

CAST External Advisory Board Bio

We are in the process of updating the College of Agriculture, Science, and Technology (CAST) webpage to highlight our esteemed External Advisory Board members. As part of this effort, we are requesting a brief biography and a headshot to be included on the page. This will allow students, faculty, and external partners to learn more about your professional background and the valuable expertise you bring to CAST. Thank you in advance for your participation and continued support.

Name

James Ray Rhodes

Email

ray.rhodes@escs.k12.de.us

Headshot**Company**

Eastside Charter School

Job Title

STEM Hub/Community Engagement Director

Company URL

www.eastsidecharterschool.org

Brief Bio

James "Ray" Rhodes Ray is a dynamic, charismatic leader who has amassed a decorated career as architect, educator, government executive, non-profit executive, accomplished fundraiser, 21-year military veteran, community activist, mentor, youth coach and tutor. Ray currently serves as the STEM Hub/Community Engagement Director for Eastside Charter School. In this role, Ray is responsible for the day-to-day operations of Eastside's new \$26 million dollar STEM Hub where students, parents and community members have access to an array of STEM related programs, workforce development initiatives and mental health services. Ray is also responsible for engagement of local communities to

establish impactful partnerships to support the STEM Hub's mission.

Prior to this role, Ray served as the Executive Director of Christina Cultural Arts Center (CCAC) from 2019 through 2024 where Ray lead CCAC through the challenging pandemic while retaining staff, accumulating an additional property for sustainable revenue and implementing new and impactful programming. Ray led the day-to-day operations of CCAC including strategy execution, budget formation and management, personnel, facilities, programming, marketing/communication and development.

In his role as a government executive, Ray served with the City of Wilmington as Director of Rehabilitation for the Department of Real Estate and Housing and as Commissioner of Licensing and Inspections. In addition, Ray served as Sheriff Sale Coordinator for New Castle County. In his role as Sheriff Sale Coordinator, Ray was responsible for managing over \$5 billion in annual property sales. His other duties included personnel management, coordinating projects with other divisions and departments within the city and county and facilitating the cooperative effort to work with various community

Prior to serving in these positions, Ray accumulated over (18) years of experience in architecture, construction project management, and real estate development consultation. From 2001-2004, Ray served as a Project Manager in the Facilities Department at Princeton University where he was responsible for the management and or co-management of projects ranging from \$7,500,000.00 up to and exceeding \$25,000,000.00. In 1999, Ray served as the lead Project Manager for the FY99 minor capital improvement projects at Delaware State University. This work included a new track, new basketball court, and renovations to Laws Hall, renovations to the Price Building and the design and management of the addition to Grossley Hall. During this same year, Ray assisted with the design development and construction documentation of the largest single dollar project in New Castle County's history, the Leonard Williams Justice Center in Wilmington.

Ray is a former certified mathematics instructor where he previously taught elementary, middle school honors, and high school mathematics and has served as a design consultant to a variety of organizations. Ray has served on a variety of governing boards including his current roles as Board Chairman for Kingswood Community Center, Trustee at Cornerstone Fellowship Baptist Church, Wilmington Licenses and Inspections Review Board, New Castle County Public Arts Commission, and Vice-Chairman for REACH Riverside. Ray previously served on the Wilmington City Planning Commission, Wilmington Design Review & Preservation Commission and as a member on the Zoning Board of Adjustment for the City of Wilmington.

Ray is the recipient of numerous awards including Delaware Tech's 2025 Black History Month Honoree, Duffy's Hope Community Service award, One Village Alliance's BHIM (Black History in the Making) award; the Philadelphia region Titan 100, and was recently named one of the top 222 impactful leaders in Delaware by Delaware Business Times. Ray is a 21-year military veteran and holds a Bachelor of Architecture degree from Hampton University, a Master of Business Administration with a concentration in Executive Leadership from Wesley College, a Masters in Teaching from Wesley College and a certificate in grant writing from Temple University.

LinkedIn Profile URL

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