ANNA POTTER CLIFFORD

FEDERAL BUDGETING EXPERT | CHIEF OF STAFF

CONTACT

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EDUCATION

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY
MCCOURT SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY
Master of Public Policy

CALIFORNIA LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY
Bachelor of Arts
International Studies and French

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

Budget Formulation:
Coordinated the development of 7 President's Budget justifications across diverse USDA mission areas.

Strategic Budget Proposals:
Collaborated across USDA, OMB, and external agency partners to develop 2 innovative legislative proposals across different mission areas to deliver on key policy priorities.

Regulatory Affairs:
Shepherded 7 high-priority regulations with economically significant budget impacts through the departmental and interagency (Executive Order 12866) clearance process.

Staff Development:
Developed 2 separate employee engagement and development initiatives to improve staff training and retention.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Federal budget processes
- Appropriations law
- Congressional relations
- Public financial management
- Staff development and training

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Accomplished budgeting expert with over 11 years of experience and leadership in the formulation and execution of the federal budget process. Skilled in navigating legislative and administrative processes, interfacing directly with agency leadership and financial management staff, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and congressional appropriations committees. Proven leader in developing and training staff to deliver high-quality policy analysis, financial management, and legislative breakdowns in demanding timelines and circumstances.

EXPERIENCE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, OFFICE OF BUDGET AND PROGRAM ANALYSIS (OBPA)

Chief of Staff, Dec 2024 - Present

Lead a diverse staff of federal budgeting professionals working across the appropriations lifecycle to implement policy priorities through fiscal strategy, planning, and management.

- Collaborate with cross-functional teams, both internal and external, to solve complex, high-stakes federal budget issues and guide policy decisions.
- Manage deliverables for senior policy officials, including legislative analyses, key performance indicators, and policy option papers, to inform leadership and guide decision-making.
- Lead office-wide reorganization efforts, coordinating role clarifications, workforce planning, and stakeholder communication under strict deadlines.
- Cultivate and maintain relationships with internal and external stakeholders, including serving as the main point of contact with appropriations committee staff.
- Mentor staff and foster a high-performance culture, ensuring professional development and retention of top talent.
- Design and implement streamlined processes to enhance the quality and impact of analytical products provided to U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) leadership.

Staff Chief, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Mission Area, Jan 2023 – Dec 2024

Departmental expert overseeing a staff of 3 in the FNS mission area, managing budget formulation and execution, regulatory initiatives, and strategic policy development for federal nutrition assistance programs and providing high-level guidance to senior policy officials.

- Coordinated with OMB to develop an innovative budget proposal for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, triggering emergency funds when program costs exceeded projections in a given fiscal year.
- Developed and executed financial management strategies to address critical funding shortfalls, securing increases in mandatory and discretionary funding for key FNS programs.
- Utilized the Farm Bill Commodity Credit Corporation to strategically address food insecurity and local food systems on a national scale.
- Led USDA's engagement with the OMB's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs on FNS regulations, Federal Register publications, and funding announcements, ensuring alignment with administration policy and securing timely approval of regulatory actions.
- Communicated with congressional appropriations staff on complex budget and policy issues, serving as a trusted source of insight on agricultural, nutrition, and income support programs.
- Spearheaded the FY 2024 and FY 2025 President's Budget publications for FNS, managing OMB passback, agency appeals, and Congressional hearing preparations to support strategic policy goals.
- Supervised and reorganized workflows for a high-performing team, improving collaboration, efficiency, and the delivery of high-quality analysis, briefing papers, and reports under tight deadlines.
- Designed and implemented an Employee Flash Mentoring Program, successfully integrating new hires into OBPA culture and processes in a remote work environment.

U.S. FOREST SERVICE, OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING, BUDGET, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Assistant Director for Budget Formulation (detail), Nov 2021 – Feb 2022

Recruited to lead three branches – Budget Formulation; Performance; and Directives & Regulations – of the U.S. Forest Service budget office, overseeing the budget formulation process, regulatory policy publication, and the agency strategic planning process.

- Supervised 15 staff across the above branches through organizational transition and staffing shortages, earning recognition for outstanding leadership in maintaining high-quality work in a collaborative team environment.

Professional Publications

"Changes in Obesity Among US Children Aged 2 Through 4 Years Enrolled in WIC During 2010-2016." Journal of the American Medical Association. June 18, 2019. Vol. 321, Issue 23: 2364–2366.

"The Impact of Federal Policy Changes and Initiatives on Breastfeeding Initiation Rates and Attitudes Toward Breastfeeding Among WIC Participants." Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior. July–August 2017. Volume 49, Issue 7, Supplement 2.

