

**SENIOR CONGRESSIONAL STAFF DELEGATION
TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA**

December 6 – 15, 2015

Delegation Bios



Shelly Blake grew up in rural Nebraska and earned her Bachelors' degree from Nebraska Wesleyan University in Lincoln, Nebraska. Her career began on Capitol Hill working for Congressman Lee Terry (NE-02) and soon transitioned to the policy realm when she joined Congressman Jeff Fortenberry's (NE-01) staff. Shelly was privileged to serve constituents in several districts prior to wrapping up her time in the House of Representatives with Congresswoman JoAnn Emerson (MO-08) while assisting her with work related to the House Appropriations Committee. After transitioning back to Nebraska, she worked in the advancement office of her alma mater, Nebraska Wesleyan University. Later, she continued her work in higher education and joined the President's Office at Midland University where she provided transitional leadership and project management throughout all corners of the changing campus. After Midland University's President, Ben Sasse, successfully won a seat in the U.S. Senate, Shelly began working as his Deputy Chief of Staff. She is currently based out of Lincoln, Nebraska where she lives with her husband and two children.



Melanie H. Bowen has served as a congressional staffer for over 35 years in the United States Senate. She presently serves as the State Director for United States Senator Orrin Hatch. As the State Director since 1998, Melanie oversees Senator Hatch's constituent cases dealing with federal agencies and acts as a liaison for issues pertaining to his committee assignments. She directs an extensive outreach program throughout Utah. In conjunction with her Senate responsibilities, she serves as the Co-Chair of the Utah Women's Conference and the Conferences for Seniors. In addition to her present position, she has served as Senator Hatch's Assistant State Director, Deputy State Director, Director of Constituent Services and Director of the Central and Eastern Utah Office.

Prior to this time, Melanie has served on the staffs of United States Senators S. I. Hayawaka and Pete Wilson of California. Her focus was dealing with the resolution of immigration and state department problems. Additionally, she is a former high school World and American History teacher. Melanie graduated with honors from Brigham Young University.

On a personal note, Melanie has a variety of interests. She travels extensively and has her black belt in shopping. Melanie is the director of a volunteer program and serves as a mentor at the Utah State Prison. She also serves on the Boards of the Women's State Legislative Council, Professional Republican Women, and is formerly the President of the Salt Lake Council of Women. She is married to Dr. Ron Bowen and is the mother of two beautiful daughters and five darling grandchildren.



Trevor Daley is United States Senator Dianne Feinstein's State Director. He is directly responsible for her statewide operations. In addition he serves as the Senator's statewide liaison to GLBT communities and provides consultancy and volunteer services to organizations such as the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Center, Human Rights Campaign, Women Against Gun Violence, The Trevor Project, and Project Angel Food.

Trevor is a savvy political strategist with experience in politics, government and community organizing on both coasts. He has gained a strong reputation as someone who is passionate and dedicated to his work and a problem solver as well as someone who is driven to help those in the communities he serves.

Previously, Trevor served as the Senator's Head Scheduler in Washington, D.C. and a Caseworker in the San Francisco District Office. Through his on-going work to Senator Feinstein, Trevor is able to help realize the Senator's vision of a diverse and vital America. His long experience with the Senator has included preparing briefing memos, organizing public events, working with local officials as a liaison to federal agencies and coordinating the Senator's schedule to maximize her effectiveness as a public servant.

Prior to joining the Senator's team, Daley's diplomatic skills were honed in the office of City Councilmember Ruth Galanter of Los Angeles where he was the point person for the Van Nuys Airport. He created a dialogue between Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) and Galpin Ford, fostering an agreement on lease issues that had previously been seen as un-resolvable. He also became visible as a solution-provider for the Sepulveda Boulevard Task Force to develop a new vision for Sepulveda Boulevard near LAX.



Jordan Dawson is the Regional Director for Metropolitan Atlanta and Northwest Georgia for United States Senator Johnny Isakson, senior senator from Georgia and Chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Senate Select Committee on Ethics. In this role, Jordan leads the Senator's operations in an area with over seven million residents, fifteen Fortune 500 companies, thirteen Philanthropy 400 organizations, over sixty foreign consulates, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the world's busiest airport. Jordan is Senator Isakson's senior staff member and Chief Policy Advisor for all matters in this region. Additionally, he accompanies the senator as he travels throughout the state, and he represents Senator Isakson in meetings with local and national elected officials, foreign dignitaries, and international CEOs.

Jordan previously served as an aide in Senator Isakson's Washington, D.C., office, where he handled constituent services. He is a graduate of the University of Georgia, where he studied International Affairs, Political Science, and Portuguese.



