

Center on the American Governor
Governor Christine Todd Whitman Archive
Forum on Human Services
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Participant Profiles

Brian Baxter has held a series of senior management, policy and budget positions in state and local government in New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania during his 45 year career. These have included business administrator for the City of Trenton, chief labor negotiator for Governor Dick Thornburgh, chief operating officer for the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, health and human services policy advisor for Governor Christine T. Whitman, and senior vice president for healthcare for a Pennsylvania lobbying firm. Baxter is a graduate of Wesleyan University (1965), and earned a master's degree in public affairs from the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University in 1968.

Nancy H. Becker is program development associate for the Center on the American Governor. A resident of Princeton, she was the founder and guiding force behind the independent public affairs consulting firm Nancy Becker Associates for 30 years. Becker oversaw the firm's government affairs and public relations divisions. She retired from the firm in July of 2006. She currently serves on the boards of Rider University and Capital Health System, where she holds the office of vice-chair. Previously, she served on the boards of the Mental Health Association of New Jersey, Greenwood House, the New Jersey Conservation Foundation, and the Christine Todd Whitman Excellence in Public Service Series. For eight years she served as the vice-chair of the New Jersey Turnpike Authority; she was also a long-time member of the board of the American Repertory Ballet, where she served as chair from 2002-2004. Her other affiliations included the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, the Center for Non-Profit Corporations, Women in Philanthropy and the Trust Company of Princeton. In 2004 she received the Barbara Boggs Sigmund Award from the New Jersey Women's Political Caucus and an award from the New Jersey Association of Women Business Owners. She was also recognized by the legislature in 2003 as an outstanding woman in New Jersey. In 1998, Becker received a TWIN award from the YWCA. She also authored a handbook on lobbying for Eagleton's Center for American Women and Politics. She is a graduate of the University of Michigan and received an M.A. from Manhattan College.

Bob Bostock was a member of the Whitman administration from December 1994 to January 2001. During that time, he served in the Governor's office as a speechwriter, senior policy advisor, and senior deputy director of communications for strategic communications planning. He joined Governor Whitman at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, where he was assistant to the administrator and chief speechwriter as well as assistant to the administrator for homeland security. After leaving the EPA, he assisted the Governor with her *New York Times* best-seller, *It's My Party Too: The Battle for the Heart of the GOP and the Future of America*.

Following more than ten years as a freelance speechwriter, and after a stint as U.S. Senator Jeff Chiesa's speechwriter during his brief service as an interim senator, in January 2014 Bostock returned to government as director of communications for Congressman Rodney P. Frelinghuysen. In July 2013, Bostock was appointed by Governor Christie to serve as chairman of the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission. In 2007, Bostock was elected to the Lawrence Township Council, where he served one term.

William Conroy is now in his 17th year as a member of the senior management team at the New Jersey Department of Health. He serves as deputy commissioner of the Health Systems Branch, responsible for health facility licensing, inspections, and the certificate of need program. Conroy is also responsible for hospital funding programs totaling over \$940 million. Prior to his time with the Department, he worked in New Jersey as a long term care administrator with Genesis Health Care. Previously, he served as a senior health care planner with the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation. With over 30 years in health care, Conroy is dually licensed as a clinical social worker and long term care administrator. He earned his M.S. degree from the School of Social Work at Columbia University.

Harriet Derman is of counsel to DiFrancesco, Bateman, Coley, Yospin, Kunzman, Davis, Lehrer & Flaum, P.C., where she provides dispute resolution, case management and special master services. She has been appointed by Governor Chris Christie to the Judicial Advisory Panel (reviewing candidates for appointment to Superior Court) and by Chief Justice Stuart R Rabner to the Supreme Court Committee on Dispute Resolution. Derman served as a judge between 1998 and 2009 – as a judge of the Superior Court of New Jersey until 2003, then as presiding judge of the Civil Division, supervising civil trial judges in Somerset, Hunterdon and Warren Counties, and finally from 2006-2009 as chancellor and presiding judge of general equity and probate. In the Whitman administration, Derman served as commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs, chief counsel to the Governor, and finally chief of staff to the Governor. She served one term in the New Jersey General Assembly representing the 18th district. She currently serves on the board of directors of Opportunity Project Inc. A past president of the Middlesex County Bar Association, Derman graduated from New York University and Seton Hall Law Center and earned an LL.M. in taxation from New York University School of Law.

