

COURTENAY C. STRICKLAND

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Experience

Independent Public Policy, Communications, and Development Consultant **May 2012 – Present**

I help mission-driven organizations achieve transformative change through design and implementation of effective communications, public policy, and development strategies. Services include program design; grant proposal preparation and reporting; strategic relationship-building and board development; public policy research, analysis, and strategy; litigation public relations; communications including media releases, op-eds, etc.; and content creation (email campaigns, web content, blogs, social media, etc.) for thought leadership. Please see www.cstricklandconsulting.com.

Current and past clients include **Catalyst Miami** (Miami, FL), **Florida Foster Care Review** (Miami, FL), **Girl Scouts of Tropical Florida** (Miami, FL), the civil rights practice of **Katon.Law** (Oakland, CA), the **Law Offices of Pahoua C. Lor** (Fresno, CA); **California Parents for the Equalization of Educational Materials** (Fremont, CA), the **American Civil Liberties Union of Florida** (Miami, FL), the **Florida Alliance of Planned Parenthood Affiliates** (West Palm Beach, FL), and **Equality Florida** (St. Petersburg, FL). Work for three clients is highlighted here:

Development Consultant, Catalyst Miami, Miami, FL **Sept. 2017 – Present**

Responsibilities include writing grant proposals and reports, as well as drafting and editing communications documents as needed, such as marketing materials, op-eds, annual reports, journal articles, and more.

- **Authored proposals resulting in more than \$1.8M to date to support Catalyst Miami's work to identify and collectively solve issues adversely affecting low-wealth communities throughout Miami-Dade County.**
- Wrote four op-eds published in *The Miami Herald* under different bylines between Nov. 2018 and Dec. 2019.
- Involved in design and launch of Catalyst's neighborhood-based resilience hub initiative to holistically address climate change, health, and economic prosperity while dismantling structural racism and inequity.

Communications/Development Consultant, Florida Foster Care Review, Miami, FL **July 2013 – Present**

Current responsibilities include producing letters of inquiry and grant applications to support FFCR's work to ensure the safety and wellbeing of abused and neglected children in Miami-Dade's foster care system. To date, proposals drafted have resulted in nearly \$800,000. Accomplishments include the following:

- Drafted proposals that resulted in seed funding for launch of the Permanency Roundtable Program (FFCR's largest expansion since 1989) to find families for youth otherwise expected to age out of foster care alone.
- Provided communications services for events that netted approx. \$100,000, \$87,000 and \$60,000 respectively.
- Raised over six times the funds (\$15,210) during the 24-hour Give Miami Day, as compared to before my tenure.
- Led FFCR's advocacy for anti-human trafficking legislation passed by lawmakers during Florida's 2015 Legislative Session. Authored an opinion piece by Executive Director Candice Maze published in English in *The Miami Herald* and *Tallahassee Democrat* and in Spanish in *El Nuevo Herald*.
- Launched a monthly e-newsletter incorporating data-driven infographics, narrative stories, interviews, etc.
- More than doubled the number of likes on FFCR's Facebook page, and added hundreds of new Twitter followers.
- Achieved a complete re-design of the FFCR website on a very limited budget and timeframe.

Public Affairs Consultant, Florida Alliance of Planned Parenthood Affiliates and Planned Parenthood of South, East and North Florida, West Palm Beach, FL **Jan. – May 2011; May 2012 – May 2016**

Analyzed proposed legislation, crafted state legislative strategy, drafted op-eds and letters to the editor, developed ideas for new legislation, analyzed campaign outcomes, created relationship-mapping surveys, and more. Also conducted communications work in 2015 for Planned Parenthood Action Fund of New Jersey.

Miami Development Manager, Common Threads, Miami, FL / Chicago, IL **Aug. 2011 – May 2012**

Cultivated relationships with individual donors, corporations, and strategic partners. Organized support for Common Threads' second annual gala, which netted \$52,000 and was backed by 15 premier chefs and 12 corporate sponsors.

Director of Public Policy, American Civil Liberties Union of Florida, Miami, FL **Sept. 2007 – Aug. 2010**

Directed legislative and field operations for the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Florida at the state and local levels, as well as in-district Congressional lobbying. Served as chief lobbyist at the State Capitol. Designed and implemented programs to mobilize ACLU members and supporters, and organized educational forums and events.

- Contributed – through lobbying, organizing, public speaking, and written testimony – to the defeat of numerous pieces of legislation that would have harmed civil liberties. In 2010, helped secure a gubernatorial veto of a bill that would have undermined women’s access to reproductive health care, and contributed to the defeat of a state constitutional amendment that would have removed the “no aid to sectarian institutions” provision from the Florida Constitution. Bills defeated in 2009 and 2008 included election bills to suppress voter participation and a bill that would have opened the door to the teaching of creationism in public schools.
- Acted as ACLU of Florida spokesperson during the 2008, 2009, and 2010 legislative sessions in dozens of committee hearings on bills related to reproductive freedom, LGBT equality, religious liberty, racial justice, due process, privacy, and voting.
- Designed programs and secured funding to grow the ACLU of Florida’s work on drug policy and immigrants’ rights.
- Authored policy analyses submitted to the Governor concerning drug enforcement and anti-gang legislation.
- Built the ACLU of Florida’s capacity to engage in lobbying by creating new infrastructure for the state board, state legislative committee, and local chapters. Recruited and trained ACLU members to speak at legislative hearings.

