

## USA Common Purpose Project Washington DC uniting top left-leaning Obama officials

Latest News 03/09/2009

### Common Purpose Project- Washington

The Common Purpose Project meets "every Tuesday afternoon at the Capitol Hilton" in Washington, DC, and "brings together the top officials from a range of left-leaning organizations, from labor groups like Change to Win to activists like MoveOn.org, all in support of the White House's agenda. The group has an overlapping membership with a daily 8:45 a.m. call run by the Center for American Progress' and Media Matters' political arms; with the new field-oriented coalition Unity '09; and with the groups that allied to back the budget as the Campaign to Rebuild and Renew America Now. Unlike those other groups, however, the Common Purpose meeting has involved a White House official, communications director Ellen Moran, two sources familiar with the meeting said. It's aimed, said one, at 'providing a way for the White House to manage its relationships with some of these independent groups.' The group's founder, political consultant and former Gephardt aide Erik Smith, described it in general terms after others had confirmed its existence. 'The goal is to convene a group of people that identify the most effective progressive messages and to advance a progressive policy agenda,' said Smith. ... Common Purpose is formed as a 501(c)(4), which leaves it focused on policy, rather than electoral, work. Its political director is another former Obama aide, Miti Sathe. Part of the group's role is to enforce a kind of message discipline." [1]

Common Purpose Project is run through the PR firm Blue Engine Message & Media. It enforces message discipline among liberal organizations and coordinates closely with Progressive Media, another part of the pro-Obama messaging and strategy operation.[2]

Erik Smith is the founder of the pro-Obama strategy and messaging operation called Common Purpose and works for the political consulting firm Blue Engine Message & Media.

According to his website he "provides strategic counsel to corporations, non-profits and individuals on the development, planning and implementation of comprehensive communications strategies. Most often, these engagements deal with complex legal or regulatory situations such as crisis, litigation,

legislative challenge, regulatory change and leadership transition in such diverse industries as health care, financial services, consumer products and public policy advocacy. ... Smith served as the senior communications advisor to Rep. Dick Gephardt in the House Democratic Leader's office and his 2004 presidential campaign where he developed multi-tiered communications strategies for economic, national security, domestic and foreign policy legislative initiatives, crises and campaign platforms. Prior to that, Smith was the Communications Director for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee. ... In 2008, Smith was a paid media advisor to the Obama-Biden presidential campaign" and "also produced high-profile special events for the Obama campaign, including the 2008 Democratic National Convention and the historic 30-minute network television broadcast seen by more than 35 million viewers." [1]

[http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Common\\_Purpose\\_Project](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Common_Purpose_Project)