

# David Axelrod

David Axelrod served as senior advisor to President Barack Obama during his historic campaign for the presidency in 2008, his first two years in office, and his reelection in 2012. Today, Axelrod serves as Director of the Institute of Politics at the University of Chicago, a senior political commentator for CNN, and host of *The Axe Files* podcast, a series of interviews with key figures in the political world. He was inducted into The American Association of Political Consultants' Hall of Fame in 2013. His *New York Times* best-selling memoir, *BELIEVER: My Forty Years in Politics* (February, 2015), spans forty years which include corruption and transformation, turmoil and progress—offering a look behind the closed doors of politics while issuing a thrilling call to democratic action. This powerful, inspiring memoir is enlivened by the charm and candor of one of the greatest political strategists in recent American history.

During his time at the White House, Axelrod was the Obama Administration's most frequent presence on influential Sunday talk shows including NBC's *Meet the Press*, ABC's *This Week*, CBS's *Face the Nation*, FOX News Sunday and CNN's *State of the Union*. He also appeared several times on *The Tonight Show*, *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* and *The Late Show with David Letterman*.

Axelrod founded the Chicago consulting firm AKPD Message and Media in 1985, and was senior partner there until 2008. At AKPD, he managed media strategy and communications for more than 150 campaigns, with a focus on progressive candidates and causes.

In 2006, Axelrod ran the independent expenditure media program for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, helping Democrats regain the majority in the House of Representatives. He also served as media adviser to Deval Patrick, who was elected Massachusetts's first Democratic governor in 16 years and the state's first-ever African American governor. In 2004, Axelrod helped then-State Senator Barack Obama win a challenging primary and go on to a landslide win in his U.S. Senate campaign.

Before entering politics in 1984, Axelrod spent eight years as a reporter for *The Chicago Tribune*, where he covered national, state, and local politics. In 1981, he became the youngest political writer and columnist in the paper's history. He also served as the *Tribune's* City Hall bureau chief.

Active in charitable work in Chicago, Axelrod has supported Special Olympics and Misericordia. In 1998, he and his wife, Susan, helped found Citizens United for Research in Epilepsy (CURE), which has raised over \$43 million for scientists searching for a cure.

Axelrod was born in New York City, and graduated from Stuyvesant High School and the University of Chicago. He served as an adjunct professor of Communication Studies at Northwestern University and has lectured on political media at Harvard University and the University of Pennsylvania. He is married to Susan Landau and has three children, Lauren, Michael, and Ethan.