

**Kevin Hassett**

Director, National Economic Council
The White House

As the 15th Director of the White House National Economic Council, Kevin Hassett is responsible for providing economic analysis and advice to the president and guiding the development and implementation of a range of domestic and international economic policies. An acclaimed economist, Hassett has published over 300 papers and is one of the world's leading scholars on the relationship between tax policy and business investment.

During the first Trump Administration, Hassett served as the 29th Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers from 2017 to 2019, and later served as Senior Advisor to the President, supporting data-driven decision-making in response to the coronavirus pandemic. While at the White House, Hassett was the top public spokesperson on economic policy and the state of the economy, appearing regularly in national media outlets and at times leading televised White House press briefings.

Hassett previously served as a Managing Director at the Milken Institute and as a distinguished fellow at the Hoover Institution. Prior to his time in the White House, he led economic studies at the American Enterprise Institute, taught at Columbia Business School and the NYU School of Law, and was a senior economist at the Federal Reserve Board.

Hassett was also a senior economic advisor to several presidential campaigns, including those of John McCain, George W. Bush, and Mitt Romney.

(BA, Swarthmore College; MA and PhD, University of Pennsylvania)



Ray W. Washburne
Chairman
Gillon Property Group

Ray is the Chairman of Gillon Property Group and the president and CEO of Charter Holdings, a Dallas-based private investment company primarily involved in real estate, restaurants and diversified financial investments. He also currently serves as the chairman of the board of Sunoco LP and is the co-founder and co-owner of M

Crowd Restaurant Group, which operates 46 restaurants including Mi Cocina, Taco Diner, The Mercury and Katy Trail Ice House.

Ray also serves as president and managing director of Highland Park Village and owns a number of retail and office spaces, including Watters Creek Village, Knox Street Dallas, the former Dallas Morning News campus, and Founders Square.

From 2017 to 2019, served the U.S. government as president and CEO of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), a member of the President's Intelligence Advisory Board, and on the advisory board of U.S. Military Southern Command.

He also served as the national finance chairman of the Republican National Committee from 2012 to 2015.

(BA, Southern Methodist University)

**John Sitilides**

Principal, Trilogy Advisors LLC

John Sitilides is Principal at Trilogy Advisors LLC in Washington, D.C., specializing in U.S. government relations, geopolitical risk, and international affairs. He is also a National Security Program Senior Fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute.

Under a U.S. government contract under Presidents Biden, Trump, Obama, and Bush, Sitilides was the Southern Europe Regional Coordinator at the Foreign Service Institute, the State Department's professional development and diplomacy academy for American foreign policy professionals.

He was Board Chairman of the Woodrow Wilson Center Southeast Europe Project from 2005 to 2011, following seven years as Executive Director of the Western Policy Center, an international relations institute specializing in U.S., NATO, and EU interests in Europe and the Middle East, until he negotiated its 2004 merger with the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars.

He has testified before Congress and is a frequent national security commentator on U.S. and international media such as Bloomberg News, CNN, FOX News, CNN International, and NewsNation. Sitilides has been interviewed or cited in the Wall Street Journal, New York Times, Washington Post, Washington Times, Politico, National Public Radio, Asia Times, Institutional Investor, and other leading print and digital media.

His domestic client portfolio includes industry leaders in real estate development, home construction, and agribusiness, along with aviation and emerging technology companies. He launched his career in the U.S. Senate and on a series of successful political campaigns.

Sitilides serves on the Executive Committee and Board of Trustees of Leadership 100, a national Orthodox Christian foundation.

He is a member of the Association of International Risk Intelligence Professionals, the Intelligence and National Security Alliance, the Columbia University Club of Washington, D.C., the Empire State Forum, and the Association of Former Senate Aides.

(BA, Queens College; MS, Columbia University)

**Martha Gimbel**

Executive Director and Co-Founder
The Budget Lab at Yale

Martha Gimbel is Executive Director and Co-Founder of The Budget Lab at Yale University, a non-partisan policy research center dedicated to providing in-depth analysis of federal policy proposals for the American economy.

Gimbel has worked in economic policy and research in government—both the executive branch and the legislative branch—as well as in the private sector and philanthropy. Before starting The Budget Lab, she was a Senior Advisor at the White House Council of Economic Advisers under the Biden administration. Gimbel’s other previous roles include serving as Director of Economic Research at Indeed.com, Senior Manager of Economic Research at Schmidt Futures, Senior Economist and Research Director at Congress’s Joint Economic Committee, and Senior Policy Advisor to the Secretary of Labor.

