

CHIRAAG BAINS

EXPERIENCE

The Brookings Institution, Washington, DC

Nonresident Senior Fellow, Brookings Metro, Jan. 2024 – Present

Public Policy and Legal Strategy Consulting, Washington, DC

Independent Consultant, Aug. 2023 – Present

Advise private sector clients, nonprofit organizations, and foundations on policy development, legal strategy, partnership opportunities, and risk. Provide landscape analysis, scenario planning, and other services. Areas of focus include artificial intelligence, democracy, economic mobility, equity and inclusion, and criminal justice.

Domestic Policy Council, The White House, Washington, DC

Deputy Director and Deputy Assistant to the President, Oct. 2021 – Mar. 2023

Advised President Joe Biden and Domestic Policy Advisor Susan Rice on domestic policy priorities. Regularly led decision-making meetings of agency Deputy Secretaries over policy options. Managed a team of experts to develop and implement executive orders, legislation, regulatory priorities, budget proposals, new grant programs, and presidential events. Anticipated and navigated legal and political risk, working closely with the Counsel's Office and the communications, legislative affairs, and intergovernmental affairs teams. Areas of focus included: artificial intelligence, democracy and voting rights, criminal justice, the racial wealth gap, LGBTQI+ equality, disability rights, Native affairs, effective distribution of new federal funding streams, and diversity and inclusion.

Accomplishments include:

- Led implementation of the President's Day One executive order on equity, including the release of 90 agency action plans and an equitable data strategy, as well as his EO on diversity in the federal workforce.
- Led DPC's strategy to address artificial intelligence by rolling out over 20 agency actions to protect workers and consumers from algorithmic bias, helping produce the *AI Bill of Rights*, and securing a presidential directive that all agencies design and use AI in a manner that advances equity.
- Oversaw DPC's efforts to secure landmark legislation, including the Electoral Count Reform Act, the Respect for Marriage Act, expansion of the Violence Against Women's Act, and permanent authorization of the Minority Business Development Agency, among others.
- Led development of a historic executive order on police reform and public safety. Advised the President on marijuana policy, leading to thousands of pardons and a regulatory effort to reschedule the drug.
- Quarterbacked the development of government-wide strategies to promote the equitable distribution of Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding to communities across the country.
- Supervised development and execution of a national action plan to combat housing appraisal bias, including through automated valuation models, and efforts to increase federal contracting with small disadvantaged businesses by 50% (\$100 billion) by 2025.
- Oversaw the creation of the first-ever opportunities for voter registration through federal offices.
- Collaborated with agencies on regulations under Title IX, the Fair Housing Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act, the Social Security Act, and other statutes.
- Helped craft the President's FY22 to FY24 budget requests, and secure new funding streams for election administration, public safety, health care in Indian Country, HBCUs, and other priorities.
- Oversaw the planning and execution of the United We Stand Summit against hate-fueled violence at the White House and two Tribal Nations Summits, announcing dozens of new policy commitments.

Special Assistant to the President for Criminal Justice and Guns Policy, Jan. 2021 – Oct. 2021

- Led the administration’s strategy to invest in Community Violence Interventions (CVI) to prevent shootings and homicides—securing \$100 million in new annual appropriations and launching an initiative to support violence interrupters and similar strategies in 16 cities with the support of 15 philanthropies.
- Developed the President’s 2021 comprehensive strategy to reduce gun crime; staffed the President and Ambassador Rice for roundtables with police chiefs and other public safety experts.
- Prepared and oversaw implementation of the President’s executive order on private prisons, resulting in over 8,000 people being moved out of privately operated facilities.
- Designed a slate of agency actions to promote second chances for people with convictions, including a novel \$145 million partnership between the Departments of Justice and Labor.
- Shepherded the development of a legislative proposal to combat fentanyl while safeguarding against racial disparities in prosecution and facilitating scientific research for Schedule I substances.
- Developed a presidential order on access to justice, directing agencies to expand support for legal aid.

Biden-Harris Transition Team, Washington, DC

COVID Policy Team, Nov. 2020 – Jan. 2021

- Prepared options for White House and Justice Department to address COVID-19 racial disparities.

Biden-Sanders Unity Task Forces, Washington, DC

Co-Chair, Criminal Justice Reform Task Force, May – June 2020

- With Rep. Bobby Scott (VA), led current and former senior government leaders in negotiations over the DNC’s 2020 criminal justice platform and additional policy recommendations to nominee Joe Biden.

Dēmos, Washington, DC

Director of Legal Strategies, Feb. 2018 – Jan. 2021

- Managed a 12-person team of litigators and support staff pursuing voting rights lawsuits and appeals as well as legislation across the country. Led legal team hiring, budgeting, fundraising, and work planning.
- Won court judgments and settlements to stop illegal voter purges in TX, IN, and OH and to require voter registration services in MO and SD under the National Voter Registration Act. Launched a national Voter Purge Table to coordinate efforts with other nonprofit organizations.
- Won injunction requiring Florida to provide ballot materials in Spanish under the Voting Rights Act.
- Represented voters seeking emergency accommodations during the COVID-19 pandemic in FL and MO, eligible pretrial detainees denied the vote in OH and CA, and voters facing intimidation in NY.
- Testified before the U.S. Committee on House Administration and the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.
- Regularly wrote op-eds and commented on civil rights, money in politics, and economic inequality.

