Annie Acosta
Director of Fiscal and Family Support Policy, Public Policy
The Arc
(202) 534-3723
Acosta@thearc.org

Annie is the Director of Fiscal and Family Support Policy at The Arc, the nation’s largest charity serving and advocating on behalf of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. She joined The Arc’s policy staff in 2011 after having served as the Director of Communications and Grassroots Advocacy for The Arc and United Cerebral Palsy since 2007. Prior to that, she served as the Program Director for the National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (NOFAS) and as a government project officer for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), working in primarily in the areas of program evaluation and distance education. Annie now covers budget and appropriations, education, Developmental Disabilities Act programs, autism, technology, prevention, and family support issues in Congress. She serves as a Co-Chair of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) Fiscal Policy Task Force and the Developmental Disabilities, Autism, and Family Support Task Force. Annie received her MSW from Catholic University, and her bachelor’s degree in political science from The George Washington University.

Shai Akabas
Director of Economic Policy
Bipartisan Policy Center
202-204-2385
sakabas@bipartisanpolicy.org
Twitter: @ShaiAkabas

Shai is director of economic policy at the Bipartisan Policy Center, where he leads and conducts research on a variety of economic policy issues, including the federal budget, retirement security, and the financing of higher education. Shai joined BPC in 2010 as a staffer on the Domenici-Rivlin Debt Reduction Task Force, and later assisted Jerome H. Powell, now Chairman of the Federal Reserve, in his work on the federal debt limit. For the past several years, Shai has steered BPC's Commission on Retirement Security and Personal Savings, co-chaired by former Senator Kent Conrad and the Honorable James B. Lockhart III. He has been interviewed by publications including The New York Times, The Washington Post, and The Wall Street Journal. Prior to joining BPC, Shai worked as a satellite office director on New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg’s 2009 campaign. Born and raised in New York City, he received his B.A. in economics and history from Cornell University and an M.S. in applied economics from Georgetown University.

Ben Corb
Director of Public Affairs
American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
bcorb@asbmb.org
Twitter: @bwcorb

Ben brings to the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology more than a decade of experience in building partnerships between the federal government and the private sector to utilize scientific advancement to improve the quality of life and well-being of Americans. Ben has made a career in science policy and advocacy, and currently serves as the chief public face of the ASBMB before institute partners, the White House and Congress. Ben also serves on the Board of Directors of the Coalition for Health Funding, Science Counts, and is a co-chair of NDD United. Before ASBMB, Ben spent two years as director of public affairs at the Washington, D.C.-based American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering, served as Executive Director and senior technical coordinator for the Next Generation Air Transportation System Institute, a policy manager for the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics and a management analyst for the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, where he developed the VA’s first energy conservation policy.
Steven is President of HPS Group, LLC, a DC-based policy and regulatory consulting firm that he started in 2001. Steven was a co-founder of the Alliance for a Stronger FDA and continues to serve as the organization’s Deputy Executive Director. The Alliance is a multi-stakeholder coalition that advocates for increased resources for the FDA. Active since 2008, the Alliance has contributed to a doubling of FDA’s appropriation. Earlier in his career, Steven was Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health at HHS and Health Staff Director and Counsel to the Senate HELP Committee. While on Capitol Hill, he was one of the chief Senate negotiators for the Orphan Drug Act of 1983 and the Drug Price Competition and Patent Term Restoration Act of 1984 (Hatch-Waxman).

Emily joined CRD Associates in 2009 and has more than nineteen years of experience in health and fiscal policy, government relations, strategic communications, and coalition management. She serves as the executive director of the Coalition for Health Funding—an alliance of more than 90 national health organizations representing patients, health care providers, public health professionals, and scientists. She also serves as the founding co-chair of the NDD United campaign, which has successfully secured three bipartisan budget deals to raise the spending caps and was named one of the Top 10 Lobbying Victories of 2013 by The Hill. She is frequently sought out by the media for her expertise on public health and fiscal policy, serves as a lecturer in health policy and management at The George Washington University, and is called upon by national organizations to lecture on the policy environment and best practices in strategic communications and advocacy. Previously, Emily served as the director of government relations for AcademyHealth and a senior health policy analyst with the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO). Emily holds a Master of Public Policy from The Johns Hopkins University and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and English from the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth.

Don is the Director of Government Relations at the American Public Health Association (APHA). In this role, he leads the association’s government relations and grassroots advocacy activities on a variety of legislative and regulatory issues including public health funding, health reform, environmental health, climate change and injury control and prevention issues. He previously served as Director of Federal and Congressional Affairs at APHA from 1998 through 2004. From 2014-2016, Don served as President of the Coalition for Health Funding, the oldest and largest nonprofit alliance working to preserve and strengthen public health investments in the best interest of all Americans. From 2004 through 2006, Don was a public policy and public affairs consultant in San Francisco, Calif. where he worked for both corporate and nonprofit clients on a variety of public policy issues, including prescription drug access, tobacco control and emergency health services. Don served as a congressional aide to U.S. Rep. Sherrod Brown from 1994 through 1998. He advised Brown on several legislative issues including the environment, financial services, education and crime and judiciary matters. He received a BA in Environmental Policy and Analysis from Bowling Green State University.

