

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD RECIPIENT



Charles John O'Byrne is Executive Vice President for Policy at Related Companies where he serves in a leadership role on government affairs on the federal, state and local levels; labor issues, litigation matters, and questions of strategy on multiple projects within the Related portfolio. He also serves on the management team of EnergyRe, an energy company founded by Related's principals dedicated to green power. EnergyRe, with its partners Invenergy and the New York Power Authority is responsible for the largest renewable project in the United States scheduled to replace close to 16% of New York City's power supply with wind and solar power.

Charles is a native New Yorker and currently resides in Manhattan. Trained as an attorney, his career prior to joining Related involved varied experiences in government, religion, academia and business. A former Jesuit, he worked at Columbia and Harvard universities as a chaplain and teaching fellow. He also served as Associate General Counsel for the Archdiocese of New York. During his time in ministry he worked as an attorney with the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights on the prosecution of those responsible for the assassination of Jesuit faculty members at the UCA in San Salvador in 1989 and as an immigration lawyer working pro bono for refugees seeking asylum in Canada.

Charles has decades of experience in politics and government as a speech writer, communications director and chief of staff. His work included stints on several presidential campaigns including that of Governor Howard Dean.

He spent more than five years in state service acting as Chief of Staff to the Senate Minority Leader, Chief of Staff to the Lieutenant Governor and Secretary to former Governor David A. Paterson. The constitutional office of Secretary to the Governor is the highest appointed office in the state's executive branch.

Charles has served as a trustee and personal adviser to members of the Kennedy Family for more than 25 years.

Long active in charitable and philanthropic works, Charles presently serves on the boards of Citizens Union, the New York Harbor Parks Conservancy, the Steering Committee of ABNY, as a Trustee of the Citizens Budget Commission and as Vice Chair of the Washington Ireland Program. He is a past president of the Columbia College Alumni Association, a co-founder of the Thomas Merton Lecture at Columbia, a former trustee of the Kennedy Smith Foundation



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and former Vice Chair of VSA Arts, an affiliate of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts providing artistic opportunities for people with disabilities. He is a former Co-Chair of the board of the Hetrick Martin Institute in New York, the nation's oldest organization providing crisis intervention services to LGBTQ youth; a former member of the Board of Directors of NYC Outward Bound and served on the executive board of the Greater Area Board of Directors for the Boy Scouts of America.

Charles holds his BA summa cum laude from Columbia College, where he majored in history and studied Chinese philosophy. He received his Juris Doctor degree from the Columbia University School of Law where he was named to the International Fellows Program. He holds a Masters in Divinity with Distinction and an S.T.L., in Theology from the Weston Jesuit School of Theology.