A widely respected voice on the economy, Gimbel’s commentary has been featured in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, CNN, NPR, and other national media outlets.

(BA, Brown University; MA, UC San Diego)

**Jonathan Pollack**

President
Starwood Capital Group

Jonathan Pollack is President of Starwood Capital Group, where he is responsible for managing the daily operations of the business and guiding Firm strategy. As a member of Starwood's Executive and Investment Committees, Mr. Pollack oversees global investment activity, capital markets, and investor relations. He is also the Vice Chairman of Starwood Property Trust (NYSE: STWD), the

largest commercial mortgage real estate investment trust in the United States. Mr. Pollack joined Starwood Capital from Blackstone, where he served as Global Head of the firm's Real Estate Credit business since 2016. Mr. Pollack served on Blackstone's Operating Committee, as well as the Real Estate Executive Committee and Investment Committee.

Prior to joining Blackstone in 2015, Mr. Pollack was the Global Head of Commercial Real Estate at Deutsche Bank and established Deutsche Bank as the top CMBS issuer and a leading special situations investor following the global financial crisis in 2008. Mr. Pollack also spent eight years in Deutsche Bank's London headquarters, helping to build the European CRE business as the Head of Capital Markets. Mr. Pollack joined Deutsche Bank in 1999 from Nomura Group.

He is a member of the Board of Trustees of East Harlem Tutorial Program, a leading charter school and after school program in New York City.

(BA, Northwestern University)

**Hessam Nadji**

President and CEO, Marcus & Millichap

Hessam Nadji is President and Chief Executive Officer of Marcus & Millichap, a leading firm specializing in real estate investment brokerage, financing, research, and advisory services. With 1,700 brokerage and financing professionals in more than 80 offices in the U.S. and Canada, Marcus & Millichap was the leading broker by transaction count in 2024, completing nearly 8,000 transactions and nearly \$50 billion in volume covering

every property type.

Since joining Marcus & Millichap in 1996 as vice president of research and advisory services, Nadji has played a central role in shaping its growth and strategic direction. Before being appointed CEO in 2016, he assumed various responsibilities at the firm, including chief marketing officer, overseeing all specialty division sales, launching the company's institutional services division (IPA), and leading its IPO in 2013 as chief strategy officer.

Before Marcus & Millichap, Nadji served as senior vice president of research and technology for Grubb & Ellis, where he started his career in 1986. With nearly 40 years of experience in the commercial real estate industry, Nadji is frequently quoted on a range of real estate topics in major media outlets such as CNBC, Fox Business, Bloomberg, Yahoo Finance, The Wall Street Journal, and numerous industry publications.

(BS, City University of Seattle)

**Anna Palmer**

Founder and CEO
Punchbowl News

Anna Palmer is CEO of Punchbowl News, which she co-founded in 2021 along with Jake Sherman and John Bresnahan. She has covered congressional leadership, the lobbying industry, presidential campaigns, and the politics of governing for over 15 years.

In 2019, Palmer and Sherman wrote “The Hill to Die On: The Battle for Congress and the Future of Trump’s America,” an inside story of Congress in the first two years of Donald Trump’s presidency. The book was an instant New York Times and national bestseller. Trevor Noah of The Daily Show said “The Hill to Die On” turned “Congress into a Game of Thrones book.”

Prior to founding Punchbowl, Palmer and Sherman were co-authors of the top-rated POLITICO Playbook franchise, where they chronicled President Donald Trump’s first term, and his relationship with top congressional leaders. Under their leadership, the platform more than doubled in revenue and tripled its readership. They also created a widely acclaimed daily podcast, afternoon newsletter, and event series, where they interviewed top political and business leaders across the country about pressing issues of the day.

Palmer joined POLITICO in 2011 and was its senior Washington correspondent. She also led Women Rule, a nation-leading platform aimed at expanding leadership opportunities for women, and hosted the critically acclaimed Women Rule podcast. She has also worked at Legal Times and Roll Call, breaking national stories on the business of Washington.

Palmer has spoken and moderated conversations at the World Economic Forum, the Milken Institute Global Forum, the UN General Assembly, the Aspen Ideas Festival, the Texas Tribune Festival, and SXSW. She’s a frequent political commentator on CNN, Fox News, NBC and MSNBC.

(BA, St. Olaf College)