

MeeCee Baker, PhD | President/CEO

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MeeCee's years of experience, technical knowledge of client issues, and homegrown commitment to their concerns have made her name synonymous with agricultural and rural issues in Pennsylvania. In sum, she is credentialed and connected.

Dr. Baker owns Versant Strategies, a premier governmental relations firm focused on agricultural, environmental, and rural issues. Versant has represented dozens of clients in the Harrisburg and DC marketplace ranging from small farms and businesses to Fortune 500 companies. Baker's networking skills allow her to efficiently and effectively move client messages to advocate on their behalf.

Previously, Dr. Baker served in the executive office of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. While there, she directed the educational outreach for the Department using the knowledge, skills, and traits she perfected during her 20 years behind a teacher's desk at secondary and post-secondary institutions. Baker served as a faculty member at Penn State, an adjunct professor at North Carolina State University, and was the first woman elected president of the National Association of Agricultural Educators. She is known nationwide as a published author and columnist with frequent engagements as a motivational keynote speaker and workshop presenter.

Dr. Baker was named an Alumni Fellow at Penn State University and delivered the commencement address at the College of Agricultural Sciences spring graduation. She also received the prestigious Medal of Honor Award from the Philadelphia Society for the Promotion of Agriculture (PSPA), the oldest (1785) continuously operating agricultural society in the country. PSPA was involved in establishing the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture. In addition, Baker was honored with the esteemed Jefferson Award by the Penn Ag Democrats. She holds a master's degree in agricultural economics and a PhD in agricultural education.

Baker was named number three on City and State's Power Ag 100 and one of the 50 over 50 by the same group. She also was recognized as a top 30 Lawyers and Lobbyists by the Central Penn Business Journal and was pleased the firm was recognized in the City and State Top 50 Lobbyists.

MeeCee and her husband, Jim Garofalo, a retired PA State Police Major, live on the Baker homestead farm in Juniata County. Her daughter Libby, a Lutheran Pastor, was a former State FFA President.

