

WiLL/WAND Women Leaders Communications Training
featuring Center for American Progress
February 26-28, 2016 | Las Vegas, NV
Speaker Guide

Jan Jones Blackhurst, *Executive Vice President of Government Relations and Corporate Responsibility, Caesars Entertainment*

Jan Jones Blackhurst is a long-time political and business leader who has left an indelible imprint on the lives of millions of people. She spent most of the 1990s as one of the most popular mayors in Las Vegas' history. She then joined Caesars Entertainment, where she and her teams developed the industry's first Responsible Gaming practices and are creating a diverse and inclusive workplace, advancing environmental stewardship, advocating for important social issues, and giving millions of dollars to individuals, families and communities in need. Under Jan's leadership, Caesars Entertainment also began to publicly advocate for human rights and has earned a 100% perfect score in the Human Rights Campaign Corporate Equality Index for nine consecutive years. Jan has channeled her passion for charitable causes through her role as Vice-Chair of the Caesars Foundation.

Prior to joining Caesars in 1999, Jan served two terms as Mayor of Las Vegas. She was the city's first female chief executive and one of its most popular mayors, having been reelected in 1995 by a 72 percent margin. While in office, Jan presided over an unprecedented period of economic, social and cultural expansion. She spearheaded a massive growth and redevelopment effort in the city's once-neglected downtown neighborhood. Jan was also among the first mayors in the country to advocate for LGBT rights and issues as early as 1991.

Jan serves as a director of the U. S. Chamber of Commerce and the Women's Campaign Fund in Washington, D.C. She also is a member of the Women's Leadership Board at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Jan has been honored as the 2015 PR News CSR Professional of the Year, inducted into the American Gaming Association (AGA) Gaming Hall of Fame, and has been recognized by the American Diabetes Association, the "I Have A Dream" Foundation, and the Muscular Dystrophy Association. Jones Blackhurst holds a bachelor's degree in English from Stanford University and attended the University of Southern California's School of Food Marketing Management.

Jessie Calkins, *Communications Director, WAND*

Twitter: @WomensAction

As Communications Director, Jessie leads WAND's communications, graphic design, and media relations efforts. For more than two years she has also been in charge of WAND's digital landscape, from social media and websites to managing online advocacy tools. Since studying linguistics at Boston University, Jessie has supported communications, design, and web development from the hospitality industry to the cycling industry. More recently she's managed social media and content marketing from manufacturers to start-ups. She has a passion for design and writing, and you can also find her teaching taiko drums and cycling around the greater Boston area.

Erin Cohan, *Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, Center for American Progress / Action Fund*

Twitter: @ErinCohan

Erin Cohan is the Director of Intergovernmental Affairs at American Progress, where she helps manage CAP's relationships with state and local governments and outside organizations. Prior to joining American Progress, Cohan served as director of intergovernmental affairs for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration, where she was responsible for the formulation and implementation of Gov. Alejandro García Padilla's federal affairs agenda. From 2007 to 2013, Cohan worked on behalf of the United States' 55 governors as a federal relations professional at the National Governors Association, where she advocated for defense and National Guard issues, homeland security, international trade and development, and international affairs. During her tenure there, she organized and led two gubernatorial trade missions to China and oversaw implementation of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act in coordination with state "recovery czars." Cohan also was chief of staff to a legislator in Suffolk County, New York, and has served in myriad roles on political campaigns at the state, local and presidential levels. Cohan received a master of arts in political management from The George Washington University and a bachelor of arts in public policy and administration from Wagner College in Staten Island, New York.

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Blanca Gamez, *Development Assistant*, Battle Born Progress and Institute for a Progressive Nevada

Twitter: @BlancaSprkls

Blanca Gamez arrived in the United States when she was 7 months old. For the past 26 years (her current age) she has only called one place home, and that is Las Vegas, Nevada. As a member of the undocumented community, Blanca has been involved with the immigration-reform movement, sharing her story in the state legislature, the halls of Congress, and in a meeting with President Obama at the oval office. She also a founding member of DREAM Big Vegas an organization dedicated in educating the community on immigration-reform policy. Thanks to President Obama's executive order, Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), she is employed as the Development Assistant for the local non-profit communications firm, Battle Born Progress. Blanca graduated from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas with two Bachelor's Degrees; one in Political Science and the other in English. She looks to pursuing a law degree in the near future and looks forward to a career in the field of public interest/ policy.

