

Profile  
Janna K. Garrison  
Southfield City Councilwoman

If there is one thing that drives Janna K. Garrison, it is her commitment to improving the lives of all citizens by bringing about “Change for the Better” in our community. That spirit of advocacy resulted in her being elected to a seat on Southfield City Council by the residents of the City of Southfield in November 2009; a southeastern Michigan community of approximately 83,000 residents.

To those who know Janna, it came as no surprise that she entered the race for Southfield City Council after a successful 30 year career as an educator and labor leader. She has dedicated her professional life to improving the quality of life for others; students in her classroom as a Teacher, and then teachers she represented as President of the Detroit Federation of Teachers and now neighbors in her community as a City Councilwoman.

Janna’s work began in earnest when she graduated from Michigan State University in 1978 with a degree in education and began teaching mathematics in the Detroit Public schools. Within a few years she had obtained a Masters degree in Labor and Industrial Relations from Wayne State University. In 1988 she was hired by the Detroit Federation of Teachers as a Labor Relations Administrator. A dedicated and hard-working advocate, she quickly moved up through the ranks of the union. She was elected Executive Vice President in 1997. Four years later, in 2001, she was elected President of the DFT which was the largest teachers union local in Michigan and the eighth largest in the nation (2001-2007).

During this time frame, Janna was also elected to a number of key decision-making positions on the local and national level. She has served as a national vice-president of the American Federation of Teachers, which represents 1.3 million educators across the United States; a vice-president of the Michigan Federation of Teachers, which represents 33,000 educators in Michigan; a

member of the AFL-CIO State of Michigan Executive Council and a member of the Metro-Detroit AFL-CIO Executive Board. Janna has lobbied at the State and National level in Michigan and Washington D.C. to bring about “Change for the Better” to the people that she served.

Janna’s passion for “Change for the Better” is also evident in her volunteer activities in the community. Over the years she has volunteered with a wide variety of organizations including the Forgotten Harvest Food Bank, the Detroit Zoo Ambassador program, the Jayhawks Little League Football Organization where she was a board member; Co-op Optical where she was former Chairman of the Board and currently serves as a board member; the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Holiday Task Force and Delta Sigma Theta sorority. She also has been active as a math tutor as well as a community service volunteer at her church, Hope United Methodist.

Janna understands the value of an education and taught algebra and statistics part-time at Michigan’s only Historical Black College, Lewis College of Business. She also continued her studies throughout the years and attended Harvard University /John F. Kennedy School of Government Executive Programs, as well as attended numerous college and university seminars on such topics as public policy, Federal Rules and Regulations and labor law.

Janna and her husband, Satchel, have been residents of Southfield since 1981. They have a son, Jared.