



RAISE Family Caregiving Advisory Council Meeting

September 21, 2021

Speaker Biographies

Administration for Community Living



Alison Barkoff

Acting Administrator & Assistant Secretary for Aging

Alison Barkoff was sworn into office as the Principal Deputy Administrator on January 20, 2021, and currently is serving as Acting Administrator and Assistant Secretary for Aging. In this capacity, she provides executive direction, leadership, guidance and coordination for ACL programs nationwide and advises the HHS Secretary on issues affecting individuals with disabilities and older adults.

Ms. Barkoff comes to ACL from the Center for Public Representation, where she served as Director of Advocacy. In that position, she led policy advocacy with federal agencies and Congress and legal advocacy nationally to advance community living and inclusion, including in the areas of healthcare, Medicaid home- and community-based services, employment, housing, and education. She led and participated in numerous coalitions with disability and aging organizations, including as co-chair of the Long-Term Services and Supports Task Force of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities. She has testified before Congress and the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights on disability rights and was appointed to serve on the federal Advisory Committee for Competitive Integrated Employment of People with Disabilities.

Ms. Barkoff previously served as Director of Advocacy at the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law, where she worked on a range of disability, healthcare, education and civil rights issues. In earlier government roles, she served as Special Counsel for Olmstead Enforcement in the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice, leading efforts to

enforce the rights of people with disabilities to live, work and fully participate in their communities. She also worked with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services within the Department of Health and Human Services on policies related to Medicaid home- and community-based services and with the Department of Labor on issues affecting the workforce providing in-home services. She is a sibling to an adult brother with developmental disabilities and been involved in disability advocacy her entire life. She received her undergraduate degree from Cornell University and her Juris Doctor from Emory University School of Law.



Greg Link, MA
Director of the Office of Supportive and Caregiver Services

Greg Link is the Director of the Office of Supportive and Caregiver Services with the Administration for Community Living/U.S. Administration on Aging, which oversees programs funded under the Older Americans Act (OAA), including Title III-B in-home supportive services, Title III-E National Family Caregiver Support Program as well as ACL's Alzheimer's disease programs. Greg and his team also

provide general oversight and technical assistance to the aging network on a range of program areas, including Information and Referral, family caregiver support programs and policies, housing, employment, transportation, LGBT aging, and Holocaust Survivors.

Before coming to ACL/AoA, Greg worked at the National Association of State Units on Aging where he provided technical assistance and training to states on family care giving, consumer direction, and transportation. Greg has also worked at the community level as a case manager and social services manager at Senior Friendship Centers in Fort Myers, Florida. There, he oversaw the social services staff and the delivery of services funded by the Older Americans Act, state funds and Medicaid waivers.

Greg holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Central Florida and a Master of Arts in Government from Johns Hopkins University.

White House Domestic Policy Council



Jessica Schubel, Director of the Affordable Care Act and Health Care

Before joining the Domestic Policy Council as the Director of the Affordable Care Act and Health Care, Jessica worked at the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) where she examined issues related to Medicaid and other coverage issues. Prior to her role at CBPP, Jessica served as the Senior Policy Advisor to the Director of the Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services at CMS during the Obama Administration and previously worked at the District of Columbia's Medicaid agency. Born and raised in western New York, Jessica graduated from Syracuse University and the George Washington University.

National Alliance for Caregiving (NAC) Presentation



Grace Whiting, J.D.

At thirty-two, Grace followed in the footsteps of NAC Founder Gail Gibson Hunt to helm one of the nation's leading public policy and advocacy organizations for friend and family caregivers. With previous experience as COO and the Director of Strategic Partnerships, Grace has doubled the budget of the organization in her tenure to date and created the Hunt Research Program.

Grace led the nation's first national policy study of 1,400+ rare disease caregivers with Global Genes. She has led other original NAC research including Sandwich Generation in the U.S. with Caring Across Generations; A National Study of Caregivers of Individuals with Crohn's Disease or Ulcerative Colitis with the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation and ImproveCareNow; Cancer Caregiving in the U.S. with the National Cancer Institute and Cancer Support Community; and Dementia Caregiving in the U.S. with the Alzheimer's Association, among others.

Grace has spoken on caregiving at national and international conferences, including the 7th International Carers Conference in Adelaide, Australia, and at multiple national summits at the National Institutes of Health. Grace has also served as a resource to major media on the topic of caregiving and aging, including C-SPAN, The Wall Street Journal, Time Magazine, Oprah Magazine, Women's Health Magazine, and Kiplinger's

Retirement Report. Grace was chosen as one of twenty PBS Next Avenue 2020 Influencers in Aging.

A licensed attorney with the D.C. Bar, Grace was named an “Outstanding Law Student” by the National Association of Women Lawyers after earning her law degree from the University of Memphis. She is a proud graduate of the Louisiana State University Honors College in communication studies and philosophy. Grace lives in Silver Spring, Maryland with her husband, writer Geoffrey Whiting, and their distinguished pug, Chief Justice.



Michael Reese Wittke, BSW, MPA

Michael Reese Wittke leads the national and federal engagement strategy for the National Alliance for Caregiving (NAC) and oversees the National Caregiver Advocacy Collaborative—a network of nearly 100 national, state, and local family caregiver advocates from across the country. Mike works directly with policymakers on Capitol Hill, federal agencies, the White House, and participates in national coalitions advocating on behalf of family caregivers across the lifespan.

In this role, Mike has directed three National Conferences of Caregiver Advocates held in conjunction with the American Society on Aging at the annual Aging in America Conference. Under his leadership, NAC has co-hosted a national Hill briefing on Congressional Caregiving Stories with the Gerontological Society of America, AARP, and the John A. Hartford Foundation and provided testimony in a hearing to the United States House of Representatives Committee on Education and Labor (Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Human Services) Examining the Older Americans Act: Promoting Independence and Dignity for Older Americans. Mike has led national coalition efforts to support key pieces of legislation directly impacting family caregivers, including the R.A.I.S.E. Family Caregivers Act and reauthorization of the Older Americans Act. He has directly participated in the implementation of the B.O.L.D. Act and the national “Caregiving Corps.” After joining NAC in the spring of 2015, Mike supported the organization’s transition in leadership and laid the foundation for growth within NAC’s public policy and advocacy strategy to address caregiving as a public health issue. Prior to joining the Alliance, Mike was the Associate Director of Government Affairs at the National Association for Home Care & Hospice (NAHC). In this role, he worked under the President/CEO and V.P. of Government Affairs supporting policies related to Medicare/Medicaid, long-term supports and services, and home and community-based care. While at NAHC, Mike directed a special event on Capitol Hill recognizing the 50th Anniversary of Medicare, Medicaid, and Older Americans Act sponsored by the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations, which featured more than 200 national stakeholders, policymakers, and members of Congress.

Mike has previously served as Chair of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Political Action for Candidate Election Committee and as a member of the NASW Metro Chapter Board of Directors and is currently on the Board of Friends of Theodore Roosevelt Island. He came to Washington through an internship with the Hinckley Institute of Politics. Mike earned a bachelor's degree in Social Work with honors from the University of Utah and a master's degree in Public Administration with a concentration in non-profit management from the American University.