



Home	Newsroom	Media	Administration	NJ's Priorities	Contact Us
Governor Christie	Lt. Governor Guadagno	First Lady Mary Pat	Governor's Staff	Cabinet	Boards, Commissions & Authorities

Home > Administration > [Governor's Staff](#)

Senior Staff

- Richard Bagger, Chief of Staff to the Governor
- Maria Comella, Deputy Chief of Staff for Communications
- Bill Stepien, Deputy Chief of Staff for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs
- Wayne Hasenbalg, Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy and Planning
- Lou Goetting, Cabinet Secretary
- Rosemary Iannacone, Director of Operations
- Jeff Chiesa, Chief Counsel to the Governor
- Kevin O'Dowd, Deputy Chief Counsel to the Governor
- Michele Brown, Appointments Counsel
- Deborah Gramiccioni, Director of the Authorities Unit

Richard Bagger, Chief of Staff to the Governor

Rich Bagger was most recently Senior Vice President, Public Affairs for Pfizer's Worldwide Biopharmaceutical Businesses. Prior to joining Pfizer in 1993, Rich was Assistant General Counsel of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Jersey, and before that practiced law with McCarter & English.

His record of public service includes ten years in the New Jersey General Assembly, where he was Chairman of the Appropriations Committee and was elected by his colleagues to be Majority Conference Leader. In 2001, he was elected to the New Jersey Senate and served there until 2003. Before his election to the legislature, he was a Councilman and Mayor of Westfield, New Jersey.

Rich has served on the Board of Trustees of British American Business, the Business Council of New York State, the Healthcare Institute of New Jersey, Kean University, the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce, the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, the United Hospital Fund and the United States Chamber of Commerce.

He received Bachelor of Arts degree from Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs and a J.D. degree from Rutgers University Law School

[Top](#)

Maria Comella, Deputy Chief of Staff for Communications

Maria Comella has directed communication strategies specific to varied constituencies as part of a career dedicated to public service and issue advocacy. During college where Comella received her BA in international affairs at The George Washington University, she worked in key positions on Capitol Hill, dealing with both trade and budget issues. From there she held leadership roles on several presidential and gubernatorial campaigns, serving as New Hampshire Communication's Director for Bush-Cheney 2004 and as Communications Director in 2006 for Iowa gubernatorial candidate, Congressman Jim Nussle.

During the 2008 presidential campaign, Comella served as Mayor Rudy Giuliani's deputy Communications Director

Stay Connected with Social Media



Stay Connected with Email Alerts

LIKE THIS PAGE? SHARE IT WITH YOUR FRIENDS.



managing a 20-person staff, creating national and regional communication strategies and serving as campaign spokesperson.

Most recently, Comella directed communication efforts for now Governor Chris Christie's campaign in New Jersey. She is also currently pursuing a Masters degree in health care policy at New York University.

[Top](#)

Bill Stepien, Deputy Chief of Staff for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs

Bill Stepien most recently served as Campaign Manager for Governor Chris Christie and Lieutenant Governor Kim Guadagno. Prior to 2009, he worked as National Field Director and Regional Campaign Manager for John McCain's presidential campaign. Earlier in the 2008 presidential campaign cycle, Stepien was former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani's National Field Director.

Stepien's vast experience in both national and state politics includes serving as the Republican National Committee's 72-Hour Director and as President George W. Bush's New Hampshire Political Director in his 2004 re-election campaign. He also successfully managed Bill Baroni's campaign for the General Assembly in 2003 and worked in the legislative office of State Senator Anthony Bucco.

A New Jersey native, Stepien received his B.A. from Rutgers University.

[Top](#)

Wayne Hasenbalg, Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy and Planning

Wayne Hasenbalg most recently served as a partner in the Teaneck office of the law firm of DeCotiis, Fitzpatrick & Cole, LLP. Mr. Hasenbalg rejoined the firm as a partner in 2008, focusing his practice on regulatory affairs. For over 20 years, Mr. Hasenbalg has represented public and private sector client interests before all levels of New Jersey government including the executive and legislative branches of government, as well as county and local governments.

In addition to his legal career, Mr. Hasenbalg has extensive experience in state government. His roles have included acting as Assistant to the Chief Counsel of the Governor of New Jersey in the Thomas Kean administration, as well as Chief of Staff for Attorney General of New Jersey, Cary Edwards. He also served as Treasurer for the County of Essex.

His extensive knowledge of the regulatory process and governmental operations has yielded positive outcomes for clients requiring specialized representation in the public sector. Mr. Hasenbalg has been involved in large-scale capital projects on behalf of public and private sector clients. He has represented several county improvement authorities and has provided legal services to governmental bodies in the development and implementation of capital and other projects.

Mr. Hasenbalg, a New Jersey native, received his B.A. from Gettysburg College in 1976. He received his Master of Public Administration degree in 1978 from Penn State University and was awarded a J.D. from Seton Hall Law School in 1984.

[Top](#)

Lou Goetting, Cabinet Secretary

Lou Goetting served as the principal and founder of Goetting Ahead, which provided public policy consulting to both private and public clients. Previously, Goetting was Executive Vice President of Administration, Operations and Information Technology for Brookdale Community College. In this role, Goetting represented the College before the New Jersey State Legislature, the Commission on Higher Education, and the Council of County Colleges. He led the capital planning and development activities of the College, including the development of school's financing plans.

From 1998-2002, Goetting was the Vice President of Administration at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey where he managed a workforce of over 1,000 employees and an annual budget of \$70 million. He previously entered public service serving as both Deputy and Assistant State Treasurer from 1994-1998. As Assistant State Treasurer, he developed the nation's first statewide performance audit program directed at municipal and school operations.

