

A Program of the Center for Asian Americans United for Self Empowerment

Purpose

Since its inception in 1991, the CAUSE Leadership Academy (formerly called CASIC, California Asian American Student Internship Coalition) has prepared elite student leaders to be in the forefront of California’s legislative arena. This program is especially dedicated to developing the leadership skills of college students who are interested in exploring a career in public office, public service or community advocacy.

Previous students have been selected from Ivy League schools, the University of California system, community colleges and local high schools. Graduates of the program have gone on to run for elected office, work as legislative staff or work in the nonprofit sector. Students with an interest in Asian Pacific American (APA) affairs, leadership development, community service or politics are encouraged to apply.

“It has impassioned me to work in government and politics in the future, because I saw from the inside and the outside the ways in which the world’s oldest standing democracy is in fact still alive and working well today.”

-Krishnanand Kelkar
2012 Intern, Brown University

Leadership Development

During the eight-week program, interns will develop:

- Political awareness and civic engagement
- Understanding of the legislative process
- Insight on issues related to the APA community
- Professional and leadership qualities
- Public speaking and presentation skills
- Interview and social etiquette
- Organizational and co-operative working skills

Activities

1 **Internship Experience**
Interns work for a legislator, public agency or city government. They gain a unique perspective of public service as they interact closely with staff and attend public events, conduct policy research and write policy briefings.



2013 Interns Collaborating with Community Leaders on Group Project

2 **Annual Legislative Leadership Conference**
The conference is held in Sacramento, CA, where CAUSE holds close relationships with legislators, staff members and lobbyists that provide interns with lessons from their own experience.

3 **Weekly Issues Forum**
The interns gather weekly to meet with community leaders, elected officials, legislative staff, and other civic leaders. They learn about policy issues while exploring career options in public service.



2013 Interns at the CA Senate floor with Senator Lou Correr

4 **Group Research Project**
Interns collaborate on a group project that will be presented to the CAUSE Board of Directors, community members, and media. As a team, they address social issues and public policies.