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CHCI PUBLIC POLICY FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM INFORMATION

The Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI) was established in 1978 by members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus as a non-profit, non-partisan educational organization dedicated to developing the next generation of Latino leaders. CHCI's educational services are designed to provide Latino students with the tools and resources they need to succeed in attaining a higher education. Its leadership development programs seek to help participants search for and understand their identity as professionals, Latinos, and leaders. By bringing together individuals who share a commitment to serve their communities, CHCI endeavors to make its vision of an educated and civic-minded Latino community a reality.



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Public Policy Fellowship Program

Every year, the nine-month Fellowship Program (late August to late May) offers up to 20 talented Latinos from across the country the opportunity to gain hands-on experience at the national level in the public policy area of their choice with the General Public Policy Fellowship. Fellows have the opportunity to work in such areas as international affairs, economic development, education policy, housing, or local government. CHCI also aims to develop leaders in areas of health and corporate America with the Sodexo, Inc. Public Health Fellowship and the Corporate Fellowship (placement must be in a public affairs office of a corporation). In addition, specialized fellowships open only to individuals with a graduate degree include the Edward Roybal Public Health Fellowship for public health administration; the Telecommunications Fellowship; and the Law Fellowship open to recent law school graduates (placement must be in a public interest law organization or in the office of a U.S. federal judge).

Program Mission

The mission of the Public Policy Fellowship is to offer Latino youth the support, training, and resources needed to ultimately become the effective leaders of tomorrow. CHCI seeks to accomplish this mission by offering educational and leadership development programs, services, and activities that promote the growth of its participants as effective professionals and strong leaders. Furthermore, CHCI's vision is an educated and civic-minded Latino community who participates at the local, state, and federal policy decision-making levels. Our programs were all created with the same mission and vision in mind. Every year, the Fellowship Program brings together a pool of educated and civic-minded young individuals in an effort to shape them into the next generation of Latino leaders.

Public Policy Fellowship Objectives:

- To bring together a group of talented, recent college graduates, currently enrolled graduate students, and graduate-level professionals who reflect the diversity of the Latino community.
- To place each fellow in an office where he or she will learn and gather work experience in their public policy area of choice.
- To enhance participants' leadership skills.
- To create a network of young Latinos who support each other's professional development and act as catalysts for community

Youth Tools & Resources

- Building The Perfect Resume
- How To Write the Perfect Essay
- Top 10 Cover Letter Tips
- Interview Questions and Answers
- Other Education Resources

Education Publications

- College Prep Kit
- Pre-College Planning Checklist
- 2006 Guide to Applying for Financial Aid and Scholarships

change.

- To increase the presence of Latinos in public policy positions.

As a CHCI Public Policy Fellow you will be able to:

- Have the opportunity to learn from experienced professionals how the government operates and policies are formulated
- Learn how the issues affecting their local communities are dealt with at the national level
- Explore different career fields and define professional goals
- Identify strengths and areas for improvement and shape your professional skills

Program Requirements

- Work a minimum of 35 hours a week at placement site
- Attend one-week orientation and weekly leadership development sessions
- Participate in all CHCI-sponsored activities
- Participate in community service
- Organize and lead policy roundtables and/or write a policy brief
- Complete a mid year and final written evaluation of the program
- Comply with CHCI policies regarding work performance and personal conduct

Orientation

Upon their arrival to Washington, DC, fellows participate in a week-long intensive orientation designed to develop the professional and leadership skills needed for their fellowship experience. For the first couple of days, fellows participate in team building exercises in an effort to build group cohesiveness. They then engage in a series of workshops that assist them in developing strong placement research and job interviewing skills and an introduction to advanced public policy writing. In addition, they are presented with an overview of Washington, DC's work culture and expectations. Furthermore, fellows end the week by participating in a series of exercises on leadership development including analyzing leadership principles, developing individual goals and objectives, and writing a personal and group mission statement to be carried out during their fellowship experience.

Work Experience

After a week-long orientation, and with CHCI's guidance, fellows research and interview with possible placements, and select the office that best matches their interests. The range of placements includes congressional offices, federal agencies, Washington-based media, corporate federal affairs offices, national advocacy organizations, and government-related institutions. Participants have the option of changing placements mid-point through the program.

