I am forever grateful for the Panetta Institute’s Congressional Internship Program. This program reaffirmed that the sky is the limit and I have control over how I choose to use my talents. It has made me question what I want my legacy to be in life. I hope to change the way people see politics and its ability to be a force for good. And I hope this program continues for years to come. This internship is designed to bring the best out in people while relying on the experience of others and I will continue to advocate for this program on my campus. To be a Panetta congressional intern is to be a believer that the future is brighter; it is to believe that every individual has a role in the governing of this nation.
Kaylen Chase, Santa Clara University
Intern for U.S. Representative Jimmy Panetta

Thank you for the opportunity of a lifetime! I cannot begin to express how much I appreciated this experience.
Lea Mulan Clark, California State University Sacramento
Intern for U.S. Representative Ami Bera

The renowned prestige, effort and skills that the Panetta Institute Congressional Internship Program is known for is why I believe so many people apply to be a participant in the program, including myself. Not only does the program offer a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for students like myself, but the Panettas and their incredibly dedicated staff also provide the best possible environment for a student to thrive in, especially in pandemic times. No other program could or would put such effort into an experience like this, and I am incredibly grateful to have experienced the Institute’s collective efforts. I leave this program no longer in the dark about what I want from life. This internship provided me clarity as a person and toward my goal to enroll in law school.
Bianca Cruz, CSU Los Angeles
Intern for U.S. Representative Julia Brownley

I am forever grateful to the Panetta Institute for the opportunity to be a part of this program and to gain this experience of a lifetime. Everything I learned will help me further my professional goals. I will never forget these past thee months, and I will continue to look back on the fond memories and amazing friends I made along the way.
Nicole Figueroa, San Francisco State University
Intern for U.S. Representative Lou Correa

The past three months was an experience of a lifetime. I got to witness firsthand the interworking of how the nation is run. I also gained an understanding of people who disagreed with me. My patience also grew. Seeing how long bills take to go through the deliberation process and being voted on made me realize everything takes time. Without this internship I would have continued to be ignorant of politics in general and being unsure if politics is something I wanted to pursue after
graduation. Again, I will forever be grateful for this opportunity and the belief in me from all parties to be able to do the internship.
Bailey Friend
Sonoma State University
Intern for U.S. Representative Salud Carbajal

I would like to give the Panetta Institute a final thank you for the opportunity to participate in this internship program. This internship has completely changed my life. If I could relive the past three months of my life, I would do it in a heartbeat. Thank you for giving me the resources and support to succeed in life. I am incredibly grateful for everyone at the Panetta Institute and wish you all much as you continue to shape the lives of young leaders for our country.
Karen Garcia, CSU Stanislaus
Intern for U.S. Representative John Garamendi

I am incredibly grateful for this experience and to be placed in U.S. Representative Speier’s office. I feel that I have learned so much and experienced something that is truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. On this journey, I have met some incredible people, both professionals and those that I would consider friends. This internship had a way of bringing people closer together regardless of beliefs. Thank you so much for this opportunity, bringing us together, supporting us, for counting on us and allowing us to dream and believe that we can and will make a difference in this world. I am forever grateful.
Cassidy Gordon, Humboldt State University
Intern for U.S. Representative Jackie Speier

My life in Washington, D.C. was life changing. I am so grateful to have been given this opportunity. I grew as a person, as a student, and as a professional. I am not the same person I was when I started, and I am happy that is so. A light of confidence and independence sparked within me. My inspiration and motivation to pursue a career in public service grew. I am not sure I would be who I am at this exact moment if it were not for this experience. I extend my deepest, most sincere, thank you to all those at the Panetta Institute who invest in students and their future, for the betterment of the nation and its upcoming leaders.
Yulissa Jimenez, CSU Dominguez Hills
Intern for U.S. Representative Nanette Diaz Barragán

Thank you so much for this opportunity. It is an experience I will never forget!
Willow Lance, Cal Poly Pomona
Intern for U.S. Representative Sara Jacobs

