



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE TREASURERS

Evaluating Outreach and Earned Media Speaker Bios

Paris Ervin, Director of Communications, Illinois Treasury

Paris Ervin is the Chief Communications and Civic Engagement Officer for the Office of the Illinois State Treasurer. Paris serves as the Chief spokesperson for the Illinois Treasury, overseeing messaging, earned and paid advertising campaigns.

Prior to joining the Treasurer's Office, Paris Ervin was the Bureau Chief of Communications at the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). In that role, she served as the agency Spokeswoman, oversaw a team of community relations managers and managed a multi-million dollar media contract.

Paris started working for the state in 2008 as the Communication Manager for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and Illinois Department of Agriculture.

Prior to her state service, she was a Reporter/Fill-Anchor at WICS-TV in Springfield, Illinois.

Paris graduated from the University of Illinois Springfield with a Bachelor of Arts in Communications and Master of Public Administration.

Benno Schmidt III, Staff Investigator/Media Director, Verus Analytics

Summary of Experience

Mr. Schmidt's work has appeared on Sunday Morning, The Early Show, NBC Nightly News, The Today Show, MSNBC, CNN and elsewhere. As reporter and anchor for NBC's Miami flagship WTVJ, he led coverage of the nation's defining stories, including the Elian Gonzalez imbroglio, the voter recounts in Florida's presidential contests, and the terrorist connections in Florida after 9/11. Mr. Schmidt has reported from nearly every state in the U.S. and brings Washington experience after field anchoring hours of live coverage of High Definition News' (the nation's first high definition network, launched by Cablevision) coverage of President Bush's 2nd inauguration. In July of 2010, Benno received an Emmy nomination for his work on the PBS aired program Worldfocus for his long form reporting from Haiti.

Mr. Schmidt graduated with a BA in American Studies from Wesleyan University in 1993. Mr. Schmidt attended journalism classes at Columbia University prior to accepting a job at CNN.

Education

* Wesleyan University: BA, 1993

Experience

* Verus Financial LLC: Staff Investigator, Media Director

* dLife: Anchor and Principal Correspondent