Nicole is a Specialist Leader in Deloitte Consulting’s Government and Public Services practice focused on delivering effective and timely communications messages and outreach strategies primarily for federal health clients. She advances her clients’ evidence-based public policy and federal financing initiatives through targeted external stakeholder and ecosystem engagement. Nicole has led a number of projects focused on partnership and coalition development; external communication strategies and message development; grassroots and leadership outreach and engagement; policy analysis and design; and federal budget strategy innovation. While at Deloitte, Nicole has served clients at the HHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Food and Drug Administration, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, and Customs and Border Patrol, among others. Prior to joining Deloitte, Nicole served as senior professional staff to the U.S. House of Representatives Appropriations Committee, as Chief of Public Policy at the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, and as a budget analyst within the federal executive branch.
Zach is the Deputy Director of Third Way’s Economic Program. In his role he helps oversee a team that specializes in developing innovative economic policy. Prior to joining Third Way, Zach spent over seven years developing economic and budget issue area expertise. In his three years at the Senate Budget Committee, he worked on economic and revenue issues under Chairs Patty Murray and Kent Conrad. Next, Zach deepened his budget expertise as a Senior Policy Analyst at the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget. While at CRFB, Zach led work on budget process reform. Zach received a bachelor’s degree in Economics from the University of Florida and a master’s degree in Economics from the University of Virginia.

Dale is the founder of Oak Federal Solutions, an advocacy and consulting firm. Dale has more than 30 years of federal budget and appropriations experience, primarily with the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations. As a Committee staffer, he served six different chairmen, both Republican and Democratic. Dale was an analyst at the U.S. Office of Management and Budget early in his career.

Michael, MPA, is the manager of policy and advocacy for the National Council for Behavioral Health, where he monitors and executes the National Council’s public policy and grassroots advocacy initiatives to support the mental health and addiction safety-net. Michael works closely with advocates, empowering them to connect with their elected officials and join the discussion on behavioral health. He also serves as the editor of the Capitol Connector, the National Council’s public policy newsletter and blog.

As Senior Director of Public Policy and Strategic Outreach at the Association of American Medical Colleges, Tannaz holds primary responsibility for the AAMC’s legislative advocacy in support of medical research, medical education, and public health funding and preparedness. In July 2016, she was named Executive Director of the Ad Hoc Group for Medical Research, a coalition of more than 200 patient and voluntary health groups, medical and scientific societies, and academic and research organizations, supporting an enhanced federal investment in the biomedical, behavioral, and population-based research conducted and supported by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Tannaz received her bachelor’s degree from the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland, and her master of public health in health policy from George Washington University in Washington, D.C. Since 2013, she also has served as adjunct faculty at the Georgetown University School of Nursing and Health Studies.
Kristin is Vice President, Strategic Communications, at AcademyHealth, leading the organization’s public relations, marketing, membership and advocacy efforts. She also serves as co-director of the AcademyHealth Translation and Dissemination Institute, which seeks, tests and promotes new and innovative approaches to moving knowledge into action. Kristin has 20 years of experience in healthcare communications including strategic planning, media relations, crisis communications, message development and speaker training. Prior to joining AcademyHealth, Kristin provided strategic communications counsel to clients in the health care and pharmaceutical industries as an Account Supervisor at Ketchum Public Relations in Washington, D.C., and as an Account Executive at McNeely, Pigott & Fox in Nashville, Tenn. Her clients have included health care providers, payers, voluntary health organizations and health technology companies. She holds a bachelor’s degree in journalism and public relations from the University of Georgia.

Judy heads the American Indian/Alaska Native Health Partners coalition. The Partners, originally known as the Friends of Indian Health, advocates for increased funding for the Indian Health Service. Its members represent non-tribal health care providers and health organizations that work with Native American tribes. The Partners focuses on funding issues that benefits all aspects of health care. Judy was Director of Congressional Relations for the American Dental Association before retiring full time in 2014. While in that position she served as a Coalition for Health board member and president. Before Coming to Washington, Judy taught junior high school and was a radio news reporter in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Under Rep. Carl Pursell, Judy served as his associate staffer to the Labor-HHS Subcommittee. She currently co-chairs the 302(b)s – an information network for former appropriations staffers.

Gaby is the Senior Manager of Government Relations at the American Public Health Association. In this role, she is responsible for promoting APHA’s legislative agenda and coordinating APHA’s grassroots advocacy activities on a variety of legislative issues including public health funding, health reform, health equity and policies that support women and families. She also manages the Friends of HRSA, a nonpartisan coalition of nearly 170 national organizations representing public health and health care professionals, academicians, and consumers invested in HRSA’s mission to improve health and achieve health equity. The coalition advocates for strengthening funding levels for HRSA’s discretionary budget authority to enable the agency to keep pace with the persistent and changing health demands of the nation’s growing, aging and diversifying population and constantly evolving health care system. She holds an MPH from the George Washington University and a BA from the University of California Santa Barbara.

The Coalition for Health Funding works to preserve and strengthen federal investments across the public health continuum. Founded in 1970, the Coalition’s diverse members organizations—representing more than 100 million patients and consumers, health providers, professionals, and researchers—speak with one voice before Congress and the administration in support of federally funded health programs with the shared goal of improved health and well-being for all.