

Sanah P. Baig

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

The Good Food Institute (GFI) | Washington, D.C. (remote)

Chief of Staff

June 2019 – Present

Acting Director of Communications

July – November 2020

Special Advisor to the Executive Director

July 2018 – June 2019

- As one of 7 members of startup global nonprofit's (100+ global staff/\$14M+ annual budget) executive leadership team: work closely with the Executive Director to make decisions related to the formulation and execution of global strategy; organizational structure, culture, and health; and the cultivation of mission-aligned partners and donors.
- Supervise a team of 3 and provide day-to-day management support to the executive leadership team.
- Oversee GFI's long-term and annual strategic planning processes and quarterly impact evaluation using the OKR framework, ensuring the integration of quantitative and qualitative metrics.
- Implemented a decision-making process using the RAPID model, enabling greater input, clarity, and speed.
- Serve as the decision-maker on new cross-team projects and ensure resources are allocated accordingly.
- Support special initiatives: advancing DEI internally and across programs; developing core collateral for funders; consulting the Policy team on federal advocacy strategy; drafting GFI's compensation policy.
- Represent GFI at employee and stakeholder sessions, including: hosting all-staff meetings, leading discussions with foreign and domestic officials, and speaking at public events.
- As Acting Director of Communications: Supervised a team of 10. Restructured department into three new interdependent teams: creative, thought leadership, and strategic operations. Formed a project management unit to streamline cross-org coordination and rollout of major public-facing initiatives and events.

Biden-Harris Transition Team | Washington, D.C. (remote)

Member, USDA Agency Review Team (ART)

November 2020 – January 2021

Volunteer Interviewer, Appointments Team

December 2020 – January 2021

- Took a two month leave of absence to serve on the USDA ART, which included writing strategy memos for the incoming administration, conducting stakeholder meetings, and serving as the personnel liaison to the Agency.
- Interviewed potential USDA political appointees, ranging from junior to the most senior roles.

National Association of Counties (NACo) | Washington, D.C.

Program Director for Community Resilience and Economic Development

December 2016 – July 2018

- Directed a team of program managers to build a \$2M+ portfolio of grants and sponsorships supporting community, economic, and workforce development innovations as well as climate and disaster resiliency within the 3,069 U.S. county governments, with a focus on rural counties. Examples:
 - Managed a \$500K, 3-year grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) to support historically coal-reliant communities across 4 western states in their efforts to diversify their economies in the face of industry downturn.
 - Managed a \$600K, 5-year sub-grant from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to support the SolSmart Initiative, which recognizes and incentivizes local governments that reduce administrative barriers to solar deployment.
 - Secured and launched a \$650k, 3-year climate resilience grant from the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to support coastal Gulf county-based teams prepare, plan, and recover from extreme weather events.

United States Department of Agriculture | Washington, D.C.

Advisor to the Secretary for Special Projects

May – December 2016

Office of the Secretary (Presidential Appointee)

- Served as one of 5 principal advisors to U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. Wrote briefing memos and participated in policy and stakeholder meetings for the Secretary related to: Rural Development's \$200+ billion loan & grant portfolio; interagency Place-Based Investment Initiatives (*e.g. StrikeForce, Promise Zones*); and White House Rural Council initiatives.
- Co-managed USDA's and the Secretary's role as co-leader of White House interagency effort to combat the U.S. opioid misuse epidemic: organized 3 statewide forums attended by 1000+ community leaders, including 3

Governors & 4 Senators; strategized the announcement of \$30M+ in grants and loans to improve rural telemedicine and build treatment centers; and spearheaded development of pilot program providing transitional housing for recovering users in rural areas.

- Coordinated across all 17 USDA agencies to create a resource guide for leaders looking for summer employment opportunities for rural youth, and created a public-facing toolkit of all available USDA resources applicable to tribal entities, colleges, and citizens.