Placement/Host Site Responsibilities

All placement/host site supervisors are charged with the responsibility to provide our Fellows with a hands-on experience in the public policy-making process. Fellows work full-time at their selected placement site (i.e. 9:00 am to 6:00 pm), devoting at least 75% to substantive duties and no more than 25% to administrative tasks. As a leadership development organization, CHCI offers a mandatory weekly seminar on Fridays from 9:30 am to 12:00 noon, which all Fellows must attend in order to complete the program successfully. Occasionally, these meetings must be rescheduled or an additional meeting must be held to accommodate a speaker's need. Fellows must notify their supervisors of these changes in advance. The placement site bears no financial responsibility for hosting a CHCI Fellow. With the exception of transportation vouchers (metro passes), the placement host can offer no other form of monetary or compensatory benefit to a fellow.

Please note that Fellows have the option of changing placements mid-point in the program (mid- January). The program requires that fellows be afforded every opportunity to enhance his or her professional skills and that the placement host cooperates with the fellow's fulfillment of program requirements.

Learning

Fellows' intensive work experience is enhanced by weekly sessions that allow them to meet with national leaders and engage in substantive policy discussions. In addition, fellows produce a public policy brief and if they are graduate fellows they also must organize a policy roundtable. Through Washington DC's wealth of information, contacts, and possibilities, the Fellowship Program serves as an excellent opportunity for participants to identify or confirm their career goals. Furthermore, participants also receive support and guidance from the CHCI's Alumni Association.

Friday Weekly Meetings

Fellows' work experience is enhanced through weekly leadership development sessions. They meet with various local and national leaders including Cabinet Secretaries, Members of Congress, local activists, representatives from the private sector, and leaders of non-profit organizations to discuss policy issues of common concern. CHCI also uses these sessions to help fellows further explore leadership principles, and presentation and debate styles, and reflect on their learning experience as individuals and members of a group. In addition, fellows participate in workshops designed to develop their coalition-building, public speaking, and media/message development skills.

Policy Briefs and Roundtables

The purpose of producing a policy brief is to give fellows the experience and exposure of working with national experts on policy issues of importance to Latinos. It is also an opportunity to author a policy-related product that will give the fellow a national platform to showcase their research, analytical and writing skills.

Fellows are assigned to a Congressional Hispanic Caucus Task Force topic and produce a policy brief on an issue within that topic.

Completed policy briefs will be distributed to the CHCI Board, members of Congress, CHCI sister organizations, and posted on the CHCI website.

Fellows with a graduate degree with guidance from CHCI are also responsible for designing, planning and moderating a roundtable dialogue on a policy issue of their choice. The roundtable dialogue is open to the public.

- Roundtable Dialogue Invitation: The Build Environment (PDF)
- Fact Sheet: The Built Environment and Public Health (PDF)

Community Service

CHCI's curriculum incorporates the latest developments in leadership training strategies based on service learning and cooperative leadership models. While CHCI does not impose a particular definition of leadership, we do associate it with service, and you as fellows are required to serve the local Washington, DC community during the program - through participation in Community Service.

Throughout the program, fellows are required to fulfill monthly community service hours with member organizations of the Council of Latino Agencies www.consejo.org (name change in 2006 - The Latino Federation of Greater Washington). These community-based organizations provide services ranging from free health care, to workforce development to legal counsel.

CHCI wishes to promote the importance and value of service in the leadership development. As such fellows will be required to donate 10 hours a month of their time to a community-based organization (member of CLA/LFGW). Sample service donated may include, but is not limited to:

- Tutoring
- Mentoring
- Resource development
- Intake services
- Legal counsel
- Medical care

- **Fundraising**

The total minimum, hours of service per fellow is 80 hours. Service is to be performed beginning in September 2005 and concluding in May 2006. Fellows may choose to do a joint service project. A proposal must be submitted before it can be approved.

Selection Process

Selection as a CHCI Public Policy Fellow is based on a combination of the following criteria:

- High academic achievement (preference will be given to applicants with 3.0 GPA or higher)
- Remarkable participation in public service-oriented activities
- Evidence of leadership skills and potential for growth
- Superior analytical and communication skills (oral and written)

The selection process is competitive. CHCI processes applications to identify the most qualified candidates. Applications are then reviewed by a selection committee composed by Alumni, Board of Directors, and CHCI staff. Based on the applications scores, the top candidates are interviewed. CHCI selects 20 candidates based on the results of their application and interviews' scores.

