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**NEW CHARITABLE FUND WILL HELP OHIO WOMEN AND GIRLS AFFORD HIGHER EDUCATION,
ACCESS REPRODUCTIVE SERVICES, AND BUILD CAPACITY FOR PUBLIC SERVICE**

CLEVELAND – A new philanthropic fund created by two female entrepreneurs will help young women and girls in Cleveland and across Ohio—particularly low-income and those of color—access reproductive services, build their capacity for public service, and afford higher education.

The Advocacy & Communication Solutions, LLC (ACS) Fund for Women & Girls was created by entrepreneurs Lori McClung and Scarlett Boudier and their all-female company in honor of the firm's 20th anniversary in business. ACS is an Ohio-based female- and minority-owned consulting firm that has grown into a national business with clients in nearly two dozen states. The firm provides advocacy, communication, strategy development, and capacity building services across the nonprofit, government, and philanthropic sectors, with a focus on early childhood, K-12 education, workforce, Medicaid, and health and human services fields.

The Fund is held at the Community Foundation of Lorain County and will support the efforts of young women to achieve reproductive justice (including access to abortion or contraceptives, transportation, other health care procedures, and prescriptions); build their capacity for public service (such as training to become an elected official, seed funding for campaign planning, and supporting women in government leadership); and access to higher education (including assistance for first-generation applicants and students applying to or attending an institution of higher education with expenses such as application fees).

McClung and Boudier said the idea of the Fund was inspired by individuals, organizations, and communities they have served through their work and from their own personal experiences.

“The ACS team knew that we could be a catalyst for change, and we plan to aggressively leverage the fund to support targeted and proven solutions that have impact,” said Boudier. “Young women and girls are resilient, creative and inspiring and when we invest in them, especially women and girls of color, everyone benefits.”

“Empowering women and girls, especially those of color, to have greater access to and flexible support for reproductive justice is critical, as we know a woman’s autonomy is key to her future health and that of her family,” McClung, ACS CEO and co-founder, said, noting that one in four women in the United States seek abortion care during their lifetime.

A first-generation college graduate, Boudier, ACS president and co-founder, added, “Higher education is many times out of reach financially for first generation students, but we do know that when they receive direct support for things usually not covered by traditional grants and scholarships, they are more likely to persist and complete their degree.”

“Women are roughly half of Ohio’s population but hold only 30 percent of legislative seats—and zero statewide administrative offices,” said McClung. “We believe that supporting more women to run for and hold public office will undoubtedly make for statewide policies that better support women, girls and their families.”

The entrepreneurs seeded the fund with an initial \$20,000 investment in honor of their 20 years in business. The inaugural fundraising goal of \$200,000 will fuel its first grants at the end of 2024.

For more information about the Fund and/or to make a contribution, visit the [Community Foundation of Lorain County donations page](#).

About Advocacy & Communication Solutions, LLC

ACS is one of the only female- and minority-owned consulting firms in Ohio, receiving various local, national, and international awards for their work. ACS has gained a national reputation for not only its advocacy, communication, and strategy development expertise but also a deep understanding of matters within the early childhood, K-12, workforce, Medicaid, and health and human services fields across the nonprofit, government, and philanthropic sectors. Learn more about ACS at www.advocacyandcommunication.org.

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