

## RYAN COSTELLA – BIOGRAPHY

Ryan Costella grew up in Washoe Valley, Nevada, and graduated from Carson High School in Carson City in 2000. He earned a swimming scholarship to attend Villanova University where he graduated magna cum laude with a bachelor's degree in English and political science with a concentration in honors and a minor in Chinese in 2004. At Villanova, Ryan co-founded the Villanova World Religions Day and the Villanova Interfaith Coalition. He also represented the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences as a Senator in the University Senate. As a member of Villanova University's Men's NCAA Division I varsity swim team, Ryan served as captain from 2002 to 2004.

Upon graduation, Ryan accepted a NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship to study at the University of Cambridge, Wolfson College, in the United Kingdom, where he earned a master of philosophy degree in Modern Chinese Studies in 2006.

As part of his studies at Cambridge, from March through December 2005, Ryan attended the China Center for Economic Research at Beijing University, where he studied Mandarin and conducted research on China's rural and urban politico-economic development, regional disparities, human rights, and the nation's sports system. He also served on USA Swimming's China Olympics Task Force and provided strategic advice in planning for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games.

After graduate school and a brief stint as a business consultant on China, he served for 2 ½ years as a special assistant in the United States Senate where he advised on China policy, outreach strategy, and new media development. While in Washington, D.C., Ryan began regularly convening a small group of China experts to discuss Sino-U.S. relations and policy. In just three years, the group has grown significantly, now consisting of over 110 professionals from Capitol Hill, the various federal departments and agencies, think tanks, human rights groups, and private industry. Ryan continues to convene the members in Washington, where they engage in off-the-record discussions with some of the most prominent leaders addressing China policy in the United States including government officials, notable authors and media representatives, human rights advocates, business leaders, and academics.

In July 2009, Ryan became the Director of Strategic Initiatives for Click Bond, Inc., a global manufacturing company in Carson City, Nevada, producing bonded fasteners for the defense and commercial aerospace, railway, shipbuilding, and renewable energy industries.

Ryan's honors include being a member of the National Society of Collegiate Scholars and the honor societies Phi Kappa Phi, Pi Sigma Alpha, and Delta Epsilon Sigma. In addition, in 2004 he received Villanova University's Augustinian Award for Academic Excellence, was named a U.S. Masters Swimming 1-Mile Open Water National Champion and All-American, became a Rhodes Scholarship Finalist for the State of Nevada, and, in that same year, was awarded a U.S. Fulbright Grant to China, which he declined in order to pursue his studies at Cambridge. Ryan was named a Regional Finalist for the White House Fellowship in 2006 and received Villanova University's Young Alumni Medallion in 2009.

Outside of work, Ryan enjoys running marathons and being active in the community. He is the founder and president of Empowerment Nevada, a Nevada-based political organization seeking to re-cultivate the "problem solving by ourselves" culture that built Nevada and the USA. He is the founder and former CEO of Youth Voice, Inc., a non-profit organization based in Reno that works to encourage civic involvement among young people. Ryan is a member of the Reno-Tahoe Young Professionals Network, the Young Professionals in Foreign Policy, and the Cambridge University Asia Law and Business Association. He also is active in the Carson City chapter of the Knights of Columbus. Ryan resides in Reno, Nevada, and is the son of Danny and Heather Costella. He has five younger siblings: Danielle, Lauren, Kiel, Sean, and Heather.