Brooke Hill has served as the Southwest Regional Director for United States Senator Sherrod Brown since March of 2007. She manages the Cincinnati office and works with constituents throughout southwest Ohio to assist them with issues related to the federal government. Mrs. Hill speaks on behalf of Senator Brown at events, and she is responsible for maintaining strong ties with community leaders. She also works to ensure that constituent opinions and concerns are conveyed to Washington D.C.

Prior to joining Senator Brown's office, Mrs. Hill served as Chief of Staff for Cincinnati Mayor Roxanne Qualls, and served as a consultant for Mayor Charlie Luken during periods of racial tension in the city of Cincinnati. Mrs. Hill worked for numerous years as a consultant in the community providing expertise in strategic planning and execution, particularly in areas pertaining to economic development.

Brooke Hill is married to Dr. Larry Hill and has 2 grown children, Jason and Josh.



Rick Jakious is District Director for Congressman Seth Moulton, a first term congressman and Marine combat veteran serving Massachusetts's Sixth Congressional District. Moulton serves on the House Armed Services, Small Business, and Budget committees.

Rick was previously the Chief Executive Officer of the Massachusetts Nonprofit Network (MNN). MNN is Massachusetts's largest nonprofit membership organization, representing the needs and interests of a strong and united nonprofit sector. Rick led efforts to pass a law creating the nation's first public-private partnership allowing small nonprofit organization to purchase their retirement benefits directly from the Commonwealth, at no additional taxpayer expense.

Prior to MNN, Rick played critical leadership roles over 13 years at City Year, an international nonprofit organization. There he helped establish the organization's Seattle operation, led a nationwide campaign to raise money for relief following the 2004 Southeast Asian Tsunami, strengthening the flagship Boston site and grew the national corporate development program.

Rick also served in several capacities for U.S. Representative Brian Baird of Washington State, as a Military and Veteran Services Representative, Northern District Director and manager of the Congressman's successful 2004 campaign.

Rick was appointed to the Massachusetts Health Connector Board of Directors by Governor Deval Patrick in 2014. He advises, and volunteers with, numerous nonprofit organizations, including Raw Arts, the JFK Presidential Library and the Boston University Institute for Nonprofit Management and Leadership. Rick speaks frequently on issues related to the importance of the nonprofit sector in Massachusetts; public policy issues that affect nonprofits; and nonprofit advocacy.

Rick resides in Swampscott, where he is a member of the Swampscott Cultural Council, with his wife, a middle school math teacher, and their two boys.



Matthew Knox serves as the District Director for Rep. Paul Cook (CA-08), a position he's held since 2013. Previously, he worked in the same position for Rep. Cook in the California State Assembly.

Prior to his work as a legislative staffer, Matthew served honorably in the U.S. Army as a Cavalry Scout from 2002-2004. He deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom with 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment and received the Bronze Star Medal with Valor Device and Purple Heart for his actions in combat.

Following his military service, Matthew attended California State University, San Bernardino where he majored in Political Science. He graduated in 2009 with Departmental Honors and is a member of the Pi Sigma Alpha national honor society.

Matthew resides in Rancho Cucamonga, California with his wife, Katie.



Juan Lopez began his professional career when he joined the office of United States Senator Bill Nelson as an intern in the summer of 2004. After completing his BA in Political Science from the University of Central Florida in December of that same year, he became a staff assistant in the Constituent Services section. Shortly thereafter, he was chosen as one of nine constituent advocates to provide public service assistance to 20 million Florida residents. He later graduated with a MA in Human Resources Management from Rollins College.

Juan gained a reputation as a leader in the field, leading him to serve as Congressman Alan Grayson's Director of Constituent Services. Grayson had been elected to represent District 8, but lost his seat two years later. During this transition period, Juan was hired again to work in U.S. Senator Bill Nelson's office. In a historic comeback, Grayson returned to Congress in January 2013, this time representing the newly formed and diverse District 9. Juan was once again hired by Congressman Grayson to serve as the Director of Constituent Services. In 2014 he was promoted to Deputy District Director and was promoted again in 2015 to District Director.

As District Director, he informs and counsels Congressman Grayson on matters that concern state, district and local issues. In this position, Juan acts as a liaison to federal, district and local agencies for the Congressman and his constituents. Juan has over a decade of experience in legislative government, non-profit organizations, public administration and social services, and has had the opportunity to interact with nearly every federal, state and local agency and government in the State of Florida. This past August, Juan ran and won the Chairmanship of the Orange County Democratic Party. In this position, he will be at the helm directing the Democratic Party in Orange County, Florida.

In addition, he is a student working towards his Masters in Professional Studies in Political Management from The George Washington University.



