

BLANCHI ROBLERO

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EXECUTIVE PROFILE

Highly dedicated and detail-oriented policy and outreach expert with a diverse background in politics and education. Proven political acumen with ability to design and execute national level strategic advocacy plan and manage projects to ensure the success and funding of major programs and initiatives. Bilingual and inclusive leader with robust cultural awareness and an unwavering commitment to educational equity.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE AND SELECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

PENN HILL GROUP, 2017 – PRESENT

Director	12/2020 – Present
Senior Associate	05/2017 – 12/2020
Washington, D.C.	

Subject matter expert tasked to inform, develop and improve policies and provide high-quality project management for a portfolio of 15 early education, K-12, higher education and workforce policy clients. Advise senior leadership and lead on a diverse stream of work, including policy and advocacy trainings, drafting of briefing memos, strategic plans, advocacy and policy toolkits, and budget and appropriations materials for clients. Demonstrated leadership in my interactions with various clients, particularly for Knowledge Alliance (KA) by advancing its policy priorities, preparing, managing KA's annual retreat and providing crucial support during KA's transition to PHG as an in-house client.

The Penn Hill Group team has experience working on both sides of the aisle as senior Administration officials, congressional committee staffers and high-level advisers to senators and members of Congress. In addition to years in government, we have worked as government and public relations professionals and consultants for an array of well-known organizations. As a Senior Associate and now Director, I bring extensive experience in legislative advocacy, policy development, strategic outreach, and knowledge in navigating the congressional process to clients. Report directly to the Principals in the firm.

Leadership Accomplishments

- Served as a subject matter expert within the lobbying and government relations team on legislative debates, emerging issues, policy/regulation changes and relevant funding matters.
- Developed, strengthened, and further relationship with Members of Congress and Hill staff including various stakeholders including the Tri-Caucus and key education and appropriations committees' staff.
- Worked with Senior leadership to develop strategic and campaign plans, set milestones, and reports on progress. Focused on helping client base develop programs, practices, and systems that influence education policy on a Federal, state, and local level.
- Developed and implemented a recruitment, and onboarding strategy for the Executive Director search for Knowledge Alliance, a nonprofit, comprised of leading education organizations that share the belief that high-quality, relevant research is key to solving the biggest education problems. Guided recruitment and hiring efforts with a commitment to equitable compensation, equity and inclusion

efforts and focused on partnerships and engagement of diverse stakeholders. Advised on DEI-related matters, provide thought partnership on operations, management, HR-related functions, and best practices on collaboration.

- Led and managed the lobbying reporting process for PHG. Implemented a system to ensure that every quarter, PHG as required by law files separate lobbying reports for each client detailing the issues on which we lobbied, which lobbyists were active, the branches of government that were contacted/lobbied, and the amount we were paid for our lobbying activities.
- Managed the end-to-end relationship with clients from initial onboarding, to education platform implementation, through training and consulting. In this work, guided internal and external communications and messaging to increase impact for multiple audiences.
- Developed, executed, and led over ten policy development and advocacy trainings focusing on the K-12 system, higher education, and workforce issues for a range of diverse nonprofit organizations in the education and business sector.
- Conducted in-depth analysis of proposals and policies to meet clients' individual needs and goals. Collaborated closely with key staff members to develop organizational plans, including congressional projections and detailed operational strategies, and identify risks and any mitigating strategies.
- Designed strategies and outreach practices to increase our clients' impact. Led the process of developing major client deliverables, including drafting legislation, writing, and editing reports, proposals, presentations, and briefing memos for clients to support their Federal policy agendas in Congress, resulting in the introduction of bipartisan bills, amendments, and increased funding for key programs.
- Led day-to-day management of highly skilled and diverse interns working policy, research, and advocacy initiatives. Designed process and built capacity of team through training, increased communication, and transparency. Optimized onboarding process to include technical elements and 90-day goals resulting in the holistic integration of employees and interns. This has resulted in increased employee /intern engagement through established meeting, brown bag learning sessions and annual retreats, tracked strategic goals, cultivation of relationships, transparency, and communities of practice.

LEADERSHIP FOR EDUCATIONAL EQUITY, 2019 - PRESENT

**Director, Coaching
Policy and Advocacy, Washington, D.C.**

04/2019 – Present

Leadership for Educational Equity is a nonprofit leadership development organization inspiring and supporting a network of civic leaders to eradicate the injustice of educational inequity. Through one-on-one coaching, fellowships, workshops, and resources, LEE works to develop and inspire its members individually and collectively, across all disciplines – as policy makers, advocates, elected leaders and community organizers.

As Director, I am part of national team working to support LEE members' career growth, effectiveness, and impact on equity within policy, advocacy, and organizing roles at all levels, from entry to senior, with a particular focus on supporting members whose identities have not been traditionally represented in positions of power.

Leadership Accomplishments

- Primarily focus on supporting members seeking new roles in these sectors, with some coaches also specializing in “make more effective” coaching, group coaching, and executive coaching. Leverage

LEE's online resources to coach a portfolio of members, meeting with them via phone and email, and tracking data to report on the portfolio's progress and transition into new roles.