The internship provided me with the most wonderful opportunity to gain knowledge about our democracy and I gained rare insights that I could not have acquired elsewhere. Having the honor to learn about this process under professional direction has taught me so much—about life skills, about how I hope to lead one day, and the way in which I will serve those around me. I wholeheartedly thank the Panetta Institute for granting my peers and me this once in a lifetime opportunity that reaffirmed my fervor for public service and inspired me to continue my dedication in serving our communities.”
Sandrien Mekany, San Diego State University
Intern for U.S. Representative Katie Porter

Being in a new place, surrounded by new people, reminded me that I am capable of big changes, and I can handle whatever life throws at me next. I learned so much about Congress, how the government works, and what it truly takes to serve the people of America. I can't thank Secretary Panetta, CEO Panetta, Dr. Banks and Dr. Kezirian enough for all the tremendous effort they put into making this program possible. It truly was a once-in-a-lifetime experience and one that I will never forget.
Desiree Nunes, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo
Intern for the Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi

These past eleven weeks I found that stepping out of my comfort zone was most definitely rewarding and something I am proud of myself for doing. I could not have made it through this experience of growth without the Institute’s support and guidance. This internship was a life-changing experience. Thank you Secretary Panetta, CEO Sylvia Panetta, Dr. Banks and Dr. K.
Zoralynn Ogelsby, CSU San Bernardino
Intern for U.S. Representative Brad Sherman

I definitely learned more about public policy after writing my research paper and recollecting my thoughts about the internship for my journal. The internship experience has been amazing from beginning to end. I thank Secretary Panetta, CEO Panetta, Dr. Kezirian, Dr. Banks, Delainey Boyd, James Whaley and everyone else involved in the Panetta Institute for giving this opportunity to me and my fellow interns.
Rylan O’Keefe, CSU Chico
Intern for U.S. Representative Jim Costa

Throughout my experience, I learned a lot about what it takes to be an elected official and public policymaker. I also got to see our democracy up close, including the good, bad and the ugly. Our system is perfectly imperfect. Our system is incredibly frustrating because it’s slow, but that is the beauty of it all. It’s a system that allows for everything, everyone and every idea to come together to form policy that makes the lives of everyone in the country a little better. Thank you SO much for the most fantastic experience of my life!
Britney Ortiz, San José State University
Intern for U.S. Representative Mike Thompson

I will never forget my time here in Washington D.C. The memories of the people and the processes will be stuck with me forever. Secretary and CEO Panettas’ passions for democracy and giving back to those of us who they want to succeed is tangible. They have such big ambitions for us that are overshadowed by their even bigger hearts. Thank you to everyone for this opportunity and I look forward to working for America’s future.
Steven Regalo, CSU East Bay
Intern for U.S. Representative Mike Garcia

My beliefs changed a lot while I was in D.C. If someone were to ask me a year ago what my beliefs were they would probably be fairly biased. I saw politics as more of a debate competition rather than a legitimate decision-making process. This all changed in the last few months. I began to ask myself if I was doing more harm than good by having the most politically correct opinions. My biased view of the world would not help legislation be passed. If I really do want to make this world better, then I need to set aside my preconceived notions of others and be willing to come to the table ready to have open and honest conversations with others.
Hannah Rosica, CSU Bakersfield
Intern for U.S. Representative Scott Peters

I learned so many great things about life and myself on this congressional internship journey. This was truly an experience of a lifetime, and I want to thank the Panettas as well as the Institute staff. I am so happy that I decided to apply for this Congressional Internship Program. My heart is truly overwhelmed with this experience, and I would redo it in a heartbeat. I am forever changed. I discovered what law I want to practice, which is Public Interest Law. I remember Secretary Panetta talking about how important public service truly is, and I now understand what that means. I want to help the people in my community, and the people that look exactly like me. I really believe that I could be a voice for those young black girls who want to be a lawyer.
Camery Smith, CSU San Marcos
Intern for U.S. Representative Jimmy Gomez
I would like to thank everyone at the Panetta Institute for believing, and investing in me. I have gained more from this experience than I ever could have imagined and will hold the lessons I learned with me forever. I could never have experienced such profound moments without the help of the Panetta Institute, and I am deeply grateful for all you have done for our cohort.

Zachary Zirzow, CSU Fullerton
Intern for U.S. Representative Scott Peters