

Hobby Fellows 2013

The Hobby Center for Public Policy (HCPP) at the University of Houston (UH) serves the Houston region and the state of Texas with timely and objective research on key public policy issues. In addition to its research and graduate training, HCPP is dedicated to providing educational and leadership opportunities to the diverse UH undergraduate population through its public service internship programs.

Introducing Hobby Fellows

The majority of University of Houston students work while attending college. Few UH students can pursue public service careers in Austin or Washington, D.C., because internships—the primary gateway to permanent jobs in these cities—are available only to students who can afford to live away from home.

The Hobby Fellows program seeks to offer UH undergraduate students the opportunity to work as full-time state interns in our state capitol during regular legislative sessions beginning in 2013. Hobby Fellows will earn a monthly stipend, have guided academic assignments, regular site visits by HCPP faculty and staff, and perhaps most importantly, enter a fast-paced learning track to becoming a leader in public service.

Additional benefits include the following:

- Encouraging academic achievements and community involvement;
- Polishing oral and written communication skills;
- Providing leadership training;
- Developing a strong sense of civic responsibility;
- Fostering relationships with interns from other Texas universities; &
- Increasing the positive exposure of UH's Tier One students in Austin.

Program Cost and Sources of Support

Each Hobby Fellow will earn a total of \$8,000 in stipends during the legislative session.

Private funds will be raised to cover the cost of the stipends. The program's administration and academic oversight will be provided through the Hobby Center for Public Policy as in-kind support.

Result: Success

Ensuring UH undergraduates an opportunity to work during the 2013 legislative session will encourage student success and pave the path for UH alumni to be leaders in government, whether as top level staff members, policy analysts or elected officials.

Increase the chances of Cougars in the Capitol—today as students and tomorrow as governmental leaders—by supporting the Hobby Fellows program.

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www.uh.edu/hcpp



Former Hobby Center interns Mirel Herrera, Debra Gonzales and Lesley Nelson at the state capitol. They now work as legislative staff: Mirel in Washington; Debra in Austin; and Lesley in Houston.

STUDY • SERVE • SUCCEED

Record of Success

The Hobby Center for Public Policy has over 1000 alumni of its Civic Houston Internship Program (CHIP), a part-time internship which places undergraduates of all majors in offices of elected officials, with non-profit organizations and on campaigns in the Houston area. CHIP alumni are now serving as key governmental staff members in local, state and federal offices, as teachers and lawyers, and as leaders in the non-profit community. Hobby Fellows will build upon the success of CHIP. Learn more about our internships at <http://www.uh.edu/hcpp/internships.htm>.

For More Information

We're happy to provide more information about Hobby Fellows and other Hobby Center for Public Policy endeavors. Contact Renée Cross, associate director, at 713 743 3970 or at rcross@uh.edu.

Checks are payable to the University of Houston. Mail payment to Renee Cross, University of Houston, Hobby Center for Public Policy, 501 Ezekiel Cullen, Houston, TX 77204-5021. You may also make a secure gift online using a credit card at <https://giving.uh.edu/gift>. Please note Hobby Fellows, 50971 with your payment.

Success Today: Former University of Houston Government Interns

Alfred “Al” Bennett, JD ▪ UH (Washington 1987) earned his undergraduate degree in political science at UH and his juris doctorate from the University of Texas. In 1998, Al established the Law Offices of Alfred H. Bennett, specializing in commercial and tort litigation matters. He has also taught as an adjunct professor of law at TSU’s Thurgood Marshall School of Law. Al now serves as the judge of the 61st Civil District Court.

Deonne Cunningham, JD ▪ UH (Washington 2002; Austin 2001) worked for Congressman Nick Lampson in his district office after the completion of her DC internship. Deonne graduated from the University of Houston Law School in May 2006, and is now working as an attorney with Iberdrola, a multinational electric utility company.

Jeanette De Los Santos ▪ UH (Washington 2002; Austin 2001) worked in the Houston office of Congressman Gene Green for 5 years before joining the office of Council Member James Rodriguez.

