

## SUFYAN S. SOHEL

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Multi-faceted experience with executive management of organizations; particular strengths include:

- *Strategic planning and facilitation.* Led various strategic planning processes for national and local organizations. Well-versed in translating missions and goals into operating plans with clear benchmarks and annual objectives.
- *Organizational development and capacity building.* Design and provide guidance to professional and community-based organizations in board and program development, organizational structure, and community assessment. Chair national and local organization boards, and an active member in various boards and advisory committees.
- *Budget and staff management.* Extensive background in fundraising and developing and monitoring program and organizational budgets. Successful at recruiting and retaining exceptional staff and creating positive work environments.
- *Advocacy work and constituency building.* Broad experiences in articulating social justice and civil rights issues to government actors and agencies while collaborating with various internal teams and external partners.

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

#### **DEPUTY DIRECTOR & COUNSEL | COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS | CHICAGO, IL | MARCH 2011-PRESENT**

Oversee daily operations and programs of non-profit civil rights organization, managing budget and implementing strategic initiatives with a focus on long-term sustainability, community building and intersectionality, direct legal services, and advocacy.

- Lead over 300 volunteer attorneys in providing legal assistance and support to travelers and their families affected by the travel bans. Created and oversee online portal and 24-hour hotline to aid affected travelers.
- Develop and facilitate diversity, unconscious bias, and Know Your Rights trainings to religious institutions, community partners, universities, and businesses; lecture and present on civil rights and social justice issues.
- Cultivate partnerships with leading local and national community organizations, universities and government bodies, including the ACLU-IL, YMCA of the USA, International Red Cross, Equality Illinois, Advancing Justice, ICIRR, New America Foundation, NIJC, Arise Chicago, the Chicago Mayor's Office of New Americans, the Chicago Commission on Human Relations, and affinity bar associations throughout the city and country.
- Lobby elected officials to support legislation and policy initiatives including anti-Muslim/travel ban resolutions, City of Chicago anti-registry and anti-hate Ordinances, increased language access for voters, and diversity in the Illinois judiciary.
- Oversee and coordinate all aspects of organizational fundraising, including 1200+ attendee annual benefit.

#### **LEAD LAW CLERK | COUNCIL ON AMERICAN-ISLAMIC RELATIONS | CHICAGO, IL | OCTOBER 2009-MARCH 2011**

Assisted Civil Rights Department in over 300 open cases involving discrimination targeted at the American Muslim community. Drafted pleadings and memorandum in support of client claims.

- Prepared and presented trainings and education on diversity, Islamophobia and discrimination to students, community members, and organizational partners throughout Chicagoland community.
- Collaborated with attorneys of the EEOC to represent Somalian migrant workers facing discrimination in *EEOC v. JBS USA*, a benchmark case that remains in litigation.
- Created new case file management database, organizing over 1000 clients in a more efficient and manageable system.

#### **PROGRAM COORDINATOR | DEPAUL UNIV. COLLEGE OF LAW, PBCSI | CHICAGO, IL | MARCH 2009 - MAY 2011**

One of three student coordinators at DePaul's Pro Bono & Community Service Initiatives; tasked with identifying and collaborating with community partners to develop volunteer opportunities for DePaul Law students, faculty, and staff.

- Managed 75+ students in responsible fulfillment of pro bono commitments in fields including housing, elder, and immigration law and volunteer opportunities focused on educating and empowering urban youth.
- Performed 1K+ hours of pro bono legal service to immigrants and refugees, and to combat civil rights violations.

#### **FELLOW | EGYPTIAN CENTER FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS | CAIRO, EGYPT | MAY 2009 – AUGUST 2009**

- Assisted in drafting a published Situational Analysis on Egypt that was shared with Egyptian legislators to pass laws allowing women more rights and access.
- Organized and facilitated workshops to educate local women on their social and political rights.
- Presented organizational research and analysis at United Nations Conference on the Status of Women, sharing data used to evaluate the socio-political rights of Egyptian women against UN benchmarks.

**FELLOW | DEPAUL UNIV. COLLEGE OF LAW, IHRLI | CHICAGO, IL | OCTOBER 2009 - MAY 2011**

Student lead DePaul's International Human Rights Law Institute; focused on women's rights in Middle East and South Asia and coordinating Rule of Law and democracy initiatives with foreign organizations and governments.

- Partnered with Iraqi law schools to develop academic courses and moot court competition on comparative law.
- Researched status of women in Egypt with a focus on gender violence and women's political and social rights, collaborating with an Egyptian NGO to provide research for them on female genital mutilation.
- Compiled and edited first-hand narratives of victims and perpetrators of violent crimes in Iraq, providing a forum to discuss political violence, analyze systemic patterns, and present policy recommendations regarding transitional justice in Iraq and mechanisms of improving human rights protections.

**EDUCATION**

**DEPAUL UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF LAW | CHICAGO, IL**

*Juris Doctor, May 2011, Certificate in International & Comparative Law*

- Editor-in-Chief, DePaul Rule of Law Journal

**DEPAUL UNIVERSITY | KELLSTADT SCHOOL OF BUSINESS | CHICAGO, IL**

*Masters of Science in Finance, March 2011*

**TULANE UNIVERSITY | NEW ORLEANS, LA**

*Bachelor of Arts, History and Religious Studies, May 2006*

**PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS**

- Licensed Attorney, State of Illinois, 2011
- Certified Diversity Executive, *expected Summer 2018*
- Trained Mediator, Center for Conflict Resolution, Chicago, 2015
- Certified Business Architect, DePaul University, 2007

**AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND RECOGNITION**

- 2018 Leadership Greater Chicago Fellow
- 2018 Cook County State's Attorney Community Leadership Award
- 2018 Chicago Scholars 35 Under 35 Leaders Making an Impact Award
- 2017 Chicago Magazine Chicagoan of the Year
- 2017 DePaul University College of Law Outstanding Young Alumnus Award
- 2017 Chicago Bar Association Vanguard Award
- 2013 New Leaders Council Fellow
- 2011 DePaul University College of Law Award for Contributions to the School & Community
- 2011 DePaul University College of Law Benjamin Hooks Distinguished Public Service Award
- 2010 South Asian Bar Association of Chicago Public Interest Fellow

**PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS**

- American Red Cross of Chicago & Northern IL | Diversity Task Force
- City of Chicago | City Clerk's Civic Engagement Advisory Council
- City of Chicago | *Chicago With You* Taskforce
- MENTEE | Board President
- Open Heart Magic | Volunteer Hospital Magician
- BMW Foundation | Responsible Leaders Network, Connected Cities leader, and Impact Consultant
- LIFT USA | Associate Board Member & Development Consultant
- Chicago TRUST Collective | Founding Member
- DePaul Law Alumni Engagement Board | Inaugural Board Member
- One Place Condominium Association | President
- South Asian Bar Association of Chicago | Advisory Committee, past President
- Local School Council, South Loop Elementary School | Elected Community Representative 2014-2018
- South Asian Bar Association of North America | Executive Board & Head of National Advocacy Committee 2017-2018