- Facilitated leadership and career coaching to over 100 LEE members in the policy & advocacy career pipeline, while serving as a thought partner and assist members in identifying areas of impact in the community.
- Supported and contributed to the development and execution of the Onramp, a self-paced virtual coaching module to build the knowledge, resources, and skills needed to successfully transition to a policy and advocacy role. Managed data entry, and reporting, including providing a weekly update to manager on coach pipeline, success, resource needs and composition of coaching portfolio and maintaining up to date data tracking including updating coaching data on a weekly basis.
- Adapted to evolving understandings of the most effective path to impact and new resource offerings. Central to our coaching model is a belief that the most effective leaders actively reflect on how their identity, values, and experiences shape their vision for ending the injustice of educational inequity, so it is often effective to coach from a place of shared understanding and identity.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, 2012-2017

Deputy Chief of Staff

07/2012 – 01/2017

Office of Legislation and Congressional Affairs, Washington, D.C.

Advised the Assistant Secretary, Chief of Staff and Senior Leadership and managed relationships with Members of Congress and other agencies. Additionally, managed a range of policy areas, including appropriations, immigration and civil rights policy, and higher education. Assisted managing the front office tasked with formulating, implementing the legislative strategy, and directing and coordinating the outreach to congressional offices. Represented the Department's team for political nominations, ensuring that the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee advanced President Obama's nominees, including the nomination and confirmation of Secretary of Education John B. King.

Performed the duties of the Chief of Staff during the last four months of the Obama Administration, including internal reorganization, program management, strategic planning, office administration and Presidential transition.

Leadership Accomplishments

- Represented the Department and collaborated with the White House on candidate vetting and political nominations process, including the Senate application, financial disclosures, preparing briefing documents, and respond to Questions for the Record (QFRs), resulting in the successful confirmation of Secretary of Education John B. King.
- Developed and implemented employee engagement strategy for eighteen staff members to enhance cooperation and teamwork resulting in increased productivity and improved office culture. Increased employee outreach and engagement through internal communications, professional development, and increased opportunities for collaboration.
- Led the Organizational Performance Review – an agency-wide internal assessment metric used to analyze challenges and accomplishments – capturing central functions, including legislative priorities, human capital matters, organizational development, and transition planning. As a result, the office had more cohesion, collaboration, and innovation capabilities providing staff with more agility, effectiveness, and excellence as they carried out their programmatic missions and operational goals.

- Participated in and provided technical advice on higher education policy initiatives in the context of the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act and accreditation efforts, which resulted in the introduction of an accreditation legislation that reflected the Administration's priorities.
- Advised and provided comprehensive analysis to the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) helping advance the Administration's equity and civil rights agenda on education, which resulted in statements of support from MOCs and introduction of legislation reflective of the Department's priorities.
- Served as Department's point of contact for the offices of over 200 Members of Congress (MOCs). Developed strategies to further our relationships with MOCs and Hill staff to advance the Department's policies proposal and funding requests.
- Managed Presidential transition requiring coordination between career and political staff, records archiving, and recommendations for new Administration's 100-day plan.

Special Advisor on Legislative Affairs

11/2013 – 01/2016

Confidential Assistant

07/2012 – 10/2013

Office of Legislation and Congressional Affairs, Washington, D.C.

Advised the Chief of Staff and Senior Leadership on strategic engagement and policy efforts to garner congressional support for the Department's initiatives. Managed OLCA's role in a range of policy and funding areas, including appropriations, civil rights policy, higher education policy and other key policy issue areas. Additionally, directed ED's team for political nominations, ensuring that the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee advanced President Obama's nominees.

Leadership Accomplishments

- Gathered extensive research and prepared guidance in support of the Department's budget priorities. Assisted in the development of a list of Hill targets for in person meetings with all subcommittee appropriators and key Hill offices and compiled highly localized impact anecdotes or data. Led and designed a multi-POC effort to update roughly 30 key stakeholders on our core priorities to keep these priorities front and center. As a result, many stakeholders added these key funding priorities to their Hill visits, which led to over 30 appropriations letters in of support for I3, Preschool Development Grants, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), and other key programs.
- Worked with the Outreach Director, in designing and standing up the outreach strategy, including developing a comprehensive strategic roadmap to garner support for the Department's priorities and leveraging existing and emerging improvement tools and techniques for improved operational effectiveness across the team. Developed strategies to meet outreach goals and build exceptional working relationships with Members of Congress, which increased the number of staffers attending the Department's Hill briefings to 200 congressional offices.
- Managed and collaborated with the White House on political senior-staff nomination, vetting and onboarding processes, resulting in nine nominations and six confirmations of Acting Secretaries. Additionally, managed and coordinated nominations to the Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance (ACSFA) and National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI).
- Developed and executed an outreach strategy to engage Members of Congress on the White House Initiative for Education Excellence for Hispanics' "Call to Action" contributing to the cultivation of over \$335 million in public and private sector investments advancing P-20 education for Hispanic students. Through this work, connected the Initiative with over 100 stakeholders, exposed its work to over 95 Members offices through a Hill briefing, and secured Members' participation in highlighting Initiative's Bright Spots and commitments through press releases, floor speeches and statements for the record.

