



KAREN W. MORSE

INSTITUTE
FOR
LEADERSHIP

Proposal to bring Jesse Moore to campus Alum-in-Residence

As a student, Jesse Moore ('05) had a major impact on WWU's campus as the President of the Black Student Union, a two-term Vice-President for Diversity, and the first-ever student recipient of WWU's Presidential Achievement Award for Excellence in Diversity Programming. Since then, he has gone on to be a speechwriter for President Obama and held many positions in the US Department of Health & Human Services, the US Administration on Children & Families, and the White House. He is now the President and Principle Consultant for Common Threads Strategies, a company designed to transform institutional cultures, priorities, and public perception through tailored messaging, branding, and bridge-building activities. The hope of his organization is to develop elegant solutions for complex problems. His clients range from non-profits and philanthropic organizations in the public sector to academia and entertainment industry, including Columbia University, the National Basketball Association, and Carnegie Hall, among others.

The Ralph Munro Institute for Civic Engagement and the Karen W. Morse Institute for Leadership are bringing Mr. Moore in April 22-26, 2019 for a week-long series of events, including visiting various classes (e.g., Political Science, Leadership Studies, and Communication Studies), student organizations and clubs on campus (hopefully to include the Legislative Affairs Council, the Black Student Union, LeaderCorps and others), and are working to develop other events. We are planning a signature event, which is a "Courageous Conversations Reunion Event" to celebrate the collaboration between Jesse and communication studies instructor Korry Harvey who created the original Courageous Conversations series that ran for a number of years in the Western and Bellingham community to encourage dialogue to develop collaborative solutions to community problems.

The Ralph Munro Institute for Civic Engagement and the Karen W. Morse Institute for Leadership welcome any funding support to bring Mr. Moore to campus and invite requests to develop programming for Mr. Moore during April 22-26, as we are developing his weeklong schedule now.

Expected costs:

\$5,000	Week long speaker's fee/honorarium
\$1,050	Lodging
\$1100	Estimate for transportation (airfare, rental car)
\$275	Per diem for food (\$55/day)
\$7425	TOTAL ESTIMATED COSTS



KAREN W. MORSE

INSTITUTE
FOR
LEADERSHIP

Western Washington University's **Ralph Munro Institute for Civic Education** is devoted to promoting civic literacy within secondary education and the public at large. It offers students, teachers and community members an opportunity to work with professors, activists and political leaders to learn how local, state and national politics develop.

The purpose of the **Karen W. Morse Institute for Leadership** is to develop graduates who are able to demonstrate responsible leadership to become positive change agents in a challenging world. The institute is committed to building leaders from all disciplines and interests by integrating theory and practice with the guidance of supportive professionals and alumni.

The Munro Institute for Civic Education and the Morse Institute for Leadership welcome all funding support for Mr. Moore's visit and invite requests to schedule time with Mr. Moore during his weeklong visit (April 22-26, 2019) . Please feel free to contact Drs. Johnson or Stout (see below).

Contact Information:

Dr. Vernon Damani Johnson, Director
Munro Institute for Civic Education
Vernon.Johnson@wwu.edu

Dr. Karen Stout, Director
Karen W. Morse institute for Leadership
Karen.Stout@wwu.edu

BIO:

Jesse Moore is a former aide to President Obama and White House staff speechwriter. As associate director for public engagement, he managed White House partnerships with the entertainment industry and minority faith communities. He served nearly nine years on both of Obama's campaigns for President, within his department of Health and Human Services aiding the passage and implementation of the Affordable Care Act, at the Administration for Children and Families, advancing the Administration's poverty reduction agenda, and on White House task forces for criminal justice reform and My Brother's Keeper - to empower kids of color.

In 2016 Jesse launched Common Thread Strategies, a consulting agency focused on facilitating institutional reform through creative messaging and bridge building tactics for clients in entertainment, law enforcement, sports and social justice. He joined the leadership team of the Pop Culture Collaborative in 2017, a bold new \$25 million philanthropic resource for entertainment and social justice organizations aiming to transform movies and television to advance justice through authentic storytelling. Jesse remains a thought leader and respected voice at the intersection of politics, criminal justice, and the power of pop culture to drive change in the real world.

Before entering politics, Jesse worked in youth empowerment, and maintains close ties with youth focused organizations around the country. He is a graduate of Western Washington University and native to the Seattle metro area.

JESSE MOORE

Washington, DC | jesse@commthread.com | 425.210.4182

SUMMARY

Messaging, media, and public engagement strategist with fifteen years of leadership experience in writing, politics, youth advocacy, and public-private partnerships. Strengths include strategic planning, public speaking, creative content development, speechwriting, social and mass-media tactics, and leveraging celebrity and corporate reach for social good.

COMMON THREAD STRATEGIES | FOUNDER and PRINCIPLE CONSULTANT

2016-present

Through Common Thread contracts, I specialize in helping major organizations transform institutional cultures, priorities, and public perception through tailored messaging, branding, and bridge-building strategies. Clients range from public sector, non-profit and philanthropy, academic and entertainment industry entities including the New York Police Department, The Pop Culture Collaborative, the NBA, Columbia University, Carnegie Hall – each working to cultivate elegant solutions to complex problems.

