

MAKE AN IMPACT BECOME A WHITE HOUSE FELLOW

“A genuinely free society cannot be a spectator society... Freedom, in its deepest sense, requires participation. It requires full and zestful, knowledgeable participation.”

PRESIDENT LYNDON B. JOHNSON



Founded in 1964, the President’s Commission on White House Fellowships is the nation’s most prestigious program for leadership and public service. White House Fellowships offer exceptional Americans first-hand experience working at the highest levels of the Federal government. After a competitive application process, selected individuals spend a year in Washington, DC working as a full-time, paid Fellow to Cabinet Secretaries, senior White House staff, and other top-ranking government officials. Fellows also participate in an education program consisting of roundtable discussions with renowned leaders from the private and public sectors. Fellowships are awarded on a strictly non-partisan basis.

The 2015-2016 White House Fellows application will be available from November 1, 2014 to January 15, 2015. Visit www.whitehouse.gov/about/fellows to learn more.

Eligibility requirements:

- ◆ Must be a U.S. citizen
- ◆ Cannot be a current Federal government employee (with the exception of career military personnel)
- ◆ Must have received a Bachelor’s degree and be working in their chosen profession

Selection criteria:

- ◆ A record of remarkable professional achievement early in one’s career.
- ◆ Evidence of leadership skills and the potential for further growth.
- ◆ A demonstrated commitment to public service.
- ◆ The skills to succeed at the highest levels of the Federal government and the ability to work as part of a team.

Components of the fellowship:

- ◆ Full-time work placement at a Federal department, agency, or office
- ◆ Education program consisting of off-the-record, candid discussions with distinguished leaders
- ◆ Service projects
- ◆ Relationship-building with Fellows class and alumni



THE IMPACT OF WHITE HOUSE FELLOWS

Notable Alumni

- ◆ Mari Carmen Aponte, Permanent Representative of the U.S. to the Organization of American States
- ◆ Joe Barton, U.S. Congressman (Texas)
- ◆ Lael Brainard, Federal Reserve Board of Governors
- ◆ Samuel Brownback, Former U.S. Senator and Governor of Kansas
- ◆ Elaine Chao, Former Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor
- ◆ Henry Cisneros, Former Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- ◆ Wesley Clark, Retired General, U.S. Army
- ◆ Cesar Conde, EVP, NBCUniversal
- ◆ Suzan Johnson Cook, Former U.S. Ambassador At-Large for Religious Freedom
- ◆ Michael Froman, U.S. Trade Representative
- ◆ Paul Gigot, Editor, *The Wall Street Journal*
- ◆ Doris Kearns Goodwin, Historian/Author
- ◆ Sanjay Gupta, CNN Chief Medical Correspondent
- ◆ Michelle Peluso, CEO, Gilt Groupe
- ◆ Colin Powell, Former Secretary of State, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

Contributions in the Obama Administration

- ◆ **Office of the Vice President:** Advising on issues related to violence against women
- ◆ **Office of the First Lady:** Critical member of *Joining Forces*, initiative to support service members, veterans, and their families
- ◆ **Department of State:** Represented the U.S. in international meetings on development effectiveness at the OECD in Paris
- ◆ **Department of Defense:** Provided specialized advice to ranking physicians at DOD about military's traumatic brain injury policy
- ◆ **Department of Energy:** Utilized cybersecurity expertise to expand focus on cyber-related issues, including electric grid security
- ◆ **Department of Labor:** Stood up a Women's Veterans Initiative, which won Secretary's Honor Award
- ◆ **Environmental Protection Agency:** Led joint effort with U.S. Coast Guard to review response efforts related to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill
- ◆ **Office of Science & Technology Policy:** Worked on Lab-to-Market Initiative, implementing policies to optimize commercialization of federally funded research
- ◆ **Office of Management and Budget:** Reorganized Federal departments and agencies related to trade and competitiveness

In a community of over 700 alumni, White House Fellows have...

- ◆ Been named MacArthur Fellows
- ◆ Invented the LED and acted as a key player in the development of stealth technology for the U.S. military
- ◆ Invented the "mood ring" and launched the technology that is now used in medical scan thermometers
- ◆ Founded the Progeria Foundation which led to the discovery of the gene causing progeria
- ◆ Received the Soldier's Medal, the U.S. Army's highest decoration for valor in a non-combat situation, awarded for bravery exhibited during the Boston Marathon bombing
- ◆ Served as Cabinet Secretaries, Governors, Members of Congress, U.S. Senators, and other statewide elected officials
- ◆ Been *New York Times* best-selling authors
- ◆ 2 served together as U.S. Attorneys
- ◆ 6 have served as Ambassadors
- ◆ 24 have been presidents of colleges or deans of premier professional schools
- ◆ 32 have gone on to become General/Flag Officers in our nation's armed forces
- ◆ 85 have served in government positions requiring Senate confirmation



White House Fellows program shows that not everything is partisan

By Steve Gunderson
Oct. 20, 2014

As the campaign advertisements assault us, we are tempted to ask: "Will they be able to work together on anything after the election?" While that question is still valid for many aspects of government, I am privileged to serve in one of those unique, intentionally nonpartisan programs, producing nonpartisan outcomes at the highest levels of government.

In 1964, President Lyndon Johnson created the White House Fellows program to provide "firsthand, high-level experience with the workings of the federal government and to increase their sense of participation in national affairs." Fifty years later, the program celebrates over 700 young men and women — of every political party, every economic and racial background, from every aspect of society — experiencing a year of both service and leadership at the highest levels of the federal government.

Each president appoints a bipartisan commission to select between 11 and 19 fellows to spend one year working and learning public-sector leadership. The President's Commission on White House Fellowships includes voices from both major parties and voices from across America with no political experience. The commission gathers twice a year to plan, evaluate and then select the following year's White House Fellows.

Candidates from across the nation submit their applications, and after an initial review, some are selected for regional interviews. Regional finalists are then evaluated by civic leaders across the nation, and, ultimately, a group of national finalists are identified. The national finalists gather in Washington, D.C., for three days of intense conversations and interviews with the commission. Candidates are evaluated based upon a commitment to public service, a remarkable track record of achievement early in one's career, demonstrated evidence of leadership skills and potential, and skills necessary to work at the highest levels of government, and the ability to work as part of a team.

There is one opportunity — and that motivates me to write these words. The Midwest has some of the brightest leaders in America, and I want to see more of them serving as White House Fellows. My hope is that together we can increase the number of young people who apply and, then, the number of Midwestern young leaders chosen for this opportunity.

Imagine working with the first lady in the design and development of her programs serving veterans and their families. Consider working at the highest levels of the Defense Department or helping to guide the operations of government at the Office of Management and Budget. These are the type of assignments given annually to those selected. With a portion of each class coming from the active-duty military, the program has a tradition of bringing together diverse leaders from every sector of society to share and improve their public service leadership skills.

Just as the election cycle winds down, applications may be made for next year's class of White House Fellows from Nov. 1 through Jan. 15. Learn more about the program at www.whitehouse.gov/about/fellows.

The program does good, with no regard for political labels or partisan leanings. It is America at its best. And when a new class of Fellows is chosen, we leave the meetings amazed at the quality of America's future leaders.

Steve Gunderson served in Congress from 1980 to 1996 from Wisconsin's 3rd District. He is a commissioner on the [President's Commission on White House Fellowships](#).