

KARRA W. MCCRAY

kwm252@gmail.com | 803-477-8834

EDUCATION

- Degree Anticipated May 2025 **Doctor of Philosophy**
Brown University | *Providence, Rhode Island*
Subfields: American Politics and Political Theory
- May 2018 **Master of Arts** in Political Science
Howard University | *Washington, DC*
Concentrations: Black Politics and American Government
- May 2016 **Bachelor of Arts** in Political Science & English
University of South Carolina | *Columbia, SC*
Magna Cum Laude - Leadership Distinction in Professional & Civic Engagement

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Assistant Faculty Principal at the Carolina International House at Maxcy College September 2018-Present
University of South Carolina, *Columbia, SC*

- Increased the enrollment of students in the Carolina Global Scholars program by 25% and maintained an 80% retention rate from previous year.
- Design and facilitate event planning and programming to include more academic focused and culturally diverse events with the assistance of the Business Manager and student leaders.
- Assist with strategic planning, assessment, and budget development for the academic year.
- Obtain and track demographic data of all residents from the previous academic year to devise a marketing plan to recruit and accept more men and students of color.
- Administer Maxcy-specific scholarships, the Magellan Navigator research grant and the Maxcy Travel grant.

Political Operant | Jack Scoville Attorney-at-Law, Georgetown, SC May 2013- August 2013

- Supported Jack Scoville with the development of political strategies, media communications and constituency outreach during his mayoral campaign for the city of Georgetown.

Legislative Aide | SC House of Representatives, Columbia, SC December 2012-June 2016

- Researched new legislation, tracked relevant political developments and prepared detailed summary reports for Rep. Carl L. Anderson, Rep. Joe Jefferson and Rep. Grady Brown.
- Aided Rep. Anderson with legislative, clerical, and constituent duties in the conduct of his responsibility as Chair of the SC Legislative Black Caucus by assisting with Caucus meetings, key staff events, outreach and press services.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University 101 Instructor August 2019-Present
University of South Carolina, *Columbia, SC*

- Support first-year students in their personal and academic transition to UofSC.
- Foster a sense of belonging, promote engagement in the curricular and co-curricular life of the university.
- Create meaningful assignments that allow students to develop critical thinking skills and recognize their strengths and translate them into success and opportunity.
- Lead dialogues and discussions promote personal development, wellbeing, and social responsibility.

State and Local Government Teaching Assistant

August 2017-December 2017

Howard University, *Washington, DC*

- Worked under the leadership of Dr. Keneshia N. Grant to lead group discussions with undergrad students on current events and social issues.
- Provided academic enrichment to students in an individual and small group setting to help improve their overall grade.
- Graded all exams and assignments for students and entered grades in Blackboard in a timely manner.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Ronald W. Walters Leadership and Public Policy Center | Howard University, *Washington, DC*

Political Consultant

May 2018-October 2018

- Developed materials and methods for data collection and analysis on the race of the top three staffers of each congressional, leadership and caucus office in the U.S. House of Representatives.
- Analyzed survey data and summarized data using fact sheets and tables to bring awareness to the lack of diversity among top staff in the U.S. House of Representatives.
- Co-authored the 2018 Diversity Among Top U.S. House Staff report under the leadership of Dr. Elsie Scott, Spencer Overton and the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies.
- Used the dataset to write six mini reports on the diversity of top staff in Delaware, Maryland, Mississippi, Pennsylvania, Tennessee and Virginia.

Graduate Research Assistant

January 2018-May 2018

- Planned, coordinated and hosted three book signings and discussions with Dr. Robert Smith to sell over 100 copies of *Ronald W. Walters and the Fight for Black Power, 1969-2010*.
- Conducted focus groups and interviews for the Engaging College Students in 21st Century Law Enforcement as a part of the Community Policing Development grant given by the U.S. Dept. of Justice.

Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program

May 2015-May 2016

University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC

- Conducted intensive research under the faculty supervision Dr. Todd Shaw entitled “To Fear or Not to Fear” that examined how unconscious prejudices affect fear and aggression in police officers policing of African American males.
- Compiled and presented findings at 2015 SAEOPP Conference in Atlanta, GA and won 3rd place in the Social Sciences division.

