

TO: Media Matters staff
FROM: David Brock
RE: Reorganization plan
DATE: 1/28/11

As we continue to implement an ambitious growth plan, *Media Matters for America* and the *Media Matters Action Network* are strengthening their executive ranks with a series of promotions and new hires.

The changes are as follows:

- Chief Financial Officer and acting Chief of Staff **Matthew Butler** will become President/CEO and assume day-to-day management of both organizations. Butler came to *Media Matters* in early 2009 with more than fifteen years of campaign and legal experience.
- After four years of service -- during which the staff and budgets of the organizations doubled under his exemplary leadership -- first as Communications Director, then Chief of Staff and President, **Eric Burns** is leaving to open a political communications consultancy, Bullfight Strategies. Burns will continue to advise David Brock in that capacity.
- **Ari Rabin-Havt** was named Executive Vice President. Rabin-Havt, who began in 2009 as Managing Director of *Media Matters Action Network* and was promoted to Vice President of Research and Communications for both organizations late that year, has been the driving force behind *Media Matters'* expanded footprint in the media and the progressive community.
- **Katie Paris** will assume the new position of Senior Vice President for External Affairs, managing the outside relations of both organizations. Paris was previously Program and Communications Director and still serves as Senior Adviser at Faith in Public Life, a nonprofit strategy center advancing faith in the public square as a positive and unifying force for justice, compassion and the common good. Paris is returning to *Media Matters* after having served as its first Research Director.
- **Kelly Ronan** has been appointed Chief of Staff. Ronan is replacing Tate Williams, who resigned his post to return to his Houston law practice. Ronan started with *Media Matters* in 2009 as the Project Manager for the Progressive Talent Initiative and has overseen the noteworthy success of the program.
- After a successful run as Communications Director for both *Media Matters* organizations, **Chris Harris** will be leaving to join American Bridge, the new federal PAC recently announced by Brock, as a communications strategist. Harris first came to *Media Matters* in April 2009 after leaving his post as Communications Director for the Kansas Democratic Party.
- **Melinda Warner** will move from managing the *Action Network* to become Senior Director of Research for both *Media Matters for America* and *Media Matters Action Network*. Warner, a veteran of Maryland politics, came to the organization from the Atlas Project in April 2009 as Deputy Research Director of *Media Matters Action Network* and has steadily climbed the ranks since.
- After four successful years as a Research Director, **Jeremy Schulman** will become Director of the Media Matters Investigative Team, a newly created position that will manage *Media*

Matters' investigative research and reporting, focusing on exposing unethical and dishonest practices by Fox News and the rest of the right-wing media.

- **Ilyse Hogue**, currently Campaign Director for MoveOn, will join *Media Matters* as a Senior Adviser responsible for coordinating programs that undercut the impact of the right-wing media machine.
- **Alex Lawson** will lead a new project at *Media Matters* working to expose the intersection between violent rhetoric, extremist violence, and the easy availability of firearms and munitions. Lawson joins *Media Matters* from Social Security Works where he was the Communications Director of a broad-based coalition of over 215 national and state organizations representing over 50 million Americans.
- **Richard Socarides**, recently named president of Equality Matters, *Media Matters'* new research and communications war room for full gay equality, has been named Senior Adviser to the Chairman and President/CEO. Socarides, an attorney, served as White House special assistant and Senior Adviser to President Bill Clinton, specializing in policy, legal and political issues. After the White House, Socarides held senior positions in media (Time Warner), entertainment (New Line Cinema), and technology (AOL). He has also held staff positions in several presidential campaigns and served as spokesperson for a Hollywood motion picture studio.
- **Trevor Thomas** is leaving the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network to become Director of Programs for Equality Matters. In his role with SLDN, Thomas managed all communications for the group and led a team that placed former and active duty service members – including retired flag officers – with the country's top newspapers, broadcast television networks, and online blogs. Thomas also directed the communications rollout of Lady Gaga's internationally recognized efforts to help spotlight repeal and urge young people to call their Senators. Previously, Thomas worked with the Human Rights Campaign, the Democratic National Committee, and Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm.
- **Matt Finkelstein** will be editor of PoliticalCorrection.org, *Media Matters Action Network's* blog and research hub. Finkelstein, a Baltimore native and graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, joined the organization as a researcher in April 2009.
- **Pilar Martinez**, *Media Matters* Controller will become Chief Financial Officer. Martinez has more than 18 years of finance and management experience and has been with *Media Matters* since 2008.