

Education & Workforce Conference

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Senator Deanna Ballard

Deanna Ballard is a native of North Carolina who has built a career based on dedicated service to others and a firm foundation in conservative values. She currently serves as Director of Public Policy for Samaritan's Purse, an international Christian relief organization headquartered in Boone. She advises and assists senior leadership and other stakeholders in determining effective communication and public policy strategies to move the organization forward in accordance with their core missions. Prior to that she served as Director of the Office of the President/CEO where her work included directing financial, administrative, and operational activities and relationships on behalf of the president/CEO, Franklin Graham, in order to coordinate complex humanitarian and ministry efforts across multiple offices around the world.



As a member of the North Carolina State Senate, Deanna has worked diligently to represent her constituents while serving as Chairwoman on the Committees on Education/Higher Education Appropriations, Education/Higher Education Policy, and Pensions. She also serves as a member on Health Care, Health Care Appropriations, Appropriations/Base Budget, Government Operations, Finance, Nominations and Rules/Operations of the Senate.

Deanna first became involved in political service as a volunteer for George W. Bush's Presidential Advance Team and quickly rose through the ranks to become Special Assistant to the President and Director of Scheduling and Advance for the First Lady—making her one of the youngest female commissioned officers within the Bush administration.

While serving with President and Mrs. Bush, Deanna improved productivity and efficiency by merging and restructuring the functions of Scheduling and Advance. She oversaw the planning and implementation of a wide range of high-level events for the president and first lady, and often led collaboration efforts between the East and West Wings of the White House on various issues and deliverables in support of the President's agenda. Her work spanned across a wide spectrum of responsibilities from managing large teams of staff and volunteers to logistics to messaging and communications.

Prior to her time with President and Mrs. Bush, Deanna served as the Director of Advance for Department of Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff and Deputy Director of Advance for Department of Education Secretary Rod Paige. Her work with Secretary Paige strengthened her resolve to fight for quality education as she visited classrooms across the country, met school leaders, and listened as teachers shared their successes and challenges at roundtable events.

Throughout her successful career, Deanna has remained committed to the conservative principles that defined her childhood in North Carolina. As the daughter of a public school teacher and a logger in a family-owned business, she gained an appreciation for hard work, family values, and the opportunities that can only come from free enterprise. She is deeply engaged with small business owners and has extensive knowledge of the challenges they encounter.

Deanna has a degree in Business from Belmont University and was selected as a Fellow for the Hunt-Kean Fellowship, a Fellow for the E.A. Morris Fellowship for Emerging Leaders, is a current member of the distinguished AEI Leadership Network and State Legislative Leaders Foundation - Emerging Leaders Program and recently honored as one of MAVPAC's "Future 40."