

Awesta Sarkash

Director of Advocacy & Communications

Coalition for Nonprofit Housing and Economic Development (CNHED)



Awesta is responsible for facilitating the development and execution of CNHED’s budget and policy advocacy strategies across the broad range of community development issues in Washington D.C. She helps to expand CNHED’s historic wins for the continuum of affordable housing-- amplifying the impact of our highly successful Housing For All Campaign-- and expand complementary advocacy efforts around workforce development, small business entrepreneurship, and neighborhood-based commercial corridors. Awesta engages, recruits, and mobilizes CNHED members, allies and community residents under this Equitable Communities platform. Beginning in 2019, Awesta took over the communication position. In this role, Awesta brands the organization’s achievements and develops an effective communications strategy broadly. She serves on advocacy committees for the United Planning Organization and Greater Greater Washington.

Prior to joining CNHED, Awesta served as the grassroots and advocacy manager for the American Land Title Association (ALTA), a national trade association representing the voice of the abstract and title insurance industry. She assisted in recruiting over 10,000 members of ALTA’s grassroots entity, the Title Action Network (TAN), and engaged nearly every state association in drafting advocacy actions and campaigns to target Members of Congress.

Awesta Sarkash received her Master’s in Political Science from American University in Washington, D.C. with a focus on American Politics and advocacy. She also served as assistant director for the Center for Congressional and Presidential Studies’ (CCPS) Public Affairs and Advocacy Institute (PAAI) at American University and in Brussels for the European Public Affairs and Advocacy Institute (EPAAI).

Originally from Afghanistan, Awesta grew up in Albuquerque, New Mexico and received her Bachelor’s in Political Science and History from the University of New Mexico (UNM) in Albuquerque.