Harvard Law School, Criminal Justice Policy Program, Cambridge, MA

Visiting Senior Fellow, Jan. 2017 – Mar. 2018

- Led a team that provided legal analysis and recommendations on Los Angeles County’s bail system.
- Consulted on court fines and fees, forensic science, ethical prosecution, and police technology.

Open Society Foundations, Washington, DC

Leadership in Government Fellow, Jan. 2017 – Feb. 2018

- Conducted research and published on police accountability and other criminal justice reform strategies that respect constitutional rights, build trust, and enhance public safety.

U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, Washington, DC

Senior Counsel to the Assistant Attorney General (Political Appointee), 2014-2017

- Supervised matters from four litigating sections, concerning fair housing and fair lending, voting rights, unconstitutional policing, prison and jail conditions, and appeals.
- Investigated and sued Ferguson, Missouri, for unconstitutional police and court practices. Co-wrote the groundbreaking findings letter (The Ferguson Report), filed suit, and negotiated a consent decree.
- Launched DOJ-wide initiative on unlawful fines and fees. Led collaboration with the Office of the Deputy Attorney General and Bureau of Prisons on a landmark report to President Obama recommending reducing the use of solitary confinement. Oversaw legal strategy to contest unlawful bail systems and the criminalization of homelessness. Managed creation of the new portal vote.gov.
- Managed congressional oversight—preparing Assistant Attorney General for two high-profile hearings, instituting a new system to ensure timely responses to congressional inquiries, and providing technical assistance to the Hill on proposed legislation.
- Regularly coordinated with DOJ leadership offices, as well as the Office of the Solicitor General, the Office of Legal Counsel, the Civil Division, and enforcement offices in other agencies.

Trial Attorney, Criminal Section, 2010-2014

- Prosecuted assaults, thefts, and sexual assaults by police and correctional officers under color of law; cross-burnings and other violent hate crimes; interference with access to reproductive health facilities; and human trafficking in federal district courts in AL, AR, CA, and FL. Worked closely with FBI, DHS, and U.S. Attorney's Offices.
- Conducted extensive grand jury investigation; tried two cases to jury verdict; and presented evidence and arguments at motions, sentencing, and post-conviction hearings.
- Conducted legal trainings on civil rights investigations, including at the National Advocacy Center.

U.S. Attorney's Office, District of Columbia, Washington, DC

Special Assistant U.S. Attorney, Sex Offense & Domestic Violence Unit (Detail), Oct. 2010 – Apr. 2011

- Handled over 200 misdemeanor domestic violence cases and had 25 bench trials.
- Secured conviction in first-degree felony domestic assault causing serious bodily injury.

Hon. Karen Nelson Moore, Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals, Cleveland, OH

Law Clerk, 2009-2010

Hon. Nancy Gertner, U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts, Boston, MA

Law Clerk, 2008-2009

Jenner & Block LLP, Washington, DC

Summer Associate, 2007

Senate Judiciary Committee, Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), Washington, DC

Summer Law Clerk, 2007

Coro New York Leadership Center, New York, NY

Coro Fellow in Public Affairs, 2004-2005

Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP, New York, NY

SEO Summer Intern, 2004

EDUCATION

Harvard Law School, J.D., 2008, *cum laude*

Harvard Law Review, Articles Editor

Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review, Editor

Ames Moot Court Competition Finalist

Criminal Justice Institute, student public defender

Research Assistant to Professors Carol Steiker & Jon Hanson

Paul & Daisy Soros Fellowship for New Americans 2005 (national award)

University of Cambridge, King's College, M.Phil. in Criminology, 2004

Gates Cambridge Scholar 2003 (national award, full tuition & expenses)

Yale University, B.A., History and Ethnicity, Race & Migration, 2003, *magna cum laude*, *Phi Beta Kappa*

Truman Scholar 2002 (national award for public service)

James Andrew Haas Prize for academics and leadership (college-wide, awarded at commencement)

Morse College Master's Prize for academic achievement (top honor in residential college)

ADDITIONAL HONORS

Trending Top 40 Under 40 in DC, 2016

Attorney General's Award for Exceptional Service (highest award for employee performance), 2015

DOJ Special Achievement Award, 2012

Harvard Law School Heyman Fellowship (for graduates in federal service), 2010

MEMBERSHIPS AND ACTIVITIES

State Bar Admissions: Massachusetts (2008–present), District of Columbia (2019–present).

Federal Court Admissions: D. Mass., N.D.N.Y., and 5th, 6th, 7th, 9th, and 11th Circuit Courts of Appeals.
Chair, Civil Rights and Policing Subcommittee, Justice 2020 Transition Committee for Brooklyn District Attorney Eric Gonzalez.

Trust Initiative Advisory Board, International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), 2017-18.

Working Group on Officer Involved Shootings, Institute for Innovation in Prosecution, 2018-19.

Speaker, Law Enforcement Action Partnership (LEAP).

Manuscript Reviewer, *New Criminal Law Review*, 2017-18.

National Board, Association of Asian American Yale Alumni, 2011-19.

Member, Asian Pacific American Bar Association and South Asian Bar Association of DC

MEDIA EXPERIENCE

Published op-eds in: New York Times, Washington Post, Bloomberg Law, The Guardian, Slate, Newsweek, The Hill, The Marshall Project, other outlets.

Published journal articles in: Indiana Law Journal, Federal Sentencing Reporter, Journal of Criminal Law & Criminology, Harvard Law Review (as student), and Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review (as student).

TV and radio appearances include: PBS NewsHour, NPR, HBO Vice News, Malcolm Gladwell podcasts.