

# **THOMAS F. GRADY, MPA, DTM**

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## **BIOGRAPHY**

Tom Grady is an advocacy and public affairs professional with expertise in the following areas: government relations, public policy, and communications – particularly speechwriting, public speaking, and presenting workshops. He has developed communication, advisory, and leadership skills through Toastmasters International (TI), several brain injury-related organizations, plus service on non-profit boards. Tom is the recipient of several communication and leadership awards from TI, a communication and leadership development organization. He currently serves as Director of Advocacy and Public Affairs for the Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey and manages the daily operations of the division.

### ***Work in the field of brain injury***

Mr. Grady currently serves as Director of Advocacy & Public Affairs for the Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey and has done so since October 2002. The mission of the Alliance is to improve the quality of life for anyone impacted by brain injury by providing support, advocacy, and information, while promoting brain injury prevention. In this role, he functions as a bipartisan, collaborative, and pragmatic government relations professional. Tom has directed, managed, and/or supported lobbying efforts that:

- Budgeted and appropriated \$75,600,000 State and Federal funding for specialized community-based supports and services to benefit people with traumatic or acquired brain injury between State fiscal years 2004-2014;
- Budgeted and appropriated \$1,400,000 that enabled the Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey to provide advocacy, education, information, outreach, and support services to the brain injury community during the State of New Jersey's 2015-2022 fiscal years;
- Requires youth under 18 years of age to wear helmets while skiing; making New Jersey the first state in the Nation to have such a law;
- Changed the age under which children must wear helmets while bicycling, skateboarding, and rollerskating from 14 to 17;
- Required the development of an interscholastic and intramural athletic head injury safety training program to mandate measures to protect student athletes with concussions and to require continuing education for athletic trainers;
- Encouraged school districts in the State to implement baseline cognitive testing;
- Encouraged Congress and the President to enact the National Pediatric Acquired Brain Injury Plan Act;
- Created the New Jersey Special Education & Traumatic Brain Injury Task Force;
- Designated the month of September of each year as Brain Aneurysm Awareness Month;
- Designated the third Friday in September of each year as Concussion Awareness Day; and,
- Designated the month of March of each year as Brain Injury Awareness Month.

One of his roles as Director is to serve as staff liaison to Voices Advancing the Brain Injury Community (Voices), one of the Alliance's advocacy committees whose mission is to champion and publicize the advocacy, rights, and needs of people who have survived a brain injury. In this capacity, Tom assists with preparing and implementing meetings and addressing follow-up activities. He assists with defining the needs of the committee; providing

counsel on how to advocate; implementing the group's signature event, *Mike-at-the-Mic*; defining independent activities for members; and raising awareness of Voices through social events and other activities.

Additional roles as Director include being a liaison to the Alliance's Advocacy & Public Affairs Committee and membership in the Alliance's Education Committee and Concussion Committee. Tom also serves as Vice-Chair of the United States Brain Injury Alliance's Public Policy Committee and is a member of Kessler Foundation's Northern New Jersey Traumatic Brain Injury System Advisory Board. He served on Moss Rehabilitation's TBIMS advisory board from 2012-2014.

### ***Communication and leadership development and service through Toastmasters International***

Mr. Grady has been a member of Toastmasters International since 2001; an organization committed to empowering individuals to become more effective communicators and leaders. He earned the highest achievement a Toastmaster can earn – Distinguished Toastmaster – in 2017.

Mr. Grady has served as an officer for his local club – Toastmasters of Westfield – between the years 2003-2007 where he served as President, Vice-President-Education, Treasurer, and Vice-President-Membership. As President, he led, managed, and directed Toastmasters of Westfield to earn President's Distinguished Club status for the 2006-2007 Toastmasters year; the highest award a club can earn from Toastmasters International. During the 2015-2016 Toastmasters year, he served as Area Director for Area 52, Division E, District 83 Toastmasters where he oversaw the effective management of four clubs to ensure a positive experience for members, coordinated, officer training, and implemented speech contests. He also served as a club mentor for JJSC Toastmasters in Bridgewater, New Jersey and as a club coach for Speakability in Scotch Plains, New Jersey. In 2021, Mr. Grady served as a member of the Toastmasters District 83 District Leadership Committee which was responsible for evaluating, interviewing, and nominating candidates for District-elected positions and nominating the best candidates.

### ***Service and leadership***

Between 2014-2019, Tom served on the Board of Trustees for the Adult Day Center of Somerset County; an organization committed to providing high quality, affordable day care services for disabled and elderly residents of Somerset County, New Jersey. During 2013-2015, he served as a Board of Health member in Bernards, NJ, a policy-making and enforcement body charged with protecting the public's health.

From 2008-2010, he served on the Board for Court Appointed Special Advocates of Union County, New Jersey whose mission is to recruit, train, and supervise community volunteers to act as advocates for children who have been removed from their homes due to neglect or abuse. From 2000-2006, Mr. Grady served as a wish facilitator and fundraiser for Make-A-Wish New Jersey which serves a unique and vital role in strengthening and empowering children battling life-threatening medical conditions.

### ***Past professional experience***

Past professional roles Mr. Grady held include serving as a Legislative Aide for two members of the New Jersey State Legislature and as a grant proposal coordinator/researcher for a private firm as well as for Liberty Science Center. He served as an intern for a former United States senator and for the Somerset County Public Information Office.

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### **TOP COMPETENCIES**

Issue Advocacy | Communications | Government Relations | Media Relations | Public Policy | Public Speaking | Relationship Building | Research | Social Media | Speechwriting | Strategic Communications | Technology | Workshop Presentations | Writing and Editing

### **WORK EXPERIENCE**

#### **Director of Advocacy and Public Affairs (functioning as Legislative Agent)**

Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey - North Brunswick, NJ (2002-Present)

- Manage the daily operations of an advocacy and public affairs division. Serves as the Alliance's chief advocate and represents the public policy positions of the Alliance. See Addendum One for specific responsibilities.

