



Strategic Communications Proposal In Support of the Beau Biden Foundation for the Protection of Children

Presented to

Josh Alcorn

August 1, 2018

Who We Are

Thank you for allowing us to submit a proposal for your consideration. ROKK Solutions is a full-service, bipartisan public affairs firm that provides winning strategies to its clients. Our team will work hand-in-hand with the Beau Biden Foundation for the Protection of Children to maximize coverage of your Special Olympics announcement and elevate the organization's brand.

Founded by Ron Bonjean, Rodell Mollineau and Brian Walsh, the firm's leadership have worked at the highest levels of government, won some of the country's biggest political and public affairs campaigns and are well-recognized and respected voices in national media circles.

ROKK Solutions sits at the nexus of policy and communications having spent years counseling companies, trade associations, coalitions and non-profits. Our team possesses decades of senior-level campaign and public service experience, which allows us to offer our clients a true understanding of the media strategies needed to create a climate for success.

We have worked on high-level public affairs campaigns in areas related to child protection, public health, trade, agriculture, transportation and financial services, successfully executing strategies that influence key audiences on a local, state and national level. Examples of our client roster include Protect LDS Children, Delta Airlines, HER Resiliency Center and the government of Puerto Rico.

Importantly, as a boutique public affairs firm, it is our senior leaders who will be available 24-7 and work directly with the Beau Biden Foundation to provide the resources and experience necessary to meet your needs.

How We Can Help

We will work **hand-in-hand** with your team to elevate the foundation's brand and **employ the following strategies designed to maximize coverage of its upcoming Special Olympics announcement.**



Strategic Overview

The Beau Biden Foundation for the Protection of Children has steadfastly enforced the life's work of Joseph R. "Beau" Biden to ensure all children are free from the threats of abuse. As it enters its fourth year, the foundation has an important opportunity to partner with the Special Olympics on an audit of its policies and practices regarding sexual abuse and assault.

In the wake of decades of abuse uncovered at the United States Olympic Committee, this project has profound significance as it is relevant to the current media discussion and provides a path forward to help ensure a tragedy of this magnitude never occurs again.

Over the next three months, the Beau Biden Foundation not only has the ability to lead the ongoing conversation on child abuse and sexual assault, but to brandish its national credentials with media influencers, potential donors, child serving organizations and the broader disability community.

In order to do so, the foundation must be ready to execute a multi-faceted communications campaign that:

- Educates citizens, influencers and stakeholders on the importance of the Beau Biden Foundation's mission and accomplishments.
- Coordinates the voices of validators and advocates in support of the foundation.

We recommend the following specific strategies in order to achieve those goals:

- > **Emphasize the Foundation Story:** The Special Olympics announcement is the perfect opportunity for the foundation to highlight its work over the past three years. The announcement could be a powerful introduction of the foundation to those that are learning about it for the first time. The context of what your organization has accomplished thus far is important to establishing credibility and raising further interest.
- > **Facilitate the National Dialogue on Prevention:** Media opportunities should also be used to help the foundation share its vision for the future and define the role it will play for years to come in preventing child abuse. While there has been no shortage of discussion on child abuse and assault in the last year, the Beau Biden Foundation's thought leadership on prevention and results driven programs can be used to define the organization as a solution provider.
- > **Leverage Voices In the Abuse and Assault Community:** There are many powerful voices the Beau Biden Foundation can utilize in amplifying its work and accomplishments. While members of the Biden family will certainly be a large draw, survivors, athletes, parents, law enforcement officials, policymakers and abuse experts should be called upon to applaud, echo and validate the foundation's vision. Building this broad coalition of support will be critical to influencing target audiences and amplifying the foundation's message.

ROKK Solutions would be honored to help you achieve these goals and navigate the terrain ahead. The following is a detailed proposal of how we can help your foundation and maximize coverage and elevate its brand.

Our Strategy

In order to **create a winning narrative** and **maximize coverage** for the Beau Biden Foundation and its upcoming announcement with the Special Olympics we recommend the following strategies:



Recommendations for Scope of Work

Strategic Communications

At ROKK Solutions we believe careful planning, perfect timing and flawless execution are keys to success. We can assist the Beau Biden Foundation in designing an effective blueprint to implement its communications objectives including:

- > **Creating a Strategic Communications Plan:** The Beau Biden Foundation has a multitude of positive message and data points that we can help present in an efficient, effective and easily understandable manner. We will help plan out controlled dissemination of key messages, create a master calendar to maximize saturation and design tactics to amplify the narrative.
- > **Message Development:** We will work with the foundation to develop key messages needed to elevate its brand and maximize coverage of its announcement. These messages will be evident in all content generated, stories pitched, interviews conducted and other amplification efforts. We will also gauge how different stakeholder audiences perceive and interpret information in order to develop the most effective targeted messages.

Media Relations

With close relationships in national, state and local media markets ROKK Solutions will educate reporters and place important news stories in key outlets.