Sharie Flores ▪ UH (Houston 2012) joined the staff of Lone Star Strategies after graduating in 2012.

Rick Guerrero ▪ UH (Houston 2007) worked as a district aide for Congressman Nick Lampson and as a media specialist for the Texas State Democratic Party before joining the staff of the Houston-Galveston Area Council as a transportation analyst.

Debra Gonzales, MPA ▪ UH (Houston 2004) started her public service career as a district aide for Senator Mario Gallegos, and now serves as his legislative director in Austin.

Shannon Harris ▪ UH (Austin 2003; Washington 2002; Houston 2001) worked as a legislative aide for State Representative Jessica Farrar in Houston and Austin. She now works in the DC office of governmental relations for United Airlines and is a graduate student at George Washington University.

Ilhaam “Illy” Jaffer, MA ▪ UH (Washington 2006; Houston 2005) worked in the Washington office of Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson as a legislative assistant for over 2 years, and earned a graduate degree at Johns Hopkins University. She now works for Obama for America in North Carolina.

Natali Lacasa ▪ UH (Houston 2008; Washington 2009) worked as the district director in the office of State Representative Kristi Thibaut. She is now an assistant director for consulting firm Hawes, Hill & Calderson, and will begin her graduate studies at the University of St. Thomas in fall 2012.

Andrew Leba ▪ UH (Washington 2009; Houston 2010) worked as a district aide in the office of State Representative Kristi Thibaut after graduating from UH. He is now a law student at Emory University.

Kristin Lee, JD ▪ UH (Houston 2006) worked with public affairs consulting firm Outreach Strategists after earning her undergraduate degree at UH. She earned her juris doctorate at UH in 2011, and is now the director of public policy for the Alzheimer’s Association - Houston and Southeast Texas Chapter.

State Representative Ana Hernandez Luna, JD ▪ UH (Austin 1997) worked as the chief of staff for State Representative Jessica Farrar and as an aide to State Representative Joe Moreno. She earned her juris doctorate from the University of Texas in 2004, and has served as the state representative for District 143 since 2005. In addition, Ana works as an attorney for Carrigan, McCloskey and Roberson, LLP.

Lesley Nelson, MPA ▪ UH (Austin 2007; Houston 2005 & 2006) worked for Congressman Gene Green and is now the senior policy analyst for Senator Mario Gallegos. Lesley received her MPA from UH in 2012.

Alex Obregon ▪ UH (Houston 2007) worked as a council aide for then-Council Member Ron Green after graduating from UH. He is now the special project coordinator for City Controller Ron Green, and is now pursuing his MBA at UH.

Robert Quarles ▪ UH (Houston 2000 & 2001) worked as a community liaison in the Mayor’s Citizens’ Assistance Office, as an aide to Council Member Toni Lawrence, and as the director of Mayor Bill White’s Residential Energy Program. He also served as the deputy district director for Congressman Pete Olson before becoming the director of public and government accounts for Enhanced Energy Services of America.

Sarah Sims ▪ UH (Houston 2012) works as a district aide in Congressman Ted Poe’s Houston office.

Jamaal Smith ▪ UH (Houston 2002) worked as the legislative director for State Representative Joe Moreno, as the executive director for the Harris County Democratic Party, and most recently as a policy analyst for Senator Rodney Ellis. Jamaal is pursuing his law degree at Texas Southern University, and is a 2012 candidate for the Democratic nomination for Texas House District 137.

State Representative Armando Walle ▪ UH (Houston 1998) worked as an aide to Council Member Carol Galloway and Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee before working as the community liaison for Congressman Gene Green for six years. He has served Texas House District 140 since 2008, and also works as a governmental affairs consultant. Armando is now pursuing his law degree at UH.

Kelly Waterman ▪ UH (Houston 2007 & 2009) worked as a field representative for the Kay Bailey Hutchison campaign, and is now the north sector manager for Council Member Mike Sullivan.

Council Member Orinaldo Ybarra ▪ UH (Houston 2010) serves as a member of the Pasadena City Council, and is a 2012 candidate for the Democratic nomination for Texas House District 140.