



# **Secular Decade Strategic Plan**

**Winter 2011/12 Edition**

## Mission

The Secular Coalition for America seeks to:

1. Increase the visibility of and respect for nontheistic viewpoints in the United States; and
2. Protect and strengthen the secular character of our government as the best guarantee of freedom for all.

## Vision

An America that has returned to its secular roots and where secularism is an influential, respected force in American civic life, and in which there are numerous openly nontheistic elected officials.

## Constituent Value Proposition

Secular Coalition for America will:

1. Utilize secular public policy as a central catalyst for inspiring growth in our entire coalition;
2. Employ coalition building as a central mechanism for building cohesion and innovation within our secular movement; and
3. Inspire a greater proportion of the millions of secular Americans to participate in our coalition.

## Strategic Overview

Five Strategies to Serve the Mission, Vision and Constituent Value Proposition

*Constituent Strategies:*

Strategy One: **Increase Advocacy**

Strategy Two: **Broaden and Deepen SCA's Base of Supporters**

*Operations Strategy:*

Strategy Three: **Strengthen Bonds Within Our Coalition**

*Learning Strategy:*

Strategy Four: **Build a Coalition Culture of Innovation and Growth**

*Financial Strategy:*

Strategy Five: **Broaden and Deepen SCA's Financial Base**

# Constituent Strategies

## Strategy One: Increase Advocacy

Objective A: Take persuasive stands on a greater variety of policy issues that are emotionally compelling and demonstrate the unjust human impact of religious privileging by June 2012.

1. Rewrite every current position paper to be more emotionally compelling by March, 2012.
2. Produce emotionally compelling web videos on our issues by December 31, 2012.
3. Create and maintain a format for a list of individuals that have been harmed by religious privileging, for use in media contacts and lobbying efforts by March, 2012. (Summit suggestion)

### **2011 Achieved Goals:**

1. Increase from 8 issue positions in Fall 2009 to 17 issues positions by September 1, 2011.
2. Increase from 17 issue positions in September 1, 2011 to 21 issue positions before 2012, featuring and emphasizing issues that suit best SCA's strategic interest.

Objective B: Increase DC lobbying presence by 50% by December 31, 2013.

1. Increase total 2012 lobbying hours over 2011 hours by 10% by focusing Government Relations Manager on lobbying duties.
2. Develop a 2012 Congressional Scorecard by December 2012.
3. Hire an additional full-time lobbyist by March 1, 2013

### **2011 Achieved Goals:**

1. Increase total 2011 lobbying hours over 2010 hours (1180) by 13% by focusing Government Relations Manager on lobbying duties.
2. Develop a 2011 Congressional Scorecard by December 2011.

Objective C: Ensure that the media instinctively looks to SCA as a valued resource on religious privileging issues by December 31, 2013.

1. Doubling the number of SCA's mainstream media hits (quotes, mentions, letters to the editor, op-eds, TV appearances, etc.) in 2012.
2. Continue to promote lobbying efforts to mainstream national reporters by increasing the number of news releases issued and time spent proactively pitching media by SCA communications staff.
3. Increase SCA's presence by placing op-eds and letters to the editor in the media as appropriate.
4. Frame our issues to reporters as compelling human rights issues with emotional examples of real people harmed.

### **2011 Achieved Goals:**

1. Doubling the number of SCA's mainstream media hits (quotes, mentions, letters to the editor, op-eds, TV appearances, etc.) in 2011.

2. Promote lobbying efforts to mainstream national reporters by increasing the number of news releases issued and time spent proactively pitching media by SCA communications staff.
3. Establish SCA's blog as a reliable and well-known center for news and opinions about the secular movement and religious privileging in government.

## **Strategy Two: Broaden and Deepen SCA's Base of Supporters.**

Objective A: Establish 50 Statewide Secular Coalitions by December 31, 2019.

1. Develop a start-up guide and resources for potential affiliates to ease their organization process by May, 2012.
2. Develop a website template for state affiliates that easily interacts with www.secular.org and that encourages participation and activism.
3. Hire an Outreach Manager by December 2012, preferably earlier.
4. Serve as a catalyst for the existence of eight State Affiliates with signed agreements by December 31, 2012.
5. Organize communications plan that targets member organizations' supporters with the goal of energizing them to participate more actively in those organizations and in SCA State Affiliates.

### ***2011 Achieved Goals:***

1. Conduct trainings for State Affiliates in a minimum of five states by December 31, 2010.
2. Hire a Chief of Staff by May 2011.
3. Have two signed Affiliate Agreements by December 31, 2011

Objective B: Increase support of the coalition through implementation of a social media strategy.

