



NATIONAL ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN BAR ASSOCIATION

**Highlights from NAPABA & AAJC's February 6, 2009 Q&A briefing with Ginger Lew and Mark Perriello regarding personnel applications with the Obama-Biden Administration**

These highlights are from the National Asian Pacific American Bar Association and the Asian American Justice Center's Q&A briefing about personnel applications with the Obama-Biden Administration, which took place at McDermott Will & Emery LLP in Washington, DC on February 6, 2009. The briefing focused on appointments for lawyers that do not require Senate confirmation and did not cover appointments of judges or United States Attorneys. During the briefing, speakers Ginger Lew and Mark Perriello shared information and advice based upon their experiences serving the Presidential Transition Team/Administration.

***Ginger Lew** was most recently a member of the Obama-Biden Transition Team as co-leader for Small Business Administration Review. She continues to advise the Administration as a member of the Economic Review Team working on TARP and the Stimulus Package. She is currently CEO of the Three Oaks Investments, and is a venture partner with Amplifier Venture Partners. Under the Clinton Administration, Ms. Lew served as Deputy Administrator and COO of the Small Business Administration. She served as the General Counsel at the Department of Commerce where she supervised 375 lawyers. She was unanimously confirmed by the US Senate for both positions. She has practiced law for more than 20 years as a partner in a Washington, DC law firm, and as Chief Counsel for the Department of Energy. She is a graduate of Boalt Hall School of Law and UCLA.*

***Mark Perriello** is Director of Priority Placement in the White House Office of Presidential Personnel. Mr. Perriello previously served as Director of Strategy and Planning at the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund & Leadership Institute, as a Senior Associate at Scott+Yandura, and as Associate Director for the Political Action Committee at the Human Rights Campaign. He is a graduate of Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee with a B.A. in Religious Studies.*

**Q: How should I submit my resume for a position with the Obama-Biden Administration?**

A: Follow the instructions at [http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog\\_post/apply\\_for\\_a\\_job/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog_post/apply_for_a_job/) because [www.change.gov](http://www.change.gov) and its application feature are no longer functional.

**Q: If I previously applied through [www.change.gov](http://www.change.gov), will my resume automatically be transferred through [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)?**

A: Yes. Those who applied through [www.change.gov](http://www.change.gov) need not reapply through [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov).

**Q: What actually happens to resumes once they are submitted?**

A: The Office of Presidential Personnel ensures that the resumes are sent to the appropriate cluster for review. There are six clusters: national security, energy and environment, economics, legal, domestic, and boards and commissions.

**Q: What are the best ways to promote my application once it has been submitted?**

A: Make sure people know that you are interested in a position, especially those individuals whose support may be particularly valuable for the position(s) you are seeking. Make sure you utilize all of your networks; NAPABA and AAJC are among them. Endorsement letters from your representatives in Congress can also be helpful. Be energetic in pursuing support while being understanding of others' needs to manage multiple priorities. Finally, heed these tips regarding resumes: include your name in the electronic filename, include your name and contact information on every page of your resume, limit your resume to two pages, consider organizing your resume by skill sets (strict chronological organization may be limiting), and list all activities that show you are a well-rounded individual.

**Q: Where can I find information and how can I do further research about jobs with the Administration?**

A: The first place to look is the Plum Book at [www.gpoaccess.gov/plumbook/2008/index.html](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/plumbook/2008/index.html), but knowing your areas of interest will help you navigate through this resource. Simple internet research on the incumbent or predecessor (as the case may be) in a particular position will lead to information about the experience the incumbent/predecessor gained while serving the Administration, which in turn will help you gauge your interest in undertaking the same or similar work.

**Q: How should an applicant proceed if he or she is open to serving in many positions for the Administration?**

A: Try to be as specific as possible regarding positions you are interested in, but indicate your flexibility. Individuals or organizations from whom you seek an endorsement may ask you to identify a limited number of positions as priority positions of interest.

**Q: Are there opportunities for individuals with less than 5 years of work experience?**

A: Absolutely. Consider staff assistant roles. Individuals knowledgeable on certain subject areas are often sought for such positions. If you are a lawyer, also consider lower to mid-level attorneys positions. Lastly, visit [www.usajobs.com](http://www.usajobs.com) to view career positions, which can be great

ways to get your foot in the door and which would lead to experience working with political appointees.

**Q: How can I find out if a particular position has been filled?**

A: Unfortunately, due to the nature of the vetting process, there is no straightforward way to find out if a position has been filled until someone begins service in that position.

**Q: How many positions remain in the Administration?**

A: The answer depends on which agency you are inquiring about. It may be helpful to bear in mind that once higher level positions are filled, these individuals often prioritize selecting their staff.

**Q: If one is already a career employee, what are his or her chances of moving into a political appointment in the same agency?**

A: This is rare but can happen. One important thing to remember for those interested in returning to a career position after the appointment ends, is that appointees will be perceived as political after they are finished serving. Also, while transitioning from a career position to a political appointment, make sure there is no break in federal service, which would complicate one's eligibility for healthcare, pension, and other benefits.

**Q: How should I pursue support based on my having worked on Obama's campaign?**

A: First and foremost in this regard, individuals who worked on the Obama campaign should work with their State Campaign Director. They should also reach out to those who they met or worked for while campaigning, who have since become White House liaisons.

**Q: After having researched positions through Plum Book, USA Jobs, and other internet sites, submitted my application on [www.change.gov](http://www.change.gov) and/or [www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov) (latter when functional), and utilized my various networks, what else can I do to promote my application for a position with the Administration?**

A: Applicants can email their resume to Mark Perriello at [Mark\\_L\\_Perriello@who.eop.gov](mailto:Mark_L_Perriello@who.eop.gov), who will work with NAPABA and AAJC to make sure the Administration is inclusive of all communities.

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