



Groundwork OHIO



CJ MURPHY

Operations Manager
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As Operations Manager, CJ supports the Groundwork team through the day-to-day functions of the organization, including financial and grant tracking, physical office needs, and general administrative support. They strive to create a welcoming, supportive, and organized environment to ensure the team is performing at their best.

CJ holds a Bachelor of Science in Education from Ashland University and will be pursuing a Master of Accounting from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill this fall.

Prior to joining the Groundwork Ohio team, CJ taught 7th and 8th grade math for Groveport Madison Local Schools. Seeing firsthand how much more support their students and families needed to thrive, especially before reaching middle school, inspired CJ to get involved in improving the lives of children at a more systemic level. Since leaving education, they now have five years of non-profit administrative and fiscal experience.

Check out our Q&A with CJ to learn more about why they are a passionate advocate for young children and families!

Q: What drew you to early childhood policy research and advocacy? Tell us more about your “why”!

A: As a middle school teacher, I saw a lot of students who were behind on their education through no fault of theirs or their families. I began wondering what we could do to better bolster these students and their families, and the more I dug, I realized they’d been failed by the system at one point or another. Early childhood policy, research, and advocacy is the way I see correcting those systemic issues to allow children and families to thrive.

Q: What’s the best piece of advice you’ve received or a lesson that you’ve learned that has helped you in this work?

A: Take time to do things that bring you joy. Too many times, we are told that if we work hard, everything will get done and done well. What happens more often is that you work nonstop and burn out and your work suffers. Doing things that bring you joy for no other reason than they bring you joy is a way to take a break, recharge, and continue to do the good work you’re so passionate about.

Q: What’s your word for 2024?

A: Possibility. This year has brought a lot of positive changes for me, so I want to continue to bask in the possibilities life has to offer.

Q: When you aren’t advocating on behalf of young children and families, what do you enjoy doing?

A: I love hanging out with my son, our cats, and our family and friends. My favorite hobbies are embroidering, baking, and gardening, but I’m always up for learning something new!

Q: Describe a scene from your vision of the future for Ohio’s youngest children and their caregivers.

A: In the future I envision for Ohio’s youngest children and their caregivers, everyone has access to the services they need to thrive, without having to worry about how utilizing those services impacts the rest of their lives.

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