



Samantha Cyrulnik-Dercher

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Pronouns
She/Her/Hers

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Summary

Motivated advocate with significant expertise in using strategic communications to translate public policy into action. Experienced in using social media, public engagement, and strategic planning skills to engage national partners, community leaders, activists, and government officials in traditional and digital advocacy efforts for a variety of policy issues. Passionate about communications and outreach that engages young people in advocacy, leadership, and democracy.



Experience

SIECUS: Sex Ed for Social Change

Federal Policy Director

- ❑ Leads the development and execution of federal policy, advocacy, and public education strategies for a nonprofit supporting the right to comprehensive sexual health education and services for young people.
- ❑ Serves as the organization's spokesperson and subject matter expert on federal issues and sexual health promotion programs, promoting an intersectional framework of sex education and its relationship to LGBTQ equality, racial justice, and other progressive movements.
- ❑ Organizes and executes the launch of press events, advocacy campaigns, and public outreach efforts to engage partner organizations in advocacy centered around the health and rights of young people.
- ❑ Creates and edits communications deliverables including press statements, social media guidance, blog posts, and fundraising emails.
- ❑ Supports the CEO with grant proposals, budget creation and management, annual reports, strategic planning, and human resources, including instituting new hiring procedures to promote equity and inclusion.

Office of Congressman Tim Walz, United States House of Representatives

Acting Legislative Director

- ❑ Served as thought partner, providing critical strategic planning support and communications guidance on healthcare and women's rights for the Congressional office during the Member's simultaneous run for Governor of Minnesota.
- ❑ Managed legislative portfolio of healthcare, finance, judiciary, women's issues, and LGBT rights, and spearheaded outreach and communications strategies to engage stakeholders in the Member's legislative priorities.
- ❑ Supervised a team of legislative employees, including onboarding, training, and mentoring new staffers, assigning and directing legislative assignments, and ensuring that the staff is effectively carrying out the Member's goals.

Senior Legislative Counsel

- ❑ Created and executed long-term initiatives to help the Member assess the political landscape and accomplish his policy goals, including managing all policy and press for the Member's efforts on healthcare, finance, judiciary, women's issues, and LGBT rights.
- ❑ Spearheaded a women's professional development working group, mentoring the younger women staffers and ensuring that the senior leadership team was responsive to their needs and concerns.

Legislative Counsel

- ❑ Oversaw all legislative work related to a large portfolio of issues, including healthcare, transportation and infrastructure, tax and finance, judiciary, housing, women's issues, and LGBT rights.
- ❑ Researched and drafted policy memoranda, vote recommendations, and strategic plans while conducting outreach and strengthening stakeholder relationships to better inform the Member's decision-making process.

Staff Assistant/Scheduler

- ❑ Managed demands on the Member's time, including the creation and maintenance of the official schedule, overseeing travel logistics, and coordinating Member-to-Member correspondence.
- ❑ Attended and analyzed legislative briefings for senior staff and drafted response letters to constituents on a variety of policy issues.

May 2018 - Present

Dec 2017 - May 2018

May 2017 - Dec 2017

Dec 2015 - May 2017

Sept 2014 - Dec 2015



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Education

American University Washington College of Law, *Juris Doctor*

- ❑ Dean's Merit Scholarship; Featured Performer, American University Law Revue; Mentor, Student Bar Association
- ❑ Admitted to the District of Columbia Bar in 2014

Washington College of Law's Women & the Law and Domestic Violence Legal Clinics, *Student Attorney*

- ❑ Represented the custodial parent in an interstate child support case during appeal of a retroactive support order.
- ❑ Communicated regularly with the Child Support Services Division to troubleshoot administrative issues and ensure timely and regular child support payments.

Washington College of Law's Legal Rhetoric Program, *Dean's Fellow/Teaching Assistant*

- ❑ Assisted law professors in teaching year-long legal writing and research courses to first-year law students.
- ❑ Lectured classes on research, writing style, and citation and counseled students individually to improve the students' written communication skills.

The George Washington University, *Bachelor of Arts*

- ❑ *Cum laude*, Political Science; Domestic Affairs Editor, *GW Discourse* (political magazine)

Forbidden Planet Productions, *Artistic Director*

- ❑ Elected leader and spokesperson of George Washington University's largest student-run theater company, developing and executing four full-length shows per semester and overseeing all related events, outreach, and public engagement.



Media Coverage

- ❑ Dave Holmes, "[Let's Talk About Sex Ed](#)," *Esquire* (June, 2019)
- ❑ Katie Berohn, "[Clever new campaign reveals dangers of abstinence-only sex ed](#)," *Mashable* (June 2019)
- ❑ Hannah Smothers, "[Get the Sex Education You Never Had With These 9 Books](#)," *Cosmopolitan* (Nov 2018)
- ❑ Rebecca Ruiz, "[The Trump administration has been steadily sabotaging sex ed. Here's how](#)," *Mashable* (Oct 2018)
- ❑ Dakin Andone, "[Do you believe survivors? Activists descend on Washington to protest Kavanaugh](#)," *CNN* (Oct 2018)
- ❑ Christina Zdanowicz, "[Posters of the Jeff Flake elevator confrontation appear at Kavanaugh protest](#)," *CNN* (Oct 2018)
- ❑ Cindy Saine, "[Countering Islamophobia, Muslim Father and Son Go to US Congress](#)," *Voice of America* (April 2016)



Panels, Presentations, and Events

- ❑ Panelist, "[Young People and Intimate Partner Violence](#)" Congressional briefing hosted by Rep. Barbara Lee, Rep. Ayanna Pressley, and URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity, Washington, DC (Oct 2019)
- ❑ Speaker, "Federal HIV/AIDS Funding - Where We Are, What's Been Done, and What's Next?" [U.S. Conference on AIDS](#), Washington, DC (Sept 2019)
- ❑ Facilitator and Speaker, "The Physics of #MeToo," [National Sexual Health Conference](#), Chicago, IL (July 2019)
- ❑ Panelist, "[Summer Series 2019: Civic Engagement](#)," Jewish Women International, Washington, DC (June 2019)
- ❑ Organizer and Speaker, "[Nay to SRA: How the abstinence-only rebrand hurts young people](#)" Congressional briefing, hosted by Advocates for Youth, Answer, Healthy Teen Network, Planned Parenthood, and SIECUS, Washington, DC (June 2019)
- ❑ Organizer, "[Sex Ed For All Month](#)" Press Conference, hosted by Planned Parenthood, Advocates for Youth, Power to Decide, Healthy Teen Network, the Guttmacher Institute, and SIECUS, Washington, DC (May 2019)
- ❑ Panelist, "Sex Ed in Me Too," [Yale Education Leadership Conference](#), New Haven, CT (April 2019)
- ❑ Panelist, "Policy Landscape and Issues," [AIDSWatch](#), Arlington, VA (April 2019)
- ❑ Organizer and Panelist, "[Sex Education 101: Why Young People Need Inclusive Sex Education Policies](#)" Congressional briefing, hosted by Planned Parenthood, Girls Inc., and SIECUS, Washington, DC (March 2019)
- ❑ Guest Speaker, "National Women and Girls HIV/AIDS Awareness Day" Facebook Live chat, hosted by UCHAPS: Urban Coalition for HIV/AIDS Prevention Services, Washington, DC (March 2019)
- ❑ Panelist, "Sex Ed: Putting the FUN in Federal Funding," State Sex Ed Summit, Washington, DC (Nov 2018)