Scott Merrick has worked for United States Senator Jeanne Shaheen since 2009, and recently became her Deputy State Director. In this role, Scott helps manage administrative and staffing operations; assists with scheduling and staffing the Senator's in-state events; and communicates with New Hampshire businesses, non-profit organizations, educational institutions, and state and local agencies to help develop and support the Senator's legislative priorities. His policy portfolio includes small businesses, budget-related matters, workforce and economic development, trade, education, labor, telecommunications, tourism, taxes, banking, and campaign finance reform.

Prior to working for Senator Shaheen, Scott was elected to three terms in the New Hampshire House of Representatives, starting in 2004 at the age of 19. While in the House, Scott championed job-creating legislation aimed to help those in the most rural areas get back to work, helped define current state education standards, and fought to protect and conserve natural resources. During his tenure in the State House, Scott served on the Democratic leadership team and was appointed as an Assistant Majority Floor Leader (Whip) in 2006, and again in 2008. He served on the House Election Law, Environment and Agriculture, and Education Committees.

Scott received a BA in Political Science from Tufts University in 2007. In 2009, he was named one of New Hampshire Union Leader's "40 under 40" honorees.

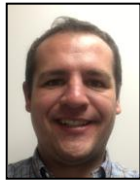
Scott currently resides in Manchester, New Hampshire.



Sherry Pierce was born and raised in Mesa, Arizona and is a fourth generation native Arizonan. She has been married to her husband, Gary, for 42 years. They have four sons, three daughter-in-laws and twelve grandchildren. Her husband has been an elected official in Arizona for the last twenty years, which includes the Yuma County Board of Supervisors, Majority Whip in the Arizona House of Representatives, and for the last eight years, Arizona Corporation Commissioner. Her oldest son also served in the Arizona House of Representatives and in January of 2015 he opened his own law practice.

She has served on the Executive Committee of Mesa Republican Women for over thirteen years, the last six as president, and will continue to serve as president for another two years. She has been working for

Congressman Matt Salmon for just under three years, beginning as Director of Constituent Services and shortly after adding Office Manager to her duties. She still functions in those capacities but now her title is Deputy District Director.

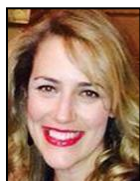


David Williams is a 2010 graduate of New Mexico State University where he majored in Economics and Government, with a focus in International Relations. He started with United States Senator Tom Udall's Office as a Field Representative, specializing in agriculture, energy, military, and water issues. David was promoted to Special Projects Coordinator in 2012, where he was responsible for spearheading new initiatives and supporting field representatives statewide. He became Acting State Director in 2015, where he is responsible for overseeing 19 staff across five offices, and serves as the office liaison with major state businesses and political leaders.

Escorts



Zhao Ma was born and raised in Beijing. He received his M.A. and Ph.D. in History from the Johns Hopkins University. His research work concentrates on the intersection of gender, legal history, and urban history in modern China. His first book, *Runaway Wives, Urban Crimes, and Survival Strategies in Wartime Beijing, 1937-1949*, will be published by Harvard University Asia Center in summer 2015. It uses criminal case files to explore lower-class women's role in challenging and remaking wartime Beijing's social and moral order. Zhao has also published articles and reviews in *Journal of Asian Studies*, *Late Imperial China*, *Journal of Urban History*, and *Frontiers of History in China*. He is currently writing a new book, *Seditious Talk in Revolutionary Beijing during the Korean War Era, 1950-1953*. It examines rumor-mongering in Beijing during the Korean War period, and offers a lens through which to study the transformation of urban informational space against the backdrop of war fever and emerging revolutionary politics in Mao's China. At Washington University, Zhao teaches courses on 20th century Chinese history, city and women, crime and punishment, material culture, historical landscape, socialist culture, and U.S.-China relations since 1949.



Jessica Bissett joined the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations in September 2011 as an executive assistant after receiving her M.S. in Global Affairs from New York University. As a program officer, Jessica plans and runs the U.S. Foreign Policy Colloquium, leads Congressional Staff Delegations to China and is one of main organizers of CHINA Town Hall –the Committee's largest annual public education program.

While at NYU, Jessica was a research associate on a team of students that developed future scenarios focusing on what China, Russia, Turkey, and Ukraine might look like in 2020 based on their current political, economic, social, and demographic trends. Prior to studying at NYU, Jessica spent the summer of 2008 at Middlebury College's prestigious Chinese Language School studying Mandarin as a recipient of the Kathryn Davis Fellowship for Peace scholarship.

She graduated from Bucknell University summa cum laude in 2005 and was awarded the Bucknell Prize for Women and the Bucknell Prize in East Asian Studies. Jessica is a member of Phi Beta Kappa.