We would start with an assessment of reporters who have covered these issues and then work to generate new interest by identifying and educating others in the media with similar or adjacent interests. For example, our research leads us to believe the following reporters who consistently covered the Larry Nassar case could be targets for your campaign.

- Lauren Green, Sports Illustrated: [The Scope of Larry Nassar's Abuse Extends Far Beyond Just Gymnastics](#)
- Carla Correa and Meghan Louttit, [New York Times: More than 160 women say Larry Nassar sexually abused them. Here are his accusers in their own words.](#)
- Eric Levenson, CNN: [Larry Nassar apologizes, gets 40 to 125 years for decades of sexual abuse](#)

Similarly, there are many key reporters who cover the Special Olympics we have identified including:

- Percy Allen, [Seattle Times: Organizers hope Seattle will greet Special Olympics with open arms, hearts](#)
- Lawrence Downes (freelancer), [New York Times: Special Olympics Takes On the World](#)
- Jacob Koffler, [Time: 5 Inspiring Athletes Who Will Get You Excited for the Special Olympics](#)
- Josh Peter, [USA Today: Dustin Plunkett's journey leads to dream job at Special Olympics](#)

Our aggressive media education effort will also focus on the following tactics:

> **Creating Earned Media Opportunities:** We will work to ensure consistent coverage of the foundation's announcement by developing compelling story pitches, anticipating openings to insert foundation messaging into news coverage and understanding the needs of journalists covering your issues.

We will start by planning a major press event/television appearance with the Biden family and a Special Olympics representative to announce the partnership. If time permits we would also recommend satellite feed interviews for all three networks so that they can be used for local newscasts across the country.

In conjunction with the announcement we recommend a conference call with the foundation's executive director. This will allow reporters who consistently cover the Special Olympics and abuse issues to have content to write more thoughtful pieces.

We would also work to generate longer profile stories about the Beau Biden Foundation and its work. As an example, we could reach out to Ronan Farrow to gauge his interest in writing such an article.

> **Developing Editorial Opportunities:** We will work to influence editorial boards and columnists about the importance of abuse prevention and the foundation's leading role in protecting vulnerable children. We will also work with editors of high-level publications to place op-eds authorized by surrogates and supporters.

> **Engaging TV-Radio Anchors/Hosts/Producers:** Our team will utilize its television and radio relationships to create a booking program that places foundation leadership and surrogates on air in key markets. We would develop tailored pitches to each individual news program and also provide producers with digestible content specifically made for their audiences.

Along with mainstream outlets, we believe there will be interest from sports-related media and possibly mid-day talk shows with heavy female viewership.

> **Media Intelligence:** We will provide reports regarding progress being made in breaking through to reporters and feedback on how the media is interpreting the communications campaign.

> **Media Training:** We will help prepare foundation leadership and surrogates for media and event appearances, providing them with concise talking points and conducting mock interviews.

Message Amplification



At ROKK Solutions we believe in concise messaging, repetition and building an echo chamber to get your point across. Working hand-in-hand with your allies throughout the country, we can help the Beau Biden Foundation effectively amplify its message to reach and influence larger audiences. This includes:

- > **Outreach to Third Party Validators:** We will identify and engage with advocates and organizations whose mission and philosophy coincides with that of the Beau Biden Foundation. We will share content with supportive groups and coordinate message delivery to compliment your strategic imperatives.

For example, we should engage Aly Raisman who has become an outspoken and credible advocate. Her participation would be helpful for television appearances as well as on social media.

We will also reach out to child abuse health care, law enforcement and disability organizations to leverage their voices. While some might not have star appeal of a former Vice President or a U.S. Olympic gymnast they do have audiences and a great deal of credibility, such as the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

- > **Content Development:** We will help distill the foundation's messages into easily digestible fact sheets, memos, talking points, press statements, op-eds and FAQ documents.

Crisis Management and Rapid Response



While the Beau Biden Foundation's mission is positive and worthy of everyone's adulation, it will not stop some from criticizing your efforts. ROKK Solutions will utilize years of media and campaign experience to recommend strategies on how best to push back on unhelpful stories. If needed, we will work to correct the record, pivot from criticism, and reframe harmful narratives. This includes:

- > **Crisis Mitigation:** By thinking as your opponents would and preparing for the worst-case scenarios we can head off attacks before they happen. ROKK Solutions would work with foundation to identify vulnerabilities and craft counter strategies to mitigate possible attacks.
- > **Real Time Message Dissemination:** We will work quickly to assess the damage of public attacks and devise appropriate measures of response including counter-messaging materials, media education and using our cultivated echo chamber to correct the record.
- > **Media Monitoring:** It is critical to stay abreast, minute-by-minute, of what the media is saying. A round-the-clock media monitoring system will be put in place to track activity in both traditional/new media forums (newspapers, cable TV, talked radio, political blogs etc.) as well as social media forums.

The ROKK Solutions Executive Team

The following partners will be working on this project



Rodell Mollineau |

Rodell Mollineau is a political and public affairs strategist with 20 years of experience developing national message campaigns, managing crises and leading high-level communications operations. A veteran of Capitol Hill, state government and electoral politics, he has provided strategic guidance to a multitude of elected officials, political candidates and organizations.