Len Fishman became director of the Gerontology Institute at the University of Massachusetts Boston in 2014. From 2000 to 2013, Fishman was CEO of Hebrew SeniorLife, New England's largest non-profit provider of senior housing and health care. He led the transformation of this 110-year old nonprofit from a long-term care organization to an integrated health care and housing system, serving seniors of all faiths and incomes—increasingly in community-based settings. Before joining HSL, Fishman was president of Leading Age, in Washington D.C., which represents more than 5000 non-profit senior housing and health care providers, serving over three million seniors across the country. From 1994 to 1999, Fishman served as Governor Christine Todd Whitman's commissioner of the Department of Health and Senior Services, In

1996, he was named "Person of the Year" by New Jersey Medicine, the health care and policy journal of the Medical Society of New Jersey.

Christine Grant has had careers in business, law, and philanthropy. She has held senior positions in public health, pharmaceutical companies including Merck and Sanofi Pasteur, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. She has also been a leader in her family's private foundation, which is currently dedicated to introducing engineering students to multidisciplinary approaches to design new products and solutions to address societal problems and coastal protection. She provides consultation and expert reports to healthcare systems, pharma and medical device companies, and law firms on matters of health care finance, legislative and regulatory issues, and reimbursement. She chairs the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation National Advisory Committee for New Jersey Health Initiatives and is a member of the NIH National Science Advisory Biosecurity Board. She is a past chair of the American Bar Association's Science and Technology Section, and immediate past finance chair and member of the Executive Committee of the former University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. She continues to hold national rankings in USTA's senior women's tennis.

Jane M. Kenny is a co-founder and the managing partner of The Whitman Strategy Group, LLC, an all-women firm specializing in sustainability issues, including energy and environmental policy and the marketing of innovative environmental technologies. Kenny's experience includes high-level management positions in the private sector and in several complex and diverse government agencies. In 2001, she was appointed by President George W. Bush as the regional administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), where she oversaw the federal agency's work in New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Prior to that, she was appointed as commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs by Governor Christine Todd Whitman, and she served as first chief of policy and planning after Whitman's first election. Governor Thomas H. Kean appointed her as cabinet secretary for his second term in office. In between her years in government, she was a vice president of corporate and community affairs in the financial services industry. Kenny is a director at New Jersey Resources and Chair of its nominating and corporate governance committee and a member of its leadership and development committees. She also serves on the board of NJ Resources Clean Energy Ventures, which invests, owns and operates renewable energy projects. She is on the executive committee for both New Jersey Future and the Sustainable State Institute of New Jersey. She has received numerous national awards, including: the *Good Housekeeping* Award for Women in Government; the National Public Service Award; the Epiphany House Community Partnership Award; "Outstanding Achievement" award for accomplishments in urban revitalization from "City News;" the Excellence in Leadership Fellowship from Women Executives in State Government; the Oliphant Award for Distinguished Leadership in Historic Preservation; and the YWCA Tribute to Women in Industry. She was also named *Governing* magazine's Public Official of the Year.

Michele Kent was appointed president & CEO of LeadingAge New Jersey in early 2009. She leads the state-wide association providing advocacy and education to over 140 non-profit facilities and programs serving seniors in New Jersey. Kent has extensive experience in the public and private sectors, having served as commissioner of human services under Governor Christine Todd Whitman. She also served as deputy chief of staff to Governor Whitman; was director of the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS); and was appointed by Governor Corzine to serve as executive director of the Commission on Rationalizing Health Care Resources. She also worked as director of operations for the NJ Senate Majority Office and was president of the New Jersey Association of Health Plans and deputy executive director of the Delaware Valley United Way. Kent is a passionate advocate for quality human services and is hailed as a strong leader and manager. She has a B.A. in philosophy from Drew University and an M.A. degree in communications from William Paterson University.

John D. Kohler has been working as a lobbyist for Riker Danzig in the Governmental Affairs Group since 2001. He retired from state government service at the end of the Whitman administration with over twenty-seven years of experience as a public policy and research professional, specializing in health care and human services issues. Starting in 1974, Kohler has now been working in Trenton for 40 years. He began working in the early seventies at the Eagleton Institute of Politics as a research assistant for Dr. Alan Rosenthal. He was then hired by Sam Alito, Sr. in 1974 to work at the Office of Legislative Services (OLS), probably as the result of an overly generous recommendation by Dr. Rosenthal. Working at OLS for eight years, Kohler specialized in health care and human services matters, staffing the Assembly Committee responsible for handling those issues. He then moved on to partisan staff, working for the Assembly Republican Office as research director and eventually heading the Office as the executive director. He was hired as Health Department chief of staff by Len Fishman, the first non-physician to serve as health commissioner. Kohler was asked to join Governor Christine Whitman's front office staff during the Governor's second term, serving as deputy chief of staff under chief of staff Michael Torpey. During that time, he also served as cabinet secretary for the Governor. He retired from state service in early 2001, when Governor Whitman went to Washington to serve as the Environmental Protection Agency administrator in President Bush's administration. Kohler graduated from the University of Maryland, College Park, with a B.A. in political science. He then earned a master's in political science from Rutgers.

