

# Van Scoyoc Associates Overview

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Van Scoyoc Associates Inc. (VSA) is a bipartisan, independent, full-service federal government relations firm founded in 1990. VSA works on behalf of California counties, municipalities, local agencies, hospitals, and Fortune 500 companies. We have advocated for the County on health care, tribal and transportation issues since 2014.

The VSA team for Sonoma County is ideally suited to meet the County's diverse needs. Our team is prepared to continue and expand our work for Sonoma County and has experience influencing legislation, regulations, guidance, and permitting in ways that can expedite projects and programs. This knowledge has been gained through our experience as former Hill and federal agency staff, as well as our decades of representation of local government on all federal issues including COVID relief and response, climate change, emergency response, infrastructure, aviation, health and human services, Indian affairs, public safety, transportation, energy, and agriculture.

VSA has close working ties with Senator Dianne Feinstein and Representative Mike Thompson and know several of the senior staff who have joined the office of Senator Alex Padilla. For more than a decade, we have advocated with key Executive Branch agencies, meeting with Cabinet secretaries, helping our clients secure grant funds, and modifying administrative decisions. Importantly, we worked with several of the agency teams during the Biden transition and are fortunate to know many of the senior appointees entering the Executive branch agencies, which will be critical to the County in the next several years.

With years of experience working in senior positions in Congress, the Executive Branch and as a contract lobbyist, Vice President Steve Palmer will continue to be the Team Leader and one of four legislative experts devoted full-time to advocating for the County. During his 20 years at VSA, Steve has successfully led VSA's advocacy team for counties, municipalities, and local agencies, including Sonoma, Napa, San Diego, and Orange Counties, as well as SMART rail.

Our bipartisan team also includes Vice President Carol McDaid, who has over 25 years of experience with federal advocacy and healthcare policy. They are joined by Associate Vice President Holly Strain and Director of Government Relations David Haines. Holly and David bring extensive experience working with California counties and the myriad of federal issues that face the County of Sonoma. These four individuals, who have advocated on behalf of the County for several years, would be the core team working on behalf of the County on a full-time, daily basis. They would be supported by all 45 principals and legislative staff at VSA, bringing expertise in a wide array of issues. The VSA team works closely with the National Association of Counties and coordinates regularly with them on federal advocacy issues.

For each of the last ten years, VSA has ranked as one of the largest and most successful advocacy firms in Washington, D.C. VSA strongly believes that our decades of experience representing local government entities in California, coupled with our relationships with the Sonoma County congressional delegation and knowledge of the legislative and budgetary processes, make us the best fit to advocate for Sonoma County at the federal level.

## **STEVEN O. PALMER**

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### **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

1998-Present                    **Vice President, Van Scoyoc Associates, Inc.**

Senior principal in one of the top Washington, DC government relations firms, with a practice that includes representation of local governmental agencies, counties, cities, corporations, trade associations, before Congress and the Executive Branch.

1993-1998                    **Assistant Secretary for Governmental Affairs, U.S. Department of Transportation**

Nominated and confirmed by the United States Senate to serve as the Secretary of Transportation's principal advisor on legislative and intergovernmental affairs. Initiated and maintained an on-going communication program with the Congress, White House, Federal agencies, state and local governments, and stakeholder groups. Supervised and managed the Secretary's Offices of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs. Testified before Congress and served as speaker before stakeholder groups.

1983-1993                    **Senior Professional Staff Member, U.S. Senate, Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation**

Advised the Chairman and other Senators on aviation, aerospace, transportation, and technology legislative proposals. Supervised staff and drafted/negotiated legislation with Members of Congress, Executive Branch officials, and industry representatives.

1982-1983                    **Budget Analyst, U.S. Senate, Committee on the Budget**

Prepared congressional funding recommendations for Federal transportation and aerospace programs. Performed budgetary and political analysis of legislation and policy proposals.

1980-1982                    **Presidential Management Fellow, U.S. Department of Transportation**

Selected through a national competition for a two-year management development program that involved assignments at DOT, FTA, OMB, and Senate Appropriations Committee.

### **EDUCATION**

Master of Public Affairs, LBJ School of Public Affairs, University of Texas at Austin, 1980.  
Bachelor of Arts, Kalamazoo College, Kalamazoo, Michigan, 1978.

