

CASSIUS O. JOHNSON



202-550-8373



cassiusjohnson@gmail.com



West Palm Beach, Florida



linkedin.com/in/cassius

EXPERTISE & SKILLS

- Strategy & implementation
- Impact Measurement
- College & Career Pathways
- Education and workforce policy expert
- Business Development
- Philanthropy
- Business & financial models
- Strategic Communications and Storytelling, and Messaging
- Influence & advocacy
- Stakeholder and Community Engagement
- Knowledge & information management
- Fiscal operations
- Talent Management
- Mindfulness & self-care

EDUCATION

M.P.A. | Public Affairs

The University of Texas at Austin
Austin, TX, 2002
Barbara Jordan Scholar

B.A. | Political Science

Texas Tech University
Lubbock, TX, 2000
Presidential Scholar

A.A. | Liberal Arts

Bevill State Community College
Hamilton, AL 1998
International President, Phi Theta Kappa

LEADERSHIP

- Leadership Palm Beach County Engage Class of 2023
- Most Influential Business Leaders of PBC, 2022, and 2023
- Member, Community Impact Committee, United Way of PBC
- Member, Family Promise of NPBC
- Member, Extraordinary Charities
- President, Palm Beach Public School Orchestral Strings Foundation
- Appointed Member, MA State Workforce Board. Chair, Youth Committee. 2016-2018

CEO and Co-Founder

Perceptist, LLC | West Palm Beach, FL (Virtual) | 2023 – Present

- Perceptist is a management consultant services firm providing strategy development, implementation, and change management support, as well as coaching to social impact organizations and leaders across sectors.
- Providing services including board and executive strategy sessions, multi-phase strategy planning, post-strategy implementation supports, business model development, impact measurement, change management support, and innovation system designs.
- Providing management consulting services to five client types: national foundations, national and local non-profit organizations, for-profit social enterprises, and state governments.
- Exceeded first year revenue target by 15% by start of third quarter.
- Firm projects: Fractional Chief Strategy Officer role for a for-profit social enterprise; Landscape scan and strategy engagement with major national foundation; policy strategy engagement with state office focused on minority and women entrepreneurs; and board strategy support to member-based organization shifting to direct services.
- Built firm administrative and operational systems, including accounting and taxes, knowledge management, contracting accounting, and business development.

Senior Director, Operations & Strategy

Education Strategy Group, LLC | Chevy Chase, MD (Virtual) | 2019 – 2022

A member of the executive team, reported directly to the President & CEO. Directed the overall operations, business development, and strategy for the \$9 million mission-based for-profit consulting services firm. Results included positioning firm for scale and strategic growth of philanthropic and fee-for-service lines of services. The firm provided support to national, state, and local government, educational institutions, businesses, and philanthropy to create education and training pathways that lead to credentials that have value in the labor market with a specific focus on low-income and communities of color.

- Strategy Development- Established five-year growth strategy to deepened field impact, build sustainable profit margins, and create stronger operations to power growth.
- Fiscal Operations- transitioned firm from part-time capacity to fully loaded external capacity for accounts payable, accounts receivable, and financial analytics. Implementation of scalable structures, tools, policies, and procedures resulted in new and accurate insights into key business drivers and critical insights into the profitability of services. This transformed the business.
- Business Development- rebuilt and managed firm business development systems. Activities and enhancements included the codification of the business development, development of tools to power client discovery, cultivation, stewardship, and monitoring. Major systems roll outs included first CRM--Salesforce. Resulted in 30% growth in year one.
- Talent Management- responsible for building team and culture including talent acquisitions, development, performance, compensation, and benefits. Immediate value-add resulted in increasing diverse hires (0% to 25% in two years); created internal routines and structures that promoted inclusive culture; designed annual performance management and bonus programs; and established parental leave.
- General Administration- provided oversight GA, including business and other taxes across multiple state and local jurisdictions, FMLA, PPP loan, insurance (including health care), contracting and contracts, compliance, and reporting (foundation and government), and other activities. A capacity support strategy resulted in securing the financial stability of the firm during the pandemic and creating a better understanding of the business model.
- Knowledge Management- designed a new file storage and collaboration structure to create much needed efficiencies, transparency, and security around critical firm data and intellectual property. Codified services to deliver, scale, and innovate more efficiently.
- Chief of Staff- managed the executive team; directed quarterly staff meetings; and general responsibilities for making connections across the firms and its multiple functional areas and portfolio units; and ensured effective and efficient executive office. Directed special projects and providing high-value strategic guidance, advice, and counsel to the President & CEO.

CASSIUS O. JOHNSON

Vice President of Strategy & Policy

Jobs for the Future | Boston, MA | 2017 – 2019

- Directed JFF's national convening newly rebranded as Horizons with over 800 participants, doubling sponsorship to nearly \$1 million.
- Led strategy development and the alignment of program activities—projects, initiatives, products, and services—aimed at deepening organization impact.
- Led effort to use impact framework and balanced scorecard measures across all programmatic work.
- Provided field and national thought leadership representing JFF through publication, blogs, social media, and at convenings and events nationally.
- Provided oversight of the development department responding for securing \$10-15 million dollars annually and managing over \$20 million dollars in foundation, federal, state, local, and other grants, and contracts.
- Managed and provided oversight over four program units focused on increasing education and credential attainment among low-income populations.
- Managed and provided direction for the policy and advocacy team based in Washington, DC

Senior Director of Public Policy & Government Affairs

Year Up, Inc. – National Office | Boston, MA | 2015- 2017

- Oversaw and expanded relationships with federal, state, and local government officials.
- Worked across all organization function areas to develop new structures and processes to efficiently secure and administer public funding.
- Represented Year-Up among national coalitions and advocacy efforts aim at focusing attention on solutions for at-risk youth.
- Managed compliance of training model with federal labor standards requirements and outreach to US Department of Labor on regulatory solutions
- Maintained compliance with federal and state lobbying laws governing non-profit organizations.
- Developed national policy agenda to advance changes in education and workforce systems.
- Preserved and expanded strategic partnerships and coalition membership.
- Awarded “Build Trust, Be Honest” Core Value for national staff outstanding performance.

