The Legis Congressional Fellowship

Your chance to work and learn on Capitol Hill

Brookings Executive Education

A Partnership of the Brookings Institution and Washington University in St. Louis
The Legis Congressional Fellowship

The formation of public policy is an increasingly critical responsibility for leaders in government and business, yet few executives have firsthand experience of the complex federal policy-making process.

By working for members of Congress in their offices and on congressional committees, Fellows gain practical insights into congressional decision-making while broadening their knowledge about the American political process.

Moreover, Fellows are able to gain a vital perspective, new leadership capabilities and political acumen that will not only inform their work in their respective organizations but also enhance their careers.
What does it take to be a Fellow?

Fellowship Term:
Spend seven or twelve months working in the office of a member of Congress or serving on the staff of a committee in the U.S. Senate or U.S. House of Representatives, becoming part of the action on Capitol Hill.

Prior to your service on the Hill, you’ll attend an intensive two-week orientation at Brookings, which will prepare you for your congressional assignment by offering keen insights into the legislative process and congressional decision-making.

While working in Congress, you’ll learn the policy-making process from the inside: drafting legislation, briefing congressmen and senators, serving as a constituent liaison, planning and participating in committee hearings, and more.

Qualifications and Nomination Procedure
Applicants must have a significant interest in legislative policy and must be able to work independently with minimal supervision. The Legis Congressional Fellowship is open to:

- Government employees who have a minimum grade level of GS-13 and are nominated by their agency’s training office; and
- Private-sector executives who have at least seven years of management experience and are nominated by their immediate supervisor.

Application Checklist:
- In order for your application to be considered, it must contain all of the following:
- A detailed and current resume
- A statement from the nominee describing the relevance of this training to career goals and how this training will be utilized by the nominee’s agency or employer
- A recommendation from a supervisor describing the nominee’s executive potential, need for this training and prospects for success as a congressional staff member
- For government candidates only: A completed, approved and signed training form including a valid billing address and purchase order number (SF182, DD1556, HHS350 or other approved training form)

Past fellows have served in these offices, among others:
- Rep. Bob Aderholt (R-AL)
- Sen. Max Baucus (D-MT)
- Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME)
- Sen. John Cornyn (R-TX)
- Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-UT)
- Sen. Carl Levin (D-MI)
- Sen. Joe Lieberman (I-CT)
- Rep. Nita Lowey (D-NY)
- Rep. Brad Miller (D-NC)
- Rep. James Moran (D-VA)
- Rep. Tim Ryan (D-OH)
- Sen. James Webb (D-VA)
- Sen. Roger Wicker (R-MS)
- House Appropriations Committee
- Senate Homeland Security Committee
- House Foreign Affairs Committee
- House Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming
The Fellowship Experience

Richard Aragon, Ph.D., Program Director, National Cancer Institute
2009 Legis Fellow in the office of Sen. Jon Tester (D-Mont.)

Richard knows something unusual about Montana: cancer—not heart disease—is the leading cause of death there. While this makes Montana unusual among the states, it also provided Richard an opportunity to make a real difference to Sen. Tester. Because of Richard’s efforts, the senator raised his profile on this issue, touring the National Institutes of Health campus, delivering a keynote address that Richard helped draft at a national meeting focusing on biomedical innovation, and meeting privately with top-level NIH and National Cancer Institute officials. “What started off as an idea in the back of my head became a reality... Things went very well.”

Randoe Dice, Executive Officer, Social Security Administration
2009 Legis Fellow in the Senate Finance Committee

Randoe’s expertise may be Social Security, but his passion is health care. By landing a position with Sen. Charles Grassley’s (R-Iowa) health policy team just as health care reform was looming, Randoe was able to work directly on issues that he found personally and professionally fulfilling. His experience went beyond what he could have expected, however. “I had the opportunity to attend every town meeting that Sen. Grassley conducted during the August 2009 recess.” Beyond the personal experience, Randoe found attending “Group of Six” negotiations extremely fulfilling. “I was able to see how relationships really play out and are alive and well in the most political city in the world.”

Melissa Mann, Director, Legislative Affairs, Department of Homeland Security
2009 Legis Fellow in the office of Sen. Claire McCaskill (D-Mo.)

With her interest in oversight and federal financial management at the Department of Homeland Security, Melissa found a natural match in Sen. McCaskill’s office. Supporting the senator’s work on the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, she had to stay fast on her feet to keep up with issues at the center of security and transparency. “I literally had to learn a new policy issue or two every week.” Her critical thinking and analysis skills got a workout as well: “It’s a great position for someone who likes to write, work against tight deadlines and doesn’t mind learning on the fly,” she says of her time there.
Building Your Capacity for Greatness in Government
Each year, hundreds of people—government leaders, corporate executives, diplomats, military officers and non-profit decision-makers—advance their knowledge, skills and career development through Brookings and Brookings Executive Education.

With our partner, the John M. Olin Business School at Washington University in St. Louis, Brookings Executive Education provides superior business and executive education, equipping America’s best and brightest with the skills they need to excel in the private and public sectors.

Once you’ve completed a Legis Congressional Fellowship, you’ll return to your organization energized, armed with an acute understanding of congressional policy-making and a network of valuable contacts on Capitol Hill.

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Contact
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Government Managers:
Acquire a unique, in-depth understanding of the legislative process that will help your agency interact more effectively with Congress while you add distinction to your resume.

Corporate Executives:
Gain an insider’s knowledge of public policy to build your company’s competitive advantage in Washington, D.C.

Training Officers:
Maximize the value of your training budget and build your next cadre of senior executives with broad political and policy-making experience.

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