## **CAROL MCDAID**

800 Maine Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20024, 202-638-1950, [cmcaid@capitoldecisions.com](mailto:cmcaid@capitoldecisions.com)

### **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

#### **2000 – Present          Principal, Capitol Decisions, Inc.**

Co-founder of Capitol Decisions, Inc., a Washington, D.C. based government relations firm that represents public and private interests in the health and behavioral health industries including addiction and mental health treatment providers and consumer organizations, behavioral health device manufacturers, hospitals and other health care providers. Capitol Decisions, Inc. specializes in developing legislative, regulatory and grassroots campaigns to help achieve clients' objectives.

#### **1993 - 2000          Senior Vice President, R. Duffy Wall & Associates, Inc.**

Represented insurance, pharmaceutical, employer and behavioral health provider clients in the areas of health care, related employee benefits, and tax issues before the U.S. Congress. Provide strategic planning and counsel. Develop and implement targeted legislative strategies.

#### **1991 - 1993          Senior Washington Representative, Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association**

Represented 70 Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans before the U.S. Congress in the areas of tax and employee benefits. Developed and implemented legislative campaigns to enhance tax treatment of employee benefits. Worked closely with key health plans to develop managed care legislative initiatives. Worked with Members of Congress and their staff on tax and labor committees.

#### **1988 - 1991          Manager, Price Waterhouse**

Monitored and analyzed Congressional legislation in the area of employee benefits. Prepared reports on hearings, markups and other legislative advocacy activities and provided analysis on the impact of legislation for dissemination to clients. Worked with Congressional staff on the tax and labor committees on behalf of coalitions and clients.

### **EDUCATION**

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia, 1982.

### **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**

Founding member and past Board Chair, Faces and Voices of Recovery  
Board member, Kennedy Satcher Institute for Mental Health Equity at the Morehouse School of Medicine  
Board member, Recovery Research Institute

Co-founder, McShin Foundation

## **AWARDS**

2016 Caron Partner in Recovery Award

2016 American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) John P. McGovern Award Recipient

2010 National Council for Community Behavioral Health Care Award of Excellent for Public Service

2009 National Association of State Alcohol/Drug Abuse Directors (NASADAD) Service Award for Exceptional Leadership and Support in the Substance Use Prevention and Treatment Field

2008 State Associations of Addiction Services (SAAS) Advocate of the Year

2007 Johnson Institute America Honors Recovery Award Recipient

**HOLLY M. STRAIN, MPH**

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[hstrain@capitoldecisions.com](mailto:hstrain@capitoldecisions.com)

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

**2019-Present            Associate Vice President, Capitol Decisions, Inc.**

Represent health care clients on Capitol Hill and before Federal agencies. In this position, she assists in representing health care entities and other organizations on a variety of issues.

**2009 – 2019            Director of Government Relations, Capitol Decisions, Inc.**

Organized Capitol Hill advocacy days for clients, including the largest addiction recovery advocacy day to date with 500 attendees. Advocated for the enactment of laws addressing the opioid misuse and overdose epidemic.

**2006 – 2009            Manager of Government Relations, Capitol Decisions, Inc.**

Managed 300-member coalition of mental health and substance use consumer and provider organizations advocating for the passage of parity legislation.

**EDUCATION**

Master of Public Health, George Washington University, Washington, DC, 2009.

Bachelor of Arts, Wheaton College, Norton, MA, 2002.

## **DAVID HAINES**

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### **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

#### **2013-Present                      Director of Government Relations, Van Scoyoc Associates, Inc.**

Advocate for both public and private entities. Provide counseling for a variety of clients on their policy priorities at the Congressional and Executive Branch levels. In this position, he assists in representing counties, cities, transportation agencies, and other organizations on a variety of issues.

#### **2010-2013                      Legislative Assistant, Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison**

Responsible for advising on energy, agriculture, natural resources, and national security issues as well as development of policy. Worked directly with a number of Federal agencies, including the Department of Energy, Department of Interior, Department of Agriculture, and others.

#### **2008-2010                      Legislative Correspondent, Congressman Kenny Marchant**

Researched policy issues and managed correspondence with constituents. Directed constituent services.

### **EDUCATION**

Bachelor of Arts, Texas A&M University, 2008.

Certificate in Security Studies from National Defense University.