



## **Nicole Pugar Lawter** **Director of Government Relations\***

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Nicole Pugar Lawter is a director of government relations in Williams Mullen's Government Relations Group, where she represents clients before Virginia's legislative and executive branches of government, including state agencies and boards.

As a lobbyist and policy analyst, Nicole works with clients to develop legislative advocacy, regulatory, and grassroots strategies to advance their policy agendas and create legislative solutions. Utilizing relationships she has developed and her knowledge of the state budget and procurement process, Nicole also helps corporate clients achieve their business development goals and secure state contracts.

Nicole's practice is focused primarily on health care law and policy, including advising health care providers, insurers and the pharmaceutical and biotech industries. Nicole has significant knowledge of Virginia's Medicaid system and avidly studies health care payment and delivery reform models. She is particularly interested in mental and oral health issues. In addition to her health care practice, Nicole advises higher education, economic development and environmental industry clients.

Working with Williams Mullen's Economic Development team, Nicole has done extensive research and advocacy for a strategic alignment of the economic development initiatives of both the Richmond and Hampton Roads metropolitan statistical areas to create a mega-region and thereby improve the economic vitality and worldwide competitiveness of both regions.

Nicole has experience working in both state legislatures and the federal government in the public and private sector. Prior to joining William Mullen, Nicole was the director of government relations for Virginia Commonwealth University, its affiliated academic medical center, and health plan. Working with the health system's executive leadership team, Nicole helped craft strategic plans to achieve VCUHS's legislative priorities. She served as a representative of the university and health system before all state governmental and regulatory bodies and also advocated for the health systems' federal legislative priorities.

Prior to her time at VCU, Nicole was a vice president at the Alliance Group, where she assisted clients

with their legislative, public relations and grassroots initiatives. She was responsible for the development of strategic alliances and coalitions to advance corporate clients' interests. At the Alliance Group, Nicole also helped create nonprofit organizations and grassroots networks focused on state legislative campaigns. Nicole gained experience working with professional associations as the director of government affairs for the Virginia Dental Association. She began her career in Washington, D.C., working as a legislative assistant and correspondent to a member of the United State House of Representatives.

Nicole earned her Bachelor of Arts from Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, Va., where she double-majored in political science and French.

## **Practice Areas**

- Government Relations
- Health Care Reform
- Economic Development

## **Experience**

- Director of Government Relations for Virginia Commonwealth University and Health System (2010-2011)
- Director of the Virginia Quality Health care Network
- Coalition Organizer for the Virginians for a Healthy Future Coalition
- Created and managed the Medicare Rx Access Network of Virginia
- Created and managed the Partnership for Prescription Assistance of Virginia
- Director of Public Policy for the Virginia Dental Association (2002-2004)
- Staff assistant for former United States Senator Rick Santorum (2002)
- Staff assistant for former United States Congressman John Linder (2001-2002)
- Intern for former Delegate L. Preston Bryant of the Virginia House of Delegates (2000)

## **Education**

- Randolph Macon College (B.A.)