

Candidate Bios

Miranda Carruth - I was born in Lima, Peru, and raised in Charleston, SC, and after seven years in Baltimore, my husband, daughter, and I are now based in Puerto Rico. My career began in community and operations work for Uber, where I discovered how much I enjoy people and building systems that make their lives easier. Today, I'm the Customer Support Manager at MuckRock, where I help create and maintain the internal processes that guide our users through submitting public records requests. I care deeply about community, access, and helping people navigate systems that can feel overwhelming.

Past, Present and Future Contributions/Expertise: When I started MuckRock in 2021, I was brought on to clear two long-standing backlogs. To achieve this, I created and implemented new workflows in addition to hands-on training for team members. After years of observation and fine-tuning systems, I am redesigning our user request platform to simplify the request process for users, creating opportunities for user self-service, and reducing the number of common inquiries. In the future, I look forward to finding more ways to educate the requester on submission best practices.

Elisa Cogswell - I am currently a senior information law attorney with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Office of General Counsel (OGC). Through the years, my experience has been varied. I started my legal practice in 2001 as a prosecutor in San Diego and thereafter moved to toxic torts and employment law practice until changing course to work the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's Washington D.C. Field Office as an investigator for three years. In 2007, I took a position in VA's Office of General Counsel (OGC) also as an employment lawyer until I discovered information law. Since 2010, I have practiced in the information law field focusing almost exclusively in the FOIA, Privacy Act, and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act's (HIPAA) Privacy Rule. More specifically, I provide legal advice to anything and everything related to these statutes and their corresponding regulations. For FOIA, which is the bulk of my current practice, this has meant everything from answering questions arising from initial FOIA requests to answering FOIA appeals, and defending the agency in FOIA litigation. Through this practice, I have gained extensive experience explaining the FOIA legal issues being presented to agency employees, and creating training content for attorneys and non-attorneys to either introduce them to the subject area or deepen their existing skills. Most recently in 2025, I created information law training for OGC attorneys as well as provided this training in person by traveling to different agency locations. In 2025, I was also asked to provide oversight review for significant FOIA requests. This has required me to work collaboratively

with a multitude of FOIA professionals across the land and has led to a better understanding of the challenges faced by our FOIA officers. Currently, I am actively involved in the drafting of several new agency policies which will aid in addressing some of these challenges.

I am now at a point in my career where I not only have helpful insight and knowledge to share with our FOIA community but also have the time to serve on ASAP's Board, meet its duties and support its mission. I would be able to put the skills I have acquired over these past years to help develop training, plan conferences, and with energy and a positive attitude support other endeavors not yet planned or foreseen. I appreciate your consideration. It would be an honor to serve ASAP.

Aaron Cork – My current role is Government Information Specialist at Veterans Crisis Line. Previous roles include Co-Chair, VHA FOIA Office, FOIA Advisory Council, Records Management Officer, Alternate and Detailed VA Medical Center Public Affairs Officer and Alternate and Detailed VISN Privacy and FOIA Officer. I also have mentored three VA Medical Center Privacy and FOIA Officers, providing guidance on compliance, process improvement, and professional development. I have been a member of ASAP for over four years and attended numerous ASAP training events. In addition to ASAP training, I also have developed my professional training through the CITI Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative, Human Research and numerous VA programs on Mentoring and Core Coaching; Communications; Media Training; and Effective Privacy Act.

Past, Present, and Future Contributions/Expertise: (Privacy and FOIA Program Development) – At one of the VA Medical Centers, I established the first dedicated Privacy/FOIA program. At the Veterans Crisis Line (VCL), I founded the Privacy Program Section for a national VHA program with over 2,500 staff. This program became a model for addressing privacy and FOIA challenges in high-volume, high-stakes environments. (Training and Mentorship) - As a member of the VHA FOIA Advisory Council, I collaborated with colleagues to create a comprehensive training program and guide for new FOIA officers, standardizing various processes and providing clear guidance on FOIA compliance. I mentored three Privacy and FOIA Officers at VA Medical Centers, focusing on process improvement, compliance, and professional development. (Systems and Processes) - I developed a tracking system for incoming records requests, ensuring accurate accounting and compliance. This system streamlined the process, improved transparency, and reduced response times by roughly 20%. I implemented monitoring systems which were adopted by the VHA network. (Stakeholder Engagement) - I interacted

