

Kenny Shatzkes is currently a Policy Advisor in the Office of the Governor, State of New Jersey, providing scientifically-sound recommendations to the Governor on issues related to the President's Commission on Combatting Drug Abuse and the Opioid Crisis. He was previously an Eagleton Fellow at the Eagleton Institute of Politics in 2016-17. As part of the fellowship, he was placed in the Office of Intergovernmental and External Affairs in the Office of the Secretary at the US Department of Health and Human Services, where he researched, tracked, and informed leadership of innovative state-led opioid-related initiatives. Kenny has nearly 15 years of experience performing biomedical research, with an expertise in infectious disease biology, at esteemed institutions such as the J. Craig Venter Institute and the US Food and Drug Administration. Over his career, he has participated in a variety of research projects ranging from novel antimicrobial strategies to combat antibiotic-resistant pathogens, to large scale genomic studies of the human microbiome. A graduate of Rutgers, Kenny was nominated to represent Rutgers at the 3rd annual American Association for the Advancement of Science' (AAAS) Catalyzing Advocacy in Science and Engineering (CASE) workshop to learn about the federal budget process and the importance of research funding advocacy. He also served as the Congressional Visits Chairperson of the Rutgers Chapter of the National Science Policy Group which travels to DC annually to meet with lawmakers and advocate for sustained and predictable basic science research funding. Kenny is also a passionate advocate for public science communication and education, with the hope of inspiring young students to take a deeper interest in science-related careers. He has volunteered his time with various science outreach programs throughout NYC, such as the New York Academy of Sciences' Afterschool STEM Mentoring Program and the NYC Department of Education's Scientist-in-Residence program, as well as judges annually at the NYC Science and Engineering Fair.

Kenny received a B.Sc. in Molecular Genetics and Development from McGill University and completed his PhD in Biomedical Sciences at Rutgers University in April 2017.