

# Salazar & Associates



## About the Firm

Prior to the creation of the firm, Ms. L. Antoinette Salazar was an independent contractor working as a solo lobbyist since 2000. Ms. Salazar formed Salazar & Associates, an independent lobbying and political consulting firm, in 2002. The firm's office is located across the street from the state capitol at 1410 Grant Street, Suite C307, Denver, CO 80203. Our primary phone number is 720.231.1425; our fax number is 866.653.4119; our website is [www.t2salazar.com](http://www.t2salazar.com); and our primary email address is [tonette.salazar@gmail.com](mailto:tonette.salazar@gmail.com).

The firm has more than eighteen years of political consulting and legal experience. At Salazar & Associates, we pride ourselves on providing a mechanism to voice the needs and concerns of our clients - with guidance from the client - at the state legislature, state departments and agencies, and various taskforces and workgroups. Our areas of strength lie primarily in K-12 and higher education issues.

Our firm can provide information on legislative issues, including easily understood analysis of complex legislation, daily reporting of the current status of legislation, and up-to-date conversations surrounding legislation. Under the direction of Tonette Salazar, clients receive legislative information, representation, and participation at the legislative and department levels. Our firm is able to position itself in the most effective way to take advantage of opportunities that arise within the Colorado General Assembly and various departments. Clients dictate the level of involvement and presence they wish to have at each level of policy-making. Without the most up-to-date and complete information, our clients are in the best position possible to make those decisions. Our ability to participate as a team player, provide timely information, provide a seat at the table for discussions, and build coalitions ensures the success of our clients.

## Philosophy

Our firm does not profess to be an expert in any particular content matter; we do profess to be an expert in the legislative process and political strategy. We guide our clients through the maze of legislation, seeking their testimony and input on legislation and rules that they feel is of utmost importance. On those issues, we become actively involved. On other issues, we closely monitor the situation, keeping our clients informed in the event that the issue develops into something of concern or importance. We work closely with our clients' staff to ensure the best information is being relayed on their behalf and to ensure that we fully understand our clients' priorities.

Excellent relationships with both Republicans and Democrats in both legislative chambers are essential when seeking support from legislators to advance legislative issues and to relay important information regarding legislation. Nurturing those relationships with legislators continues throughout the calendar year in order to allow for a more pro-active approach to legislation instead of a reactive approach. It is also important to keep legislators informed of issues of importance at the client-level so that they can be more knowledgeable when speaking to the general public and fellow legislators about key issues for their constituency.

# Employees of the Firm

## L. Antoinette Salazar, Esq., Principle

Tonette Salazar has been involved in politics in Colorado since 1993. She began her career as a legislative staffer in the Office of Legislative Legal Service, which is the office responsible for researching and drafting legislation. She then held the position of Amendment Clerk for the Colorado State Senate and Computer and Technical Computer Support for both the Colorado House of Representatives and the Colorado Senate. Tonette started her own lobbying and political consulting firm after completing law school; her background as an attorney and legislative staffer brings valuable expertise to the firm. Beyond standard services provided by a lobbyist, Tonette's legal expertise allows her to draft complex legislation for clients, assist clients in implementing and drafting policies to comply with newly enacted legislation, review district contracts for compliance with newly enacted legislation, and assist school districts with review of charter school applications. She is also known widely around the capital for building coalitions and creating compromises in difficult situations. Tonette's political campaign experience includes work for both candidates and ballot measures at the state level in Colorado. Her regulatory experience involves working with state agencies to draft rules and assisting clients or state agencies with legislative rule review authority challenges. She received her bachelor's degree with honors from the University of Denver and her law degree from the University of Colorado.

## Stacey M. Lestina, MPA, Associate

Stacey Lestina's experience in Colorado politics includes working at the Colorado Commission on Higher Education and with former Senator Ken Salazar's office. Her background also includes organizing on statewide ballot initiative campaigns. She has been working with Salazar & Associates since 2006. Stacey is also currently assisting the Governor's Office with Colorado's Race to the Top Federal Grant Application by staffing the Low Performing Schools subcommittee and helping to create the state grant application for funding. Her expertise is on-loan to the Governor's Office for this process. Additionally, her responsibilities at Salazar & Associates include active lobbying of client issues, drafting white papers and legislative recommendations, maintaining Salazar and Associate's website, weekly client communications, event coordination, committee and legislation tracking and scheduling. Stacey received both her Bachelor's of Arts in Economics and Public Policy with honors and her Master's in Public Administration from the University of Denver.