Prerequisites

- U.S. citizenship or legal permanent residency
- Applicants should have graduated from a college or university (with a BA/BS or graduate degree) within one year of application deadline, or be currently enrolled as graduate students

The application is available online and must be postmarked by March 1, 2006. Interviews are conducted in late April. Finalist will be notified in early May. CHCI awards Fellowships on a non-partisan basis, and encourages balance and diversity in all aspects of the program.

Stipend and Benefits

CHCI provides participants with:

- Domestic round-trip transportation to Washington, DC
- Health insurance
- Gross monthly stipend of \$2,200 to help cover housing and local expenses; Fellows with a graduate degree receive a \$2,600 monthly stipend

Alumni Association

Interaction between fellows is an invaluable element of the program which often results in long-lasting friendships. The Alumni Association provides a support network for current and future CHCI programs' participants. In addition, the Association has made a strong commitment coordinating events that connect current CHCI fellows with alumni who reside within the DC area. These events have provided a great opportunity for alumni to mentor and share their valuable experiences with current participants of CHCI's programs.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the mission of the CHCI Fellowship Program?

The mission of the program is to provide 21 promising Latinos the opportunity to gain hands-on experience at the national level in the public policy area of their choice. Fellows have the opportunity to work in such areas as international affairs, economic development, education policy, housing, or local government.

What type of individual is the program looking for?

CHCI seeks candidates with demonstrated leadership potential, a history of active participation in projects for the common good, high academic standards, and superior communication skills. Successful candidates should benefit significantly from the exposure to the issues, people, and work environment that a structured program in the nation's capital can offer.

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What is expected of a Public Policy Fellow during the program?

The CHCI Public Policy Fellowship Program offers recent Latino college graduates, currently enrolled graduate students, and graduate level professionals interested in public policy the opportunity to gain hands-on work experience in Washington, DC. Participants select their own placements from such diverse environments as congressional offices, federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, and Washington based media.

A leadership development curriculum enhances fellows' training through weekly sessions in which they meet with national leaders, participate in professional workshops, and engage in substantive discussions about current policy issues. In addition, fellows produce and present policy briefs/roundtables and participate in community service.

What is the selection timeline?

- **Application deadline: March, 2007.** The application is available on our website - and must be postmarked on or before March 1st to be accepted. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that his/her application has been received.
- **Semi-finalists contacted:** mid April
- **Phone interviews conducted:** late April
- **Final notification of finalists:** mid May
- **Program begins:** Late August
- **Program ends:** Late May

Are there age restrictions?

There are no age restrictions.

Can I apply to the program while in my last semester?

Yes, you can apply during your last semester in college. You must graduate before the fellowship starts.

How long after graduation can I apply for the fellowship?

You can apply for the program within one year of your graduation date.

What criteria do you look for in a letter of recommendation?

Applicants are required to submit three letters of recommendation. We encourage you to have recommendations from individuals who know you well and can fully answer the questions that are posed in the application. A recommendation letter is not helpful if that individual cannot speak about your background, achievements and character.

CHCI recommends for you to have letters from individuals who know you from different perspectives (professor, community leader, employer or volunteer project supervisor). The recommenders must respond to the specific questions listed in the application. Letters should be submitted on their official letterhead, and be sealed and signed across the flap on the envelope.

What is the best approach to prepare for interviews?

Semi-finalists should carefully prepare as they would for any other type of interview. It is recommended that you:

- Be current on key issues and current events
- Develop a clear statement about why you want to be selected and what can you offer
- Develop a clear mission statement

How is the placement determined?

Once selected, we encourage fellows to start looking for a placement of their choice. The placement ranges from Hill offices, government agencies, non-profit organizations and corporate. The fellow should take into consideration his/her interests. CHCI Programs Staff provides guidance with the placement search. Fellows have the opportunity to change placement mid year.

Does the Fellowship provide housing during the Fellowship year?

No. Fellows are responsible for their housing arrangements. We recommend that Fellows start their housing search early. Current Fellows, Alumni and the program staff can provide advice on housing arrangements.

How CHCI handles special needs – such as disabilities – for Fellows?

CHCI staff is available to work with individuals to properly handle any special needs.

Where can I direct additional questions?

The program staff is available to provide assistance and answer questions. The staff can be reached Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM ET - 6:00 PM ET at 1-800-Excel DC or (202) 543-1771.

