

MAX S. LESKO

(b)(6)

Professional Experience

BIDEN READINESS PROJECT (JBRPT), Washington, D.C.

Chief of Staff, Domestic COVID Team, August 2020 – Present

- Supported in standing up a team to plan for the future administration's Domestic COVID response through: identifying and bringing on staff, volunteers, and experts; building lines of communication across relevant policy and operational teams; and establishing processes and systems to drive a team to meet deliverables ranging from policy development, effective collaboration with Agency Review Teams, and external stakeholder engagement.

CHILDREN'S DEFENSE FUND, Washington, D.C.

National Executive Director, December 2018 – October 2020 (Chief of Staff, May 2018 – December 2018)

- Responsible for the day-to-day operations and executing the strategic direction of a historic civil rights and advocacy organization with 120 staff and a \$22 million annual budget.
- Managed the organization's budgeting, policy strategy, communications, hiring, fundraising, programs, asset management, performance management, employee engagement, legal compliance, and state office activities.
- Drove CDF's strategic process through the creation and implementation of a strategic approach with goals and key performance indicators, and led the Board of Directors through a process of assessing key strategic questions.
- Led CDF's financial performance to the first net-surplus year since 2003.
- Launched CDF's first employee engagement survey and achieved positive change across every question in 1 year.
- Oversaw the development and execution of critical programs including: state and federal policy advocacy efforts that led to the passage of two pieces of federal legislation and the first presidential debate question on child poverty in 20 years; CDF Freedom Schools serving over 12,000 students a year; and youth leadership programs.
- Managed the organization through several critical moments including a 2-year transition from an iconic founder to a new President, the sale of the organization's national office building, the sudden death of a senior staff member, and organizational challenges related to the COVID global health crisis.
- Launched training and working groups to strengthen CDF's promotion of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Reported to the Board of Directors and guided their evolution from a founder's board to a working board.

Director of National Organizing, Intergovernmental Outreach, and the CDF Action Council, March 2017 – May 2018

- Established a new division designed to increase the capacity of citizens to advocate for children harnessing nonviolent organizing tools through youth leadership development and digital mobilization.
- Launched congressional profiles and a dynamic scorecard accounting for member's actions on behalf of children.
- Provided strategic counsel on management, program, and policy to CDF's President, Marian Wright Edelman.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS, Washington, D.C.

Chief of Staff, March 2015 – January 2017

- Responsible for the budget planning and execution, performance management, employee engagement, communications, and staff development for a 589-person office with a FY16 budget of \$107 million that addresses civil rights discrimination in schools based on race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, and disability.
- Advised the Assistant Secretary on matters of management, strategic and crisis communications, congressional relations, stakeholder engagement, policy priorities, and personnel actions.
- Led Congressional engagement efforts and strategy which resulted in a 7% appropriation increase for FY16.
- Provided key support on projects including federal guidance on the rights of transgender students, disparate discipline of students based on race, the Civil Rights Data Collection, and racially hostile environments.
- Directed the recruitment, interview process, selection, and onboarding of 54 staff in FY15 and 102 staff in FY16.
- Co-Chair the office's 30-person Diversity and Inclusion Council.

THE WHITE HOUSE, OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE COUNSEL, Washington, D.C.

Assistant Counsel, July 2014 – March 2015

- Provided legal guidance to White House offices and personnel on matters of ethics and compliance.
- Reviewed documents in advance of potential production on issues related to foreign policy and health care.
- Conducted research and prepared memoranda for White House oversight priorities on issues including Congressional subpoena power, executive privilege, and authorities of agency Inspectors General among others.
- Led the White House Counsel vetting process for all White House personnel.

THE WHITE HOUSE, PRESIDENTIAL PERSONNEL OFFICE, Washington, D.C.

Director of the Domestic Agency Team, May 2013 – July 2014

- Interviewed, assessed, recruited, and led the selection of political appointees at the Departments of Justice, Health & Human Services, Housing & Urban Development, Labor, and Education in support of the President's agenda.
- Managed the day-to-day operations, activities, and priorities of the Domestic Team.
- Authored weekly memoranda to the President for approval of Senate-confirmed candidates.

ORGANIZING FOR AMERICA, Columbus, OH

Director, Get Out the Vote, July 2012 – November 2012

- Created and implemented a winning Get Out the Vote program for President Obama's re-election campaign in Ohio, coordinating strategies of communications, political outreach, voter protection, and field operations.
- Managed 23 staff in headquarters and regional offices and a non-personnel budget in excess of \$500,000.
- Served as liaison with the state party and other campaigns to negotiate agreements on resource collaboration regarding field staff, voter contact, and voter protection.

SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER, Montgomery, AL

Law Clerk, May 2012 – July 2012

- Authored a draft complaint against an Alabama public school system including discriminatory intent and disparate impact claims under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and Title II of the ADA.
- Compiled evidence through data analysis, institution visits, and prisoner interviews for a potential complaint against a state department of corrections.
- Prepared for and assisted in depositions of witnesses for a §1983 Constitutional challenge.
- Organized forums to educate communities on predatory payday loan and title loan practices.

LAWYERS COMMITTEE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS, Washington, D.C.

Legal Intern for the Voting Rights Project, January 2012 – May 2012

- Prepared legal memos including a state comparison of voter identification laws, analysis of possible legal avenues to challenge voter identification laws, and legal restrictions to Election Day poll watchers.
- Created voter toolkits to educate the public on voting laws and monitored voting related legislation nationwide.

U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS, Washington, D.C.

Legal Intern in the Office of the General Counsel, May 2011 – July 2011

- Conducted research, wrote briefs, and edited documents on issues including racial profiling, immigrant rights, and discrimination in schools based on religion, sexual orientation, and disabilities.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY, Washington, D.C.

Legislative Specialist, May 2010 – April 2011; Special Assistant, March 2009 – May 2010

- Served as the liaison for the National Programs and Protection Directorate by briefing Department leadership of pending legislative activities and managing relationships with Congressional staff.
- Prepared senior leadership for congressional testimony to authorizing and appropriating committees.

OBAMA FOR AMERICA, New Hampshire, South Carolina, Maine, Vermont, Pennsylvania, Oregon, and Ohio

Field & GOTV Staff, May 2007 – November 2008

- Managed and trained over 30 staff in ten offices as a Regional Field Director in Ohio.
- Represented the campaign to elected officials to coordinate field and political strategies.
- Built relationships within the community and empowered volunteers in six primary elections.

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Board Member, Generations United (2020-Present)
- Deputy Desk for the National Day of Service with the Presidential Inaugural Committee (2008-2009)
- Executive Assistant with Dutko Worldwide (2006-2007)
- Internships with the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (2005), State Senator Chris Van Hollen for Congress Campaign (2001), and Office of U.S. Representative Richard Gephardt (1998).

Education

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY LAW CENTER, Washington, D.C.

Juris Doctor, August 2010 – February 2014 (Part-Time)

Georgetown Journal on Poverty Law & Policy, Staff Editor (2011-2012), Article Selection Editor (2012-2013)

Notes: *How We End Predatory Payday Lending: An Analysis of the Tools Available and Suggested Solutions to Curb the Abuses of Payday Lending in America*; and *The Electoral College: Constitutionally Grounded but Contrary to Current Legal Principles of Justice*

COLLEGE OF WOOSTER, Wooster, OH

Bachelor of Arts, August 2002 – May 2006

Major: Political Science concentrating in International Relations

Honors Thesis: *Stories about War: A Comparative Case Study of How Four Presidents Used Narratives to Justify Military Involvement*

Active Standing with the Maryland Bar (Admitted June 2014)