

# PROJECT 24

Executive Interview Series

Fall 2015

Spotlighting: Corporate Counsel



**Brian Harris**



**Employer: HD Supply**

**Position: Corporate Counsel**

HD Supply is an industrial distributor in North America providing a broad range of products and value-added services to more than 500,000 professional customers in the maintenance, repair and operations, infrastructure and specialty construction sectors.

HD Supply was founded in 1974 as Maintenance Warehouse in San Diego, California. In 1997 The Home Depot purchased Maintenance Warehouse with its dedicated delivery trucks and free delivery service. In 2004 Maintenance Warehouse changed its name to HD Supply. In January 2006, Home Depot announced that it was acquiring Hughes Supply in a \$3.2 billion deal. Hughes Supply was integrated into the HD Supply division. In 2007 the company was purchased by private equity firms Bain Capital LLC; The Carlyle Group; and Clayton, Dubilier & Rice and continued as HD Supply.

Harris graduated from Jacksonville State with a B.A. in History and obtained his Juris Doctor (J.D.) from the Cumberland School of Law at Samford University.

**13** Years Married

**2** Children

**Favorite Family  
Vacation Spot?**

**Disney Cruise  
Orlando, Florida**

**Corporate Counsel and devoted sports**

**fan,** Brian Harris is passionate about family, faith, and all-things sports. He and wife Carrie have two boys: Brodie, 10, and Dylan, 8.

Born in Phoenix, Arizona, Harris spent his childhood years in North Dakota, South Carolina, Alabama, and Georgia. He met wife Carrie, a Southeastern 'lifer', in Atlanta and he and his family have never felt more at home than they do in Marietta, as is evidenced by the many community activities and groups in which they are involved. On weeknights and weekends, Brian coaches soccer, basketball and baseball. Both of Harris's sons have acquired Brian's passionate love of athletics and the entire family (Carrie included) enjoy attending as many collegiate and professional sporting events as possible.



Harris' sons Brodie and Dylan

**Q: How would you define your mission as a parent?**

A: Harris doesn't hesitate when asked about his mission as a parent. "My focus as a dad is to model a Christ-centered marriage and raise godly sons who will, in turn, model Christ-centered marriages and raise godly children of their own." Harris also believes in surrounding himself with like-minded men who share common beliefs about faith and fatherhood. "I am fortunate to be part of a group of men who are intentional about raising their boys with strong values. I also talk to my sons about important life issues even though they are only 8 and 10."

**Q: What are the biggest challenges you face in balancing demands at the office and home?**

A. Not unlike many executives, Harris's biggest challenge is finding enough time in the day to focus on both career and family. "Unfortunately, I spend more time at work than I do with my family. By the end of the weekday, I'm pretty worn out, but I make it a priority to muster up energy to keep up with my family once I get home."

## 3 Books that have impacted Harris's approach to fatherhood and marriage:

- Uncommon Marriage by Tony and Lauren Dungy
- Point Man: How a Man Can Lead His Family by Steven Farrar
- Raising a Modern-Day Knight by Robert Lewis



Harris with wife Carrie and sons Brodie and Dylan

**Q: With so many different demands for your time in both your personal and professional life, how do you prioritize everything? Are there tips, techniques or habits you've developed to manage how you spend your time?**

A: "Honestly, I don't have any tips or techniques. When the kids have an event, I make sure I'm there. While I am passionate about my career, Carrie and the boys come first." Brian describes his commitment to grow as a husband and dad as "being intentional" with the people in his life who matter most.

**Q: What secrets can you share that have helped you both protect and grow your marriage while balancing career demands?**

A: "Carrie and I have gotten better at having a date night. I also have no problem giving Carrie a night off whenever she needs one, since she spends so much more time with the boys during the week."

**Q: What is the greatest challenge in parenting today's youth?**

A: "Battling the secular worldview. There are so many negative influences out there and they all say their way is better than God's way."

**Q: If there's one "life lesson" you can choose to pass on to your children, what would it be and why?**

A: "Keep a pure heart and mind, and keep your focus on Christ. Nobody has any regrets about leading a Christ-centered life, but plenty of people, including me, have regrets about decisions when Christ wasn't the center of their life."

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