with high-ranking stakeholders, including Veteran Service Organizations, Congressional representatives, community leaders, media, and commercial entities to ensure transparency and compliance, resulting in improved stakeholder trust and confidence, thus furthering stronger relationships and increased collaboration. I provided subject matter expertise to senior leadership, local and facility law enforcement, Regional Counsel, and VHA network leadership on data governance and privacy matters. (Legal and Regulatory Expertise) - I reviewed federal court determinations and case law to make informed decisions on FOIA requests. I ensured all facility records were maintained and disposed of in accordance with Records Control Schedule 10-1 (RCS 10-1) and other regulatory requirements. I have over 18 years of experience with VHA and 14 years' experience as a government information specialist. I have many years of professional experience working with, and communicating with, the public, executive leadership, congressional offices and federal program leaders. I have reached a point in my VHA career to be a subject matter expert. I have a natural talent to teach, and I have a Bachelor of Arts degree in Education. I want to be professionally involved in something purposeful, and I am ready to use all these skills and talents to help others learn and develop their professional knowledge and skills involving federal records.

Toni Fuentes - I retired from federal service in September 2025. I have worked with some aspect of FOIA for over 30 years, both during my time on active duty in the United States Navy and during my federal civilian service. I have held positions of increasing responsibility beginning in 2004 when I began my civilian federal career at NASA, Kennedy Space Center as a paralegal in the Office of Chief Counsel. I have worked in FOIA dedicated roles as a civilian at Customs and Border Protection (CBP) as a FOIA Analyst, Department of the Navy (DON) as a FOIA paralegal specialist, United States Marshals Service (USMS) as a FOIA paralegal specialist, Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) (Formerly NPPD) as the Director of FOIA, and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) as the Deputy FOIA Officer for Litigation and Administration. I am currently the Director, Freedom of Information, for the Office for the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Privacy, Civil Liberties and Transparency (OATSD(PCLT)) for the Department of Defense.

Past, Present and Future Contributions/Expertise: I have served on the ASAP board as director-at-large 2024-2025. In addition to board responsibilities, I worked with the various committees helping to develop educational content. I also taught or co-presented at many of the ASAP training events. With over three decades of combined military and civilian experience with FOIA and Privacy, I believe that my varied background is an asset to the

Board of Directors at ASAP. I have managed FOIA Divisions, teams of FOIA professionals and FOIA Litigation Programs which further bolstered my problem-solving skills and provided a sound knowledge base for all things FOIA. I have been a member of ASAP for many years and truly enjoy the purpose of the organization and the camaraderie within the FOIA community.

Sally Hughes - I have been working on FOIA and Privacy matters for over 30 years. I served for 20 years as a Navy attorney and, for the 5 years prior to retirement from active duty, I was the Deputy Director of Navy's General Litigation Division within the Office of the Judge Advocate General, the appellate authority for most Navy and Marine Corps FOIA/PA appeals. After retiring, I became the Program Manager for the Marine Corps' FOIA and Privacy programs, acting as the IDA for Headquarters entities and the Inspector General and overseeing field command FOIA/PA activities, and have continued in that role for over 13 years.

Past, Present and Future Contributions/Expertise: Having worked in the FOIA/Privacy field for so long, I believe I have gained valuable and varied experience and perspective, and I would like to be a useful contributor to ASAP in any way that might be needed. I have worked FOIA/PA matters from different aspects...as a litigator working with DOJ, as an appellate authority, as an IDA, and as a program manager overseeing FOIA/PA activities at Marine Corps commands throughout the world. I have co-organized and taught at several 3-day training workshops and hosted Marine Corps "break out" sessions at the Navy and DoD workshops held in recent years, and I would be happy to assist in any capacity with ASAP events. I have developed professional and cordial working relationships with other agency entities as well as requesters, including with representatives of the media and 'watchdog' organizations, which I believe has led to a greater requester satisfaction level and a reduction in adverse actions such as appeals and litigation. In short, I would like to make a positive and meaningful contribution to ASAP and to the furtherance of goals such as practitioner education and training, standardized certification, promotion of good relationships with the requester community, and public understanding of FOIA and the Privacy Act.

Sarah Kotler was the FOIA Officer at FDA for 10 years. Previously, she was the Denials & Appeals Officer and Deputy Director of FDA's Division of Freedom of Information and an Office of Chief Counsel attorney. While at FDA, Sarah spearheaded a 75% reduction in FDA's FOIA backlog and modernized the FOIA program through technology and other operational upgrades. She also served two terms on the FOIA Advisory Committee. Since

leaving FDA in April 2025, Sarah has been working as a consultant, counseling clients on strategic public records requests in the U.S. and abroad.

