CAPAL was founded in 1989 in order to provide a platform for Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders interested in public service. For more than 30 years, CAPAL has provided opportunities for over 600 professionals, and is continuing to build a strong AANHPI public service pipeline. Through these programs, CAPAL strives toward a future with equitable representation throughout all levels of government and public service.
OUR PROGRAMS

Washington Leadership Program (WLP)
In response to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, CAPAL successfully transitioned and implemented 100% of its summer programming on a virtual platform, allowing students and professionals to engage across the country. This year, CAPAL registered over 334 participants for its Washington Leadership Program, with attendees hailing from a variety of professional backgrounds. The 2020 WLP theme of “Moving Forward” spurred attendees to address issues facing the AANHPI community, as well as form key takeaways and action plans to lead social change in their own communities.

WLP Attendee Professional Background

2020 WLP Topics
- COVID-19 Present and Aftermath for Asian America
- AANHPI Womxn in Public Service: Overcoming Challenges in the Workplace
- Hidden Faces of Immigration
- Be the Change: Energy & Sustainability

Public Service Scholarships and Internships
CAPAL places and funds undergraduate and graduate students within the federal government and nonprofit sector nationally each summer. Students participate in WLP, connect with a mentor, attend cohort sessions, and collaborate on a Community Action Project.

2020 Scholar and Intern Majors
- Global Affairs
- Anthropology
- Political Communication
- International Studies
- Philosophy, Politics, & Economics
- Leadership & Public Policy
- Psychology
- Master’s in Food Science
- Religion, Culture & Society
- Journalism
- Spanish
- Business
- Economics & Business

Scholar & Intern Placement Partners
- USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services
- USDA Natural Resources and Conservation Service
- Refugee and Immigration Services
- National Domestic Workers Alliance
- Conference on Asian Pacific American Leadership
COMMUNITY ACTION PROJECTS

Scholars and Interns directly supported important causes by collaborating with partner organizations and producing concrete deliverables that were presented at CAPAL’s Closing Ceremony. 2020 Projects included a COVID-19 anti-racism toolkit; a women’s leadership program evaluation; and an analysis of caregiving, intergenerational communication, and mental health during COVID-19.

2020 Project: Confronting Racism in the Face of COVID-19 Toolkit

This project was created in order to provide resources for families and students to confront racism and bullying, especially among AANHPI youth in the wake of COVID-19. This project was featured on Act to Change’s website as part of their Educational and Resource Toolkit and was also presented at Act to Change’s Day Against Bullying and Hate Conference.

“It was so empowering for me to hear from an AAPI professional who had experience in public service, especially as someone who is pursuing a degree in a non-public service focused field. My time with Rebecca (mentor) was one of the highlights of my summer.”

Alice A. Yu
2020 Refugee and Immigration Services Scholar

PUBLIC SERVICE CAREER EXPLORATION

Over the past 10 years, CAPAL has served over 220 scholars and interns, many of whom have gone on to pursue careers at the following organizations:

- U.S. Department of State
- BluePrint Research Group
- New York City Council
- Booz Allen Hamilton
- Women’s Way
- Google
- National Association of County and City Health Officials
- Asian Pacific American Advocates (OCA)
- Hulu

Mentoring

CAPAL Scholars and Interns emphasized the lasting impact of their mentorship experience, with students acknowledging their weekly meetings with their mentor as one of the most significant and influential parts of the program.

Professional Development

This year, CAPAL launched a series of professional development workshops in partnership with CAPAW. Through these sessions, Scholars and Interns gained valuable insight into the interview process, participated in resume-writing workshops, and engaged in speaker panels.
"For the last three months I have been working at the National Domestic Workers Alliance as a policy intern, and this experience has taught me a lot about the particular challenges and needs of this population—one that is primarily made up of women of color. I have learned how to change passion into policy and have gained a new appreciation for our nation’s domestic workers."

Amanda Yuen, 2020 National Domestic Workers Alliance Scholar

“My summer experience with CAPAL was wonderful, and I feel humbled and empowered coming out of this program. I learned through my internship, supervisor, mentor, and CAP project the critical importance of building bridges and communicating effectively in all matters of life and politics, and I feel better equipped going into future positions to make the most of my time in those jobs."

Patrick Liu, 2020 CAPAL Intern