

Alumni Spotlight: Brittany Weaver '10 '15G

A double Wildcat follows a political career pathway all the way to the Capitol

Tuesday, March 13, 2018



Career and Professional Success recently caught up with *College of Liberal Arts* and *Carsey School of Public Policy* alumna Brittany Weaver '10 '15G about her career story and the pathway she's followed to her current position with US Senator Maggie Hassan.

Name: Brittany Weaver

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Major(s):

- Bachelor of Arts, [Political Science](#) and [International Affairs](#), 2010
- [Master of Public Administration](#), 2015

Previous position(s):

- Campaign Manager, Mandy Merrill for State Senate, NH District 21
- Finance Director, Kelda for Congress (Madison, WI)
- Deputy Finance Director, Maggie Hassan for Governor 2012
- Director of Special Events, Inaugural Committee Governor Maggie Hassan
- Special Assistant for Citizen Services, Governor Maggie Hassan
- Director of Administration, Governor Maggie Hassan
- Deputy Policy Director, Governor Maggie Hassan

Current position:

- Legislative Assistant, US Senator Maggie Hassan

What does a typical workday look like for you?

My main areas of focus are education and workforce, labor, housing and disability policy. My primary responsibility is to make policy recommendations to the larger staff and Senator related to legislation to support. In addition, I support the Senator on the Health Education Labor and Pensions (HELP) committee on the education, labor, and pension-related issues.

Each day looks a little different as a staff member in the Senate.

On any given day, I have a number of internal and external meetings, while the rest of the day is a balance of research, writing memos, and responding to emails.

What previous experience(s) prepared you for your current job?

I have been very fortunate to work for Senator Hassan for nearly six years. Starting as a fundraiser for her first campaign for Governor and now serving on her legislative team, I have a breadth of experience in both the political and official office sphere.

Many staffers who work in Congress have been working in some capacity in Washington, D.C. for a number of years. After more than a year, I am still working to figure out exactly how things work in D.C., but it has been a great advantage to really understand the state my boss represents in the Senate and the many priorities that the people of New Hampshire have.

What is the best part of your job?

I started working on education policy when I served in a policy role in the Governor's Office. Now, to be working on the same issue on the federal level is fascinating because I have a greater understanding of how policy is implemented on the ground. I would also be remiss if I did not say that I love NH so it's great to be in a role where I can help make changes that make our state,

and country a better place to live.

What challenges do you face in your position and how do you overcome them?

There is a lot to balance because I work on a number of important policy issues and finding the time to prioritize all of them can often be a challenge. My schedule is often dictated by what is happening in the news and other external forces rather than what is on my to-do list.

What's the most important thing you have learned on your career path?

When I was in college I was committed to working in foreign policy. I was very lucky to be able to intern at the U.S. State Department in the office of European Political and Military Affairs where I worked on the NATO team. The access I had was incredible and I enjoyed every minute. That being said, I ended up working in a Governor's Office and in turn focusing on domestic policy. Soon after I was assigned education as a policy topic, I realized that I was equally as passionate about education policy as I had been about foreign policy. I always say that education policy found me, and in turn taught me to not rule something out just because I may not have been interested in it before.

What are your professional goals?

I always have a hard time answering this question. First in the Governor's Office and now in the U.S. Senate, I have consistently been gratified by the work that I do and that I am working in a field that I aspired to be a part of throughout my studies. I have very much enjoyed working on education and disability policy. As I think about what I may do in my future career I would like it to relate to these areas.

What are you most proud of, or is there a memorable moment from your career path you can share?

I was born with a visual impairment, and with that disability, I had additional supports in school while I was growing up. Looking back, having these additional supports contributed to my success. I have been working on disability issues now for a number of years, and I am so grateful that I can help ensure that children with disabilities receive the support they need to succeed like I did.

Who is your role model (i.e. who inspires you) and why?

I have had the honor of working for a number of strong women. Starting my career working for Mandy Merrill, moving to Wisconsin to work for Kelda Roys who was running for Congress, and now working for Senator Maggie Hassan. All of these women and many others have constantly shown me that I can succeed on whatever path I choose to pursue.

What was your UNH experience like?

My time at UNH was very special. Neither of my parents had a college degree (though my mom went back to school at the same time I did), and though going to college was always an expectation, I didn't grow up fully understanding what that meant. I was blessed to have teachers who believed in me and family that would do anything to make sure I could pursue my dreams.

Freshman year, I knew I had a good idea of what I wanted to do during my time in college. My advisor at the time was [Professor Reardon](#). I met with him during my first semester and we mapped out together every credit I would need to take each semester to

Learn more about the **Master in Public Administration** program Brittany completed, offered through the [Carsey School of Public Policy](#) at UNH!

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graduate on time, while pursuing a double major, studying abroad in Italy, and doing an [internship in](#)

[Washington, D.C.](#) I did all of these things, along with being the president of the College Democrats during the 2008 election. I credit my experience at UNH for much of the drive and confidence that I have today.

Later, when I started working in the Governor's Office I attended graduate school and received my Masters in Public Administration from UNH. I was able to work and attend school full-time and am certain I would not be where I am in my career today if were not for that program.

What advice would you give to students looking to enter this field?

You never know where your career will take you, so be OK with changes. College is meant for digging into the things you are most passionate about, but it's important not to be overly prescriptive about what your career will look like. To have goals is important, but it is also important to reflect on what those goals are and to alter them on occasion as you follow your career path.

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COMPILED [Jonathan Constable '14](#) | Career and Professional

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