

Andrew Romanoff

Former state House speaker who challenged Sen. Michael Bennet in a Democratic primary last year. Burned some bridges in the process, but remains a tireless advocate for progressive causes. His supporters are among the party's most passionate.

Paul Harstad

Harstad has achieved perhaps the best win-loss record of any Democratic pollster in the country, having won forty-three out of forty-eight statewide general elections for U.S. senator, governor, ballot initiatives and presidential battleground states—all but a handful of them competitive.

Bill Ritter

Outgoing governor pioneered the phrase “new energy economy” and positioned Colorado to take advantage of a renewable fuel boom. Former prosecutor stepped down for personal reasons, choosing not to run for re-election.

Jim Lyons

Denver lawyer with connections to Clinton White House. One of Ritter's prime backers, he remains an asset for Democrats seeking office.

Brandon Shaffer

State Senate president helped recruit and fund-raise to keep the party's majority in the upper chamber. Former Navy officer is seen as potential challenger to newly elected Republican Rep. Cory Gardner in the 4th congressional district.

Tyler Chafee

Up-and-coming political consultant works with Craig Hughes and Rick Ridder at powerful Denver firm, RBI Strategies. Ran Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign in Colorado.

Rick Ridder

Co-founded RBI Strategies, which has consulted for six different presidential campaigns. He also works internationally, having helped elect four heads of state overseas.

Hollie Velasquez Horvath

Top Democratic fundraiser. Raised money for candidates at local, state and federal level in Colorado, most recently Gov. Hickenlooper.

Jason Bane

Labor operative co-founded state's most viewed political blog, Colorado-Pols.com. It drives discussions and places odds on candidates. Campaigns have found themselves not only reading it, but giving its bloggers interviews and story tips.

Ed Perlmutter

Democratic congressman from 7th congressional district. Old school, retail politician whose “Government at the Grocery” events often turn into extended give-and-takes. Neighbors love him even if they don't agree with him because he listens to their concerns. Built network of support in Denver suburbs that is the closest thing to a Chicago-style machine in Colorado today.

MISCELLANEOUS

Rick Reiter

Colorado's preeminent political consultant when it comes to statewide ballot measures. His side has won fifteen of the last sixteen initiatives he's worked on; if you want an initiative passed or defeated, his firm is the one to hire.

Dan Hopkins

Former Owens press secretary, the registered independent is the single most respected media rep in the Colorado political world. Technically retired, he tends to work every other year with Reiter on ballot measures, serving as spokesperson for the campaigns.

Roxane White

No one will be closer to the governor than his chief of staff, who is a regis-

tered unaffiliated voter. She has the complete trust of Republicans and Democrats alike from her work with past administrations.

Eric Sondermann

A high-profile political pundit, offering regular commentary on public television programs and in newspapers around the state. He's seen as a straight shooter, and candidates know they have problems if he criticizes them.

Floyd Ciruli

The preeminent pollster in Colorado. Serves as political analyst for leading television station and newspaper in Denver. No candidate declares victory or accepts defeat until Ciruli calls the race.

Chris Watney

As the head of the Colorado Children's Campaign, her bipartisan “Kids Caucus” usually gets whatever legislation it wants passed. The former Justice Department spokesperson worked on Democratic campaigns before leaving the field to focus on Colorado children.

Dick Lamm

Former three-term Democratic governor has angered many in his party in recent years with his stand against illegal immigration. He remains a prolific writer, recently focusing on personal and government responsibilities in health-care decades after he was famously quoted as saying, “Old people have a duty to die.”