Ruth B. Mandel is director of the Eagleton Institute of Politics, and Rutgers Board of Governors Professor of Politics. She has led Eagleton's expansion of graduate and undergraduate offerings and launched new program areas in youth political engagement, immigrant political behavior, and the study of governors. In 1971, Professor Mandel co-founded Eagleton's Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP). As CAWP'S director for over two decades, she developed the nation's premier research and education center for the study of women's changing political roles. Her *In the Running: The New Woman Candidate* was the first book about women campaigning for office. During three administrations (1991 to 2006), Mandel held a presidential

appointment on the governing Council of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. Named Council Vice Chairperson by President Clinton in 1993, she led the process to create the Committee on Conscience and became its founding chair. Her board service also includes the Charles H. Revson Foundation and the National Council for Research on Women. Recently she joined the board of the New Jersey Council on the Humanities. Mandel's B.A. from Brooklyn College and M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Connecticut are in English/American Literature. She was awarded an honorary Doctor of Public Service by Chatham College and an honorary Doctor of Public Administration by Georgian Court University.

Rita Manno was a reporter and political editor at the *Courier-Post* until 1993, when she left to become press secretary for Gov. Christine Todd Whitman. In 1995, she became director of communications at the NJ Department of Health and Senior Services under Commissioner Len Fishman. She left state government in 2000 to become vice-president of public relations at Princeton Partners, a brand marketing agency. In 2007, she became president of Manno Consulting, a public relations firm where she specializes in writing and media relations. Manno received her BA in English from Canisius College in Buffalo, NY and the University of Exeter in England and her MA in English from the University of Wisconsin in Madison.

Eileen McGinnis is the President of CMC Energy Services and provides oversight of contracts to ensure that all necessary resources are dedicated to each project to guarantee successful implementation. Ms. McGinnis has held top policy, regulatory, and management positions in state and federal governments for over two decades. She served as Chief of Staff to the Administrator of the United States Environmental Protection Agency where she provided advice and counsel on the key policy and regulatory issues facing the Agency. As Chief of Staff to Administrator Christie Whitman, Ms. McGinnis directed and coordinated the activities of EPA's 10 regional offices, serving as the Administrator's day-to-day manager for the 17,000 employee, \$8 billion Agency. She also managed the Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs, Office of Public Affairs and Communication, and the Office of Policy, Economics, and Innovation. Ms. McGinnis also served in NJ Governor Christine Todd Whitman's Cabinet as Chief of Policy where she was responsible for the planning and implementation of major government initiatives and operations across state government. During her tenure as Chief of Policy, Ms. McGinnis was responsible for the design and implementation of the state's historic million-acre land preservation program; served as Director of NY/NJ Dredging Task Force, which led to the development of environmentally sound disposal sites; and managed the implementation of a federal-state program to expand health insurance. She also oversaw the development of the State's first Quality of Life Report which reported to the public what State agencies and departments were doing to implement plans for a sustainable New Jersey. In 2004, Ms. McGinnis successfully completed a one-year mid-career program designed for leaders in public service at Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs where she was awarded a certificate in Science, Technology, and Environmental Policy.

Bruce Stout is associate professor and chair of the Department of Criminology at The College of New Jersey. Stout has held numerous positions in government and academia. He has taught at the Rutgers Graduate School of Criminal Justice and at Penn State-Abington. He was also executive director of the Violence Institute and the Behavioral Research and Training Institute at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, where he was a clinical assistant professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. In government, Stout served as deputy chief of policy and planning for Governor Whitman, executive director of the Juvenile Justice Commission, director of the Division of Child Behavioral Health Services, and research director for the Juvenile Delinquency Commission. He is also a public member of the New Jersey Sentencing Commission. Stout also worked for the office of Governor Corzine, where he chaired the working group that developed the reentry component of the Governor's crime plan, and where he worked with the Government Efficiency and Reform Commission on sentencing and corrections reform. Stout earned his doctorate at the Rutgers School of Criminal Justice, and he has dedicated his career to using data and research to develop sane, equitable and effective criminal justice policies.