Prior to starting his own consulting practice, Mollineau served as a top aide to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and was tasked with crafting the communications strategies for some of the most significant policy initiatives and legislation in a generation. As Staff Director of the Senate Democratic Communications Center he also led the long-term planning, message development and rapid response operations of the Senate Democratic Caucus while working closely with the White House and House Leadership to coordinate programs and tactics.

Mollineau started his career as a press aide to Senate Democratic Leader Tom Daschle and then as Communications Director for U.S. Senator Mark Pryor. He later served as Communications Director to Iowa Governor Tom Vilsack, gaining valuable insight and experience navigating the inner-workings of state government.

Mollineau has played senior roles on several U.S. Senate and Presidential campaigns and has been regarded as one of the nation's top political influencers by the trade magazine Campaigns and Elections. As the first President of American Bridge 21st Century, he is credited for having built the research Super PAC into a multi-million-dollar organization active in dozens of federal and state campaigns. He is a graduate of the University of Dayton.



Ron Bonjean |

Ron Bonjean has over twenty years of public affairs and crisis communications experience and has managed some of the most significant business and policy debates affecting the lives of millions of Americans.

He also remains the first person to serve as the lead spokesman in both the House of Representatives and the United States Senate.

At the request of the White House, Bonjean served as the communications strategist for United States Supreme Court Nominee Judge Neil Gorsuch. He also acted as a top strategic communications adviser for the Presidential Transition Team assisting cabinet nominations through the confirmation process.

Bonjean was Chief of Staff to the Senate Republican Conference under Senator Jon Kyl; Communications Director to Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert; head of public affairs for Secretaries Don Evans and Carlos Gutierrez at the Department of Commerce and the top spokesman to Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott.

The Politico wrote, “Ron Bonjean is one of the most popular communicators in Washington — and that’s quite an achievement in a town with this much hot air”; Reuters called him

a “Washington Public Relations Heavyweight” and Buzzfeed says that Ron is the most “Washington of Washington Strategists.”

For the better part of a decade he was named to the Roll Call Newspaper’s Fabulous Fifty as one of the top movers and shakers behind the scenes on Capitol Hill. A frequent guest on many national news programs, Bonjean provides insightful political analysis to millions of viewers across the country. He currently serves on the Board of Visitors for the University of Wisconsin Madison Department of Political Science and is also a Fellow at the Georgetown University McCourt School of Public Policy.

Bonjean received his master’s degree in Journalism and Public Affairs from the American University and his undergraduate degree in Political Science from the University of Wisconsin- Madison.



Brian Walsh |

Brian Walsh has nearly 20 years of experience on Capitol Hill and dozens of campaigns at the local, state and federal levels. He is a veteran political strategist and public affairs expert who has worked at some of the highest levels of politics and government. Campaigns and Elections Magazine named Walsh one of the top communicators in Washington: “On the air, online and in the strategy room, these messengers will be out front for their parties.” And the cutting-edge political website BuzzFeed named Walsh as one on their top “communications-obsessed operatives for the Twitter-age” in Washington.

Prior to leaving Capitol Hill, Walsh served as current Senate Republican Whip John Cornyn’s chief communications strategist — first in his official Senate office as Communications Director and then at the National Republican Senatorial Committee (NRSC) for both the 2010 and 2012 election cycles during which Republicans gained five new Republican Senate seats. He was also a consultant to the NRSC team that won the Senate Republican Majority in 2014.

In addition to his work in the Senate, at the NRSC and on numerous political campaigns, Walsh also worked in the U.S. House of Representatives for almost 10 years, where he served as Communications Director for a key Congressional Committee and several members of Congress. He is a graduate of Bucknell University.



Katy Summerlin |

The following ROKK Solutions team members will also be assigned to this project

Katy Summerlin is an Account Executive and came to ROKK from the office of Georgia Congressman Doug Collins (R-GA-09), where she served as Communications Director. Summerlin previously served on the press team of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, and also worked in the office of Congressman Frank Wolf (VA-10). Summerlin graduated from James Madison University with an undergraduate degree in Journalism.



Ryan Hughes |

Ryan Hughes is an Account Executive and came to ROKK from the public affairs firm, Shirley & Banister Public Affairs where he served in a pivotal role handling conservative media relations for Governor Scott Walker's (R-WI) campaign for President, and later managed key aspects of the surrogate booking operation for Governor John Kasich's campaign for President. Hughes received his undergraduate degree in Political Science from Loyola University Chicago.

Budget and Timeline

Development of this communications program can begin immediately upon agreement with timeline to be determined by the Beau Biden Foundation's immediate and long term needs. Based on our discussion and the proposed scope of service, we believe this program can be implemented for a \$12,500 a month retainer. Digital advertising, video and creative production will be priced based on the breadth and length of the campaign.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this potential engagement. If you have any questions or further thoughts regarding this proposal, please call Rodell Mollineau at 202.669.5424.