President & CEO, Verified Voting, San Francisco, CA **Feb. 2006 – Mar. 2007**

Served as head of the Verified Voting Foundation, a national nonpartisan, nonprofit 501(c)3 educational organization, and VerifiedVoting.org, a national nonpartisan, nonprofit 501(c)4 lobbying organization. Directed strategies for promoting accurate, transparent elections while preserving voters’ ability to cast a secret ballot with privacy and independence.

- Guided design and implementation of the 2006 Election Transparency Project, which provided tools for measuring the transparency of local elections and the level of accessibility for persons with disabilities.
- Developed and implemented fundraising initiatives, including the authoring of several successful grant applications.
- Directed Verified Voting’s strategic planning process and development of the organization’s long-term goals.
- Acted as spokesperson on issues related to transparency and participated in federal lobbying in Washington, D.C.
- Managed financial, tax, and budget obligations (including budget development) under current laws and regulations.
- Supported the operation and administration of the board of directors and directed human resource management.

Voting Rights Project Director, ACLU of Florida, Miami, FL **Mar. 2001 – Feb. 2006**

Managed the legal, legislative, and grassroots efforts of the ACLU of Florida to protect the right to vote between the 2000 and 2004 Presidential elections. Directed and organized the Florida ACLU’s multi-faceted campaign to restore the voting rights of the 600,000+ citizens of Florida who at that time had lost those rights due to a past felony conviction. The campaign finally succeeded in ending Florida’s Jim Crow-era voting ban in November 2018.

- **Founded and directed the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition, a statewide group of nearly 40 local, state, and national organizations dedicated to ending Florida’s voting ban through a state constitutional amendment. Florida voters passed the amendment in Nov. 2018. The coalition, still active today, played a key role in the achievement.**
- Ensured that some 3,000 people received assistance in completing the paperwork necessary under Florida law in order to apply for restoration of civil and voting rights; organized more than four dozen rights restoration workshops statewide; managed monthly rights restoration centers where individuals received one-on-one assistance from volunteer attorneys and law students; recruited, trained, and supervised volunteers in the provision of such assistance.
- Authored opinion pieces and letters published in multiple outlets (e.g., *The New York Times*); wrote press releases, talking points, action alerts, and self-help materials for clients; participated in the development of statewide polling.
- Collected data on 2004 voting irregularities for use in post-election litigation and advocacy concerning absentee balloting; produced a November 2004 report on problems with implementation of provisional balloting.
- Provided, in September 2004, expert testimony before the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights on vote suppression.
- Lobbied the Florida Legislature regarding provisions of the Florida Election Reform Act of 2001.
- Participated in the drafting of letters to the U.S. Department of Justice concerning preclearance of new voting laws.
- Facilitated expansion of the Voting Rights Project to a stand-alone department; built capacity through grants.

Legal Program Associate, ACLU of Washington, Seattle, WA **June 1998 – June 2000**
Directed the intake process for the 4,000+ complaints received yearly; determined which merited further review; performed initial research on potential cases; hired and supervised an intake assistant and interns.

Employment Case Manager, El Centro de la Raza, Seattle, WA **May – Oct. 1997**
Taught job search and retention techniques to homeless clients with limited English proficiency; boosted job placement through the King County Homeless Employment Program by more than 300%; recruited area businesses to provide employment opportunities.

Intern, Senate Judiciary Committee, Washington, DC **Summer 1995**
Wrote talking points related to abortion, school prayer, and other constitutional issues for then Judiciary Committee minority leader U.S. Senator Edward (Ted) M. Kennedy; provided background research on surgeon general nominee.

Activities

Writer and Author **July 2012 – Present**

Contributor, *Localeur* **Nov. 2018 – Present**
I provide travel recommendations for Medellín, Colombia, my city of residence, on this top-rated website and app. Please see www.localeur.com/locals/medellin/29895

Contributor, *Alone Together: Tales of Sisterhood and Solitude in Latin America* **November 2017**
My poem, “Havana Rewind,” is included in this anthology empowering women to discover Latin America. Please see my author page on Amazon: www.amazon.com/Courtenay-Strickland/e/B00W258BMU/ref=ntt_dp_epwbk_2

Blogger, *Barranquilla or Bust! International Relocation and Other Leaps of Faith* **July 2012 – Present**
Founder, writer, and editor of my own blog, which as of September 2017 had 94,096 views, more than 44,067 visitors, and 673 followers. Please see www.barranquillaorbust.com

Contributor, *Was Gabo An Irishman? Tales from Gabriel García Márquez’s Colombia* **April 5, 2015**
My essay, “Si Dios quiere...”, was included among stories by writers worldwide who have lived in Colombia and were inspired by García Márquez. The book reached #1 on Amazon.com in books about travel in South America.

