



Dawn Harris Jeffries, PhD - Executive Director and Founder of Girls Light Our Way and Financial Advisor

Dawn Harris Jeffries has devoted her life to believe in justice, equality, respect, and service, especially for underserved girls. In 2015, Dawn Harris Jeffries established a nonprofit, Girls Light Our Way to provide tools for mental, physical, and nutritional wellness, self-efficacy and literacies of power. The goal is to provide a directed pathway and curated agency out of poverty to improve social and economic mobility, quality and longevity of life. She received her PhD from Benedictine University and has developed a specialized model for organizations of all kinds to promote equity for African American girls, girls from all backgrounds experiencing poverty, racism, sexism, and classism.

Dawn Harris Jeffries is a Financial Advisor and Chartered Retirement Planning Counselor with Merrill Lynch. She has been with the organization for 22 years as a financial advisor and a variety of management positions, which included oversight of more than \$1 trillion in client assets. Dawn began her career as a Bank Examiner for the Federal Reserve Bank of New York.

She has been featured in local newspapers, business magazines and publications. Since moving to Peoria in 2012, she has served on the board of directors of the various organizations. Currently, she serves as a member of the National Council of Advisors at The Foster College of Business at Bradley University. Dawn is a member of Central Illinois Chapter of The Links, Inc. and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. She also provides financial education in the community whenever possible.

She and her husband James M. Jeffries III, MD, FACS, reside in Peoria, IL.