



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

James Skoufis

## Skoufis Names All-Female Senior Leadership Team

JAMES SKOUFIS September 22, 2021

| ISSUE: **WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP, CHIEF OF STAFF, LEADERSHIP, HUDSON VALLEY, WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS**



Senator James Skoufis (D-Hudson Valley) is proud to announce the appointments of Christie Foster and Gabriella Madden as his new Chief of Staff and Deputy Chief of Staff, respectively. A longtime non-profit development lead and communications agency executive, Foster was first hired in 2020 to oversee district operations and constituent services as the COVID-19 pandemic forced the team's transformation into an all-hands-on-deck hub for virus updates, unemployment assistance, and community support. Madden

comes to the team following several years serving with Assemblyman Kevin Cahill's office (D-Kingston), most recently as Cahill's top staffer, overseeing operations in both the district and Albany offices.

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*"I am thrilled to continue building on the exceptional work Christie and I have accomplished on behalf of our Senate district in recent years, and to welcome Gabriella, a dedicated public servant, to our senior team," said **Senator Skoufis**. "Both colleagues are deeply committed to recognizing and responding to the needs of local communities and I look forward to collaborating with them to advance district priorities each and every day."*

"In my time as Deputy Chief of Staff and Director of Operations for this office, I became intimately familiar with the issues facing our neighbors and the local, county, and state resources available to efficiently address their concerns," said **Foster**. "As a public servant, it's my job to act in the best interests of the public at all times. And as someone deeply committed to improving women's health, reproductive healthcare, and supporting survivors of domestic and sexual assault, it's an honor to work alongside Senator Skoufis at this pivotal moment."

"It is with great pride and enthusiasm that I take on the role of Deputy Chief of Staff," said **Madden**. "I am well-prepared to bring Hudson Valley values to Albany, and to continue my service to our community under the leadership of Senator Skoufis."

Foster and Madden will share their time between Skoufis' district office in Newburgh, North Rockland office in Garnerville, and Albany office, overseeing a staff of ten other colleagues who handle constituent services, community engagement, investigations, communications, and policy.

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Christie Foster hails from a small hamlet in Chenango County. The daughter of a longtime town clerk and a union plumber, she got an early start in the workforce, washing dishes in a local restaurant and painting sample swatches for Golden Artists Colors throughout high school. Foster went on to major in human development with minors in women's studies and communication at SUNY Oswego, supporting herself through college as a dance teacher and bar manager.

After landing an internship with ARISE, an organization providing services to people with disabilities, Foster was captivated by human services work and relocated to Newburgh to join Access: Supports for Living as a development and human resources specialist. She led Access through a four-organization merger and rebranding, working in tandem with Manhattan creative agency The Abelson Co. Abselson soon lured Foster away to join their team, quickly promoting her to Vice President of Development & Operations. In this role, she led business growth strategy and served as the primary external relationship manager for a broad portfolio of service-oriented non-profits, interfacing with non-profit boards and leadership across the country.

Foster joined the office of Senator James Skoufis as Director of Operations in early 2020, was promoted to Deputy Chief of Staff in the spring of 2021, and now serves as Chief of Staff. She is a former member of the Fearless! Board of Directors and the Planned Parenthood Hudson Peconic Emerging Leaders Council. Foster lives with her husband and two dogs in a restored 200+ year old dairy barn in Chester, and enjoys beekeeping and reading. She is a lifelong advocate for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault, as well as women's reproductive freedom.

Gabriella (“Gabi”) Madden is a lifelong resident of Ulster County, having grown up in her family’s beloved Kingston restaurant, Savona’s Plaza Pizza. After graduating from Kingston High School, Madden jumpstarted her college vocation at SUNY Ulster Community College, where she interned for the Admissions office as a Digital Media Ambassador and later transferred to Marymount Manhattan College, receiving a bachelor's degree in communications and minor in journalism.

Having worked through both high school and college in the restaurant scene and as a nanny, she began her professional career in public service by joining the team of New York State Assemblymember Kevin Cahill (D-Kingston) as a communications liaison and constituent representative. In short order, Madden was appointed Clerk for the Assembly Committee on Insurance, which Cahill chairs, and later to the role of Chief of Staff, serving as the member’s primary strategic advisor while overseeing legislative efforts and district operations. Having spent the past few years re-familiarizing herself with communities throughout the 39th Senate District, Madden is well-prepared to hit the ground running with Senator Skoufis’ active and ambitious team.