



LEADERSHIP SIX

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM



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A NEW PROGRAM FOR A NEW FUTURE

Illinois cries out for leadership. Across all levels of government, our communities demand and deserve effective leaders to tackle seemingly intractable problems. Common Cause Illinois's **LeadershipSix Internship Program** seeks to address this by informing, empowering, and elevating a new generation of leaders. We invest our time, expertise, and resources into a new class each year, training our interns on policy and leadership. **Our goal: to serve as a central resource in Illinois for the current and next generation of leaders who will transform our state for the better.**

ABOUT COMMON CAUSE ILLINOIS

Common Cause Illinois is the state branch of Common Cause Education Fund, a nonpartisan grassroots 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to upholding the core values of American democracy. **We work across the country - and here in Illinois - to create an open, honest, and accountable government that serves the public interest.** We promote equal rights, opportunity, and representation for all and empower all people to make their voices heard. We increase understanding of how our government actually works, empower citizens to hold their representatives accountable, and promote broad and effective citizen engagement at federal, state, and local levels.



Fixing our Democracy

We fight at the local, state, and federal level for remedies to the most persistent problems in our democracy, from abuse of power and lack of transparency to ensuring fair representation and equal rights for all.



Organize & Educate

We work in our local communities to organize and educate people across demographics and geographic locations. Rural or urban, young or old, we invite everyone to learn about how they can become agents of change to improve society.



Growing the movement

We are a grassroots organization which means that we are fueled by the energy and donations of people across Illinois. Growing our supporter base means working to inform the public about our advocacy and education efforts and inviting them to join our movement.

ABOUT THE LEADERSHIPSIX INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

In 2019, Common Cause Illinois (CCIL) embarked on an ambitious plan to train and empower the next generation of leaders in Illinois. The core and unique philosophy behind our flagship LeadershipSix Internship Program is that it is not enough to educate interns about policy alone. To become true agents of change -- to run for office, lead community organizations, and be effective advocates -- these young leaders must be able to link this knowledge with access and opportunity. As such, we paired policy training with unparalleled leadership training to create a one-of-its kind program.

The LeadershipSix participants receive this training over the course of a twelve-week program that focuses on CCIL's broad agenda in six issue areas: voting rights, ethics, money in politics, constitutional issues, gerrymandering & representation, and media & democracy. The program recruits 24 interns (four per issue area) who are initially assigned to a policy team in one of these areas.

Over the course of the summer, all interns cycle through each of the issue areas, thus completing the program with an extraordinary breadth of knowledge and understanding. The interns receive six two-hour long trainings in each policy area and rolling education in the form of news analysis, policy briefs, and brainstorming sessions.

In a team capacity, teammates generate group content, including policy briefs and campaign plans for their issue area. Individually, the interns also produce weekly content, including letters to the editor, op-eds, and multimedia content. All of this serves to elevate their voices in the public arena and hones their writing and presentation skills.

Alongside this immersive policy training, the program features six leadership training sessions. These sessions are the springboard for development throughout the program and have included topics such as *Personal & Professional Branding*, *Model Democracy: How to govern during a crisis*, and *Ethos, Pathos & Logos: The Art of the Argument*. Interns receive one-on-one resume revisions, media training, and interview coaching, and are paired with a mentor from CCIL's Board of Directors, who meet with them periodically to discuss their progress.

In the 2021 cycle, we seek to build upon the success of our previous program by adding a new element -- a podcast -- to further heighten the public profile of our interns in the community.

How our LeadershipSix Program can transform Illinois

Exhaustive research shows that the levers of power in society -- the leaders in government, think tanks, policy organizations, and top-tier campaigns -- skew wealthy, white, old, and male. Even the most brilliant policy student from Pullman or a first generation immigrant from Rogers Park can lack access to the requisite networks to compete for these positions of influence. The LeadershipSix Internship Program aims to remedy this by coupling intense policy training with

comprehensive personal branding and leadership development, elevating the profile of leaders that continue to be denied a seat at the table of influence.

What makes our program different

Amidst the other laudable internship programs offered by organizations across Illinois, only the LeadershipSix program is explicitly built upon the interplay between education and opportunity, and only the LeadershipSix program equips its interns to take advantage of both. **There's no question that the program is intense: interns learn each issue area beyond the introductory 101 level, and gain fluency in the nuances of policy and process typical of an advocate with years of experience in the arena.** The leadership training requires discipline, self-reflection, practice, and evaluation. This process, though rigorous, produces outstanding results. We have found that our interns welcome the challenges and enjoy tackling problems with their teams. Indeed, over the course of the twelve weeks, the interns and staff form a camaraderie of common purpose: working together, even on the toughest of problems, to advance true change.

“Now, after I volunteered and interned for CCIL, I have a deep understanding of the issues.”

2020 LeadershipSix Intern Gavin Johnson

The LeadershipSix Program is notable not just for content and curriculum but for its bold scope and size. Each year, 24 new civic leaders graduate from the program, with the previous classes maintaining a relationship with CCIL as mentors, volunteers, and network resources. **In just five years, 120 young leaders will have completed our program and be in positions to make meaningful impacts across Illinois.**

What we've accomplished so far

Our LeadershipSix interns have successfully had their opinions and arguments incorporated on critical policy issues published in newspapers and blogs. They have interviewed elected officials before an audience of thousands, testified to shape bills pending before the Illinois General Assembly, and have highlighted issues like protecting voting rights, the importance of the census, and the need to end prison gerrymandering. They also have directly engaged with thousands of members of the community to encourage self-response to the census. And with their help, Common Cause Illinois successfully ran the largest non-partisan voter protection program in Illinois history.

