

Contact

www.linkedin.com/in/melodygonzales (LinkedIn)
sites.ed.gov/hispanic-initiative/ (Company)
www.hopeandpowerstrategies.com/ (Personal)

Top Skills

Political Campaigns
Community Outreach
Politics

Languages

French (Elementary)
Spanish (Native or Bilingual)

Certifications

Harvard University: Executive Leadership Certificate, Kennedy School of Government
RYT 200 Hour Registered Yoga Teacher
Center for Creative Leadership: Executive Leadership Program

Honors-Awards

President Leadership Workshop Graduate
Politic365 Game Changer
National Hispana Leadership Institute Executive Fellow
UCSD Young Alumni of the Year Award
Congressional Hispanic Staff Association Vice President

Melody Gonzales

Executive Director of the White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence and Economic Opportunity for Hispanics. Executive leadership coach.

Washington DC-Baltimore Area

Summary

- ★ Creative, impact-oriented, bilingual professional with 20 years of experience strategically advancing innovative policy, public engagement, programmatic and process improvements in local to national organizations and small to complex, large institutions.
- ★ Founder of Hope and Power Strategies, an executive leadership and career coaching business to bolster leaders' capacity, resiliency, impact and ability to thrive
- ★ Current Biden-Harris Administration appointee serving as Executive Director of the White House Initiative on Advancing Equity, Educational Excellence and Economic Opportunity for Hispanics
- ★ Current boards: UC San Diego Alumni Association, Leadership Fairfax Equity Council. Past boards: Governor Ralph Northam's Virginia Latino Advisory Board, Labor Council for Latin American Advancement national board, Congressional Hispanic Staff Association
- ★ Former presidential appointee in the senior executive service ranks of President Barack Obama's Administration.
- ★ Experience working in Congress, political campaigns, union, Chamber of Commerce, nonprofits, and media.
- ★ Expertise managing diverse teams of 4 to 52 staff; development and implementation of strategic policy, budget and operational plans; and constituent, community, media and bilingual (English and Spanish) engagement strategies.
- ★ Security clearance: Eligible for Top Secret clearance. Favorably adjudicated Single Scope Background Investigation.

Some of my favorite career interests include:

- Working to advance racial and social justice in America's public schools and communities
- Developing and participating in leadership and management programs

- Leveraging policy, programs and strategic initiatives to scale the empowerment and advancement of historically marginalized and disadvantaged individuals and communities
- Developing cross-sector partnerships, as well as communication and public engagement strategies, to increase our target audience's awareness -- and responsiveness to -- organizational efforts
- Sparking innovative initiatives and strategies to maximize the impact and reach of critical policies/programs
- Collaborating with colleagues to improve organizational culture, processes and diversity and inclusion efforts
- Fostering a data/metric-oriented approach to help track progress towards mission goals and priorities
- Leveraging technology, data, and human-centered solutions to drive forward real, positive and sustainable impact

Experience

White House Initiative Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence & Economic Opportunity for Hispanics

Executive Director

December 2021 - Present (1 year 9 months)

Washington, District of Columbia, United States

PRESIDENTIAL APPOINTEE IN THE BIDEN-HARRIS ADMINISTRATION

I lead the White House Initiative's work outlined by Executive Order to:

- * Identify and promote evidence-based best practices that can provide Hispanic and Latino students with a rigorous and well-rounded education in safe and healthy environments, as well as access to support services, that will improve their educational, professional, economic, and civic opportunities;
- * Advance and coordinate efforts to ensure equitable opportunities for Hispanic and Latino students in the re-opening process for schools across the country, and take steps to ensure that Hispanic and Latino students, from early childhood to post-secondary education, can equitably recover from learning losses and other challenges faced during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- * Encourage and develop partnerships with a national network of early childhood and early intervention providers, schools, institutions of higher education, and other public, private, philanthropic, and nonprofit stakeholders to improve access to educational equity and economic opportunities for Hispanics and Latinos;

- * Monitor and support the development, implementation, and coordination of Federal Government educational, workforce, research, and business development policies, programs, and technical assistance designed to improve outcomes for historically underserved communities, including Hispanics and Latinos;
- * Work closely with the Executive Office of the President on key Administration priorities related to education, equity, and economic opportunity for Hispanics and Latinos; and
- * Advise the Secretary on issues of importance and policies relating to educational equity, excellence, and economic opportunity for Hispanics and Latinos.
- * Establish and coordinate a Federal Interagency Working Group, which shall collaborate regarding resources and opportunities available across the Federal Government to increase educational and economic opportunities for Hispanics and Latinos.

