

SHANNON JONES

Executive Director



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Groundwork
OHIO



In just 24 months, Executive Director Shannon Jones has grown Groundwork Ohio's statewide advocacy efforts into a national model for coalition building and policy success. The goal of this well-orchestrated, strategic effort is to advance quality early care and education so all Ohio children have the best chance for lifelong success. Her vision calls for every elected leader, policymaker and diverse stakeholder to clearly understand the value of making targeted investments in Ohio's youngest children and why that investment is critical to Ohio's long-term economic success.

The results speak for themselves. Through Shannon's relentless commitment to build key partnerships, mobilize stakeholders, and communicate thoughtfully with core constituencies and the media to influence and educate statewide policymakers, Groundwork is now the recognized leader in child advocacy in the state of Ohio.

Under Shannon's trusted hand, Groundwork pioneered the Ohio Early Childhood Race and Rural Equity project by leading a thoughtful conversation across the state of Ohio on equity. By evaluating child serving systems and communicating about them through an equity lens, Groundwork utilized powerful storytelling, using disaggregated data as a critical lever, to influence early childhood policy. This work continues to be shared with local communities, early childhood and health stakeholders, education professionals, business leaders, statewide policy makers and the media and its

data and analysis are frequently cited in the press.

Another achievement is her vision and leadership behind the Vote for Ohio Kids Campaign, a unique alliance between Groundwork and the Ohio Children's Hospital Association in partnership with business, healthcare, and early education leaders as well as child advocates from across the state to ensure Ohio's new Governor prioritizes children's early education and health. As a result of her successful efforts, Ohio is experiencing renewed interest in early childhood policies by its new chief executive.

Prior to joining Groundwork, Shannon served in the Ohio General Assembly for a decade as a state representative and a state senator, where she was chosen by her colleagues for key leadership posts in both chambers. She is the only woman in her party, and first in Ohio history, ever to achieve the distinction of election to the leadership teams in both chambers. Known as a leader who is willing to tackle the most difficult and complex issues, Shannon used her trusted influence to put kids at the top of the legislative agenda. Her efforts resulted in a renewed focus by the state on policies that support the health and educational opportunities of Ohio's most vulnerable children.

Shannon's most significant legislative effort led to a statewide bipartisan mandate to improve Ohio's abysmal infant mortality epidemic. Her passion helped catapult this health crisis into the public consciousness

and as a result, created a uniform and streamlined process for investigating infant deaths, implemented a safe sleep education program and a policy to ensure safe places for newborns to sleep upon discharge from Ohio's hospitals, and established the Commission on Infant Mortality. Shannon also co-chaired the first Commission, which culminated in a comprehensive law implementing the Commission's substantive recommendations around evidence-based practices and the social determinants of health. This work has been praised by national experts in the field and has been emulated by other states as a model roadmap for improvement.

Because of her leadership, Shannon is one of Ohio's most distinguished child advocates. She shares her passion for and learnings around this work throughout the country at conferences and workshops.

In 2008, Shannon was selected for the prestigious Rodel Fellowship by the Aspen Global Leadership Institute and remains one of only 300 public servants nationally to have achieved that honor. She remains active with this distinguished group of leaders by regularly participating in Aspen-Rodel convenings. Shannon earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Cincinnati and teaches Health Policy at the University of Dayton. She also currently serves as President of the Board of Warren County Commissioners and as a board member for the Health Policy Institute of Ohio and YWCA of Dayton.

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