Chelsea Kiene, *Senior Media Coordinator*, Center for American Progress

Twitter: @chelseakiene

Chelsea Kiene is the Senior Media Coordinator for the American Progress Communications Team, where she oversees op-ed strategy and placement and manages press strategy for American Progress's Women's Initiative, Faith and Progressive Policy Initiative, and TalkPoverty.org. Chelsea is from Weston, Ohio, and is a 2012 graduate of Miami University of Ohio, where she received a B.A. in strategic communications and political science. Prior to joining American Progress, Chelsea was an intern with The Huffington Post's political bureau in Washington, D.C. She also served as press secretary for the Angela Zimmann for U.S. Congress campaign in the 2012 election.

Sara Langhinrichs, *Social Media Director*, Center for American Progress

Twitter: @SaraLang

Sara Langhinrichs is the Director of Social Media for American Progress. Previously, she worked as a social communications advisor at AARP, focusing on Social Security, Medicare, health care, personal finance, caregiving, and the Affordable Care Act. She also worked as an email campaigner at the Democratic National Committee during the 2010 cycle and as a program manager for President Barack Obama's 2012 campaign. This is her second stint at American Progress; immediately after college, she joined American Progress as an Online Communications intern, and she also worked with Mic Check Radio as a research assistant for two years. Langhinrichs graduated with a degree in political science from Macalester College, where she worked as a Chuck Green fellow on immigration policy in the Twin Cities. She studied abroad in Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, as part of a border studies program through Earlham College and was active on campus in musical groups and residential life.

Maria-Teresa Liebermann, *Deputy Director*, Battle Born Progress and Institute for a Progressive Nevada

Twitter: @Mayte_LP

Maria-Teresa Liebermann has always had a passion for helping people doing good work have a voice in their community and tell their story, whether it's out in the field or online. Maria-Teresa is currently the Deputy Director at Battle Born Progress and Institute for a Progressive Nevada. Prior to joining Battle Born Progress and Institute for a Progressive Nevada, she worked for the Ramirez Group, a consulting firm based in Nevada, and Nevada State Education Association, where she worked on a multitude of projects and engaged the organization's membership across Clark County and the state of Nevada. Born in Tijuana, Mexico, Mayte has lived in Las Vegas since she was a teenager. She is a product of one of Clark County's magnet schools, Advanced Technologies Academy and a proud UNLV Rebel. In 2008 she graduated with a B.A. in Political Science and spent her first year after college mobilizing voters in Southern Nevada for President Obama's campaign, Organizing for America. In 2012, she worked on the President's reelection campaign in Charlotte, North Carolina, where she served as a Regional Field Director and helped with Latino outreach in the Charlotte area. For the past two years, Mayte has volunteered with Organizing for America as Nevada's State Digital Lead. When she's not working you can find her outdoors – running, hiking or obstacle course racing.

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Annette Magnus, *Executive Director*, Battle Born Progress and Institute for a Progressive Nevada

Twitter: @AnnetteMagnus

Annette Magnus was born and raised in Las Vegas. She is a second generation Nevadan with family roots in the local Culinary Union. In 2003, she graduated from Centennial High School where she was involved with student activities and student government. From her high school experience she became interested in politics and set out to major in Political Science at UNLV. In her junior year at UNLV, Annette applied for the legislative internship program and was accepted. Annette was assigned to then-Nevada Senate Minority Leader Dina Titus for the 2005 legislative session, an assignment that changed her life. Annette went on to work as scheduler and personal assistant to State Senator (now Congresswoman) Titus on both her 2006 Gubernatorial Campaign and her 2008 Congressional Campaign. In addition to this, she was also her Executive Legislative Assistant for the 2007 legislative session in Carson City. Annette is now the Executive Director of Battle Born Progress, which is the public relations firm for the progressive community in Nevada. Prior to this, she was the Public Affairs Manager for Planned Parenthood of Southern Nevada where she worked on political issues and media. In addition to her work at BBP, she is the Co-Chair of the Nevada Women's Lobby, Vice President of Emerge Nevada, a board member of Southern Nevada Children First and volunteers for many other progressive causes in the Las Vegas community.

Colleen McCarty, *Associate*, Gentile, Cristalli, Miller, Armeni & Savarese

Colleen McCarty is an attorney with the law firm Gentile Cristalli Miller Armeni Savarese. She began her legal career with the law firm Gordon Silver, following her graduation from the William S. Boyd School of Law, *cum laude*, in 2013. Ms. McCarty's current areas of practice include First Amendment and civil rights protection, civil litigation with an emphasis in commercial and media law matters, and criminal defense in all jurisdictions. She has litigated successfully in both jury and bench trials in Nevada's Eighth Judicial District Court, and she has authored winning briefs for cases pending before the Nevada Supreme Court. Ms. McCarty is probably best known for her tenure as part of the award-winning I-Team at the Las Vegas CBS affiliate, KLAS-TV. Her work on "Desert Underwater," a comprehensive examination of the housing crisis in Clark County, was honored in 2011 with the broadcast equivalent of the Pulitzer Prize, the duPont-Columbia Award, as well as the prestigious Peabody Award for Broadcast Excellence, and the Society of Professional Journalists Sigma Delta Chi Award. Ms. McCarty is married and the mother of twin daughters, who were born while she was covering the 2005 Legislative Session in Carson City for KLAS-TV.

