Clay L. Doherty

Washington, DC • clay@claydoherty.com • linkedin.com/in/claydoherty

STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT | EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP | DONOR & STAKEHOLDER RELATIONSHIPS

Senior executive, former U.S. diplomat, and presidential appointee with 20+ years of experience advising principals, leading teams, and delivering consequential engagements across six continents. Career spans government, international affairs, philanthropy, corporate advisory, and higher education. Expertise includes strategic public diplomacy, executive preparation, diplomatic protocol, official hospitality, ceremonial leadership, and the stewardship of relationships that build institutional trust.

Directed high-level official visits, national ceremonies, international summits, executive transitions, and philanthropic initiatives where preparation, discretion, cultural judgment, and personal recognition were essential to success. Leadership experience encompasses military remembrance and commemoration, donor and stakeholder relationships, multidisciplinary teams, multimillion-dollar budgets, and complex engagements involving distinguished guests and senior leadership.

SELECT CAREER ACCOMPLISHMENTS

HIGH-VALUE INDIVIDUAL STEWARDSHIP Led diplomatic engagement and donor stewardship for the *U.S. World War One Centennial Commission* and the construction of the $44 million National World War One Memorial. Conceived the presentation of American flags flown over the Memorial on its opening day to all major donors and supporters. The initiative was credited with helping secure the final seven-figure amount needed to complete construction.

MAJOR NATIONAL EVENTS Produced the *White House Summit on Global Development*, convening approximately 800 leaders from government, business, and civil society. Led high-level ceremonial and diplomatic engagements, including national commemorations, official visits, and events involving senior U.S. and foreign officials.

BESPOKE EVENTS & ENGAGEMENTS Conceived and authored the German Marshall Fund's *Whistle Stop Tour for Ukraine*, a strategic public diplomacy initiative that secured more than $2 million in philanthropic support from the Howard G. Buffett Foundation.

EXECUTIVE AND BOARD LEADERSHIP Served on the Board of Trustees of the *Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum*. Served as senior advisor to USAID leadership on diplomatic protocol, executive engagements, and high-level international relations.

EXECUTIVE & TEAM LEADERSHIP Led USAID's protocol, special events, and public engagement functions, supervising teams of 5–25 personnel and managing multimillion-dollar budgets. Served 14 months as Acting Director of Public Engagement, directing a 10-person team and $2.5M operating budget.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- **Strategic Engagement & Public Diplomacy**
- **Executive Advisory & Board Relations**
- **Philanthropy & Donor Stewardship**
- **Bespoke Event Production & Engagements**
- **Distinguished Guest Relations**
- **Diplomatic Protocol & Hospitality**
- **National Events & Commemorations**
- **Executive & Team Leadership**

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

High Touch Engagement | Washington, DC **2016 - present**
Founder & President
Lead strategic engagement advisory firm serving governments, international institutions, corporations, foundations, and mission-driven organizations, advising senior leaders on institutional relationships, diplomatic engagement, and consequential initiatives.

- Led American delegation of business executives to attend the *Libyan American Business Forum* and the *Global Competitive Urban Planning Initiative* in Benghazi, Libya in September 2026.
- Established partnership between CBS Television, Revelations Entertainment, and the National Museum of American Diplomacy that secured sets and props from TV show *Madam Secretary* for permanent exhibition.
- Directed stakeholder and diplomatic engagement for the U.S. World War One Centennial Commission, helping to raise $44M for the National World War One Memorial. Received Writer and Producer credits for the *First Colors* ceremony with President Biden, Secretary Haaland, and Gary Sinise.
- Led external narrative and public engagement efforts for Roots of Peace, contributing to CEO Heidi Kuhn's selection as 2023 World Food Prize Laureate and her nomination for the 2024 Nobel Peace Prize.
- Produced inaugural *International Forum on Caribbean Renewable Energy* at the GRAMMY Museum in Los Angeles on the margins of Ninth Summit of the Americas, creating new regional public-private partnerships.
- Served on Raj Shah's presidential transition team at the Rockefeller Foundation, supporting executive engagement, stakeholder coordination, and the preparation of consequential institutional interactions.

Q2IMPACT (A QED Group Company) | Arlington, VA **2024 - 2025**
Managing Director, Strategic Engagement & Marketing
Served as in-house advisor to company leadership on global engagement strategy, led corporate rebranding and positioning and market expansion initiatives that strengthened the firm's competitive position as a U.S. Government contractor serving USAID, the Department of State, and the Department of Defense.

- Repositioned company as a global leader in AI governance through media, corporate events, and thought leadership – strengthening reputation management and expanding development and innovation portfolios.
- Designed and implemented strategic communications plan that included launching new corporate podcast and targeted social media campaigns that increased online engagement by 40% in six months.
- Led institutional engagement across the U.S., Europe, Middle East, and Asia, resulting in new strategic partnerships with think tanks, academia, and policy influencers.
- Engineered Q2IMPACT's first corporate government relations strategy, increasing executive engagement opportunities and reputation management with Congress and the Executive Branch.

