Dr. Susan W. Martin  
Interim President  
San José State University  
One Washington Square  
San José, California 95192

Dear Dr. Martin:

Late this summer, August 7, 2016, The Panetta Institute for Public Policy will begin the eighteenth annual Congressional Internship Program for students selected from the twenty-three campuses of the California State University System along with private universities. The program runs thirteen weeks beginning with a two-week training session at the Panetta Institute followed by eleven weeks in Washington and ending on November 5, 2016. We invite you to nominate from your university an outstanding undergraduate (sophomore or junior) student, (who will then be either a matriculating junior or senior during the period of the internship, Fall 2016). This student will participate in an extraordinary learning experience held both at the Institute and in the nation’s capital. Please note that students who will have accumulated more than 120 credit semester units or 180 credit quarter units are ineligible. The twenty units of the Institute’s Congressional Internship Program must be accepted as an integral component of the student’s transcript.

The Institute’s Congressional Internship Program has been recognized as one of the best in the country due to several reasons. First, is the two-week training and classes the Panetta Institute provides before the students depart for Washington, D.C. After each class, students are required to reflect on the presenter’s key ideas and then provide a written summary of what they learned. Second, is the mentoring of the students while they are serving in Washington, D.C., through close supervision by the Institute staff in California and by the intern advisor hired to serve in Washington, D.C. Third, are the regular seminars that are planned in D.C. with nationally renowned leaders. Finally, the Institute offers a full scholarship covering program, travel and lodging costs for the selected students.

Accordingly, we require each president from the participating campuses to select only the most qualified student using a rigorous review process that includes an interview by the president prior to sending the letter of nomination to the Panetta Institute. Please take special note of the following listed requirements for eligibility, criteria for selection and the specifications to help improve your recruitment process. We have also provided a check-off sheet that must be signed by either you or a representative of your office and returned with the nomination letter, and a timeline and a list of documents that are required by the Institute. Remember, the performance of these students reflects on your campus and the Institute.

To guide your selection process, these are the required criteria—a student who:

- is a matriculating student during the internship;
- has not accumulated more than 120 credit semester units or 180 credit quarter units;
- has not taken part in this program during previous years;
- has exhibited superior academic achievement;
- has demonstrated commitment to community and public service;
• is willing to accept work assigned to interns which will involve the practical application of what is learned in the classroom;
• is willing to take on all assigned tasks and work hard;
• has exemplary maturity and leadership abilities;
• has demonstrated ability to be a good team member;
• has excellent English written and oral skills, and clarity of speech appropriate for constituent phone calls and visits;
• is willing to live in assigned group housing with other interns during the entire program;
• is willing to submit a written essay stating the reasons for her/his interest in the Panetta Institute’s Congressional Internship Program, and one of the student’s graded papers so that the selection committee may review it to ensure excellent English language proficiency;
• has never been sanctioned under the California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Article 2 (Student Discipline), Section 41301;
• is willing to undergo a background investigation;
• is a U.S. citizen;
• is a California resident (we pay tuition fees only for California residents); and
• at the time of the personal interview, is able to provide proof of health insurance that is compliant with the Affordable Care Act and covers the student while residing in Washington, D.C.

In addition, students are expected to:

• make a total commitment to the program (e.g., no pursuit of other employment, no enrollment in LSAT, MCAT, GRE or other graduate school preparation classes and/or exams during the internship);
• work full-time in a congressional office;
• attend required seminars in Washington, D.C. (arranged by the Panetta Institute);
• submit a brief weekly report to the Panetta Institute;
• maintain a journal;
• and write a twenty-page research paper.

The Panetta Institute will reasonably accommodate interns with disabilities if the person is otherwise qualified to safely perform all of the essential functions of the position. To comply with applicable laws ensuring equal employment opportunities to qualified individuals with a disability, the Panetta Institute will make reasonable accommodations for the known physical or mental limitations of an otherwise qualified individual with a disability who is an applicant for the internship or an intern unless undue hardship would result.

Again, to emphasize, students must be enrolled in their junior or senior year when the program begins at the Panetta Institute for the fall term. The student must be eligible to matriculate in the Congressional Internship Program’s courses on a credit-bearing basis in the standard enrollment format. No audits are allowed and students may not have graduated prior to the internship. Further, no additional course enrollment is allowed outside the Congressional Internship Program including preparation courses for or scheduling of LSAT, MCAT, GRE, or other graduate school exams; nor are special preparations for other tests allowed. Students must be able and willing to participate fully in this Congressional Internship Program and not be involved in any other employment or pursuit of employment. And, finally, they will not be excused for family or other reasons unless there is an emergency or extenuating circumstance, which the Panetta Institute will review and consider before a final decision is made.

To attract the best-qualified students, there must be broad advertisement of the Panetta Institute’s Congressional Internship Program throughout the campus community well in advance to ensure that the entire student body is notified. The above criteria must be included in
the outreach information. All departments on campus must be contacted to recruit for the program. It may not be limited to just a few departments. Enclosed is a program and position description to provide to each applicant to ensure that the type and nature of intern work is known. A rigorous interview process must be conducted by a broad-based review committee that, amongst other items, assesses the candidate’s clarity of speech, writing skills and overall demeanor and character. Subsequent to the interview by a campus committee, the president will conduct the final student interview before writing the letter of nomination. College transcripts, resume, and personal statement of interest shall be reviewed carefully. In addition to a check-off sheet, we are enclosing a publicity flyer for campus distribution.

The Panetta Institute interview team, including a representative from the chancellor’s office, will then meet with the student nominee at the Panetta Institute at a date and time to be announced in the spring of 2016. During the student applicant’s visit to the Panetta Institute, he or she will meet with the campus police department to begin the process for a background investigation. The Panetta Institute interview team reserves the right to reject the nominee if the student fails to meet the Panetta Institute’s and the chancellor representative’s standards set for participation. Students may also be rejected due to the findings of the required background investigation. This program is open to students in any academic major recognized by the university subject to the criteria stipulated above and any additional criteria set forth by the campus president’s office.

Again, the cost of the program is fully funded in order to allow participation by any qualified student, independent of family income. Student benefits include academic fees and tuition, food and housing, modest reimbursement for living expenses, a text-binder and other academic materials, along with air and ground transportation. Qualified candidates must begin the application process at the president’s office of their university.

We strongly encourage your university’s participation in this program. We have always believed that the educational experience provided by this Congressional Internship Program can be and often is a turning point in a student’s life. We have enclosed selected comments from students who participated in last year’s class. The deadline for this nomination is Friday, March 4, 2016. Soon thereafter, interviews will be scheduled with each student and held at the Panetta Institute.

We thank you for your cooperation and support and look forward to hearing from you and having a student from your campus join the program.

Sincerely,

[Signature]
Leon E. Panetta
Chairman

[Signature]
Sylvia M. Panetta
Co-Chair and CEO

LEP/SMP:rk/s
Enclosures