NEA

Senior Policy & Program Specialist, Community Advocacy & Partnership Engagement (CAPE) Department

January 2018 - December 2021 (4 years)

Washington D.C. Metro Area

SENIOR ADVISOR MANAGING LATINO COMMUNITY ADVOCACY, GRANTS AND PARTNERSHIP ENGAGEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE NATION'S LARGEST PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION REPRESENTING 3 MILLION EDUCATORS.

- Managed grants and strategic partnerships for NEA state and local unions for the purpose of helping affiliates advance racial justice in public schools and increase student achievement among students of color in K-12 schools through higher education institutions.
- Established partnership, grant and advocacy opportunities bridging national Latino organizations with NEA affiliates/leaders to advance policy and programmatic efforts related to:
 - Racial justice in education,
 - Support for immigrant students/educators and English language learners,
 - Increasing the representation of teachers of color,
 - Juvenile justice/breaking the school to prison pipeline,
 - Teacher, parent, student and community advocacy around the Every Student Succeeds Act and

- Professional support for the education workforce – from aspiring, current and retired educators to education support professionals.

- Advised association executives, members and partners in implementing strategic advocacy and communication efforts in support of Latino and immigrant students, educators and communities.

- Developed/delivered trainings for union members and partners on community data-influenced organizing, racial and social justice, running for elected or appointed office, and leadership.

Biden-Harris Presidential Transition Team

Agency Review Team, U.S. Office of Personnel Management

October 2020 - January 2021 (4 months)

- Participated in review of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management as part of the Biden-Harris transition's agency review process.

- Vetted potential nominees to serve in the Biden-Harris Administration.

Ralph Northam for Governor Campaign

Regional Political Director

September 2017 - November 2017 (3 months)

Arlington, VA

SENIOR CAMPAIGN STAFF MEMBER DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIC PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PLANS FOCUSED ON STATE-WIDE LATINO VOTER ENGAGEMENT AND POLITICAL WORK FOR VIRGINIA'S 8TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT.

- Served as campaign liaison to elected officials at the local, state and congressional levels as well as local Democratic committees in four counties.
- Cultivated relationships with external organizations and community leaders to leverage volunteer recruitment; paid, earned and media engagement; and canvassing efforts to register, persuade and turnout English-dominant, Spanish-dominant and bilingual Latino voters.
- Built and mobilized network of Latino leaders and volunteers across the state to maximize Latino and Spanish-speaking volunteer engagement in the campaign via house parties, phone-banks, canvassing, surrogate, English and Spanish language media, social media and voter protection programs.

- Strategized with internal communications, field, digital and voter protection staff develop and implement long-term and rapid-response communications and public engagement activities.
- Developed and supported high-profile campaign events to garner public and media interest with surrogates such as President Barack Obama, Vice President Joe Biden, U.S. Senators Tim Kaine and Catherine Cortez Masto, Democratic National Committee Chair Tom Perez, Virginia's First Lady Dorothy McAuliffe, Former HUD Secretary Julian Castro, Delegate Alfonso Lopez, newly elected Delegates Elizabeth Guzman and Hala Ayala, and other leaders.
- Supervised and supported intern/fellows focused on Latino vote program's administrative support, digital engagement and Latino student/millennial outreach.

U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM)

Deputy Chief Of Staff

January 2016 - January 2017 (1 year 1 month)

Washington D.C. Metro Area

SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE-LEVEL PRESIDENTIAL APPOINTEE SUPPORTING AGENCY HEAD LEADING A 5,000-EMPLOYEE FEDERAL AGENCY AND DRIVING HUMAN CAPITAL EFFORTS FOR FEDERAL AGENCIES EMPLOYING 1.8 MILLION PEOPLE WORLDWIDE.

- Strategic senior adviser:

Liaison in the Director's Office working horizontally with staff across Federal agencies and the White House as well as vertically with OPM staff in support of: the President's Management Agenda; the White House Council on Women and Girls; Congressional, Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs; Retirement Services; Policy, Planning and Analysis; and other priorities related to OPM's mission of recruiting, retaining, and honoring a world-class workforce for the American people.

