

Joel Watson, Jr., Communications Director

Phone: 225-341-9100 | Email: joelwjr2024@gmail.com | Website: joelwjr.com

Profile:

Communications strategist with over 12 years of experience in political, governmental, and grassroots roles. Proven record of designing award-winning campaigns that increased voter engagement and strengthened public trust.

Core Skills:

Communications strategy, speechwriting, media relations, social media management, community outreach, policy research.

Tools: Critical Mention, Buffer, Canva, Mailchimp, Microsoft Office Suite.

Experience:

Deputy Secretary of State, Communications | Louisiana Department of State | 2019-Present

- Lead statewide communications strategy for the Louisiana Department of State.
- Designed and implemented a year-long election integrity campaign that increased public confidence in election security by 13%.
- Crafted multiple award presentations, resulting in the agency receiving four national awards in three years.
- Oversaw messaging, media coordination, media buys, managing a communications team of four.

Account Executive | LR3 Consulting | 2015-2016, 2017-2019

- Managed multiple candidate accounts for local, state, and national political campaigns across Louisiana and Arkansas.
- Developed data-driven grassroots plans.

Regional Field Coordinator | The Leadership Institute | 2016-2017

- Recruited and trained political activists on political technologies and the public policy process across nine states.

Additional Experience:

Legislative Aide (Rep. Valerie Hodges, 2015), Statewide Grassroots Director (Louisiana Family Forum, 2014), Deputy District Director & Internship Director (2013-2014).

Education:

Harding University, Searcy, AR—Coursework in Communications, 2009

Key Achievements:

- Crafted communications strategy that resulted in over \$8.4 million in publicity and increased the percentage of Louisianans expressing confidence in elections from 61% to 74%.
- Developed presentations that resulted in four national awards for the Louisiana Department of State: the 2022 National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS) IDEAS Award, the 2024 NASS Margaret Chase Smith Award, and the 2022 and 2024 Election Assistance Commission Clearinghouse Award.
- Crafted an ongoing, \$3.5 million campaign to educate Louisiana voters concerning the transition to closed party primaries.
- Developed a policy plan resulting in Louisiana moving to the top five in the nation for election integrity.