**STEPHEN THOMAS SALOOM, ESQ.**

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## EXPERIENCE

# Policy Director

**(Un)warranted at ideas42** (June 2024 – Present)

Creating nationwide policy effort to enable jurisdictions to provide court appearance reminders to criminal defendants, by securing contact information and enabling information systems to communicate with each other and defendants. Goals are to reduce backlogs, prevent waste of other court participants’ time, and avoid needless additional sanctions.

# Strategic Advisor

**Harris County (Texas) Commissioner** [**Rodney Ellis**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rodney_Ellis)(August 2022 – June 2024)

* Staff leader of expert Indigent Defense Committee, created to establish Harris County’s indigent defense system as a national model
  + Orchestrating most ambitious indigent defense system reform effort in the country
  + Secured two major federal grants for technical assistance from leading national organizations
* Develop, lead, and teach strategic approaches to advocacy to talented yet less-experienced policy team, in coordination with communications and community engagement teams

# Founder & Director

[**Center for Community Foundation Policy Leadership**,](http://www.cfpolicyleadership.net/) Nationwide (July 2022 – June 2024)

* Provide direct service to individual community foundations, enabling stronger community impacts and donor support through effective policy leadership, including:
  + Conducted 3-day policy leadership assessment with 25-page analysis and recommended actions for program development
  + Led daylong board retreat that secured their support for policy engagement
  + Delivered opening remarks at board strategic planning meeting exploring policy
  + Host “Expert Perspectives on Community Foundation Policy Leadership” webinars
  + Publish posts on leading issues in community foundation policy leadership with 40% open rate
* Primary drafter of 9-hour [Practice & Purpose Policy Training for Community Foundation Leadership](https://cof.org/event/practice-and-purpose-policy-training-community-foundation-leaders), for CFLeads and the Council on Foundations, offered in 2023 and 2024
* Lead nationwide Policy & Advocacy Discussion group for the Community Foundation Opportunity Network (2022-2023)

# Director, Advocacy & Capacity Building

**Fairfield County’s Community Foundation,** Norwalk, CT (2019 – 2022)

* Led exploration of pioneering community foundation advocacy program, channeling establishment and community power and relationships in support of a progressive agenda
* Established first organizational advocacy agenda and diverse board of policy advisors
* Created and presented national policy advocacy webinar and conference sessions for community foundation colleagues
* Developed supportive internal operational structures in partnership with Managers of Community Capacity Building and Center for Nonprofit Excellence
* Engaged in DEI cohorts within foundation, housing coalition, and statewide philanthropy

# Senior Manager for Advocacy and Partnerships

**The Pew Charitable Trusts, Public Safety Performance Project**, Washington, D.C. (2018–2019)

* Facilitated 9-member team’s pivots in substantive and strategic approaches to reform, in coordination with over 20 other project staff and organization-wide re-structuring
* Co-administered U.S. Department of Justice “Justice Reinvestment” program
* Guided advocacy plans within lobbying restrictions across four evolving subject matter areas, spanning 10 states, Congress, and federal initiatives
* Managed shifts in partner relationships and advocacy strategies for multi-million dollar partner portfolio including Right on Crime, moderate, and progressive partners
* Because of father’s terminal illness in Connecticut, had to resign sooner than planned

# Commissioner (Elected)

# Ridgefield Police Commission, Ridgefield, Connecticut (2017- 2018)

* First Democrat to win election since the Willie Horton era
* Co-established 2018 Chief’s goals with Commission’s most conservative member

# Principal

# Policy Advocacy Leadership Strategies, Nationwide (2016-2018)

# Strategic planning, project management, grant writing, and consulting on a range of non-profit organizing, advocacy, and communications initiatives

# Proposal and report writing for multi-million dollar, multi-year and shorter-term projects

# Clients included New Virginia Majority Education Fund, Tenants and Workers United, National Domestic Workers Alliance, and Concerts for Indigent Defense

**Director of Partner Outreach and Legislative Practice**

# 8th Amendment Project, Proteus Fund, Amherst, MA (2014 – 2016)

* Advised coalition of major funders on strategic allocation of millions of dollars for legislative, litigation, and communication efforts under multi-year, nationwide strategy to end the death penalty
* Led nationwide policy advocacy campaign through national and state leaders
* Produced and directed two nationwide, state-focused advocacy trainings

