

3L Rachel Palermo to work for Vice President Kamala Harris

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Third-year Notre Dame Law student Rachel Palermo will join the White House staff after President-elect Joe Biden and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris are inaugurated on Jan. 20.

Palermo will work as assistant press secretary to the vice president. The position is the culmination of a long interest in government and politics.

“When I was in college, I interned at the Department of Justice, which opened my eyes to the importance of public service,” she said.

After graduating from St. Olaf College in Minnesota, Palermo joined the press team of the Democratic National Committee during the 2016 election. During her second year at Notre Dame Law School, she was a legal extern on former South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg’s presidential campaign, working at his campaign headquarters in South Bend. Since early fall, she has been a member of the Biden-Harris Transition’s communications team, which she has done remotely.

At Notre Dame Law School, Palermo has served as president of the Women’s Legal Forum and managing articles editor for the Journal of Law, Ethics & Public Policy. She is also an oralist for the Moot Court Board.

“Notre Dame Law School has prepared me for my new role because there is an important intersection between law and communications,” Palermo said. “In both fields, I’ve learned how to write persuasively and communicate compelling messages. Law school has refined my research, writing, and advocacy skills, which will allow me to bring a unique perspective to the work of the vice president-elect.”

Professor Christine Venter, director of Notre Dame Law School’s Legal Writing Program, said this position is perfect for Palermo’s skillset.

“Rachel embodies the best of Notre Dame Law. Her commitment to public service, her intelligence, her skills in both written and oral communication, her work ethic, and her warm collegiality will make her an asset to the Biden-Harris Administration,” Venter said. “While completing the last semester of law school and working full time in a demanding position might seem daunting to some, I have the utmost confidence that Rachel will not only succeed but do so brilliantly.”

Palermo’s position was announced in a [press release](https://buildbackbetter.gov/press-releases/president-elect-joe-biden-and-vice-president-elect-kamala-harris-announce-additional-members-of-the-office-of-the-vice-president/) [\[link:https://buildbackbetter.gov/press-releases/president-elect-joe-biden-and-vice-president-elect-kamala-harris-announce-additional-members-of-the-office-of-the-vice-president/\]](https://buildbackbetter.gov/press-releases/president-elect-joe-biden-and-vice-president-elect-kamala-harris-announce-additional-members-of-the-office-of-the-vice-president/) about several staff additions to the Office of the Vice President. Biden and Harris praised the new appointees.

“Building our nation back better requires having the best and the brightest in our administration. These accomplished individuals have the knowledge and expertise to hit the ground running on day one and will work each day in service to the American people,” Biden said. “With their varied and diverse backgrounds, they bring a shared commitment to tackling the crises facing America, helping us become a stronger, more united nation.”

Harris said, “These deeply experienced public servants reflect the very best of our nation, and they will be ready to get to work building a country that lifts up all Americans. Their counsel and expertise are grounded in a commitment to making sure our economy works for working people and all those looking to work. And their leadership will be critical as we work to meet the challenges facing the American people — from the coronavirus pandemic to this economic recession to our climate crisis and long-overdue reckoning on racial injustice. I am proud to announce these individuals will be joining my team and look forward to working alongside them each and every day.”



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