Program Officer

Carnegie Corporation of New York | New York City NY. | 2012 – 2015

- Managed \$8 million grant portfolio, including key strategic grantees advancing equity in education and grantees advancing innovative designs for secondary schools and state and local education systems.
- Conducted comprehensive due diligence in order to identify strategy-aligned investments.
- Supported potential grantees through the Corporation's comprehensive proposal submission process.
- Presented grant proposals to the executive review committee.
- Traveling extensively nationally in order to monitor existing grantees, identify new grantees, and represent the Corporation.

Other Valuable Experience

- **Associate Vice President, Jobs for the Future, Washington, DC**
 - Launched and expanded JFF first office outside of Boston and established its DC operations.
 - Managed JFF Washington, D.C. office operations, including budget, personnel, office lease, and funder relations.
 - Served on JFF Leadership Team and Chair of JFF Policy Committee, charged with ensuring alignment of organizational policy positions and advocacy strategies.
 - Provided oversight of education and workforce federal policy activities, building from the organization's work across the nation, through the identification and analysis of federal policy targets, development of advocacy strategies, and creation of a comprehensive policy and advocacy agenda
 - Directed government relations with Congress, the administration, and the Departments of Education and Labor
- **Director of Public Policy, College Summit, Washington, DC**
 - Directed College Summit's federal policy and advocacy activities aimed at establishing a meaningful role for postsecondary outcome data in federal secondary education laws and regulations.
 - Developed and executed research agenda that resulted in a policy brief titled *Seizing the Measurement Moment*

CASSIUS O. JOHNSON

- **Director of Education Policy, Jobs for the Future, Boston, MA**
 - Directed federal education policy activities and managed government relations with Congress, the administration, and the Department of Education
 - Developed and maintain relationships with national organizations to build collaborative policy efforts and advance the JFF policy agenda.
 - Managed policy outreach programs aimed at educating and supporting partner organizations and informing federal policy development.
 - Coordinated high profile, high visibility events and communications opportunities to build public and political awareness of the JFF policy agenda.
 - Supported JFF network of local leaders to develop and implement strategies for leveraging federal and state resources for education and career pathways for disadvantaged youth.
 - Served on USAID that provided recommendations on training opportunities for disconnected youth in Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Kitts, Nevis, and Antigua
- **Project Manager—State and Federal Policy Analyst, Jobs for the Future, Boston, MA**
 - Served on quality review team for Boston Public Schools, assessing the performance of Boston community based alternative schools
 - Supported Congressional staff in writing the *Graduation Promise Act of 2007* with colleagues from the Alliance for Excellent Education, the Center for American Progress, and the National Council of La Raza
 - Translated JFF's extensive district-based work on struggling students and out-of-school youth into comprehensive state and federal policy frameworks and agendas.
 - Member of the Accountability Working Group, convened by the Alliance for Excellent Education, which developed cohort graduation rate legislation.
 - Co-authored *Addressing America's Dropout Challenge* that led to the development of federal legislation aimed at improving the nation's high school graduation rate.
 - Analyzed data from the National Educational Longitudinal Survey to weigh the educational persistence of dropouts; published in report entitled *Making Good on a Promise*
 - Provided policy development expertise and strategic support to Youth Transition Funder's Group policy work group.
 - Analyzed state policies and graduation rate data in Indiana, Massachusetts, and North Carolina as part of a policy initiative with partner organization Achieve, Inc.; resulted in state reports, policy memos and briefings to policymakers and business leaders in respective states.
 - Served on the Policy Working Group of the Alternative High School Initiative
 - Tracked and analyzed news and print media trends in national, federal, and state education policy.
- **Chief of Staff, Texas House of Representatives, Austin and Missouri City, TX 2004 – 2005**
 - Developed and managed a comprehensive legislative initiative on statewide alternative education reform, including reducing placements and improving educational outcomes; resulted in passage of key legislation.
 - Organized educational summit to mobilize public and political support for disciplinary reform legislative agenda.
 - Hired, trained, and supervised office personnel at district and capitol offices.
 - Directed public relations; resulted in articles and editorials in *Christian Science Monitor*, *Stateline.org*, and *Houston Chronicle*
 - Maintained strategic relationships with state and national policy organizations to inform legislative agenda: including National Black Caucus of State Legislators, National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators, Harvard Civil Rights Project, and the American Bar Association
 - Collaborated with lobbyists and consultants to draft legislation.
 - Participated in local and community task forces and initiatives.
 - Tracked, analyzed and summarized legislation.
 - Initiated enhancements to office database and improved web-based communications
 - Reorganized district office operations to improve efficiency and enhance constituent services.
 - Coordinated community outreach and constituent relations efforts.