- Cross-Functional Experience:

Worked with internal OPM teams, Federal agencies and external partners to strategically shape, implement and track data-driven progress towards advancing government-wide policy, programmatic, regulatory and workforce initiatives related to the President's Management Agenda goals focused on Hiring Excellence; Employee Engagement; and Strengthening the Senior Executive Service.

- Executive Engagement:

Represented and advanced agency priorities with the White House, President's Management Council, Deputy Secretaries, Assistant Secretaries for Administration & Management and external stakeholders.

- Results-Driven:

As White House Council on Women and Girls liaison, led staff to: host a live-streamed forum on Federal female executives I moderated generating 2 million Twitter impressions, digital actions to support the White House United State of Women Summit, and a partnership with the Vice President's office and Justice Department establishing a training and policies in 40 agencies to support domestic violence survivors in the Federal workforce.

- Staff Development:

Co-designed/facilitated White House training for 55 appointees aspiring to become supervisors.

U.S. Department of Labor

Chief of Staff, Mine Safety and Health Administration

October 2014 - January 2016 (1 year 4 months)

Washington D.C. Metro Area

PRESIDENTIAL APPOINTEE SUPERVISING EIGHT STAFF AND SUPPORTING ASSISTANT SECRETARY AND ELEVEN SENIOR EXECUTIVES' MANAGEMENT OF 2,300-EMPLOYEE AGENCY AIMED AT REDUCING FATALITIES/HEALTH HAZARDS AMONG MINERS.

- Crisis Management:

Worked with staff to troubleshoot and respond to time-sensitive and critical issues related to: miners killed or injured on the job; White House, Congressional and Inspector General press inquiries; personnel issues; and cybersecurity and personal identity verification compliance.

- Improving Organizational Culture:

Led the establishment of a new agency diversity committee; coordinated improvements in internal and external communications processes; managed development of annual awards event honoring employees; worked with senior leaders on efforts that improved agency's Best Places to Work ranking.

- Improving Operations:

Worked with internal communications and IT staff as well as external consultants to develop, roll-out and manage a more vibrant, user-friendly intranet site internal for employees and public-facing web site.

- Oversight & Guidance:

Provided direction to staff regarding the roll-out of regulations, external stakeholder engagement, document clearance, congressional correspondence, strategic coordination of messaging across delivery vehicles and office administration.

National Hispanic Leadership Agenda

Founding Director, Presidential Appointments Program

January 2013 - October 2014 (1 year 10 months)

Washington D.C. Metro Area

DEvised AND LAUNCHED NEW LATINO APPOINTMENT PROGRAM FOR COALITION OF 39 NATIONAL LATINO NON-PROFITS; LED LATINASREPRESENT PARTNERSHIP ENCOURAGING LATINAS TO RUN FOR ELECTED OFFICE; AND ADVISED CHAIR AND BOARD MEMBERS ON POLICY CAMPAIGNS RELATED TO ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT, HEALTH, IMMIGRATION, VOTING RIGHTS AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY.

- Project Management:

Planned and executed 40+ events targeting 10 states, engaging 5,000+ people in 18 months. Developed comprehensive plans, timelines and goals to manage communication strategies, training programs, coalition and external partner engagement, candidate vetting processes, and program's online infrastructure.

- Budget/grant management:

Managed \$300,000+ annual program budget. Drafted proposals securing foundation and corporate grants as well as reports on program outcomes for sponsors.

- Strategic Media/Digital Advocacy:

Spearheaded advocacy efforts for Senate confirmation of 3 Cabinet-level officials and Administration leaders via Senate lobby visits, earned media coverage, national conference calls, and social media actions reaching 245,000 people. Represented coalition in English and Spanish language media interviews, national conferences, Google+ Hangouts and meetings with the White House, Cabinet Secretaries, Congress, federal agencies, elected officials, and diverse stakeholders. Designed and executed communication strategies – drafting press statements, fielding reporter inquiries, collaborating with consultants, and creating web pages, graphics, online ads, digital toolkits, and tools to help the public contact their elected officials.

Organizing For America

Director, Virginia State Latino Vote Program, Obama 2012 Presidential Campaign

May 2012 - November 2012 (7 months)

Virginia

MANAGED STATE-WIDE PROGRAM TO REGISTER, EDUCATE AND TURNOUT LATINO VOTERS IN SUPPORT OF PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA'S REELECTION – IN PARTNERSHIP WITH FIELD, POLITICAL, COMMUNICATIONS, DIGITAL, DATA, LEGAL AND OPERATIONS STAFF— RESULTING IN 67% TURNOUT OF ELIGIBLE LATINO VOTERS AND THE SUPPORT OF 64% OF VIRGINIA'S LATINO VOTERS.