Leadership Board Member, Yale Club of Colombia, Bogotá, Colombia **Feb. 2016 – Present**
Founding board member of this countrywide alumni club, which seeks to introduce a wider pool of potential applicants to Yale University and vice versa.

Board Member, Diaspora Vibe Cultural Arts Incubator, Miami, FL **July 2009 – Nov. 2011**
Supported acclaimed arts organization in cultivating the talent of emerging artists from the Latin and Caribbean Diaspora.

School/Kitchen Volunteer, Common Threads, Miami, FL **Jan. – April 2011**
Assisted in an after-school program to educate kids about nutrition, wellbeing, and cultural diversity through cooking.

Panelist, Employment for the Arts in a Struggling Economy (EASE) Grants Program, Miami, FL **Dec. 2009**
Appointed to review applications for National Endowment for the Arts funds to assist arts organizations in restoring jobs.

Co-Founder & Member, Miami-Dade Election Reform Coalition, Miami-Dade County, FL **Sept. 2002 – May 2010**
Assembled and supported activists and organizations in the formation of the coalition in the aftermath of South Florida’s failed September 2002 primary elections. The coalition was a leading advocate of best practices in election administration.

- Together with members of the coalition, achieved the first-ever mailing of trilingual sample ballots to all Miami-Dade households, the extension of early voting locations/hours, and outside monitoring of the November 2002 elections.

Public Relations Director, League of Women Voters of Florida **Aug. 2005 – Feb. 2006**
Appointed by the LWVF President to manage the organization’s statewide media relations.

Board Member, League of Women Voters of Miami-Dade County, FL **May 2003 – Feb. 2006**
Procured funding for and coordinated the June 2005 Miami forum, *Local Voices: Citizen Conversations on Civil Liberties and Secure Communities*; authored, in conjunction with the ACLU, a bilingual “Make Your Vote Count!” guide used in the sample ballot mailed to all Miami-Dade households for the November 2002 elections.

Panelist, Developing Arts in Neighborhoods Grants Program, Miami-Dade County, FL **Sept. 2001 – Sept. 2003**
Appointed for three consecutive years by the Cultural Affairs Council of Miami-Dade to evaluate applications and allocate program funding to small and/or emerging cultural groups that provide artistic activities at the grassroots level.

Legal Assistant, King County Bar Association Neighborhood Legal Clinics, Seattle, WA **1997 – June 2000**
Performed intake for the Spanish and Immigration Legal Clinic; served as bilingual liaison between attorneys and clients.

105th President, The Yale Political Union, New Haven, CT **Spring 1995**
Elected highest officer of Yale’s largest student organization (1,000+ members at the time); supervised staff of 15; organized nationally televised speaker program; managed budget; oversaw creation of the YPU website.

Education

Especialista en Intervención Creativa (Specialist in Creative Intervention)
Colegiatura Colombiana, Medellín, Colombia **Feb. 2018 – Oct. 2019**
Ranked #1 in my cohort of this graduate program focused on the ability to intervene in any challenge and create new perspectives and solutions. My thesis, a short theater work, exposed the human toll of our culture of hyper-consumption.

J.D. Candidate, University of Miami School of Law, Coral Gables, FL **Aug. – Dec. 2010**
Awarded the full-tuition Harvey T. Reid Scholarship for academic achievement; departed to pursue other opportunities.

Bachelor of Arts, Yale University, New Haven, CT **1992 – 1996**
Concentrated in Latin American Studies; graduated *cum laude* and with distinction in the major; GPA 3.71.

International Summer School, University of Oslo, Norway **Summer 1994**
Completed college courses in international relations and European politics.

Languages

English (native speaker); Spanish (full professional proficiency, oral and written).

Awards and Recognitions

- InterNations, a worldwide community with over 1.7 million members, designated *Barranquilla or Bust!* a **Top Expat Blog Colombia** in April 2015. **WordPress.com** featured *Barranquilla or Bust!* on **Freshly Pressed** in February 2014.
- Selected as one of 19 individuals in the **2009/2010 Class V of the Miami Fellows Initiative**, a leadership development program of The Miami Foundation. Met with leaders in Bogotá, Colombia as part of our training.
- Honored with a **2004 “Women of Diversity” Award** by the E.J. White Lay Organization of the St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal Church for accomplishments in the voting rights field.
- Presented with the **2002 President’s Award of the ACLU of Greater Miami** for co-founding the Miami-Dade Election Reform Coalition.
- Awarded the **1994 Georgia-Norway International Rotary Scholarship**; offered the **Georgia 1996 Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship** for study in Seville, Spain.

Other Interests

Lifelong runner – four full marathons (26.2 mi/42 km) on three continents; salsa dancer; enthusiastic book club member.