Michael P. Torpey is the president and managing partner of A.F.T. Associates, LLC, a full service lobbying and business strategies firm in Trenton. Over the years his consulting practice has included representation of a broad array of clients before nearly every executive department of state government, the New Jersey State Legislature and the New Jersey Governor's Office. As well as in various state capitals and in Washington, D.C. Prior to consulting, Torpey enjoyed a 15 year career in state government, starting as an intern in the New Jersey State Legislature and ending as chief of staff to Governor Christine Todd Whitman. His experience in the Legislature included serving under Speaker Chuck Haytaian as deputy executive director of the Assembly Majority Office. In that capacity, Torpey managed a comprehensive policy and political operation that included research, media relations and grassroots organizing. Recognized for his legislative expertise, he was recruited to join the Whitman administration, where he eventually was promoted to chief counsel, serving as the Governor's top legal advisor and chief negotiator with the Legislature. Following Governor Whitman's reelection in 1997, Torpey was appointed chief of staff, holding that position for the Governor's entire second term. Torpey attended American University and received his undergraduate degree from Saint Michael's College in Winooski, Vermont. He received his Juris Doctor from Seton Hall University School of Law and was admitted to the practice of law in New Jersey in 1989.

Jennifer Velez was confirmed as commissioner of the NJ Department of Human Services in 2007; re-nominated by Governor Chris Christie and re-confirmed in March 2010. She served as one of the Department's deputy commissioners from January 2006 until her nomination as commissioner. DHS has the largest budget in state government, with about 15,000 employees - approximately 75-percent of them serving as direct care workers in the state-run developmental centers and psychiatric hospitals. Commissioner Velez works in partnership with the Administration on initiatives including: Medicaid reform; advancing supported placement of

individuals with developmental disabilities and mental illness in the community; creating employment opportunities for people with disabilities; and sustaining the safety-net of services made available for the state's older population, and individuals and families with low income. Velez was named first assistant child advocate in the Office of the Child Advocate when it was created in September 2003. Previous to that role, she served as senior associate counsel and Assembly liaison in the Office of Governor's Counsel for three administrations. Before entering public service, Velez was in private practice at the law firm of Pitney, Hardin, Kipp & Szuch in Florham Park, New Jersey. She received her law degree from Rutgers School of Law in Newark, NJ and her undergraduate degree in Economics from Drew University in Madison, NJ.

William Waldman has served as a visiting professor, lecturer and executive in residence at the Rutgers University School of Social Work since January, 2001. From July 1998 to December, 2000 he was the executive director of the American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) in Washington, DC. Waldman was employed by the State of New Jersey from July 1987 to June 1998 during which time he served as a director of the Division of Youth and Family Services, as deputy commissioner and then commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Human Services, and a member of the cabinet for three Governors of New Jersey. From 1975 until 1987 Waldman directed the Middlesex County, New Jersey Department of Human Services and before that he worked for the Essex County Welfare Board in Newark. He began as a caseworker and advanced through a series of progressively responsible supervisory and administrative positions including the administration of the County's food stamp, employment and training programs.

John Weingart is associate director of the Eagleton Institute of Politics. Before coming to Eagleton, Weingart worked in New Jersey state government, focusing on environmental and land use issues, during the administrations of Governors Byrne, Kean, Florio and Whitman. He was a division director and assistant commissioner in the Department of Environmental Protection and subsequently served as executive director of the state's Low-Level Radioactive Waste Disposal Facility Siting Board. While at Eagleton, he also chaired the Delaware and Raritan Canal Commission from 2002-2004 and New Jersey's Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council from its establishment in 2004 through 2009.

Leah Z. Ziskin, MD, MS, was deputy commissioner for the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) for nine years, serving in this position during the Whitman administration until her retirement in June 1999. During her twenty-eight years with DHSS, Ziskin held responsible positions in the Divisions of Epidemiology, Family Health Services and the Commissioner's Office. She also represented the DHSS on the NJ Board of Medical Examiners. After her retirement from the DHSS, Ziskin joined the UMDNJ-School of Public Health as an associate dean. In this position, she established a branch of the School of Public Health on the Stratford Campus of UMDNJ. She remains an adjunct associate professor at the Rutgers School of Public Health. Ziskin currently serves as a family representative on the NJ Council of Developmental Disabilities and secretary of the Board of Disability Rights New

Jersey (DRNJ). In these positions she is an advocate for persons with developmental disabilities and behavioral mental health services. She also is an active member of Planned Parenthood of Southern New Jersey.