- Community Engagement:

Organized over 115 community engagement activities in 20 cities in 5 months – recruiting over 2,200 Latino supporters via voter registration events; meetings; conference calls; webinars; phone-banks; canvasses; youth/faith/ small business events; and rallies with the President, Vice President and First Lady.

- Capacity Building:

Developed English and Spanish language training materials for campaign staff and volunteers, engaged community members as volunteer team leaders, recruited bilingual voter protection attorneys as volunteers.

- Bilingual Communication Support:

Supported state campaign's English and Spanish language communication efforts via e-newsletters, events to garner earned media coverage, online messaging/blogging advice, coordination with surrogates and creating a paid media plan to connect with Spanish-dominant voters/volunteers.

U.S. House of Representatives

Director, Member Outreach, Democratic Caucus Vice Chair; Legislative Assistant, Rep. Xavier Becerra

June 2006 - May 2012 (6 years)

Washington D.C. Metro Area

SIX YEARS CONGRESSIONAL, POLICY, POLITICAL STRATEGY EXPERIENCE – RISING FROM LEGISLATIVE STAFF (6/2006 – 12/2008) TO DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS LEADERSHIP OFFICE SUPERVISOR (1/2009 – 5/2012).

- Operations:

Supported chief of staff and staff director in creating and managing new leadership office, hiring, performance reviews and budget. Advanced congressional staff diversity initiative in the House of Representatives.

- Congressional Outreach:

Supervised and led six staff providing 198 members of Congress from 41 states and four territories with constituent outreach assistance such as community engagement plans to connect with their districts' diverse communities, traditional/digital media strategies, policy research, briefings, and bilingual policy updates.

- Legislative Process & Analysis:

Served as part of a select group of congressional staff with House floor access – advising Members during floor votes about policy, floor procedures and whipping efforts to pass bills, such as: the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, Affordable Care Act, National American Latino Museum Commission Act, and legislation on gun micro-stamping, immigrant foster care and Smithsonian Institution issues.

- Policy portfolio:

Advised the Congressman on: Trade; Social & Income Security; Appropriations; Commerce; Civil Rights; Homeland Security; Judiciary; Telecommunications; and his role serving on the boards of the Smithsonian Institution, Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture and Smithsonian Latino Center.

- Committee & Caucus Experience:

Drafted memos and staffed the Congressman in Member-level meetings and hearings for the Ways & Means Trade and Social Security and Income Security Subcommittees. Served as Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC) liaison – coordinating meetings, briefings and legislative activities related to the CHC Technology, Communications and Arts Task Force chaired by Becerra in 2006.

Arizona Democratic Party/DCCC

Director, AZ-07 GOTV Program to Re-elect Rep. Raul Grijalva
October 2010 - November 2010 (2 months)

Tucson, Arizona Area

- Managed 54 canvass staff field program in three Arizona counties -- managing budget, hiring, training and oversight of canvassers working to help educate, register and turnout voters to successfully re-elect Rep. Raul Grijalva.

Obama for America, Colorado Campaign for Change

Director, Latino Vote Canvass Team, Obama 2008 Presidential Campaign

October 2008 - November 2008 (2 months)

Greeley, Colorado

- Recruited, hired, trained and managed a team of 4 canvassers to register, educate and turnout Latino voters in target precincts to help elect President Barack Obama and Congresswoman Betsey Markey.

Georgetown University

Graduate Research Assistant, Center for Public & Nonprofit Leadership
September 2004 - May 2006 (1 year 9 months)

Washington D.C. Metro Area

SUPPORTED TRAININGS, RESEARCH AND EVENTS AIMED AT DEVELOPING PUBLIC, NONPROFIT AND PHILANTHROPIC LEADERS' CAPACITY.

- Nonprofit Capacity Building:

Coordinated media relations and logistics for policy forums and Georgetown's nonprofit management certificate program. Drafted teaching case study on Federally Qualified Health Center. Provided emergency management consulting support to the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' efforts on Long-Term Community Recovery and Mitigation Plans. Updated website and database of nonprofit/philanthropic contacts.

