

BWE GIVES BACK

We work to change our communities and our world

DJ EFFLER & PELOTONIA

Watching a loved one die of cancer can often lead to a person feeling angry and powerless. Admittedly, that was the case for Bellwether Enterprise Senior Vice President DJ Effler who lost his mother and grandfather to the deadly disease.

After a decade, DJ decided to take matters into his own hands and redirect his internal negative emotions towards giving back. Last year, 10 years after death of his mother, he decided to “pick a new path” and became a rider and fundraiser for the Pelotonia cycling event in Columbus, Ohio.

“For too many years I held onto the anger that comes with losing the people you love the most,” DJ said.



Left to right; Brayden Effler, DJ Effler, Tripp Effler, Sarah Effler and Reese Effler at Pelotonia 2017

“ When you remember what you’re riding for, and all of those who have suffered through cancer, it provides you the inspiration you need to PEDAL THROUGH THE PAIN. ”

His mother died of colon cancer in 2007, and the following year, lymphoma claimed the life of his grandfather.

“Losing two of the four most influential and impactful people in my life took its toll on me. Anger is a powerful emotion and frankly got in the way of my participation in Pelotonia until last year. But last year I picked a new path and that path became a journey that turned into one of the most powerful and rewarding experiences of my life.”



DJ Effler shows his daughter, Brayden a photo of his deceased mother after completing Pelotonia 2017 race.

Pelotonia is a fundraising event where 100 percent of the proceeds get donated to the Ohio State University’s James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute to be used for education grants, research projects, and statewide cancer-fighting initiatives.

Founded in 2008, Pelotonia has raised more than \$172 million for cancer research since its inception.

This year’s three-day event was held Aug. 3-5 and featured 10 rider routes throughout the Columbus area ranging from 25 miles to 200 miles. DJ participated in the most challenging 102-mile route, all completed in one day.

“Physically riding 102 miles through the hills of Ohio is extremely challenging,” DJ said. “But when you remember what you’re riding for, and all of those who have suffered through cancer, it provides you the inspiration you need to pedal through the pain.”

BWE GIVES BACK

We work to change our communities and our world

More than 8,400 riders took to the Franklin County streets and nearly 3,000 more “virtual riders” participated. To date, more than \$16 million has already been raised.

Last year, DJ rode as an individual rider and personally raised \$30,000 from more than 150 donors. With the help from his professional and personal connections, DJ became the number two individual fundraiser for the event measured by number of individual donors.

This year, he’s on track for similar fundraising success, but he took his involvement with Pelotonia even one step further by establishing and leading the Bellwether Peloton team. DJ has personally raised more than \$25,000 so far this year, and the Bellwether team has combined to raise over \$40,000. Pelotonia fundraising continues through October with the overall goal set at \$30 million.



Left to Right; TEAM BELLWETHER: Ian Newcomer, Rich Effler, DJ Effler and Brooks Gilmore.

While the fundraising effort to reach this year’s Pelotonia goal continues, DJ is already looking ahead to doing even more next year. He said he is planning to expand his team to become a companywide event with the goal of getting even more participants to help in the fight against cancer.

“It’s an absolutely spectacular, first-class event with 100 percent of all proceeds raised going towards cutting-edge cancer research. In my mind, there’s no better way to contribute to the fight against cancer than through Pelotonia.

“Bellwether Enterprise, having a significant presence in Columbus, it just makes sense to me to get the company more involved in such an awesome event. There’s a lot of camaraderie involved, and I think Bellwether Enterprise can be extremely impactful. My goal is for the Bellwether team to raise over \$100,000 next year.”

For more information on DJ’s Pelotonia journey or to donate, visit pelotonia.org/djride.