

ACE WOMEN'S Network™ Michigan

Mentoring Mondays
January 11, 2021

To continue our recognition of women in significant governmental positions, this week we will look at the “Women Who Speak for Biden” (excerpts from a reprint from *USA Today*). This marks the first time that women will hold all of the communications positions for the White House. Each has extensive experience and are accustomed to working with each other.

Jen Psaki will lead the communications team as White House Press Secretary – Psaki is a veteran of President Obama’s administration and has overseen the confirmation team for Biden’s transition. Her training as State Department spokesman is among the best. As communications director in 2015 and 2016, Psaki reorganized the White House approach to media with more attention for non-traditional and online outlets. She served as traveling press secretary for Obama during his reelection campaign.

Karine Jean-Pierre will serve as Principal Deputy Press Secretary – Karine was a senior advisor on the Biden campaign, and was chief of staff to Kamala Harris. She was chief public affairs officer for MoveOn.org and a political analyst for NBC and MSNBC. Jean-Pierre was regional political director for the White House Office of Political Affairs during the Obama-Biden administration and served as deputy battleground states director for Obama’s 2012 reelection campaign.

Kate Bedingfield will be White House Communications Director – Bedingfield served as communications director for Biden when he was vice president and associate communications director, deputy director of media affairs and the director of response in the Obama-Biden White House. Before joining the Biden White House team, Bedingfield was communications director to Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-N.H.) on her successful 2008 Senate campaign, along with other roles on Democratic campaigns.

Pili Tobar will be Deputy White House Communications Director – Tobar served as communications director for coalitions on the Biden-Harris campaign. She was deputy director for America’s Voice, where she advocated on behalf of immigrants. She was the Hispanic media director for Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, national director of Hispanic media and western regional press secretary for the Democratic National committee, communications director for U.S. Rep. Ruben Gallego (D-Ariz.), and communications director for the Latino Victory Project.

Ashley Etienne will serve as Communications Director for the Vice President – Etienne was a senior advisor on the Biden-Harris campaign. She was the first woman and person of color to hold the position of communications director to the House Speaker. Etienne was special assistant to the president and director of communications for the Cabinet in the Obama-Biden administration and led communications on President Obama’s My Brother’s Keeper initiative.

Symone Sanders will be Senior Adviser and Chief Spokesperson for the Vice President. Four years ago, she worked for Senator Bernie Sanders’ presidential campaign as press secretary, the youngest person ever in that role for a presidential campaign. Before joining the Biden-Harris campaign, Sanders was a CNN political commentator and principal of the 360 Group, where she provided strategic communication guidance. Sanders is the former chair of the Coalition for Juvenile Justice Emerging Leaders Committee and former member of the Federal Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice.

Elizabeth Alexander will serve as Communications Director for the First Lady – Alexander was a senior advisor on the Biden-Harris campaign. She spent the first years of the Obama-Biden administration as press secretary to Vice President Biden after serving as his communications director on Capitol Hill when he was a senator.

We extend congratulations to these women and look forward to seeing and hearing more from them in the future.

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