Past, Present and Future Contributions/Expertise: In the past, I have been a speaker at the ASAP National Training Conference, most recently in 2024. Going forward, I hope to take a more active role in ASAP and feel that my experience as both a FOIA Officer and a private FOIA consultant will bring a unique perspective. I am particularly interested in operational issues, including modernizing FOIA, as well as customer service, appeals, and litigation. I will participate in board meetings, committee meetings, general meetings, and educational events. As I am self-employed, my schedule is fairly flexible.

Yvonne Marquez, a dedicated Attorney-Advisor with the Department of Treasury, Bureau of Engraving and Printing with 15 years of experience, brings a passion for analyzing information policy and transparent dissemination of information and ensuring the public has access to the information they need. As a former FOIA analyst for the Department of Energy and Department of Agricultural and now a FOIA Attorney-Advisor, she is dedicated in providing legal and policy guidance on information access issues and compliance on FOIA and Privacy Act regulations. Yvonne Marquez graduated from New England School of Law and is admitted to practice DC and New York.

Past, Present and Future Contributions/Expertise: Yvonne Marquez is a member of ASAP and the International Association of Privacy Professionals and is certified in paralegal studies. She is also a member of Toastmasters International. Yvonne looks forward to providing her expertise in defending agency interests as provided by the FOIA and Privacy Act, collaborating with stakeholders, public-speaking skills, and proving sustainable support to ASAP as a director-at-large. Beyond her legal expertise she has contributed to the legal community serving as legal counsel from 2023-2024, for Hands For A Cause, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) global humanitarian organization dedicated to providing services to underprivileged communities.

Jason Taylor is the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Program Lead at the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), a component of the Department of Energy. Previously acting as BPA's first FOIA Public Liaison, he now develops and monitors the agency's FOIA program policies, procedures, and training. With over 13 years of FOIA experience, he has processed FOIA and Privacy Act requests, developed agency-wide FOIA training, and matured the use technology and proactive FOIA to enhance BPA's transparency. Jason

performs regular analyses of the FOIA program to identify innovative approaches to reducing backlogs and improving customer relations. He is veteran of the U.S. Air Force, holds a Master's Degree in Library Science from Drexel University, and loves helping the inquisitive minds of FOIA requesters from across the globe.

Past, Present and Future Contributions/Expertise: Positions I've held previously include FOIA Public Liaison where I served as the agency expert and point of contact on FOIA and Privacy Act matters, and as the FOIA Office liaison with the Project Management Office and Cyber Forensics & Intelligence for all technical and functional issues with the agency's FOIA information technology applications. Prior to that I served as FOIA Lead Case Coordinator where I managed BPA's total FOIA workload and evaluated agency work processes and disclosure programs for recommendations to BPA's FOIA and Privacy Act Officer. Prior to that I served as Internal Auditor where I planned and conducted operational and financial audits on critical agency processes; assessed effectiveness of internal controls and efficiency of systems. I also worked with clients to provide assistance, resolve problems, and provided guidance on how to resolve governance and compliance issues. I assisted the FOIA/Privacy Act program with records collections and investigations. Currently I serve as FOIA Program Lead where I manage daily operations for BPA's program team including schedules, priorities and workload balance. I review/advise on complex cases; develop and maintain the policies and procedures for regulatory compliance; and coordinate with Office of General Counsel, senior management, and external entities (both federal and private) on specific FOIA and PA request cases. I also provide training, briefings, and advisory services to BPA organizations and Information Governance staff members. I manage BPA's public FOIA website and prepare and submit the Annual FOIA Reports. I act as functional manager for FOIA program technology (coordinates the maintenance, troubleshooting, and training for the agency's FOIA information technology applications). I continue to mature the agency's FOIA program and assist other federal power marketing administrations with FOIA innovation and benchmarking. I continue to foster and strengthen partnerships with other federal partners, state entities, and foreign institutions such as the Canadian Government. I participated in the FOIA Advisory Committee's focus group to discuss the challenges and obstacles agency FOIA professionals face in implementing innovative ideas. I earned certification in 2019 as a Certified and Compliance and Ethics Professional from the Society of Corporate Compliance and Ethics (SCCE). I attend yearly, robust training in from National Archives and Records Administration, the Department of Justice, SCCE, and ASAP to maintain this certification and develop my skills and expertise: My CCEP digital badge.