

**AUDRA M. WILSON**  
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## **PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY**

Experienced attorney with a distinct background in economic and social justice issues. Extensive political experience with elected officials at various levels of government in conjunction with multiple initiatives related to economic justice, as well as diversity and inclusion. Extensive proficiency in developing public policy. Broad multi-media public speaking and writing experience.

## **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

### **Executive Director**

October 2019 - present

League of Women Voters of Illinois

Statewide director of a 100-year old, non-partisan civic organization with nearly 4,000 members and 42 local League chapters. Work with State Board to set League priorities and develop guidelines for the two arms of the League's work: voter services and civic engagement. Serve as lead spokesperson and work collaboratively with state directors around the country. Recently appointed to the National Nominating Committee with national League (LWV-US).

### **Deputy Chief of Staff**

April 2013 – September 2019

U.S. House of Representatives

Was responsible for overall administration and management of the Congressional district offices of U.S. Congresswoman Robin Kelly (IL-02). Managed staff of 16 employees. Worked in conjunction with the Chief of Staff to develop and implement policy objectives and strategies, and develop operating plans for the district offices. Oversaw \$500K district office budget and procurement. Served as lead Illinois coordinator for the Congressional Caucus on Black Women and Girls, of which the Congresswoman is a co-chair. Met periodically with municipal and statewide office elected officials. Frequently served as a surrogate to the Congresswoman. Traveled to Washington, D.C. quarterly to attend and/or facilitate specific policy meetings and briefings.

### **Director of Diversity Education & Outreach**

March 2006 – April 2013

Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law, Chicago, Illinois

Worked closely with school deans, faculty and staff in planning strategies, developing programs and implementing new activities that increase the ethnic and cultural diversity of the law school population. Oversaw and planned programs, workshops and training sessions with students, staff and faculty to promote the school's effort to build and maintain an inclusive, pluralistic and diverse environment. Created and served as co-chair of the *Chicago Consortium of Diversity Professionals*, a coalition of diversity officers from all six Chicago-area law schools that provides co-curricular support and resources for diverse students. Co-created and facilitated the *JumpStart Law Preview and Preparation Program*, a city-wide preparatory program for incoming diverse law students.

### **Adjunct Professor of Law**

September 2006 – May 2013

Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law, Chicago, Illinois

Developed and taught *Introduction to Poverty Law*. Purpose of the course is to give an overview of contemporary issues facing the nation's poor, with special attention given to analysis of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996. Course provides a historical

background of governmental assistance programs in the United States, and examples of how attitudes towards the poor have shaped current policies and programs. Also taught a *Public Interest Practicum* for aspiring public interest law students.

**Senior Policy Associate**

September 2004 – February 2006

Ounce of Prevention Fund, Chicago, Illinois

Conducted extensive research and writing on various issues related to early childhood care and education. Developed media and networking strategy for Illinois' new universal preschool initiative, launched in conjunction with the Illinois Early Learning Council. Was co-creator and editor of a monthly electronic newsletter, *Early Edition*, distributed to over 3,000 educators, early care providers, legislators and parents.

**Deputy Press and Policy Director  
Deputy Campaign Manager**

April 2003 – June 2004

Obama for Illinois, Chicago, Illinois

As Deputy Policy Director, was responsible for research and drafting of various position papers, talking points and speeches, as well as answering various subject matter questionnaires. Performed extensive legislative tracking and analysis. Served as surrogate speaker at various public forums and debates. As Deputy Press Secretary, was responsible for assembly of numerous press conferences, drafting media advisories and press releases, as well as handling calls from print and broadcast media, both local and national. As Deputy Campaign Manager, performed extensive community outreach, working closely with state legislators, community leaders and organizations, as well as churches.

**Welfare Advocacy Staff Attorney**

August 1999 – April 2004

Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law, Chicago, Illinois

Represented indigent clients in administrative and state court hearings with respect to welfare benefits. Facilitator of the *Let's Get It Right!* project and author of the accompanying monthly watchdog column, featured in the Center's publication, *Illinois Welfare News*, designed to monitor systemic welfare reform implementation problems in local offices throughout the state of Illinois. Successfully launched statewide food stamp advocacy tool in conjunction with Illinois Department of Human Services and United States Department of Agriculture to promote and maximize SNAP usage among eligible families. Regularly provided lectures throughout the state of Illinois to civic groups, social services providers and other advocates regarding the intricacies of welfare reform.

**ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES**

**Founder and Host**, *Practically Speaking* - Vocalo 91.1 FM, Chicago Public Media (2013 – 2018)

**Board Member**, *Chicago Social Change* (2016 – present)

**EDUCATION**

**Valparaiso University School of Law**, Valparaiso, Indiana

*Juris Doctor*

Moot Court Society, Associate Justice of First-Year Oral Arguments

**Bucknell University**, Lewisburg, Pennsylvania

*Bachelor of Arts*, International Relations and Spanish