

Weekly Report: 6/28 - 7/1  
Olivia Pham

**Monday June 28, 2016**

*Tracey Spicer – Partner, Avenue Solutions*

Ms. Spicer first spoke with us about her personal career on the hill and her work with Avenue solutions. Her time with Sen. Kennedy was of particular interest – she described what it was like to work with a powerful, highly visible member. At my request she discussed the process of coming to consensus on the Hill and with her clients, emphasizing that consensus is reached when people make reasonable asks. Based on my interests she recommended that I look into placements at GAO, MedPAC, and Energy and Commerce.

*Miguel Franco, Anna Hevia – Office of Rep. Tony Cardenas*

Unfortunately, we were not able to meet with our original appointment, Jacqueline Usyk. Instead we met with Mr. Franco and Ms. Hevia who were not on the health policy team and who could really only tell us about Rep. Cardenas’s general interests. We learned quite a bit about the office itself but otherwise did not speak on any specific health policy interests.

*Bill Hoagland – Senior Vice President, Bipartisan Policy Center*

Our meeting with Mr. Hoagland was one of the best meetings we have had so far. I really enjoyed the opportunity to discuss his thoughts on bipartisanship, specifically on the relationship between politics and research. He described public policy as a negotiation in which the goal is to reach consensus while minimizing the amount of loss for any party. He also shared the idea that all public policy needs to be integrated in order to create a “culture of health”.

**Tuesday June 29, 2016**

*Mark Hayes, Peter Leibold, Nicole Commodore – Ascension Health*

We were able to meet with the entire D.C. advocacy office. Mr. Hayes. described his career on the hill and also talked about his role in the Gang of 6 healthcare reform bill. Mark also mentioned following up with Liz Fowler to perhaps have a lunch/dinner where we could discuss healthcare reform negotiations and the perspective of their respective offices.

*Todd Spangler – Director, Public Policy & Government Relations, BD*

In our meeting with Mr. Spangler, we also discussed his involvement with the healthcare reform negotiations. Additionally, Mr. Spangler spoke about his time on the HELP committee which he highly recommended for a placement. He also spoke briefly about the fact that sometimes the biggest opposition to a piece of legislation comes from your own party and how that type of opposition can result in paralysis. If possible I do recommend scheduling future meetings with Todd, Mark Hayes, and Liz Fowler within a short time frame, if not on the same day. Being able to hear about the healthcare reform negotiations from each of their perspectives is a great opportunity.

*Abigail Duggan – LA, Office of Senator Sherrod Brown*

In our meeting, Ms. Duggan spoke with us briefly about her own career on the Hill and how she came to work for Sen. Brown. She explained Sen. Brown's position on healthcare issues, and then gave us advice on what we could expect with administration change. A great piece of advice we received was to make sure we included ourselves in any activities of the office in which we were interested, not just the activities to which we were invited. Ms. Duggan was able to connect us to a former fellow in her office, LaTasha Lee, with whom we will be meeting.

### **Wednesday June 30, 2016**

*John Ford and Heather Strawn – Abbvie*

Abbvie is the first pharmaceutical company we have met with, so we asked Mr. Ford and Ms. Strawn to describe their interactions with entities such as the FDA, CMS, Congress, etc. They addressed the generally negative reputation that pharmaceutical companies have with regards to drug pricing and lobbying, and how this reputation makes them extremely careful with their personal reputations. They also discussed the background research that goes into any proposals they put forward. It was also interesting to hear about their role in the cancer moonshot and the meetings they have had with Vice President Biden's office regarding the matter.

*Jason Ormsby – Atlas Research, Former Fellow*

Mr. Ormsby discussed his fellowship experience with us and gave us excellent suggestions on several people to meet with, including the congressmen from our own state. He is also going to put us in touch with several people at Atlas who will be able to speak on the VA, correctional facilities, the Department of Defense, and health disparities. For much of the conversation we spoke about our "next steps" after the fellowship. He strongly suggested that we obtain our PhDs, even if we planned on staying in the government.

*Lauren Aronson – Mehlman Castagnetti Rosen & Thomas*

While Ms. Aronson shared her experience on the Hill with us, she spoke at length about our potential placements. Her strongest recommendation seemed to be an agency, such as CMS or OMB. She explained that CMS is “the perfect intersection of politics and policy,” and that we will be able to work on a wide variety of issues. She also recommended OMB to me as a place to learn about healthcare financing. She also mentioned science communication and data analysis (or rather, interpretation), as key technical skills in any placement, but especially an agency.

### **Thursday June 31, 2016**

*Matt Salo – Executive Director, National Association of Medicaid Directors*

Our meeting with Mr. Salo was another excellent meeting – I think this is in part to Kripa’s and my familiarity with Medicaid. We learned quite a bit about the issues Medicaid directors face, which are surprisingly universal across the states. Our discussion of the association itself was also enlightening, in that most directors are in agreement on the issues even if they are political appointees. Mr. Salo shared several stories about creative methods being used to prevent catastrophic events. He also discussed Medicaid and long term care at length, referring to spending on dual-eligibles and providing benefits outside of nursing home care.

*Kathleen Laird – Legislative Assistant, Office of Senator Tammy Baldwin*

Ms. Laird gave us a brief overview of her experience on the hill and then gave us a history of Sen. Baldwin’s position on healthcare. We asked how Sen. Baldwin, with a very liberal perspective on healthcare, was able to work toward goals like single-payer healthcare, a public option, and queer and trans health issues when those ideas are not widely supported. We received an answer to the effect of “we do what we can” but it really brought me back to the reality of reaching bipartisan consensus. Ms. Laird mentioned that we would receive plenty of interaction with the Senator and that she would be very active in healthcare next year, specifically on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Cures, FDA user fee agreements, veteran’s health, and troubleshooting the ACA.

*Rohini Kosoglu – Policy Director, Office of Senator Michael Bennet*

Our meeting with Ms. Kosoglu allowed us to learn what working in Sen. Bennet’s office would be like. Rohini said that she expected her fellows to be entrepreneurial in bringing up new areas of interest, and that Sen. Bennet is very active in committee. He does need to maintain interest in the topic, however, or he may not show as much support for our efforts. Ms. Kosoglu did mention that she might be leaving the office and that Sen. Bennet is up for re-election, so this may cause some disruption during placement.

*Veronica Duron – Legislative Assistant, Office of Senator Charles Schumer*

Ms. Duron began by giving us a brief overview of her career on the Hill. She shared her intriguing experience of working for a member that eventually lost his seat, and how she found work in another office. According to Ms. Duron, working in Sen. Schumer's office will be a unique experience because he is a very senior member with high visibility and strong involvement with the media. When asked about what changes might occur in the office should Sen. Schumer move into party leadership, Ms. Duron was unable to make any predictions.

**Friday July 1, 2016**

*Chris Dawe – Principal, Evolent Health*

Mr. Dawe graciously treated us to lunch where we discussed his time in the Senate and the administration. It was fascinating to learn about how he negotiated with different branches of government during the construction of the ACA. Of particular note, he suggested that we try to explore a placement in the private sector if possible. He reasoned that the majority of "work" being done in healthcare is in the private sector, so in order to gain the most experience we should go there. No one has previously presented this viewpoint.