

**Date:** May 12, 2008

For Immediate Release

**Contact:** Marcia Ford  
(863) 647-4292  
[marcia.ford@polk-fl.net](mailto:marcia.ford@polk-fl.net)

## **LOCAL PROFESSIONAL IS NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED WITH THE FIRST STANDARDS-BASED GRANTS CREDENTIAL**

(Jackson, TN): Amy Jones, Executive Director of the Madison and Henderson County Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) programs, has earned a nationally recognized credential in the grants field with the first cohort ever to do so. The recognition is conferred by the Grant Professionals Certification Institute, Inc. (GPCI, pronounced “gypsy”), an affiliate of the American Association of Grant Professionals (AAGP). Jones is one of just 170 certified grant designers and managers in all of the United States who were conferred the “GPC” title as Grant Professional Certified after the history-making first offering of the GPC exam. The credential recognizes proficiency in standards that include tenure in the profession, education, demonstrated achievement and a commitment to service for public and private philanthropy. Jones, originally from Lexington, has served in her current capacity since 2004. “Grants are critical to the success of nonprofit organizations today. Funders, whether it’s a private foundation or a division of government, demand a high level of professionalism and accountability from those writing applications for funding. This certification is one way to demonstrate that skill set. I am proud to be one of the first GPCs in the country,” said Jones.

“The past decade of activity by the American Association of Grant Professionals shows this field now requires skills far beyond just the staff-level ‘writer’ role,” said GPCI President Marcia Ford. “Today, grant professionals are held accountable not just by their employers, but especially by charitable and corporate foundations and governments. They are called upon to negotiate elaborate collaborations between groups that can leverage more productivity than a single agency or advocacy group could manage on its own. They come from many walks,” she said, “and are more likely to

have nonprofit management and program development skills than the typical proposal writer from the last generation.”

Beyond meeting eligibility requirements, GPCs have mastered nationally standardized competencies that are defined by nine skill sets. In partnership with the University of South Florida’s Tampa-based Institute for Instructional Research and Practice (IIRP), the GPC exam was established within the strict rigors and standards of psychometric testing. The exam, which took seven years since inception, is the result of numerous interactions with grant professionals, employers, the funding community, and other stakeholder groups throughout the country.

Credentialed individuals agree to uphold AAGP’s Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Practice. GPCs receive certification for a three-year period. In order to maintain the status, conferees must continue documenting their education, practices and contributions to the field, or pass the same examination as new GPCs. More information about GPCI can be found on its website, [www.grantcredential.org](http://www.grantcredential.org).

GPCI is an affiliate organization of the  
American Association of Grant Professionals  
1333 Meadowlark Lane, Suite 105  
Kansas City, KS 66102  
Email: [info@grantcredential.org](mailto:info@grantcredential.org)