**Development/Communications Assistant (P/T)**, Westfield Area Y - Westfield, NJ (2006-2007)

- Assisted director with grant proposals and annual appeal campaign.

#### **Grant Researcher/Coordinator**

Defined prospective grant opportunities and coordinated grant application proposals for:

- The Bruno Group - Clifton, NJ (2001-2002)
- Liberty Science Center - Jersey City, NJ (2000-2001)
- The Bruno Group - East Hanover, NJ (1999-2000)

**Public Information Officer**, Visiting Nurse Service System - Elizabeth, NJ (1998)

- Wrote, proofread, and edited press releases for submission to media.

**Legislative Aide**, New Jersey General Assembly - Trenton, NJ (1995-1997)

- Conducted legislative research. Compiled and recorded constituent opinions of issues and addressed constituent questions and concerns. Managed constituent casework.

**Public Information Intern**, Somerset County Public Information Office - Somerville, NJ (1995)

- Wrote, proofread, and edited press releases for submission to media.

**Congressional Intern**, United States Senate - Washington, D.C. (District office) (1995)

- Compiled viewpoints on various issues. Managed constituent casework.

**Substitute Teacher**, Cranford Public Schools - Cranford, NJ (1993-1995)

- Implemented lesson plans and maintained classroom order.

**Research Assistant**, RUTGERS Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences Institute - Piscataway, NJ (1991-1993)

- Collected samples for human exposure study. Weighed and recorded data.

### **EDUCATION**

Master's Degree in Public Administration, Kean University - Union, NJ

Bachelor's Degree in Political Science, Rutgers University - New Brunswick, NJ

Associate's Degree in Liberal Arts, Union County College - Cranford, NJ

## **AWARDS**

### **Distinguished Toastmaster (Toastmasters International)**

- The highest award given by Toastmasters International, a nonprofit educational organization that teaches public speaking, communication, and leadership skills through a worldwide network of clubs. Member since 2001.

## **SERVICE AND LEADERSHIP**

### **Committee Member**, Toastmasters District 83 Leadership Committee (2021)

- Evaluated, interviewed, and nominated candidates for District-elected positions.

### **Board Member**, Adult Day Center of Somerset County - Bridgewater, NJ (2014-2019)

- Supported communications and development efforts. Provided government relations counsel.

### **Club Coach**, Speakability (Toastmasters) - Scotch Plains, NJ (2016-2017)

- Observed and analyzed club environment. Provided feedback and counsel. Assisted club with achieving goals relative to President's Distinguished Club, the highest award a club can earn.

### **Club Mentor**, JJSC Toastmasters - Bridgewater, NJ (2016-2017)

- Provided expert advice on club management to new clubs.

### **Area Director**, Toastmasters International, Area 52, Division E, District 83 - Union County, NJ (2015-2016)

- Provided district contact, support, and assistance to four area clubs so that it may achieve the club mission and fulfill its responsibilities to members. Help clubs by keeping in regular contact with club presidents.
- Coordinated officer trainings. Directed and managed group of volunteers to implement speech contest.

### **Board Member**, Bernards Township Board of Health - Bernards, NJ (2013-2015)

- Created health policy for Township of Bernards.

### **Board Member**, Court Appointed Special Advocates of Union County – Elizabeth, NJ (2008-2010)

- Served on Board of Trustees.

### **Board Member**, Toastmasters of Westfield - Westfield, NJ (2003-2007)

- President (2006-2007): Oversaw, directed, and managed the club to earn the highest level award a club can earn, President's Distinguished Club.
- Vice President Education (2005-2006): Planned, organized, and directed club program to meet the educational needs of the individual members.
- Treasurer (2004-2005): Maintained accurate accounting of club deposits and expenditures.
- Vice President Membership (2003-2004): Assisted with promotion of club and effectively registered new members.

### **Wish Facilitator/Fundraiser**, Make-A-Wish Foundation of New Jersey - Monroe, NJ, (2000-2006)

- Assisted with the facilitation of wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions. Raised funds for the Foundation.

## **ADDENDUM ONE: Advocacy, Government Relations, and Public Policy Expertise**

Lead year-round advocacy and public policy efforts for the Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey in the State of New Jersey to achieve positive legislative and budgetary goals on behalf of people with brain injury and families impacted by same.

### ***Responsibilities***

- Oversee all aspects of the public policy and advocacy work in the State of New Jersey and take action to realize public policy priorities and goals.
- Serve as the Alliance's chief lobbyist in New Jersey and develop relationships with state legislators, members of the New Jersey congressional delegation, and their respective staffs – of both the Republican Party and Democrat Party - for purposes of realizing public policy priorities and raising awareness of brain injury.
- Work with elected officials and other partners to advance state-level public policy priorities.
- Monitor committee meetings and legislative action both during and between legislative sessions. Assess legislative activities and define positions to support or oppose legislation.
- Draft legislation and define legislative sponsors to advance an Alliance-supported legislative initiative.
- Prepare alerts and testimony on behalf of the Alliance to be presented to members of the New Jersey State Legislature.
- Collaborate with other organizations to collectively advance issues of mutual importance.
- Represent the Alliance at public forums, task forces, work groups etc.
- Plan and implement advocacy events, namely, Brain Injury Awareness Day either virtual or in-person.
- Disseminate information that promotes the State policy agenda.
- Navigate the legislative environment to achieve policy goals.
- Partner with United States Brain Injury Alliance's Public Policy Committee for advocacy, government relations, and public policy purposes. Serve as member of the Committee.

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