State Senator Nan Grogan Orrock (GA), *President*, Women Legislators' Lobby of WAND

Twitter: @SenNanOrrock

Senator Nan Grogan Orrock is responsible for the overall coordination of the Women Legislators' Lobby (WiLL): recruitment, communication with members, material development and production, issue identification, and coordination with WAND. Senator Orrock's legislative expertise includes health policy, women's issues, child/family policy, workplace issues, civil liberties, civil rights, and environmental issues. She is a founder of both the Georgia Legislative Women's Caucus and the Working Families Agenda Caucus. A veteran of the civil rights and women's movements, Orrock served ten terms in the Georgia House of Representatives and is serving her fifth term in the Georgia Senate. Among Orrock's successful legislative initiatives are passage of the Georgia Family Medical Leave Act, the Prescriptive Equity for Contraceptives Act, the Chlamydia Screening Act, Georgia Hate Crimes Act, and the Omnibus AIDS statute. She was named Public Health Legislator of the Year for her efforts. Orrock worked with a legislative team to pass landmark legislation regulating landfills and continues to monitor landfill issues and advocate for environmentally sound policy on air and water, solid waste, and nuclear waste. Senator Orrock formerly chaired both the National Labor Caucus of State Legislators and formerly chaired the Labor and Workforce Development Committee of the National Conference of State Legislators. Senator Orrock serves as a Trustee of the Sapelo Foundation and a board member for Women in Government. Senator Orrock received her B.A. in English from Mary Washington College of the University of Virginia. Her work experience spans the fields of philanthropy, civil rights, union and community organizing. She is the mother of two grown sons.

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State Senator Sandy Pappas (MN), *Vice President, Women Legislators' Lobby of WAND*

Twitter: @SenatorPappas

Senator Pappas' focus is engaging legislators in media work and active messaging in state & national media outlets. Pappas was first elected to the Minnesota House of Representatives in 1984. In 1990, she was elected to the Minnesota Senate and currently serves as Senate President. Throughout her career, Senator Pappas has been a fervent advocate for human rights. Sandy is a lifelong progressive, a supporter of women, has held several leadership positions in the Minnesota Senate, and nationally recognized for her legislative accomplishments. In addition to her legislative duties, Senator Pappas is on the advisory committee for the Office on the Economic Status of Women, serves on the board of World Without Genocide, was a member of the Legislative Commission to End Poverty in Minnesota by 2020, served as Treasurer of the World Hellenic Inter-Parliamentary Association and was a chair of the Social Justice Committee at Congregation Shir Tikvah Synagogue. Pappas attended the University of MN, is a graduate of Metropolitan State University, and has an MPA degree from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. Currently, she teaches political science and public policy courses at Metropolitan State University.

Tori Taylor, *State Campaigns Manager, Center for American Progress / Action Fund*

Twitter: @ToriTaylor

Tori Taylor is the State Campaigns Manager in the Center for American Progress Action Fund War Room, where she leads state-based advocacy campaigns across the country and builds local partnerships to promote progressive policies. Tori has worked in political campaigns and issue advocacy in over 25 states during her career. In 2016, *Fusion* named her one of the "30 Under 30 Women Who Will Change the 2016 Election." Prior to joining American Progress, Taylor spent three years at EMILY's List, the nation's largest resource for women in politics. She worked to recruit, train, and help elect pro-choice Democratic women to political office. Taylor traveled the country advising women candidates and building infrastructures for winning campaigns, and coordinated the national training program that trained more than 1,400 women candidates and campaign staff. Taylor also worked on President Barack Obama's 2012 re-election campaign in the battleground state of Ohio, where she managed regional operations for Election Day. After his victory, she moved to Washington, D.C., to serve on his 2013 Presidential Inaugural Committee, where she helped manage logistics for members of Congress, the Supreme Court, state and local elected officials, and Democratic Party leaders participating in inaugural activities. A lifelong advocate for youth engagement in politics, Taylor served as national president of College Democrats of America, the official youth outreach arm of the Democratic Party, and vice chair of the Democratic National Committee's Youth Council, where she advised party leaders on youth issues. She also worked on the 2012 Democratic National Convention in Charlotte, North Carolina, where she directed all youth programming and outreach for convention activities. Taylor holds a bachelor's degree from The University of North Carolina at Charlotte and a master's degree from The George Washington University.