

[HOME](#)[PURPOSE](#)[WHY STEVE?](#)[ABOUT](#)

ABOUT STEVE ADRAGNA

The grandson of Italian immigrants, Steve was born in New York City and raised in suburban New Jersey. His parents had lived through the Depression and World War II, and both had to leave school to help support their families -- his father completed two years at City College; his mother dropped out of high school when her father became too ill to work, and she took a job in a knitting factory.

From an early age, Steve was taught the importance of family, hard work, education, and never giving up in pursuit of his goals. Those lessons became all the more sharp at the age of 14, when his father died suddenly and his mother had to return to the workforce with no high school diploma and no highly marketable skills. In spite of the challenges, Steve excelled in school and turned down admission offers from several Ivy League colleges in order to attend the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, where he majored in International Politics and graduated with honors. To make ends meet, he worked throughout college -- first in an ice cream shop, then running a media project on Capitol Hill, and finally as a full-fledged staff member of a prominent public policy and advocacy organization.



Steve left the Washington area only to attend the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, where he was an Earhart Fellow. He again worked throughout his four years there, as Research Staff Director of the International Security Studies Program. Despite developing good job prospects by earning master's and doctoral degrees, Steve was determined to serve the country that had afforded him so much opportunity. He received an extremely rare direct appointment as a combat arms officer in reserve components of the US Army, as an armor officer, and went on to serve for 15 years in command and staff positions in armored cavalry, Special Forces, and strategic intelligence units. After graduate school, Steve returned to the National Capital Area in 1989, and put down roots in Virginia, with which he had fallen in love during his years at Georgetown. He has lived in Northern Virginia ever since.

Steve served the national interest as a civilian, too, working for some 13 years with the Defense Intelligence Agency in a variety of roles, often on highly complex and extremely sensitive issues. He

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