Special Advisor, Rural Opportunity Investment (ROI) Initiative
Rural Development (Presidential Appointee)

September 2015 – May 2016

- Supported a team of 6 to execute two White House Rural Council conferences: *Spurring Economic Development through Investment in the Delta* (Memphis, January 2016) and *Investing for Impact in the Rural Economy* (White House, May 2016) attended by 500+ combined participants and resulting in at least two new conditionally-licensed Rural Business Investment Companies (funds) pledging to make \$200M+ in equity investments in food and agriculture businesses.
- Co-led a team of 4 to launch a first-of-its-kind “Diversity and Inclusion in Agriculture Consortium”: a USDA-convened group of 45 industry, academic, NGO and legislative bodies uniting to build a robust BIPOC talent pipeline to fill the growing supply gap in professional agriculture jobs.
- Worked across 3 different agencies to help develop and launch USDA’s Food LINC initiative, which leveraged \$1M in USDA funds with \$2M in philanthropic capital to better link rural producers with new urban consumers to promote more robust local and regional food systems across 10+ U.S. markets.
- Collaborated with President Obama’s *Build America Initiative* team to institutionalize private partnerships and \$10B+ investment efforts within USDA Rural Development’s existing structure.

Acting Deputy White House Liaison
Office of the Secretary (Presidential Appointee)

May – September 2015

- Stepped in to liaise with White House Presidential Personnel Office to recruit/interview dozens of applicants.
- Worked with USDA leadership to promote and onboard 25+ political appointees in less than five months.
- Managed vetting and appointment process for over 500 nominees to USDA’s 203 Boards & Committees.
- Executed two professional development programs to support career growth of USDA’s 220+ appointees.

Confidential Assistant to the Under Secretary
Marketing and Regulatory Programs (Presidential Appointee)

August 2013 – September 2015

- Coordinated principal’s diplomatic travel to 8 countries; staffed 30+ domestic and international trips and public stakeholder meetings; coordinated amplification of funding announcements totaling more than \$300M.
- Coordinated publication of 25+ animal and plant trade regulations with the White House & USTR.
- Partnered with U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services to develop a toolkit for New Americans/Refugees to access available government programs, grants, and resources to enable a smooth transition into farming and agriculture careers.

Staff Assistant to the White House Liaison
Office of the Secretary (Schedule A Appointee)

June 2011 – August 2013

- Vetted thousands of nominees to USDA’s Boards & Committees and worked with the Department’s Committee Management Officer to ensure federal compliance and reporting standards met annually.
- Crafted candidate biographies and candidate slates for vacant political positions; served as a training coordinator for 220 political appointees across the U.S.; and helped organize special appointee events at the White House.

Office Automation Clerk
Agriculture Research Service, Extramural Agreements Division (Internship in Beltsville, MD)

May – August 2008

National Labor Relations Board | Washington, D.C.

Office Automation Clerk/Executive Assistant
Office of the Director of Administration (Full-time during school breaks)

May 2009– August 2010

Northern Virginia Community College | Woodbridge, VA

Tutoring Center, Woodbridge Campus
Math and Writing Tutor

August 2007 – May 2008

EDUCATION & LANGUAGES

B.A. in Foreign Affairs and Psychology (double major)
University of Virginia | Charlottesville, VA

Urdu: Intermediate Spoken | Spanish: Basic Written and Spoken | Arabic: Basic Written (relearning)

VOLUNTEERING & BACKGROUND

- Since June 2020, serve as a mentor through the WANBAM global network for women, transgender, and non-binary people interested in Effective Altruism.
- Since 2015, volunteer at the DC Central Kitchen and Capital Area Food Bank to prepare meals and pack non-perishable food items (paused during pandemic).
- Since 2007, volunteered on more than eight local, gubernatorial, congressional and Presidential campaigns in Virginia, Nevada, Pennsylvania, and Washington, D.C.
- Served as: lead organizer for USDA's Annual Iftar Dinner from 2011-2016; member of USDA's 2014 Farm Bill Implementation Task Force; and member of the Deputy Secretary's "Women in Ag" working group.