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New Handbook Provides Tips and Guidance on Building and Activating Advocate Networks

Bethesda, Md. (May 11, 2009) – In order to tackle some of the nation’s most pressing issues – the economy, health care reform and energy legislation – policymakers are seeking the guidance of their constituents. While constituents are members of organizations that want their views heard in Washington, organizations must be structured to recruit, activate, and train advocates to advance your issues.

The Advocacy Handbook: A Practitioner’s Guide to Achieving Policy Goals through Organization Networks is a new publication from Columbia Books & Information Services serving to guide advocacy leaders at organizations of all sizes and all types in building from scratch or tweaking their existing advocate networks. Written by advocacy trainer Stephanie Vance, this guide describes various advocate networks, methods to communicate with the network and public, and plans for lobby days and other events that provide advocates the chance to discuss issues and make their asks with elected officials.

Other topics discussed in *The Advocacy Handbook* include the following:

- Creating the “Advocacy Mission Statement” to outline your advocacy goals
- Structuring the advocacy network based on the policy environment, interest in issue and budget
- Recruiting grassroots and “grasstops” advocates
- Using Web 2.0 strategies to connect the organization to its advocates
- Training advocates for meetings with their elected officials

The Advocacy Handbook also includes case studies detailing how organizations such as the Humane Society and the National Trust for Historic Preservation put into use the methods and concepts described in each chapter.

Additionally, appendices of sample materials, such as newsletters, lobby day schedules, and worksheets for policy goal development are available for organizations to use as templates for their advocacy needs. Lists of links for “grassroots games,” advocacy toolkits and blogging services also provide users of *The Advocacy Handbook* with further examples and specific tools to help organizations communicate with and train advocates.

The table of contents of *The Advocacy Handbook* is available at http://www.lobbyists.info/ProductDetail/the-19-0-66/Advocacy_Handbook_2009. The handbook is currently on sale for \$329.

About the Author

With 20 years of experience in Washington, DC Stephanie Vance, known nationally and internationally as the Advocacy Guru, knows the insider's secrets to influencing government. She has worked at a prominent DC law firm, as a lobbyist for National Public Radio and as a Congressional aide, holding positions as Legislative Director and Staff Director for three different members of Congress. She is the author of *Government by the People: How to Communicate with Congress* and the fabjob.com guide *Get a Job on Capitol Hill*.

Stephanie's work stems from a deep and abiding belief that the US system of government is effective only when citizens are active and well-informed participants. She helps citizens across the country take action through her speeches and training sessions for groups both small and large, including nationally recognized organizations like the American Library Association and the Humane Society of the United States. Her message has been heard by tens of thousands of advocates across the country and around the world many of whom are making the world a better place (at least in their view) through the application of her advice.

Ms. Vance holds a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science as well as two Master's degrees, one in Legislative Affairs from George Washington University and the other in Liberal Studies from Georgetown University (this is not the study of how to be a liberal). A member of the National Speakers Association, she recently earned the NSA's prestigious Certified Speaking Professional designation. She is also a member of the American Society of Association Executives, Women in Government Relations and is mentioned in Who's Who in American Women.

About the Publisher

For more than 40 years Columbia Books & Information Services has provided users with information on the associations, government relations, lobbying and public relations communities. As a publisher of print directories, online databases, mailing lists, and audioconferences we have extensive experience capturing and delivering relevant and accurate information on the above topics in easy-to-use formats. Whether you are interested in lobbyists and their clients, associations and their executives, or public affairs professionals we have a resource that will fit your needs.