



ADVOCACY &
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ADVOCACY & COMMUNICATION SOLUTIONS POLICY ASSOCIATE NAMED NATIONAL ‘UP AND COMING ADVOCATE’ BY PROFESSIONAL WOMEN IN ADVOCACY

Cassie Gaffney honored for work in K-12, early childhood education

CLEVELAND – Cassie Gaffney, policy associate at Advocacy & Communication Solutions, LLC (ACS), received the 2015 Excellence in Advocacy by an Up and Coming Practitioner Award at the Professional Women in Advocacy Conference in Washington, D.C., for her work as an early childhood education and K-12 policy advocate.

The Professional Women in Advocacy Conference salutes women advocates dedicated to representing their organization, issue or cause. This year’s competition had more than 100 nominees.

Gaffney was selected as the 2015 Up and Coming Advocate for her work for The Ohio 8 Coalition, an alliance of superintendents and teacher union presidents from Ohio’s eight large urban school districts, and PRE4CLE, Cleveland’s plan to expand high-quality preschool to all children. During Ohio’s 16-week 2015 biennial budget process, Gaffney conducted 100 policymaker meetings on behalf of The Ohio 8 Coalition and 70 policymaker meetings on behalf of PRE4CLE. She conducted advocacy and policymaker engagement trainings for 200 attendees from 39 states at the National Association for the Education of Young Children’s (NAEYC) 2015 Policy Forum.

Finalists in the Excellence in Advocacy by an Up and Coming Practitioner category are Katie Simon, Policy Organizing Manager for the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, and Dana T. Weekes, Associate at Squire Patton Boggs for education and higher education policy advocacy.

Gaffney helps lead Advocacy & Communication Solutions, LLC’s (ACS) local, state and federal advocacy, communication, and strategy development for clients. She draws on her considerable skills and experience to help clients advance their lobbying efforts and to frame and deliver clients’ key messages to media, policy makers, and the public. Gaffney earned her Master of Urban Planning, Design, and Development degree at Cleveland State University’s Levin College of Urban Affairs.

“In the three years Cassie has been a registered lobbyist with ACS, she has distinguished herself as a rising policy expert in the areas of early childhood, K-12 education and related health and human services issues,” said Lori McClung, ACS president and co-founder. “She has political savvy beyond her years and has helped elevate our clients’ reputations among local, state and federal policymakers.”

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LeeAnn Petersen, Co-Founder of the Professional Women in Advocacy Conference and Awards said her organization is happy to be the group that recognizes women advocates for the work they do. “There is no greater challenge than representing a cause, industry or organization when the stakes are high, resources are low and the difference between succeeding or losing in a fight is the quality of the advocate,” she said. “We honored Cassie as an Up and Coming Advocate because she has accomplished so much early in her career. We are impressed with her advocacy work at the local, state and federal level on behalf of enhancing early childhood, K-12 urban education opportunities as well as for training advocates across the U.S. for causes that impact our nation’s children.”

David Romick of The Ohio 8 Coalition said of Gaffney’s work: “The Ohio 8 is viewed as a critical voice of K-12 education by state policymakers and the State Board of Education, in part because of Cassie’s tireless work at the Statehouse to help insert our priorities into legislation or refine legislation to reflect the needs of urban schools in Ohio. We are pleased the Professional Women in Advocacy Conference recognized her for the good work she does for Ohio’s children.”

About Advocacy and Communication Solutions, LLC: *Advocacy & Communication Solutions, LLC (ACS) is a communication, advocacy, and strategy development consulting firm that helps nonprofits, government agencies, philanthropic organizations and other groups share their messages about target issues with key audiences and position themselves as leaders in their respective fields. Headquartered in Cleveland, ACS also has offices in Columbus, Ohio, Washington, D.C., and Phoenix, Arizona. For more information, visit www.advocacyandcommunication.org*

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