Our vision for the future

LeadershipSix interns are trained and equipped to serve as drivers of public policy discussions across Illinois. Over the next year, we want to build upon early successes of the program by increasing the public policy engagement and influence of our interns by more vigorously pursuing publication of their letters to the editor and op-eds. In addition, we are expanding multimedia content by adding a public education podcast scripted and hosted by the interns, which we expect will have an audience reach in the thousands.

“I got so much out of it, from a new understanding of Illinois politics to learning about prison gerrymandering and being able to really tailor my media presence.”

- 2020 LeadershipSix Intern Daniel Bamford

POLICY TRAINING OVERVIEW

Voting & Elections

Voting & Elections training focuses on issues of election integrity and voting rights, with a primary focus of protecting the vote for November. Topics of focus include voter registration modernization, implantation of automatic voter registration, and election protection. Election Protection is a core part of work in this internship area. Working with the Election Protection program and volunteers, interns identify advocacy opportunities for ways to ensure elections is safe, secure and accessible.

Ethics & Accountability

Ethics & Accountability training focuses on issues of transparency and good government. Topics of focus include executive ethics, FOIA and the Illinois Open Meetings Act, judicial ethics, and legislative ethics. Work focuses on holding power accountable at the local, state and national level. A key focus of this area is CCIL's Lincoln Line Project, a comprehensive ethics campaign that was launched in 2020.

Media & Democracy

Media & Democracy training focuses on issues of the First Amendment and other free speech and public access topics. Topics covered by this internship area include net neutrality, broadband access, media consolidation, and freedom of the press.

Gerrymandering & Representation

Gerrymandering & Redistricting training focuses on the fight for a fair map in Illinois and the ramifications of the 2020 Census. Other advocacy areas include prison gerrymandering, mass incarceration and national redistricting efforts.

Money & Influence

Money & Influence training focuses on issues of campaign finance, lobbying reform, and corporate accountability. Specifically, interns learn about small donor match programs, voucher programs, and other grassroots approaches to democratizing the political donor base. In addition, interns learn about the influence of organizations like ALEC on the state and national level.

Constitution, Courts & Other Democracy Issues

Constitution, Courts & Other Democracy Issues training teaches interns about the fight for such as fair courts and H.R. 1, the For The People Act. In addition, interns learn about the Emoluments Clause and other constitutional issues raised by the Trump presidency. Interns also learn about calls for an Article V Convention.

LEADERSHIP & SKILLS TRAININGS OVERVIEW

In addition to the policy and advocacy training interns receive, interns also have an opportunity to participate in a productive leadership curriculum over the course of the program.

Advocacy 101

Interns receive a behind-the-scenes look at how to influence policy as an advocate. They learn about the difference between activism and advocacy, how legislation is really made, and how to take better action. Includes tips on getting letters to the editor published, social media advocacy, prepping for constituent meetings and town halls, and more. Focus is on how to influence all levels of government -- local, state and federal.

Canva Training

This training teaches interns how to use Canva, an online graphic design tool. They'll also learn tips for visual storytelling, storyboarding, and best practices for social media design.

Social Media Training

How can one be persuasive online? Interns learn how to influence family, friends, and community on social media by learning how to be an effective communicator online. This session also teaches interns how to influence media narratives online. Does tweeting to journalists really work? Which news outlets and journalists should interns follow? Training includes how to become an expert and responsible consumer of social media content.

Personal & Professional Branding

This training covers the core of brand building: updating a biography or resume, take stock of one's current professional reputation and assessing where interns want to be and how to get there. Future employers, coworkers and potential clients will Google interns — are interns happy with the results? They learn how to impact search results and put their best online face forward. They also learn how to use Twitter, Facebook, email and other online tools to advance a cause, persuading family and friends and reaching out to professional networks.

Art of the Argument

Facts matter, but how interns present those facts is how they can win an argument and persuade voters. This training focus on ancient rhetorical skills -- ethos, pathos, and logos -- and features the best debate clips from presidential debates and others to teach interns how to make the perfect policy case, every time.

So You Want to Govern

What do we care about most and how do we pay for it? Participants will take on the role of one of the key players in the federal budget process. They will have to negotiate budgetary priorities with other participants and then agree on specific policies to realize these priorities. Interns

will go through The Fiscal Ship budgetary exercise developed by the Brookings Institution and Wilson Center.

Model Democracy: How to govern during a crisis?

Participants will play various congressional and executive branch roles in a scenario dealing with a contemporary domestic policy issue.

Even if you aren't interested in politics, politics is interested in you

Campaign season never ends, and volunteering for a campaign is a great way to get involved. What should interns expect? What is it like to be a volunteer on a local, state or federal campaign? We break down the different types of volunteer opportunities (field, phone banking, canvassing, etc.), explaining each one and empowering interns to get involved. Interns will review tactics and strategies that will make them a force in state and local policy.

MENTORSHIP

In addition to the policy and leadership training curriculum, interns are assigned a personal mentor from CCIL's Board of Directors and engage with their mentor at least once per month. Board Members have extensive exposure to Common Cause as an organization, our campaigns here in Illinois, and serve as a valuable resource as interns consider the impact of their campaigns. Interns are also be given special opportunities for meetings with academics, government officials, and journalists.

**This program was just unbelievable.
I was able to learn so many things
related to policy making, civil rights,
activism, and public service.**

- 2020 LeadershipSix Intern Spencer Pease

