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Capitol welcomes Sac State students

Six Sacramento State students have been selected to take part in the University’s 2011-2012 Capital Fellows Programs. Matthew Easley, Lisa Lindhorst, Mark Neuburger, Michelle Paul, Amanda Plant and Motecuzoma Sanchez join 58 other students from around California, working in various branches of state government.

The program places student interns in the Assembly, the state Senate, the executive branch and judicial administration, giving them a chance to gain valuable experience and contribute to the development and implementation of public policy.

Each student works as a full-time employee and is typically given assignments with considerable responsibility and challenges. The students are also enrolled as graduate students at Sacramento State and receive graduate units.

The six Sacramento State students are eagerly looking forward to the opportunity and have already begun their work.

Matthew Easley is a California Senate Fellow. He graduated from Sacramento State in 2009 with a Kinesiology/Athletic Training degree but harbored an interest in politics. “After an internship with Assemblymember Kevin Jeffries’ office, I was hooked,” Easley says. He hopes to stay on at the Capitol after the fellowship. Easley nurtures a desire to run for public office, saying he’s grown dissatisfied waiting for the right people to make the changes California and the nation need to survive. “Becoming a Fellow will open many doors for me in the future,” he says.

Lisa Lindhorst is an Executive Fellow in the Department of Veterans Affairs. “The fellowship is giving me invaluable and high-level work experience that I could never
have received in an entry-level job," she says. Lindhorst plans to attend law school next year and become a public attorney, such as a Marine JAG officer, or work her way back into politics in the executive branch. “The single best part of being a Fellow is the access I get to amazing people,” she says. “I spent hours recently talking to the secretary of Veterans Affairs about my goals and aspirations.”

Mark Neuburger is a Judicial Administration Fellow placed at the Placer County Superior Court. He graduated summa cum laude with a B.S. in Criminal Justice and an M.A. in International Affairs, each from Sacramento State. “The Judicial Administration Fellowship has allowed me to develop a working knowledge of the duties of executive-level administrators, as well as gain a deeper understanding of the issues that California’s court system faces,” says Neuburger. “The work experiences, professional environment and contacts I have made will be critical after the Fellowship as I pursue a career in public service.”

Michelle Paul joined the Assembly Fellowship after studying in Israel and Spain, and attending Fresno State and Sacramento State. She applied to the Fellows because of its reputation. “The program is so well-regarded nationally, and provides a more in-depth perspective into the inner operations of the Legislature, that I couldn’t resist applying,” Paul says. She’s looking forward to building a career at the Capitol and enjoys being immersed in policy issues. Paul sees the fellowship as a step in building a career in the Capitol. “I feel enormously blessed to have been selected for this opportunity.”

Amanda Marie Plant developed a passion for California politics from participating in several political internships during her college days. She graduated with a degree in Government and is a California Senate Fellow. “This program has helped me to further develop my passion for public service,” says Plant. When her fellowship concludes, Plant hopes to continue working at the state Capitol. “My ultimate career goal would be to become a chief of staff for an elected official or move to the ‘third’ house to lobby for business or agricultural interests,” she says.
Motecuzoma Sanchez is a Marine veteran who served in Operation Enduring Freedom/Iraqi Freedom and graduated magna cum laude with a B.A. in Ethnic Studies and a concentration in Chicano Studies. He applied to the Capital Fellows Programs because of a passion for public service and a desire to learn the legislative process and make the state a better place through public policy. “This gives me a strong foundation and real-world education in California government,” he says. “It also includes me in a prestigious network of current and past Fellows who have benefited from the program.” Sanchez hopes to continue working in public service after he has completed his master's.

The Capital Fellows Programs is nationally recognized. In 2010 and 2011, Vault.com Guide to Internships voted it one of the nation’s 10 best programs.

For more information on the Capital Fellows, visit www.csus.edu/calst/programs. For media assistance, call Sacramento State’s Public Affairs office at (916) 278-6156.

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