

WINNING STRATEGIES

POLITICS • POLICY • PUBLIC AFFAIRS

ROBIN LEEDS

Robin Leeds is a senior political strategist, organizer and advocate with more than 30 years of work in the government, labor, business and non-profit sectors. Her experience is unusually broad, from rank and file workplace organizing to spearheading major initiatives from the Clinton White House, giving her the capacity to work with people from all sectors of society and a wide range of constituencies. Ms. Leeds' expertise encompasses women's leadership development and multi-cultural communications, public policy advocacy, grassroots organizing, political and non-profit fundraising, donor advising and philanthropy, campaigns and elections, government affairs, civic engagement, and corporate social responsibility.

Ms. Leeds manages Winning Strategies, a public affairs and political consulting firm in Washington DC. Winning Strategies has represented a range of organizations from the Inter-American Commission on Women at the Organization of American States to The Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights. Recent clients include: The Creative Coalition, Astellas Pharma US, Insight Center for Community Economic Development, and Envision, EMI. Winning Strategies regularly provides strategic consulting on the women's vote to presidential, congressional and gubernatorial campaigns and advised President Obama's women's outreach and policy teams during his 2008 campaign.

Ms. Leeds is a member of the Harvard Women's Leadership Board and AARP's Women's Leadership Council, and a Woodrow Wilson Visiting Fellow. She was a Fellow at the Center for Public Leadership at the John F. Kennedy School of Government and an Advisor to the Senior Director of University Women's Initiatives at Harvard University. She was a Scholar-in-Residence at the Women in Politics Institute at American University, and Academic Advisor to the Carter-Baker Commission on Federal Election Reform.

Ms. Leeds' lifelong commitment and work has been to expand access to economic, civic, and social opportunities for all Americans and has consistently fought to increase the participation, visibility and leadership of women in politics and government. She served as a political appointee to President Clinton from 1994 to 2000. While serving at the White House Office on Women's Initiatives she coordinated domestic public policy and constituency development efforts. She also played a significant role in numerous global initiatives relating to the status of women -- U.S. follow-up to the U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women, US Delegation to the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women, 50th Anniversary Celebration of the Human Rights Declaration, CEDAW (Convention to End Discrimination against Women) and International Women's Day Commemorations.

Ms. Leeds' most notable public policy accomplishments in the Clinton administration include: raising the national childhood immunization rate to 90% for the President's Child Immunization Initiative at the Department of Health and Human Services, implementing the

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National Voter Registration Act, “Motor Voter” in the WIC, Food Stamps and AFDC programs at the Department of Agriculture, and building the public private partnership that significantly increased youth training and employment for the President’s Youth Opportunity Movement at the Department of Labor. She is also credited with building presidential and congressional support for pay equity, Title X family planning, Title IX affirmative action, paid family and medical leave, reproductive rights and health, and domestic violence and sexual harassment protections. In 1997, Black Women United recognized her as *The Most Admired Person* for her contribution to advancing the agenda of women of color.

During the 2004 presidential primary, Ms. Leeds served as National Co-Chair of Women for Kerry, taking a lead in the creation and management of Women’s Voices on the Trail (WVOT), the national women’s outreach, education, and vote program for Senator John Kerry. WVOT coordinated with all aspects of the campaign to ensure that the concerns of women were fully integrated into policy, message, and strategy. Ms. Leeds has advised other presidential campaigns on the women’s vote -- Al Gore, Bill Clinton, Michael Dukakis, Jesse Jackson and Walter Mondale.

In connection with the 2004 election cycle, Ms. Leeds saw an opportunity to encourage young women to become political leaders. Winning Strategies organized a partnership with the National Council of Women’s Organizations, Lifetime Television, Lesley University and Barnard College to create and produce the *Young Women’s Leadership Conference ’04* (YWLC ’04). Coinciding with the Democratic and Republican National Conventions, the YWLC ’04 prepared 500 young women to become effective leaders inspiring women across the country to register, take a stand on the issues and vote.

As one of the nation’s leading advocates for election law reform and voting rights, Ms. Leeds led many successful campaigns to increase voter participation. She developed state and federal strategies including government executive action, legislative reform, litigation, ballot initiatives, and public private partnerships. Ms. Leeds’ work on voter participation and democracy building began in 1984 when she directed Massachusetts Human SERVE (Human Service Employees Voter Registration and Education Campaign). She then worked for the Massachusetts Committee on Elections Laws, served on the Secretary of State’s Voter Participation Partnership and was Campaign Director for the Voter Registration by Mail ballot initiative. She was recognized by the Massachusetts Legislature for her *Outstanding Commitment to Reforming Voter Registration Laws*.

In 1992, Ms. Leeds organized a nation-wide voter registration and get-out-the-vote effort for VOTE NOW 92’, a public charity that funded some of the most effective drives. She played a leadership role in the development and passage of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA), also known as “Motor Voter”. Ms. Leeds served as liaison to the National Motor Voter Coalition for the Clinton-Gore Transition Team, and subsequently coordinated the Clinton Administration’s government-wide NVRA implementation efforts. During the 2004 and 2008 election cycles, Winning Strategies partnered with the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights and People for the American Way to organize non-partisan election protection programs.

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During the 1980's, Ms. Leeds organized a number of labor community initiatives for the Massachusetts AFL-CIO and Building Trades Council including a referendum campaign that prevented the repeal of the Prevailing Wage Law and the Pension Investment Project. As an active member of SEIU, she organized private and public sector health care workers. She also coordinated a campaign to implement the Boston Jobs Ordinance that increased access for women and people of color to careers in the building trades.

Ms. Leeds is a graduate of the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study and Institute for Intellectual Renewal. She is a frequent presenter at national and international conferences and forums, and provides commentary to the press on a broad range of public policy issues. Ms. Leeds has served on numerous boards including: Mary's Center for Maternal and Childcare, United for a Fair Economy and the Martha's Vineyard Donors Collaborative. She is an active member of the Democratic National Committee's Women's Leadership Forum.

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