[Top](#)

Rosemary Iannacone, Director of Operations

Rosemary Iannacone, of Monroe Township, was formerly Chief Administrator at the United States Attorney's Office, District of New Jersey. She served there from June 2000 to December 2009. Previously she held the same position at the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of New York, in Brooklyn.

As the Chief Administrator at the U.S. Attorney's Office in New Jersey, Mrs. Iannacone was the primary advisor to the United States Attorney for planning and managed all United States Attorney's Office resources, including a budget of more than \$30 million. Among her duties was the management of all personnel resources (approximately 270 attorneys and staff), budget administration, procurement, information technology management and facilities management.

Before becoming chief administrator in the Brooklyn U.S. Attorney's Office, Mrs. Iannacone rose from assistant systems manager, to budget officer, to deputy administrative officer.

Mrs. Iannacone lives in Monroe Township and is married with two children and two grandchildren.

[Top](#)

Jeff Chiesa, Chief Counsel to the Governor

Jeff Chiesa served as Executive Director of Governor Christie's Transition Team. He previously was a partner at the law firm of Wolff & Samson in their litigation group.

Prior to joining Wolff & Samson, Jeff worked in the U.S. Attorney's Office in the District of New Jersey from 2002 - 2009, last serving as the Executive Assistant U.S. attorney. He also served as Counsel to the U.S. Attorney and as the Chief of the Public Protection Unit. Jeff was involved in all aspects of the U.S. Attorney's Office, including the management of the Criminal, Civil, Appeals and Special Prosecutions Divisions.

As a unit chief, he supervised a group of assistant U.S. attorneys primarily responsible for the investigation and prosecution of criminal cases involving bank robbery, child pornography, human trafficking and identity theft. Prior to joining the U.S. Attorney's Office, Jeff was a partner at the law firm of Dughi and Hewit.

Jeff is a graduate of the University of Notre Dame where he earned his Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting. He earned his Juris Doctorate from Catholic University of America.

[Top](#)

Kevin O'Dowd, Deputy Chief Counsel to the Governor

Kevin O'Dowd formerly served as the Chief of the Securities and Healthcare Fraud Unit in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of New Jersey. Over the course of the last 7 years as an Assistant United States Attorney, Mr. O'Dowd has prosecuted various crimes ranging from complex healthcare, securities and financial fraud matters to international child pornography distribution, cyber and narcotics prosecutions.

Prior to joining the U.S. Attorney's Office, Mr. O'Dowd spent the previous five years serving as both a Deputy Attorney General for the State of New Jersey and an Assistant Counsel in the New Jersey Office of Counsel to the Governor.

Mr. O'Dowd received his B.A. at The Catholic University of America and his J.D. at St. John's University School of Law.

A New Jersey native, O'Dowd currently resides in the City of New Brunswick.

[Top](#)

Michele Brown, Appointments Counsel

Mulvaney & Carpenter.

Prior to joining the firm in 2009, she served for eighteen years as an Assistant United States Attorney in Newark, most recently as Acting First Assistant United States Attorney. She also served as Executive Assistant United States Attorney and Counsel to the United States Attorney.

Her successes include prosecution of public corruption, financial institution fraud, health care fraud, and money laundering offenses. She has received numerous awards from a host of federal agencies, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation and has also been commended by the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency with the Award for Excellence from the Office of Inspector General.

An instructor at the Department of Justice National Advocacy Center, she has also been the featured speaker at numerous conferences.

Michele Brown received her B.A., magna cum laude, from Drew University and her J.D., magna cum laude, from Georgetown University Law Center.

[Top](#)

Deborah Gramiccioni, Director of the Authorities Unit

Since June 2008, Deborah Gramiccioni served as the Director of the Division of Criminal Justice in the Department of Law and Public Safety. Gramiccioni joined the Attorney General's Office in September 2007 as a Special Assistant to Attorney General Anne Milgram

In November 2005, Gramiccioni was appointed Assistant Chief of the Fraud Section in the Criminal Division of the U.S. Department of Justice in Washington, D.C., where she supervised cases brought nationwide under the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. From January to September 2007, Gramiccioni was the Vice President of Trace International, Inc., an international non-profit company specializing in anti-bribery training and due diligence reviews for multinational companies and their commercial intermediaries.

Gramiccioni worked first as an associate at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher and Flom LLP and then clerked for the Honorable Alfred J. Lechner, Jr., United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey. Immediately following her clerkship, Gramiccioni joined the United States Attorney's Office for the District of New Jersey in September 1999. As an Assistant U.S. Attorney, Gramiccioni prosecuted cases in the Criminal Division and Special Prosecution Division. In September 2004, Gramiccioni was promoted to Chief of the Commercial Crimes Unit, where she supervised the prosecution of white-collar crimes involving financial fraud, identity theft and intellectual property.

Gramiccioni graduated magna cum laude from the University of Pennsylvania in 1994 and the University of Virginia School of Law in 1997. She lives in Monmouth County with her husband Christopher, and their two children.

[Top](#)



[Contact Us](#) | [Privacy Notice](#) | [Legal Statement & Disclaimers](#) | [Accessibility Statement](#) | [Feedback](#)

Statewide: [NJ Home](#) | [Services A to Z](#) | [Departments/Agencies](#) | [FAQs](#)
Office of the Governor: [Home](#) | [Newsroom](#) | [Media](#) | [Administration](#) | [NJ's Priorities](#) | [Contact Us](#)

Copyright © State of New Jersey, 1996-2011
Office of the Governor
PO Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625