Discovery Channel

BirthDay Live! Freelance Production Assistant

2004 - 2005 (1 year)

San Diego, CA (2004) and Silver Spring MD (2005)

- Television production:

Assisted director, producer, reporters and crews in an annual cable TV special program covering 10 hours of live baby deliveries at hospitals in 3 different cities. Interviewed and collected information/stories from expectant mothers for use in reporters' scripts. Supported photographers, producers and directors with technical needs -- setting up lighting, sound and video equipment to ensure high quality live production.

Chula Vista Chamber of Commerce

General Manager, Convention & Visitors Bureau; Leadership Manager; Executive Assistant

August 2002 - August 2004 (2 years 1 month)

Chula Vista, CA

PROMOTED FROM EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO LEADERSHIP PROGRAM MANAGER TO GENERAL MANAGER OF THE CHULA VISTA CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU, WHERE I MANAGED A \$600,000 ANNUAL BUDGET AND FOUR STAFF PROMOTING TOURISM FOR THE SEVENTH-FASTEST GROWING U.S. CITY AT THE TIME.

- General Manager, Convention & Visitor Bureau Experience:

- # Promoted tourism for the City of Chula Vista – the seventh-fastest growing city in the nation at the time – managing a \$600,000 annual budget and generating \$50,000 of earned media annually.

- # Reported to city community development department and 23-member Chamber of Commerce board of directors.

- # Supervised Visitor Center staff providing information, retail sales and transit/attraction tickets to 800 people daily.

- # Developed several programs including a local tourism association, a partnership with police and code enforcement officials to improve the city's hotel standards, a Spanish language radio program, an international internship program and bi-national projects with tourism executives from San Diego County, the city of Tijuana and Mexico.

- Leadership Program Manager for "Leadership Chula Vista"

- # Organized two 10-session leadership certificate programs for business and community leaders.

- # Facilitated workshops in over 20 locations involving over 100 guest speakers, including representatives from the California State Senate, State Assembly, Congress, local government and international business community.

- # Conducted research and evaluations to restructure the past program—doubling enrollment and generating \$14,000.

- Executive Assistant Experience:

- # Wrote and designed newsletters, brochures, and presentations to communicate with Chamber members.

- # Drafted correspondence and talking points for Chamber CEO and Board Members.

- # Wrote articles and publicity materials for Chamber's advertisements in local newspapers.

- # Managed the Chamber's web site content and online communication strategies.

NBC News

News Writer/Assistant Producer, KNSD News Station

October 2002 - July 2004 (1 year 10 months)

Greater San Diego Area

- Local news media experience:

Served as part of the news crew providing breaking news coverage of the 2003 Cedar Fire, which was the largest firestorm at the time in California's history. Analyzed current events and news stories to write viewer-friendly news scripts for anchors to read on-air. Assisted producer by researching and pitching new stories and guest/segment ideas. Proof-read 2-hour newscast to eliminate errors before air time. Worked in control room during the live broadcast running the teleprompter, giving cues to reporters in the field, and managing the morning show's live viewer call-in segment.

ABC News

Investigate Research Intern, KGTV News Station

January 2002 - June 2002 (6 months)

Greater San Diego Area

- Local investigation journalism experience:

Served as research assistant to local television station's managing editor. Reviewed and analyzed legal cases, news articles and online sites to develop the production of new investigative stories and to ensure accuracy of content used in local investigative news feature stories.

ABC News

Summer Research Intern

June 2000 - September 2000 (4 months)

Greater Los Angeles Area

- National TV news experience:

Researched, attended press conferences and compiled briefing of issues, demonstration activities and leaders of all protest groups demonstrating at the Democratic National Convention for use by ABC's national media staff (from World News Tonight with Peter Jennings, 20/20, Nightline, and Good Morning America). Conducted internet research and phone interviews with ABC's western region local news affiliates to gather news stories, then disseminated research information to appropriate bureau chief or producer for possible inclusion in network programming.

Education

Georgetown University School of Continuing Studies

Executive Leadership Coaching Certificate · (2018 - 2019)

Georgetown University

Master of Public Policy, International Policy Development · (2004 - 2006)

Oxford University

Summer International Management Program with Georgetown University · (2005 - 2005)

UC San Diego

Bachelor's Degree, Communication Studies, Minors in Environmental Studies, Spanish Literature, & Theatre · (1997 - 2002)

Universidad de Sevilla

Spanish Literature Fall Study Abroad Program · (2001 - 2001)