THE WHITE HOUSE | ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

2014-2016

Served as President Obama's primary liaison and strategist for celebrity and creative community partnerships. Mobilized a broad range of celebrity influencers and their teams in support of the President's policy priorities. Also charged in this role with managing White House engagement with faith leaders and youth advocates working in support of the President's My Brother's Keeper (MBK) initiative to empower boys and young men of color.

- Prepared regular briefing materials and talking points for the President, Vice President and senior White House staff
- Served on the Criminal Justice working group, shaping White House strategies to promote police and justice reform
- Convened roundtables with fiction and documentary showrunners, writers, and producers, along with policy experts and community leaders to discuss socially relevant script integration and collaborative projects
- Conceived and led the execution of an unprecedented meeting between the President and over 20 hip hop superstars to discuss strategies for advancing criminal justice reform and MBK.
- Liaised with studios, producers and publicists in order to review, approve and execute advanced White House film and TV screenings. Focused on screening films relevant to the President's priorities and building in substantive panel discussions and policy forums with relevant stakeholders
- Championed a series of MBK PSAs in coordination with creative and celebrity partners including Kendrick Lamar, Michael B. Jordan, and Stephen Curry—whose PSA with the President reached 22 million broadcast and online views, and sparked a 4,000% increase in Mentor.gov page-views and an historic spike in mentor signups
- Built celebrity invite lists and coordinated outreach for White House events, concerts, receptions and State Dinners
- Managed Muslim American engagement in the wake of domestic and international terrorist attacks
- Secured commitments from over 30 YMCAs across 19 states to build tailored MBK community plans of action

THE WHITE HOUSE | SPEECHWRITER

2013-2015

Directed speechwriting for White House senior staff members while drafting and contributing to formal remarks, talking points, press statements, official proclamations, private letters and talking-points for President Obama.

- Conceptualized the 'MBK Community Challenge,' to which over 240 communities have now accepted, committing to build local plans and infrastructure to support young men of color along MBK-specific guidelines
- Championed the design and application of the Administration's My Brother's Keeper logo, branding, and drafted much of the foundational language articulating the initiative's purpose and scope
- Coordinated strategic briefings with members of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing to inform their recommendations to improve trust between communities and over 18k law enforcement agencies

ORGANIZING FOR AMERICA | POLITICAL DIRECTOR – North Carolina

2012

Managed the engagement and mobilization of the state’s elected officials and civic leaders in support of the President’s reelection. Managed the political department staff, setting priorities and monitoring progress to goals.

- Prepared briefings, set political priorities, and staffed visits from the President, Vice President, and First Lady
- Led outreach to faith leaders and trained field staff to mobilize local congregations toward campaign goals
- Represented the campaign in radio interviews and at community events and political rallies

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES (HHS) | COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR for HUMAN SERVICES 2011-2012

Served as national spokesman and lead communications strategist on social policy and human services programs, coordinating with HHS leadership and the White House to direct press and messaging strategy on issues of poverty, jobs, welfare, foster care, human trafficking, religious freedom, and early childhood development.

- Oversaw crisis communications and media strategy for high profile stories involving HHS’ Human Service divisions
- Led the agency’s outreach to minority and specialty press for stories on health disparities and “Obamacare”

U.S. ADMINISTRATION ON CHILDREN & FAMILIES (ACF) | SPECIAL ASSISTANT for PUBLIC AFFAIRS

2009-2011

National spokesman, speechwriter, and media strategist for ACF, which houses poverty reduction, early childhood development, family empowerment, and child welfare programs at HHS.

- Managed the creative redesign, rebranding and content development for ACF’s website
- Served as agency spokesman and provided victim support at U.S. landing zones for 25,000 Haitian earthquake survivors and over 600 Haitian orphans
- Joined an HHS/State Department delegation to assess refugee resettlement processes in Kenya and Jordan

OBAMA FOR AMERICA | REGIONAL FIELD DIRECTOR – Charlotte, North Carolina

2008

Served in regional field and political leadership roles through the primaries in NV, WA, TX, MS and IN – and took on a regional field director role, with a heavy political organizing focus in North Carolina for the general election.

- Managed over 70 field staffers across eight offices, along with elected and community leader relationships
- Helped to secure over 350,000 votes toward North Carolina’s first win for a Democratic candidate in 32 years

WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY | MULTICULTURAL OUTREACH & COMMUNICATIONS COUNSELOR

2005-2008

Led an integrated messaging and outreach campaign to broaden university appeal to minority students.

- Successfully advocated the use of non-cognitive Admissions criteria to expand access for low-income students
- Served as a leadership adviser to the University’s Black Student Union and helped to establish a new leadership program to provide full scholarships and ongoing support to annual cohorts of low-income, top tier students
- Sparked a 74% upsurge in applications from African American students over three years

APPOINTMENTS & SPECIAL PROJECTS

POP CULTURE COLLABORATIVE – CHIEF COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIST	2017
ROCK THE VOTE, BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEMBER	2017 - Present
SPEECHWRITER – 2016 DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION	Aug, 2016
CONFIDENTIAL ASSISTANT TO THE WHITE HOUSE LIAISON – HHS, EXECUTIVE TRANSITION TEAM	Spring, 2009
COORDINATOR FOR TICKETS & CREDENTIALING – 2019 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURAL COMMITTEE	Winter, 2009

WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY – Bellingham, Washington

2005

- B.A. in Political Science | English Minor
- First ever student recipient of a Presidential Achievement Award for Excellence in Diversity Programming
- Two term Vice President for Diversity on the Student Board of Directors