

## Campaign Cognoscenti

With hotly contested primaries in both major parties, the 2016 presidential election season has been particularly feverish. Meet a few of the Columbians behind some of this year's top-office seekers.

Summer 2016



Robby Mook

### **Robby Mook '02CC**

*Campaign manager, Hillary Clinton campaign*

Robby Mook has been working with Clinton since her first presidential campaign, in 2008, where he earned respect as the state director for Nevada, Indiana, and Ohio (Clinton won in all three). After managing several congressional campaigns, Mook rejoined the Clinton team in January 2015. A Vermont native, Mook is known for his obsessive organizational skills and calm management style. He studied classics at Columbia and is the first openly gay manager of a presidential campaign.



Nicole Willis

**Nicole Willis '08LAW**

*National tribal-outreach director, Bernie Sanders campaign*

Willis began her political career in 2008 as an adviser to Barack Obama's presidential campaign. After serving in his administration as special assistant for Indian affairs in the Department of Labor, Willis joined the Sanders campaign as the national tribal-outreach director. The Sanders campaign subsequently made several pledges to Native American voters: it offered to create a position in the Office of

Management and Budget serving tribal affairs, and to mandate that all federal grants open to state and local governments also be open to tribes. Willis, who was president of the National Native American Law Students Organization while studying at Columbia, is a member of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, based in Oregon.



Chad Sweet

**Chad Sweet '91CC**

*Campaign chairman, Ted Cruz campaign*

Sweet is a Texas-based former CIA operative and an expert in finance and national security. He earned a degree in East Asian studies at Columbia and, after a short stint in covert intelligence operations, worked as an analyst at Morgan Stanley and

Goldman Sachs. In 2007, he returned to the public sector to serve as then Homeland Security secretary Michael Chertoff's chief of staff. Sweet and Chertoff are the cofounders of the Chertoff Group, an international security and risk-management consulting company.



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[All categories >](#)