The German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF) | Washington, DC **2023**
Managing Director, Strategic Convening
In-house consultancy contract to elevate convening strategy, strengthen external relationships, support fundraising, and deepen engagement with global stakeholders across Washington, DC and Brussels.

- Conceived, authored, and advanced multimillion-dollar public diplomacy initiative - *The Whistle Stop Tour for Ukraine* - that was fully funded by the Howard G. Buffett Foundation. Campaign aligned U.S. public engagement efforts, philanthropic investment, and foreign and public policy narratives in support of Ukraine's recovery and reconstruction.
- Designed virtual convening architecture and produced U.S.-based piece of the 2023 NATO Summit Public Forum, enabling direct participation from Washington, DC during real-time policy dialogues in Lithuania.
- Structured and secured $150K investment that established GMF's in-house production studio, achieving 5-year objective in less than six months, increasing institutional capacity for digital engagement and improving strategic communications delivery systems.
- Strengthened relationships with major institutional partners, including NATO's Public Diplomacy Division, USAA, Rotary International, and Amazon Web Services; expanded existing and established new financial partnerships, including largest six-figure corporate donation to *Brussels Forum,* GMF's flagship summit.

United States Agency for International Development (USAID) | Washington, DC **2013 – 2016**
Director of Protocol & Special Events
Directed executive diplomatic engagement, corporate events, global convenings, and hospitality programs to advance U.S. foreign policy, strengthen reputation management, and expand international partnerships. Established KPIs to measure ROI of global convenings and ensure continuous improvement in stakeholder engagement. Managed $2.5M+ annual budget and supervised teams ranging from 5 to 25 personnel.

- **Produced 2016 White House Summit on Global Development.** Received Letter of Commendation from White House Communications Agency for direct support to the President of the United States.
- **Led diplomatic engagement at the 2015 Call to Action Summit, India.** Produced 22-nation, three-day ministerial conclave that secured the *Delhi Declaration on Maternal and Child Health*.
- **Launched USAID – NBA partnership in Dakar, Senegal.** Efforts increased global media coverage and expanded partnerships in sport diplomacy and stakeholder engagement across the African continent.
- **Produced two Off-Broadway events in NYC** featuring Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, amplifying U.S. foreign policy and launching U.S. Global Development Lab on margins of UN General Assembly (UNGA).
- **Led production of the White House Faith Leaders Luncheon,** the first official event of His Holiness Pope Francis's 2015 official state visit. Event secured new opportunities for high-level engagement on social impact initiatives among faith communities, private sector partners, and the U.S. Government.

United States Agency for International Development (USAID) | Washington, DC **2010 – 2013**
Deputy Director (Acting Director), Office of Public Engagement
Managed $2.5M+ budget and led career civil service team of 10, driving initiatives that strengthened partnerships and thought leadership with stakeholders. Presidential appointment. SECRET clearance.

- **Served as Senior U.S. Government Representative and Special Advisor to the President of Kosovo.** Received Presidential Letter of Commendation for exceptional leadership in service to Kosovo.
- **Produced the $1.2M USAID Frontiers in Development Forum (2012 & 2014),** a Davos-style event convening 800+ global leaders across government, NGOs, and the private sector. This initiative re-established USAID as a thought leader in international development and led to the creation of the U.S. Global Development Lab, redefining the U.S. Government's approach to collaborative innovation.
- **Appointed U.S. Government Representative to the OECD Development Communicators Network,** strengthening USAID's public policy role in shaping international communications strategies.

RELEVANT EARLIER CAREER EXPERIENCE

Senior Vice President, Hollenbeck Associates *Award-winning public relations firm in San Francisco,* CA
Arms Control Policy Analyst, Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) and U.S. Army DAMO-ODOM
Parliamentary Fellow, Joint Standing Committee (Foreign Affairs, Defense & Trade), Parliament of Australia

EXPERT-LEVEL CERTIFICATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL INSTRUCTION

Intercultural Etiquette and Diplomatic Protocol Licensed by *The Protocol School of Washington as a certified expert-level trainer in cross-cultural engagement, corporate etiquette, and diplomatic protocol*.

EDUCATION

Corporate International Master's (CIM) Program *Joint program that conferred separate graduate degrees*.

- **Executive Masters, International Business** – Georgetown University, McDonough School of Business
- **Corporate Master of Business Administration (MBA)** – ESADE Business School, Spain
- **Executive Masters, Business Management** – FGV/EBAPE, Brazilian School of Business Administration

Master of Arts, Political Science – American University

Bachelor of Arts, Political Science – Hampden-Sydney College

Bachelor of Science, Political Science (coursework) – U.S. Naval Academy (Honorable Discharge)