

**Name:** Christopher Corbett

**Location:** Albany, N.Y.

**Name of workplace:** n/a

**Title:** independent researcher

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**Website (personal or workplace):** n/a

**Please describe your primary workplace and role:**

My primary paid work was for the New York State Public Service Commission in the regulation of public utilities. My role was as a public utility regulator to audit and investigate gas and electric public utilities, testifying to the findings as an expert witness in adversarial public hearings.

**Please describe any work you do related to public policy (paid or voluntary):**

My unpaid work primarily includes board service for over 10 years and chair of a legislative committee for a disability nonprofit representing families of individuals with disabilities. This required meeting with state senators and assembly members of the New York State Legislature for 10 years, including submitting testimony before the State Legislature on two occasions.

**What training/education do you have in community psychology? How has this training contributed to your work in public policy?**

I have an MA in Community Psychology (1994). My CP training included strong emphasis on essential need for second order change, intervening in systems at highest levels, and primary prevention.

These values led me to conclude that my priorities would include first, intervention at Sector level of intervention, including primarily the Nonprofit Sector, and understand complex inter-relationships with the Government and For Profit Sectors. This led to membership in ARNOVA and ISTR (see affiliations below) to apply CP principles at the Sector level of intervention-- and given the role and relationship with the Government Sector, to the critical need to influence public policy. My CP training shaped both my research and intervention interests first, in the Nonprofit Sector and secondly, in the Government Sector through attempts to influence or implement public policy I deemed important.

**What other training or experiences helped prepare you for your work in public policy?**

My paid work immersed me in the intense politics of public utility regulation and rate setting, testifying in adversarial settings and drafting legal briefs. This required conflict resolution and ability to fashion collaborative settlements with various parties. Also, to apply my CP principles to the Nonprofit Sector, I authored a book to improve NP governance and ethics that helps implement public policy goals of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 to prevent organizational malfeasance. The book is titled: *Advancing Nonprofit Stewardship Through Self-Regulation: Translating Principles into Practice* (Kumarian Press).

**What advice might you give to students and others thinking about working in public policy?**

Your CP training and values well prepare you for a potential role in influencing public policy. Yet, attempting to influence public policy is an ambitious undertaking and not suited to everyone. Aside from the need to develop various advocacy and intervention skills, three key qualities include persistence, willingness to take a long-term view and ability to tolerate politics with the give and take necessary to achieve consensus based, bi-partisan decision-making.

**Is there anything else you would like to say about your involvement in public policy?**

A lesson I learned is that one must have, or develop, the capacity to be truly bi-partisan and work across the aisle with both political parties if you expect to potentially influence public policy.

**Please list any professional affiliations that relate to your involvement in public policy.**

Since ~1994, I have been a member of the two research organizations of the Nonprofit, Voluntary or Third Sector and presented papers at their conferences. That is: ARNOVA (Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations & Voluntary Action) and ISTR (International Society for Third Sector Research).

