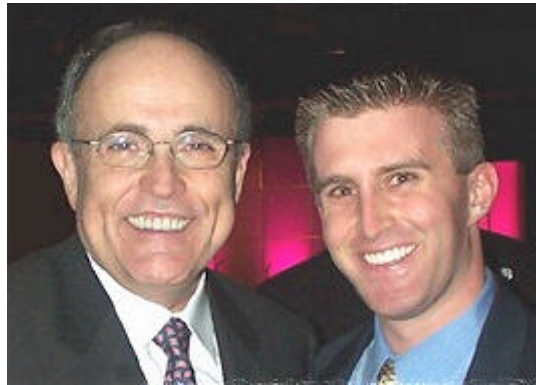




AT THE RACES

HillZoo's Weekly Profile of Former Congressional Staffers Who Are Now Running for Political Office



MICHAEL WISSOT (R-California)

Candidate for State Assembly - District 41

www.wissot.com

Although former Senate staffer Michael Wissot's online resume states that he'd like to pursue "a career in sports and business administration and jurisprudence" -- and a glance at his career proves that statement very accurate -- he's setting that goal aside for the moment to make a challenger run this year against freshman California Assemblywoman Fran Pavley (D).

It is very clear that Michael's first love is sports. While a student at Virginia's James Madison University (BA in Speech Communications, 1996), Michael worked as an Assistant to the school's Athletic Director, was a member of JMU's Water Polo team (and was also Team Captain), was Editor of the *JMU Athletics Sports Annual*, was a public relations intern for the San Francisco Giants baseball team, and was a public relations intern for the Baltimore Orioles baseball team. On top of that, he wrote sports articles for various publications.

Michael earned his MBA in 1999 the University of Arizona (and a Master of International Management at the same time from nearby Thunderbird-American Graduate School of International Management). While at Arizona, Michael also spent four years as the Head Coach of the school's water polo team. He twice took the team to the national championships (earned them the #2 national rank) -- and won the Southwest Conference Coach of the Year award for water polo.



In part of 1997, Michael served as a Corporate Communications Intern in the New York City office of the powerhouse public relations firm Hill & Knowlton. He also worked that year as Marketing & Media Relations Assistant for the Tucson Bowl Foundation (marketing research efforts to boost revenue). In May 1998, Michael started work on Capitol Hill as an intern in Senator John McCain's office. By August 1998, Michael was back in Arizona as a campaign aide working on McCain's re-election effort. He also later worked on

McCain's Presidential campaign. "My alliance with Senator John McCain yielded an invaluable understanding of the relationship between Congress and corporate America ... My experiences in Washington fittingly extend into sports business activities. Similar to the climate on Capitol Hill, sports entertainment must cultivate an environment of diplomacy, negotiation, and tenacity, regardless of any criticism from its detractors," explained Michael.

Michael launched his personal sports web site -- LineDrives.com -- in 1999. The site itself -- like Michael's work history -- is focused on the business side of major league sports. "His comprehensive personal website on sports entertainment ... continues exploring opportunities for organizations to expand their capabilities in strategic marketing and public affairs," said Hill & Knowlton President Tom Hoog.

That Internet project led in 2000 to Michael's current position as CEO of the Dentistry.com, an Internet company specializing in information-based services for patients and dental professionals. Michael's partner in the company is his father, cosmetic dentist Jeffrey Wissot.

While Southern California's 41st Assembly District is strongly Democratic, Michael is still making an energetic, underdog run for the seat. Under the slogan of "Leadership Over Politics," Michael has won endorsements from GOP gubernatorial nominee Bill Simon, Secretary of State Bill Jones, former Los Angeles Mayor Dick Riordan, five Members of Congress, former Reagan aide Michael Deaver, and a long list of GOP state legislators. Deaver even headlined a campaign event, lavishly praising the 27-year-old Michael as "a young Reagan with a masterful ability to communicate." (One interesting note of trivia: Michael's opponent is the great-granddaughter of three-time Democratic Presidential nominee William Jennings Bryan).

Whether or not Michael ultimately succeeds in the race, he certainly is demonstrating that he learned much from his time in the public relations field. And -- as an Internet executive -- it is also not surprising that he has a great looking [campaign web site](http://www.wissot.com) at www.wissot.com

**For more info on other former Congressional staffers,
be sure to check out our online
[Directory of Former Hill Staffers
Running for Political Office in 2002](#)**

[AT THE RACES ARCHIVES](#)