

2020 YFD Service Award Recipient

Jay J. Foster, J.E. Foster Funeral Home

Nominated by: Rebecca R. Foster

Jay is currently president of our local school board. He has been president four years of the eight years he's been on the school board. He has led our schools in a buildings and grounds campaign which has resulted in a brand-new middle school/high school with an elementary wing. Jay is also a member of the Toronto Lions Club, serving that club for the past 15 years, also serving as president of the club. Jay is on the board of directors for the United way of Jefferson County, helping with fundraisers that benefit all citizens of our county. Jay was an active member of our Toronto Chamber of Commerce until it merged with the county chamber. Jay is a sports announcer at our local basketball games. He is a member of the first United Methodist Church here in Toronto. Jay is active in anything that goes on in our community, willing to lend a hand, attend a meeting, pitch in with a fundraiser, anything for the improvement of the community where he lives and works.

Jay is a second-generation funeral director, working with his father in a small-town business, with a second funeral home in a neighboring country town. He was integral in creating and opening the Jay Cremation Service here in town, opening last year. Jay is caring, understanding, sympathetic, empathetic, a kind and friendly face to every family in need, ready and willing to work with anyone on a preneed basis, available and busy speaking at local events, promoting meaningful and purposeful memorials regardless of cremation or traditional burial. Jay reaches out in times of tragedy and offers his services whether a family is able to pay or not, especially when a child has died. Jay goes above and beyond in his calling and is truly a giving and caring professional.

Jay is an active member of the Ohio Funeral Directors Association as well as the Ohio Embalmers Association and the National Funeral Directors Association. He supports and endorses all efforts to help small businesses and the integrity of funeral service. He has chosen to dedicate his life to promoting funeral service. He supports any political candidate that stands beside small businesses and endorses efforts to maintain the viability of the small independent funeral firm. He has accepted that cremation is a part of funeral service and is growing year-by-year. He strives to support memorialization and remembrance services, enabling cremation and memorialization to coexist as the families of those he serves make their choices.

Jay has recently started his family. He hopes to work hand-in-hand with his daughter in the future as they strive to serve the families of our small, close knit community. Jay is the epitome of the hard-working, small-town guy, the funeral director that stays up late get up early, goes without being paid for services if necessary, to make his small portion of the world a better place in which to live and to be remembered when you die.