

Biography of Barbara Merrill

Chief Executive Officer, ANCOR

Barbara Merrill joined the staff of ANCOR in 2012 as Vice President, Public Policy, and since 2014 has served as Chief Executive Officer. During Barbara's tenure as CEO, ANCOR's membership has more than quadrupled in size, solidifying its status as the leading voice in Washington for community-based providers of intellectual and developmental disability services. Today, the association represents more than 2,500 provider organizations and nearly five dozen state provider associations.

Barbara has been a leader in the disability field since 1992, working first as an advocate and later as an attorney and state legislator whose diverse background has been united by a commitment to strengthening community providers and the services they deliver to people with I/DD. In her three-decade career as an attorney and advocate, Barbara has represented a variety of clients and associations, including psychologists, nursing facilities, mental health professionals and I/DD providers. Among her many accomplishments, she successfully orchestrated the passage of legislation to increase wages for Maine's direct support professionals and to codify Maine's Mental Health Parity law. In 2002, Barbara became the first Executive Director of the Maine Association for Community Service Providers.

In 2004, Barbara left private practice to serve in Maine's legislature, where she represented the Appleton area in the Maine House of Representatives. In 2006, she won more than one in five votes cast in her bid to become Governor of Maine, an office for which she ran as an Independent. Although she did not win the state's gubernatorial election, the effort was hardly a failure, as Barbara earned the loser's prize of hosting *Inside Maine*, a political talk show aired on Maine's most popular talk radio station.

Though Maine will always be home, Barbara has made the Washington, DC, area her adopted home since moving to Northern Virginia to join the ANCOR staff. When she isn't speaking to gatherings of ANCOR members or connecting with partners across the country, Barbara can be found unabashedly cheering on her New England sports teams, spending as much time outdoors as possible, enjoying any number of the incredible restaurants that make up Washington's underrated food scene, or connecting around the table with her husband, Phil, and their four adult children.