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Andrea • McWilliams  
The skilled strategist and devoted lobbyist  
consulting the powerful and political

BY ARDEN WARD • 03.11.13 | 03:25 PM



Photo by Jessica Pages

**N**ative Austinite Andrea McWilliams has been a political force in Texas since she became a Chief of Staff at the tender age of 21. The founder of McWilliams Governmental Affairs Consultants, Andrea McWilliams is a skilled strategist recognized nationally for her lobbying efforts. She was named the top lobbyist in Texas by the *Austin Business Journal* in 2009.

"Most folks have a hard time putting it in words," she says of her role as a lobbyist and political fundraiser. "Last week, a client of mine came up with a phrase while introducing me at an event that I thought was pretty catchy — 'consigliere to the powerful and political,'" she continues. "I actually had never heard that one before."

In her role as a top Texas lobbyist, McWilliams works alongside her husband, firm co-founder Dean McWilliams, crafting policy in legislative and regulatory arenas on behalf of their clients. They are a unique Republican/Democrat husband and wife lobby team, one that ensures clients are well-represented on both sides of the political aisle. The dynamic bipartisan team has a track record that indeed speaks for itself.

In the 81st Legislative Session, Andrea McWilliams passed \$100 million in incentives to make Texas the first location on the globe with the world's most advanced clean coal power plant that captures carbon. And in 2007, she was acknowledged for her key "outside-the-Chamber role" in saving a \$3 billion cancer research package.

McWilliams' tenacity and devotion extends far beyond the political arena. A resident of the historic Old Enfield neighborhood, she is widely known for her philanthropy. Among many philanthropic positions, McWilliams is a longtime member of St. David's Toast of the Town committee, an inaugural member of the Long Center's Notable Women, and the 2012 honorary chair of the Mamma Jamma Ride.

**Q. Your chief characteristic?**

A. Strength in adversity.

**Q. Your idea of happiness?**

A. Group hugs from my three children.

**Q. Your idea of misery?**

A. Waiting.

**Q. What is your favorite pastime?**

A. Lounging on Lake Austin.

**Q. Your favorite food?**

A. Any soufflé at La Grenouille.

**Q. Your favorite motto?**

A. "It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man

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