



Michael Claeys

Executive Advisory Board Member – Communications Professional, Specializing in Medical Science and Research

Michael Claeys is an Executive Advisory Board Member with About the Kids Foundation. Over the past 30 years, he has crafted a diverse career working in government, non-profit, industry, and academic settings; Michael is a passionate and effective messenger, a ‘translator’ of complex scientific stories to a variety of professional and lay audiences.

Michael earned a Political Science degree from the California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo and built on that education by securing a series of legislative aid positions in the US House of Representatives. During his four years in the nation’s capitol, he managed a wide range of issues from defense and foreign affairs to medical research and campaign finance reform. Michael’s skills in clear and persuasive writing secured him leading roles as a speech and correspondence writer.

In 1994, he left Washington to work on the successful reelection campaign of Representative Lynn Woolsey of Petaluma, California. He then became the Public Policy Coordinator and a Federal lobbyist for the Parkinson’s Action Network, the nation’s leading advocacy organization for Parkinson’s disease research. This experience led to a position as a Research Program Manager and one of the first hires, for The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson’s Research. In addition to his research program responsibilities, Michael served as Michael J. Fox’s political advisor and speechwriter, drafting numerous public statements, including high-profile Congressional testimony.

In 2004 Michael again returned to his native California to marry and start a family. He consulted for the successful campaign for Proposition 71, the California Stem Cell Research and Cures Act, which led to full-time policy and communications positions with the non-profits Alliance for Stem Cell Research and the Parkinson’s Institute.

In 2008 Michael transitioned to the biopharmaceutical industry as a Public Affairs Manager with Gilead Sciences, Inc. His experience there led him to a role as Senior Communications Manager for the Stanford Cancer Institute. During his six years at Stanford, he produced a wide variety of original internal and external communications, led the overhaul of the Institute’s website and interviewed dozens of renown scientists, patients and advocates, including scientist/author Siddhartha Mukherjee, MD, and actor/advocate Alan Alda.

Michael maintains his consulting firm, Open Mind Consulting, based in Los Altos, California. He skis and plays guitar with his daughter Rhys and loves to cycle to the Stanford University driving range to knock some of the rust off his golf game.