



PANETTA INSTITUTE

# update

## Annual Jefferson-Lincoln Dinner Honors Three Public Figures for Their Bipartisan Service

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**F**riends and supporters of the Panetta Institute gathered in Pebble Beach on November 10 to honor three public figures for their outstanding service to the country. Democratic Congressional Whip Steny Hoyer, Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood and CNN anchor Candy Crowley received the Institute's Jefferson-Lincoln award at a gala dinner and celebration at the beautiful Inn at Spanish Bay.

The annual award honors public servants and journalists who put country ahead of partisan interests.

"We have held this event the weekend following each November election," said Institute director Sylvia Panetta, "because with each election there is renewed hope that elected leaders and journalists will be inspired to govern and report in the best interests of our democracy."

Mrs. Panetta praised the award recipients as representing "the best in our democracy – public office, public service and a free press."

A congressman since 1981, Rep. Hoyer (D-MD) has earned a reputation as a skilled consensus builder who has frequently reached out to colleagues across the aisle. He praised the goals of the Jefferson-Lincoln Awards, saying, "All of us should be serving for a better America."

LaHood served in Congress for fourteen years and in 2009 was selected as Secretary of

Transportation, one of two Republicans in President Obama's cabinet. Mrs. Panetta described him as an "independent Republican in the spirit of Teddy Roosevelt."

LaHood praised the audience for supporting the goals of the Panetta Institute, which he described as "giving tremendous encouragement to young people to enter public service."

Crowley, the host of the CNN news program *State of the Union with Candy Crowley*, received an ovation for her performance as moderator of the second presidential debate of 2012. The longtime reporter assured attendees that the nation's capital is better served by its public servants than might be portrayed on some cable news shows. "Don't give up faith," she said.

The annual dinner serves as the Institute's main fundraiser and features cuisine created by Bert Cutino and other outstanding local chefs.



**Ray LaHood, Candy Crowley and Steny Hoyer join Institute director Sylvia Panetta at the annual "Evening to Honor Lives of Public Service."**

### Inside:

- Reading Program Continues Innovation
- Congressional Interns Study and Serve
- Research Fellows Provide Valuable Help



## Monterey County Reads Continues to Expand

**N**ow in its sixteenth year, the Monterey County Reads program continues to innovate, with the addition of a literacy expert to further ensure quality assessments, and more children are being helped.

The effort's mission is to improve the literacy skills of at-risk children in first, second and third grades throughout Monterey County.

Four new schools have been added to the program this year, including schools in the Greenfield Union and Alisal Union School Districts. In addition, the Institute has further committed to assessing and analyzing the effectiveness of the program by working with literacy expert Mary Alicia McRae, a longtime Monterey County educator who now performs both student data collection and school site orientations.

"Mary Alicia's expertise ensures measurable evidence of the program's effectiveness," says Panetta Institute director Sylvia Panetta.

Volunteers are at the core of the program. As Ms. McRae explains, "Monterey County Reads improves the skills and raises the confidence of children just learning to read. Each child has a positive volunteer, a willing and encouraging listener who helps the child become a better reader. We see children just below grade level coming up to grade level after this help."

Pupils are selected for the program based on demonstrated need, and their progress is carefully charted. The collected data are compiled and reviewed by the Institute and the Monterey County Office of Education. The U.S. Naval Postgraduate School then analyzes the results to determine program effectiveness. Test results have consistently shown that six hours of one-to-one reading with a child yields marked improvement in reading skills.



**Longtime Monterey County educator Mary Alicia McRae has lent her expertise to help ensure meaningful measurements of pupils' success.**

Working with these institutions, along with an array of area colleges, businesses, military installations, faith groups and community organizations, Monterey County Reads has recruited and trained thousands of volunteers and placed them in the area's elementary schools.

Panetta Institute Board Member Rhonda Williams says, "The evidence is overwhelming that children who engage in adult-child storybook interactions from a young age are more likely to have later reading success. This program makes a huge difference."

To reach more children, we are always looking for more volunteers and program partners from businesses and other organizations. Go to [PanettaInstitute.org](http://PanettaInstitute.org) to learn how you can help.

## Institute's Congressional Internship Program Earns a Reputation as a National Leader

In early November, a politically diverse group of twenty-four college students wrapped up the opportunity of a lifetime when they completed their tenure as congressional interns as part of the annual Panetta Institute Congressional Internship Program.

“During a particularly partisan time, this year’s interns demonstrated a commitment to working together,” commented Panetta Institute director Sylvia Panetta. “This class of interns included Republicans, Democrats and independents, but they all devoted themselves to studying policy issues in an open and respectful way.”

Students hailed from twenty-two campuses in the California State University system, plus Santa Clara and Dominican Universities. Following an intense two-week preparatory program at the Panetta Institute in August, the interns flew to Washington, D.C. to work in congressional offices and also to attend weekly seminars featuring members of Congress, political journalists and other experts in public service.

In the program’s orientation sessions, Institute staff and visiting lecturers provide background on the legislative process and the major issues facing leaders in Washington. In addition, interns learn about the basic protocols of working in a congressional office.

As a result, congressional offices have come to respect and count on the program. Said one congressional staff member, “The Panetta Institute does a fantastic job training interns. We look forward to receiving them and depend on them every fall semester.”

This year’s interns served and studied in Washington during the weeks leading up to the presidential election. Despite the sharp



The Institute’s congressional interns, gathered here on the Capitol steps, met this fall with elected officials, executive branch leaders, political journalists and public policy leaders.

partisan divisions of the campaign, the interns attended seminars led by experts from a variety of political viewpoints. Student Nicholas Johnson of California State University, Stanislaus, observed, “The nation definitely needs both parties working with each other to come to consensus on the many problems we face.”

Since the program’s inception in 1999, 318 university students have participated. To help extend the opportunity to students of all backgrounds, the interns receive airfare, housing and a modest living allowance to support their stay in Washington.

After completing their internships, a majority of the program’s participants have gone on to work on Capitol Hill or pursue advanced degrees in law, political science or public policy.

“THE NATION DEFINITELY NEEDS BOTH PARTIES WORKING WITH EACH OTHER.”

Nicholas Johnson  
California State  
University, Stanislaus





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**Research Fellows Receive Academic Credit While Helping Institute Fulfill its Mission**

**F**or the past seven years, the Panetta Institute has benefited from the research done by a series of dedicated law students.

This fall, three carefully selected students from the Santa Clara University School of Law studied and conducted public policy research while also assisting the Institute’s teachers and program leaders in support of Institute programs.

“Much of their work involves study and research on all sides of public policy issues,” says Institute Director Sylvia Panetta. “This is especially good experience for those who may be contemplating a career in public service.”

This fall, the three students, John Fox, Patrick Hensleigh and Drew Miller, attended special seminars in which elected officials spoke about the practical realities of drafting and passing legislation, as well as consensus building and career options.

The fellows researched complicated issues like campaign finance, the election process and health care, examining a variety of public-policy options. Each topic is designed to combine students’ legal studies with political and policy analysis.

Fellows also provide support to other Institute programs, such as the Jefferson-

Lincoln Awards dinner, where they document the service and accomplishments of the honorees.

“The Panetta Institute has allowed me to apply the skills I’ve learned in law school to the some of the country’s biggest policy challenges,” says Fox. “For someone interested in public service, this is excellent preparation.”

Thus far, forty-three students have completed their semester of service in this program, receiving academic credit from their respective law schools.



**From left, fellows Drew Miller, John Fox and at right, Patrick Hensleigh, met with elected leaders like former Santa Cruz Mayor Ryan Coonerty, second from right, as part of their research at the Institute.**