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## DAMON TASEFF

*Principal, Allegro Realty Advisers*



**DAMON TASEFF**

By **STAN BULLARD**

Colleagues of Damon Taseff at real estate consulting firm Allegro Realty Advisers consider him a case of brain gain for Northeast Ohio. That's because the company hired him in 2004 as he sought to return home from a job at Bank One Corp. in Chicago, where he was a corporate real estate strategist for the bank's real estate decisions.

However, much of the gain is very much on the side of the Cleveland community, not just Allegro. Mr. Taseff, 34, serves as chairman of the Ohio City Inc. neighborhood development group, and recently joined the board of the Collegetown District, which serves the Cleveland State University area, the site of Allegro's headquarters.

Moreover, Mr. Taseff, his wife, Ashley, and their three children, all less than 4, live within shouting distance of Garrett Morgan School of Science in Ohio City. Mr. Taseff and his wife, who met when they were attending St. Edward High School in Lakewood and Magnificat in Rocky River, respectively, recently opted to stay in the city as their children reach school age. Friends say the couple made the decision with the same studied analysis Mr. Taseff performs when helping clients decide how best to handle their real estate or where to locate operations.

Mr. Taseff, who grew up in North Ridgeville and graduated from Ohio University, said he decided to come back to Cleveland in 2004 because he was ready to start graduate school.

"If I did not make the cut then, all my contacts from business school would be in Chicago and that would keep me there," Mr. Taseff said.

He landed a job with Allegro to return home and got his MBA from Case Western Reserve University's Weatherhead School of Management.

Mr. Taseff last year was named a principal at Allegro, making him one of five owners of the firm. He is also the only principal who was not at the firm at its startup stage.

George Hutchinson, Allegro CEO, said Mr. Taseff earned a place as a principal with an overwhelming commitment to the firm.

"His fingers are all over Allegro in terms of making improvements and getting things done," Mr. Hutchinson said. Though Mr. Taseff does not like to discuss specific engagements, Mr. Hutchinson credits him with Allegro landing a big plum: a contract with Cuyahoga County to study its space needs and recommend headquarters options.

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