PROFESSIONAL PUBLICATIONS

Scott, Elsie L., **Karra W. McCray**, Donald Bell, and Spencer Overton. 2018. [*Diversity Among Top U.S. House Staff*](#). Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies.

McCray, Karra W., Donald Bell, and Spencer Overton. 2018. [*Racial Diversity Among Top Staff of the Delaware Congressional Delegation*](#). Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies.

McCray, Karra W., Donald Bell, and Spencer Overton. 2018. [*Racial Diversity Among Top Staff of the Maryland Congressional Delegation*](#). Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies.

McCray, Karra W., Donald Bell, and Spencer Overton. 2018. [*Racial Diversity Among Top Staff of the Mississippi Congressional Delegation*](#). Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies.

McCray, Karra W., Donald Bell, and Spencer Overton. 2018. [*Racial Diversity Among Top Staff of the Pennsylvania Congressional Delegation*](#). Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies.

McCray, Karra W., Donald Bell, and Spencer Overton. 2018. [*Racial Diversity Among Top Staff of the Tennessee Congressional Delegation*](#). Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies.

McCray, Karra W., Donald Bell, and Spencer Overton. 2018. [*Racial Diversity Among Top Staff of the Virginia Congressional Delegation*](#). Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS & PUBLIC TALKS

- “Let’s Talk About Colorism: A Roundtable Discussion” hosted by the Xi Beta chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., October 2018
- Accepted to present at the 2017 National Conference of Black Political Scientists (NCOBPS) in Baton Rouge, LA
- 2016 National Conference of Black Political Scientists (NCOBPS) in Jackson, Mississippi on March 18th
- 2016 National Association of African American Studies (NAAAS) Conference in Baton Rouge, Louisiana on February 11th
- 2015 SAEOPP McNair/SSS Scholars Research Conference, Atlanta, Georgia on June 27th

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Founder | Lifting Our Youth

February 2017-Present

- Award two high school seniors with high scholastic achievement and strong community involvement a \$1000 scholarship every academic year.
- Edit and revise high school and college students resume to highlight their strengths and increase their chances of employability.

HONORS/AWARDS

- Outstanding Advocate for First-Year Students Award, UofSC, May 2020
- Outstanding Service to Students- Division of Academic Affairs & Student Support- UofSC, May 2020
- Nominated for M. Stuart Hunter Award for Outstanding Teaching in University 101, January 2020
- Nominated for Outstanding New Staff Member and the Excellence in Collaboration Award, May 2019
- Outstanding Senior Award, 2016
- Who’s Who Among Students in American Colleges and Universities, 2016
- First Place in USC Connect Showcase at Discovery Day, 2016
- 2016 Greek Woman of the Year by the Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life at the University of South Carolina
- 2015 Dr. Kendra Ogletree-Cussac Spirit Award for the Ronald E. McNair Post- Baccalaureate Achievement Program
- 2014 Opportunity Scholars Program Tutor of the Year Award
- The Most Outstanding Achievement Student Award 2014, 2016

INSTITUTIONAL EXPERIENCE

Diversity Week | University of South Carolina

March 2019-Present

Planned and organized the inaugural *ThisIsUSC* event that celebrated the diversity and inclusivity of the UofSC campus by seeking to highlight the unique experiences and stories of students, faculty and staff.

First-Generation College Student Working Group| University of South Carolina

January 2019-Present

Increase awareness, education and success of first-generation college students through the development and execution of First-Generation training programs and a celebratory week.

International Education Week| University of South Carolina

September 2018-Present

Promote international understanding and build support for international educational exchange by developing programs that prepare UofSC student to live and work in a global environment.

RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

Racial and Ethnic Politics

State & Local Politics

Public Policy

Electoral Behavior

Women and Politics

Political Participation

Interests Groups

SKILLS/CERTIFICATIONS

- A to Z Grant Writing Class, Midlands Technical College, September 2018

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated

EDUCATIONAL TRAVEL

Global Classroom Learning Participant in Salvador de Bahia, Brazil

March 2015