Abstract: To explore the effects of the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) on participants' breastfeeding (BF) practices, studies that use large national samples are warranted. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service funded several studies that leveraged national samples of WIC agencies, sites, and participants to evaluate how WIC affects BF outcomes among its participants. This report integrates findings across multiple Food and Nutrition Service–funded studies to describe important program benefits and how the program and its benefits supported positive attitudes and beliefs toward BF, as well as higher rates of BF initiation. The report concludes with policy implications and suggestions for future research.

"The Relationship Between Social Security Disability Insurance and Unemployment in the Twenty-First Century." The Georgetown Public Policy Review. Winter 2014-2015. Vol. 20, No. 1.

Abstract: Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) enrollment rates have risen sharply since the enactment of the Social Security Disability Benefits Reform Act of 1984, and on the national level, enrollment rates appear to track unemployment rates closely. This paper builds on previous research examining the relationship between SSDI and unemployment by using a fixed effects model to examine the association between SSDI enrollment and unemployment rates at the county level in the United States between 2000 and 2010. I find evidence of a statistically significant relationship between SSDI enrollment and unemployment, using both contemporaneous and lagged unemployment data, with some variation in the size of the relationship across regions and employment sectors. However, the magnitude of this relationship remains quite small across specifications.

- Led the formulation of the FY 2023 President's Budget justification, coordinating with OBPA, OMB, and senior leadership to ensure alignment with legislative and regulatory priorities.
- Represented the agency to Congressional committee staff, providing technical assistance and aligning agency priorities with departmental goals, ensuring effective advocacy on Capitol Hill.
- Coordinated the development and implementation of a new reporting system for agency funding opportunities, ensuring compliance with departmental and legislative reporting requirements.
- Designed and implemented an automated reporting process for regulations and agency directives, streamlining updates to senior leadership and ensuring clear communication of policy changes.
- Managed the agency's response to OMB passback on the FY 2023 budget, collaborating across divisions to gather critical data, aligning recommendations with strategic legislative objectives.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Budget and Program Analysis

Program Analyst, Sep 2019 – Jan 2023

Managed budget formulation, execution, and regulatory processes for USDA's Natural Resource and Environment (NRE) and FNS mission areas, ensuring alignment with Administration priorities and key policy directives through collaboration with senior policy officials, appropriations committee staff, the Congressional Budget Office, and OMB.

- Coordinated with OMB and the Department of the Interior to develop a cross-departmental budget proposal for firefighter pay reform, securing a $4.2 billion inclusion in the FY 2024 President's Budget, and eventual legislative authorization and appropriation.
- Managed the development of budget estimates and President's Budget justifications, ensuring well-aligned proposals through collaboration with OMB, agency stakeholders, and interagency partners.
- Drafted position papers and studies on complex natural resource issues, supporting the development of proposed legislation and guiding regulatory decisions aligned with USDA's mission and stakeholder interests.
- Led regulatory oversight for NRE and FNS programs, guiding 7 high-profile and various other regulations and directives through OIRA's Executive Order (EO) 12866 interagency regulatory clearance process.

Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), Office of Policy Support

Policy Analyst, Sep 2014 – Sep 2019

Led complex budget analysis and policy research to address critical issues within nutrition programs, collaborating with internal and external stakeholders to enhance program effectiveness and public impact.

- Managed complex budget models to predict appropriation needs and adjusted forecasts in response to shifting priorities and policy changes, ensuring alignment with USDA and Congressional objectives.
- Prepared budget tables, justifications, and impact analyses for FNS nutrition programs, including cost estimates for budget proposals and regulatory impact analyses.
- Evaluated program performance and provided strategic recommendations for budgetary and regulatory actions to enhance program effectiveness and public service delivery.
- Stepped in during staffing shortages to ensure timely response to OMB comments on regulatory impact analysis, maintaining program momentum and stakeholder engagement.
- Initiated and led employee engagement discussion among 30+ non-managerial employees within OPS.

Legislative Affairs Specialist (detail), Jan 2017 – May 2017

Managed communication and fostered relationships with Congressional members and staff to support FNS programs, contributing to strategic legislative engagement.

- Represented FNS at Congressional briefings and staff meetings, presenting performance data on FNS programs, ensuring alignment with policy goals, and cultivating relationships with Congressional staff to advocate for FNS priorities.
- Coordinated with public affairs and data teams to develop a Congressional district 2-pager on SNAP, utilizing data visualization to effectively communicate FNS program impacts to elected officials.
- Developed tools and strategies to improve legislative affairs functions, including creating the State Legislation Tracking Tool, later adopted by the Office of Government Affairs for enhanced legislative tracking.