1. Increase online contacts by 35% by December 31, 2015. Increase social media likes by 50% by December 31, 2015. Member organizations report a cumulative increase in membership attributable to SCA by December 31, 2015.
2. Market in social media and blogosphere the need to address injustices to real people resulting from the privileging of religion in law.
3. Continue to link and promote our website, videos, and action alerts to Facebook, our blog, and Twitter on an aggressive basis.
4. Create a strong blogging presence devoted to compelling issues of secular public policy by April, 2011.

### ***2011 Achieved Goals:***

1. Link and promote our website, videos, and action alerts to Facebook, our blog, and Twitter on an aggressive and continuing basis.
2. Create a strong blogging presence devoted to compelling issues of secular public policy by April, 2011.

Objective C: Broaden the reach of the Secular Coalition and of the nontheist movement by reaching out to uninvolved nontheists.

1. Draft outreach plans focused on targeted groups by March, 2012:
2. Schedule 4 speaking engagements targeted towards members of the above groups by December 31, 2012.
3. Inspire a sense of mission among apathetic nontheists by making a compelling case regarding the human impact of the privileging of religion.

Objective D: Create a nontheist campaign contribution strategy for the 2014 election.

1. Vet legal and strategic electioneering options, and offer a plan to board by Fall 2012.

Objective E: Secure ten openly non-theist members of Congress by January 2019.

1. Draft a plan for recognizing and celebrating nontheist elected officials by August 1, 2012 for use in a consensus process with staff.
2. Cultivate relationships with Members of Congress to discern the presence of nontheists, while only publicly recognizing those who are comfortable with public recognition.

# Operations Strategy

## Strategy Three: Strengthen Bonds Within Our Coalition

**Achieved:** Objective A: Increase communication between SCA and coalition organizations December 31, 2010.

1. Monthly communication from the Executive Director to the Board.
2. Regular calls between Executive Director and individual Board Members.
3. Monthly e-newsletter that goes to Board as well as others.
4. Monthly calls as needed with Board Officers and Executive Director.

Objective B: Decrease time commitment necessary for service on SCA Board by June 2012.

1. Increase communication between Board and staff in between meetings so continued actions and strategy are easily understood and communicated to full Board.
2. Ensure that staff member communicate with appropriate committee of the Board regularly so that Board members are more informed regarding staff initiatives and direction at Board meetings. Schedule bi-monthly committee meetings between the board committees and applicable staff.
3. Consider delegation of certain committee functions by SCA voting board members to staff within their respective organizations.
4. Schedule individual calls between board members and the Executive Director for every two months.

Objective C: Survey supporters, Board members, and members of member organizations about their ideas for coalition-strengthening by December 2012.

1. Form a committee in January 2012 to analyze best survey methods and make a recommendation to the Board by the Summer 2012 Board meeting.
2. Ensure that member organization are prominently linked from the SCA website and SCA communications [achieved], and provide more information about member organizations on our website by March, 2012.
3. Create a calendar for member organizations access, showing all notable SCA events, including those not open to the public by May, 2012.

# Learning Strategy

## Strategy Four: Build a Coalition Culture of Innovation and Growth

**Achieved:** Objective A: Host a successful May 2011 Strategic Summit that contributes substantively to furthering SCA's strategic plan and establishes a strategic precedent.

1. Consult with business leaders and strategists on best methods of improving the structure of the summit in early 2011, including a core committee that would review strategic planning quarterly.
2. During fall/winter 2010/2011 cultivate twenty people who have strong leadership potential for important responsibilities in the movement to attend the summit.
3. Draw together attorneys within the movement for strategic thinking sessions at the summit.
4. Draw together from within the movement communications professionals, web professionals, and podcasters for a strategic session at the summit. [achieved]
5. Require summit attendees to study in advance the strategic plan and come prepared to contribute meaningfully.
6. Hold a strategy session at the summit that offers a genuine opportunity for collaborative participation with the goals of finding the best ways to improve our strategic plan and formulate entirely new ideas that serve our Mission, Vision and Constituent Value Proposition
7. Hold a lobby day with summit attendees, training them to serve as experienced advocacy leaders in their home regions.

Objective B: Institute a continuous strategic planning process that anticipates continual adjustment and innovation by June 2011.

1. Use 2011 summit feedback to help prepare for Spring 2013 Summit.
2. Hold strategy sessions at the two in-person board meetings and at the biennial summit.

**2011 Achieved Goals:**

1. Engage business leaders, strategic thinkers and the Board's strategic committee to reassess the plan every six months.

Objective C: Create a successful internship program, cultivating future leaders.

1. Increase number of interns hosted by the Secular Coalition from one to two per year, by December 2012.

**2011 Achieved Goals:**

1. Create a plan for financial incentives and structuring of an intern program by January 2011.
2. Implement a successful internship program by December 2011.

Objective C: Increase professional abilities of staff by December 31, 2011.

1. Engage staff in technical and strategic training sessions that empower them to take innovative steps in their respective areas, including ensuring that each staff member has a professional development plan and completes at least one training a year.

# Financial Strategy

Internal Use Only