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CHCI is pleased to announce the unveiling of the new **Graduate & Young Professional Fellowship Program**. The mission of the CHCI Graduate & Young Professional Fellowship Program is to offer exceptional Latino graduates and young professionals unparalleled exposure to professional experience in the underserved public policy areas of Health, Housing, Law, and International Affairs. The fellowship is open to applicants who possess a graduate degree from an accredited educational institution or equivalent 3 years professional experience in chosen policy field. This competitive program is comprised of a nine-month fellowship including a substantive work placement at a Legislative Subcommittee Office, Federal Agency, National Non-Profit Advocacy Organization, or Corporate Office. The International Affairs fellowship includes three months abroad in Mexico or Spain from May to July. Fellows receive paid travel expenses and health insurance as well as a monthly stipend of \$2,700. **The Graduate/Young Professionals Fellowship Program application deadline is March 1, 2008.**

The mission of the CHCI Graduate & Young Professional Fellowship Program is to offer exceptional Latino graduates and young professionals unparalleled exposure to professional experience in the public policy areas of Health, Housing, Law, and International Affairs. Grounded in the core principles of Excellence, Leadership, Professionalism and Service, the program seeks to enhance participants' leadership abilities, strengthen professional skills and ultimately to increase the presence of Latinos in underserved public policy areas. In order to meet these objectives, the Graduate & Young Professional Public Policy Fellowship Program is designed to challenge participants with a strong curriculum while granting privileged interaction with the prestigious network of professionals and leaders in Washington, D.C.

To apply for the 2008-2009 Graduate & Young Professional Public Policy Fellowship Program, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Demonstrated commitment to the program principles of Excellence, Leadership, Professionalism and Service
- Graduate degree from an accredited educational institution or equivalent 3 years professional experience in chosen policy field
- U.S. citizenship or legal permanent residency
- High academic achievement
- Superior oral and written analytical and communication skills
- Willingness to relocate to Washington, D.C. for duration of program
- Submission of all application materials by March 1, 2008

Program Basics:

- 9-month fellowship (September 2008 – May 2009)
- International Affairs fellowship includes three months abroad in Mexico or Spain (May-July-2009)
- 8-month substantive work placement at a Legislative Subcommittee Office, Federal Agency, National Non-Profit Advocacy Organization, or Corporate Office
- Paid travel expenses and health insurance
- Monthly stipend of \$2,700
- Local housing for the duration of the program is the responsibility of the fellowship recipient

To complete the Graduate & Young Professional Public Policy Fellowship Program requirements, fellows must:

- Work a minimum of 35 hours per week at a placement
- Develop and execute a Policy Roundtable to promote public policy issues of importance to Latinos
- Research and publication of a written work about a public policy issue in chosen area (research paper, op-ed, or briefing paper)
- Contribute to the development of the 2008 CHCI Public Policy Conference Summits
- Complete rigorous program curriculum including various personal and professional trainings and lectures as well as community service hours and project.

For further information, please contact Katherine Ward, Policy & Graduate Programs Coordinator, at (202) 548-5871.



The Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute

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CHCI SCHOLARSHIP AWARD INFORMATION

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The 2008 CHCI Program Applications Are Now Available ONLINE!

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Scholarship Awards

This premier scholarship opportunity is afforded to Latino students who have a history of performing public service-oriented activities in their communities and who plan to continue contributing in the future. There is no GPA or major requirement. Students with excellent leadership potential are encouraged to apply.

Recipients will receive a one-time scholarship of:

- \$5,000 to attend a graduate-level academic institution; or
- \$2,500 to attend a four-year academic institution; or
- \$1,000 to attend a community college or AA/AS granting institution.
- Undergraduate recipients will also receive a DELL Notebook Computer and Microsoft Package.

CHCI will be responsible for managing the disbursement of the scholarship monies to the recipients. In a two-fold effort to monitor the progress of scholarship recipients and promote college retention, total scholarship monies will be equally divided and distributed on a yearly basis as long as recipients maintain good academic standing (i.e. if you receive the scholarship as an entering freshman, your \$2,500 award will be distributed in 4 equal installments of \$625 a year). Scholarship awards are designed to cover tuition, room and board, textbooks, and other educational expenses associated with college enrollment.

Eligibility Criteria

- Consistent active participation in public and/or community

- service activities
- Demonstrated financial need
- Good writing skills
- Full-time enrollment in an accredited community college, four-year university, or graduate/professional program during the period for which scholarship is requested
- U.S. citizenship or legal permanent residency

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