# Policy Director

**The Innocence Project,** New York, NY (2004 – 2014)

* Created and directed Innocence Project’s policy department and nationwide operations, ultimately cited as central to the rise of the “Innocence Movement”
  + Envisioned, hired, and managed 12 newly created positions
  + Selected and directed multiple state and federal lobbyists
  + Developed complementary advocacy strategies with communications, strategic litigation, and development departments, involving state and federal partners
* Created and led the *Innocence Policy Network* with 50+ organizations nationwide
* Secured over 100 state and federal reforms with state and local partners
* Directed advocacy efforts that established National Commission on Forensic Science
* Led 6-year advocacy campaign resulting in Texas Forensic Science Commission finding “untenable” the arson analysis central to Cameron Todd Willingham’s execution
* Launched national prosecutorial oversight campaign and related report
* Developed new major relationship with International Association of Chiefs of Police, culminating in its “Wrongful Conviction Summit” and accompanying report, released with U.S. Department of Justice
* Participant in long-term planning for nationwide victim services movement, Vision 21
* Helped secure and maintain federal funding for two wrongful conviction grant programs serving state-focused efforts; ensured program fidelity in distribution and administration
* Presented at national conferences including American Bar Association Criminal Justice Section, N.A.A.C.P, International Association of Homicide Investigators, National Organization of Bar Counsel, and American Society of Crime Lab Directors
* Strategically sought and secured media coverage of issues at national and state levels, including op-eds authored in *Congressional Quarterly, Houston Chronicle, Newsday,* and numerous others; television and radio appearances on *CNN, CNN International, Fox News, MSNBC,* and others; and editorials and stories pitched across media
* Created and led coordinated nationwide litigation/lobbying effort to reform eyewitness identification procedures with NACDL, NLADA & D.C. Public Defender Service

# State and Political Affairs Consultant for State Criminal Justice Network

# National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, Washington, DC (2003- 2004)

* Created advocacy network to catalyze the policy reform potential of the organization’s 40,000+ national and state affiliate members
* Developed state affiliate relationships with national reform organizations
* Initiated national conference model still being followed
* Drafted numerous “President’s Columns” and other material for national magazine

**Regulatory Affairs Consultant, *Congress Watch***

**Public Citizen,** Washington, DC (January – August 2003)

* Advocated in D.C. Council and Congress
* Organized victims of medical malpractice for Congressional lobby day
* Created press statements, fact sheets, op-eds, and report segments

**Executive Director**

**Criminal Justice Policy Coalition,** Boston, MA (1998 – 2001)

* Initiated organizational overhaul including expansion of board of directors, strategic planning, adoption of by-laws, creation of committee structure, and 501(c)(3) incorporation, enabling organization to thrive to this day
* Devised programs that tripled organizational budget in three year span
* Crafted statewide speaking & local campaign at Rotary, Kiwanis, and Lions Clubs
* Organized resistance to federally funded county jail expansion; original jail still stands
* Lobbied legislative leadership and general membership, testified at legislative hearings
* Coordinated re-entry conference attended by over 400 people
* Led statewide coalition in ballot campaign to preserve prisoner voting rights
* Active coalition partner in drug policy ballot campaign directed by Bill Zimmerman

**Intake Attorney**

**American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts,** Boston, MA (1998 – 2000)

* Reviewed wide range of alleged civil rights and liberties violations from across state
* Responded to all complainants
* Prepared appropriate claims for official legal team review

# Legislative Advocate

**Betty Gallo & Company**, West Hartford, CT (1993 – 1997)

* Led legislative coalitions, met with leadership and committee chairs, and lobbied individual legislators on civil liberties, housing, health care, and other progressive issues
* Learned the trade under one of the best in the business

## EDUCATION

## Juris Doctorate, The University of Connecticut School of Law (1996)

**Bachelor of Arts, Communication Sciences***, Cum Laude,* The University of Connecticut (1990)

# Executive Certificate in Nonprofit Management, Georgetown Public Policy Institute (2004)

**AWARDS, WRITINGS AND ACTIVITIES**

\* [Concerts for Indigent Defense](http://www.concertsforindigentdefense.org/), Founder & Producer (2017-Present)

# \* International Association of Chiefs of Police, Police Professionalism, Standards, Ethics & Image Committee (2017-Present)

\* Peer Reviewer, U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance Grants (2023)

# \* Connecticut General Assembly Task Force on Police Accountability and Transparency, Logistics Subcommittee (2020 – 2021)

\* *President’s Trust Initiative,* International Association of Chiefs of Police (2017-2018)

# \* Wasserstein Public Service Fellow, Public Interest Advising, Harvard Law School (2014-2015)

\* National Association for Public Defense, Impact Committee Co-Chair (2014)

\* Stephen Saloom and Rebecca Brown, *The Imperative of Eyewitness Identification Reform and the Role of Police Leadership*, 42 U. Balt. L. Rev. 535 (2013)

\* *Champion of State Criminal Justice Reform* honoree, National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (2011)

\* Stephen Saloom, *Adversaries as Allies: Joining Together to Prevent Criminal Injustice*, 73 Albany L. Rev. 1235 (2010)

\* Disciplinary Committee Member, Park Slope Food Co-op (2008-2009)

\* Soros Justice Fellowship Selection Committee Member, Open Society Institute (2008)

\* Board Member, Stanley Jones Clean Slate Project, Roxbury, MA (2000-2002)

\* Adjunct Professor, Graduate Program in Criminal Justice, Suffolk University: *Criminal Justice Policy* (created curriculum) and *Legal Issues in the Criminal Justice System* (2000-2001)

\* Co-Founder and Contributor, *Hearsay,* University of Connecticut School of Law (1994– 1996)

\* Author of Motion for Summary Judgment upheld by Connecticut Supreme Court (1994)

\* Host, *Breakfast Gumbo*, WHUS-FM, Storrs, CT (1991 – 1992)

\* Student Lobbyist for UConn Undergraduate Student Government (9 credit internship) (1990)

\* Founder, Volunteer UConn, University of Connecticut’s 1st community service center (1988-1990)

\* Spirer-Duecker Connecticut Humanitarian Service Award (1989)