- Developed and executed congressional outreach, rollout plans and briefings. These briefings included the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals guidance, which resulted in Members of Congress sharing the guide through their social media and OCR's English Language Learner's guidance and toolkit which resulted in the participation of 30 Hill offices. Additionally, executed House and Senate briefings on the Rethink Discipline Campaign, which attracted over 60 Hill offices.
- Researched and provided recommendations for policy and programmatic efforts and publications focusing on immigration-related cross-agency initiatives, including a Deferred Action Childhood Arrivals federal-level toolkit and guide, and the White House's New American Taskforce.

UNITED STATES SENATE

Correspondent Editor/ Staff Assistant **05/2012 – 07/2012**
Office of U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, Washington, D.C.

- Managed daily activities and prioritized operational, programmatic, scheduling matters for the front office. Edited and approved correspondence to be sent to regional offices and generated a weekly report regarding the overall performance and legislative action within the office. Prepared the briefing book for the Senator and assisted in one-to-one meetings with different organizations. Developed briefing materials for meetings, events, and public engagement activities.

CONGRESSIONAL HISPANIC CAUCUS INSTITUTE, 2011-2012

Secondary Education Graduate Fellow **01/2012 – 04/2012**
Office of U.S. Senator Chuck Schumer

- Monitored floor hearings and developed detailed memos on the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Additionally, handled constituent's cases regarding education, immigration, and tax matters. Examined legislative issues on Child Tax Credit and the American Opportunity Tax Credit.
- Facilitated communication between constituents and Senate personnel, including providing language translation. Further, researched, and generated memoranda regarding education matters pending before the U.S. Senate.

White House Initiative for Education Excellence for Hispanics **08/2011 – 12/2011**

- Coordinated and planned national community action summits in Denver, New York and Miami focused on bringing cross-sector partners and spurring collaboration and capacity-building in key Hispanic markets. Monitored and strengthened relationships with various non-profits and Federal organizations through constant communication and interagency work.
- Assisted in the development and publication of the community action summit report for the White House detailing our findings from the summits and providing an action plan to address the challenges identified in the report.

EDUCATION

- **Certificate on Education Finance**, Georgetown University McCourt School of Public Policy, June 2020.
- **M.A. Education Leadership, Politics and Advocacy**, New York University, December 2010.
- **B.A Economics and Sociology with a Minor in Urban Studies, Magna cum laude, Dean's List**, Hunter College City University of New York, 2009.

LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES AND RECOGNITION

- Recipient, Mitigating the Impact of COVID-19 on Communities of Color Grant, The Policy Academies, 2020-2021
- Board Trustee, The Next Step Public Charter School Board, 2020
- Alumni Leader and Fellow, The Policy Academies, 2019
- Leadership summit, The Policy Academies, to the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM) Conference in Spain, Barcelona, 2019
- Board Member and Chair of the Advisory Board, Story of Our Schools Associate Board, 2018
- Member, Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, Alumni Association, 2012
- Fellow, White House Management Leadership Program, 2016
- Fellow, Center for American Progress Leadership Institute, 2016
- Vice-Chair, Hispanic Employee Council, U.S. Department of Education, 2014-2016
- Graduate Research Assistant, New York University, Center for Research on Teaching and Learning, 2010-2011
- Intern, Department of Youth and Community Development, 2009-2010
- Public Policy Fellow, Urban Institute Summer Academy for Public Policy Analysis & Research, 2008
- Fellow, Ronald E. McNair Scholar, Hunter College, 2007
- Fellow, Public Service Scholar, Hunter College, 2008
- Volunteer (Translator), United Nations Environmental Magazine, 2006-2009

PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

- Presenter, “Policy and Advocacy Training,” UnidosUS, 2020
- Presenter, “Story Telling and Advocacy Training,” National Access College Network, 2019
- Presenter, “Media Literacy Education Policy & Advocacy,” The National Association for Media Literacy Education, 2019
- Moderator, “Advocacy 101,” Women in Government Relations (WGR) Panel, 2018
- Presenter, “The Impact of Federal Education Policy,” Diversity in Public Leadership Summit for the Leadership for Educational Equity, 2017
- Author, “Professional Development: The Importance of Teaching Vulnerable Populations,” Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy publication, 2012
- Author of Urban Institute publication, “Helping LEP students achieve: Bilingual Education versus English Immersion”, 2008
- Presenter, “Helping LEP students achieve: Bilingual Education versus English Immersion,” Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management Annual Conference, 2008
- Presenter, “The Impact of Free Trade in the U.S. and Latin America: Is it a Good Move?” University Delaware, Ronald E. McNair Scholar Annual Conference, 2008