



## **OVERVIEW OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS INTERNSHIP & REGIONAL DIRECTOR/ADVOCATE VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS**

Welcome to The Borgen Project! This document, along with the Weekly Tracker, contains just about everything you need to be successful in your internship and volunteer programs. These programs are meant to help you grow from being a person who cares about making a difference, into being a person who is highly effective at doing just that. You will learn how to lobby members of Congress, mobilize, raise awareness and fundraise. In short, you are going to learn how to be politically effective on behalf of those who are struggling to survive.

### **3 Things to Know**

1. **Read Everything.** We provide you all of the details and instructions in written form. Without being in the office to hear instructions, if you don't follow details closely, it will show and hamper your ability to be successful here.
2. **Honesty or Out.** Anyone falsely reporting information in their weekly tracker or to their manager will be let go and their school will be notified (if in college). We're putting a lot of trust in you to complete the assignments, and if that trust is violated, the internship will be immediately terminated.
3. **Step Outside of your Comfort Zone.** Meeting with a Congressional office... Scary. Asking people to donate... Scary. Speaking to a class... Scary. These things are remarkably easy, but can seem intimidating at first. All great things occur outside of our comfort zones so rise to the challenge. This is not an internship for those looking to skim by. This is an internship meant to challenge you and help you grow.

### **Key Times**

- Friday's at 5pm PST – Weekly Trackers are due. Turn in the entire tracker for the week as an attachment.

### **Schedules**

- The Political Affairs Internship is a 12-hour per week Internship. You can pick your own schedule.
- The RD program is a 4-6 hour per week volunteer program and the Advocate program is a 4 hour per week volunteer program. You can pick your own schedule.

### **More about the Political Affairs Internship Hours:**

- 10-hours per week clocked in. Minimum of 4-days per week. Clocked in hours can be done on weekends or evenings if you prefer.
- 2-hours per week can be un-clocked hours. These two hours' factor in that sometimes you won't be able to clock in (attending events, meetings, quickly responding to emails, etc.).



- Select a weekly schedule. You may work weekends or evenings. Please note that your schedule may be subject to change if need be during your internship.

## INTERNSHIP GOALS & EXPECTATIONS

Below are the big picture items that we'd like to see you accomplish during your internship. The weekly tracker will guide you through key assignments, but throughout the internship, you need to be working toward accomplishing the following big picture items. As you work through the weekly assignments, remember that these are the goals you should be trying to accomplish. Print this page out, place it near your desk and put an "X" through each item as you accomplish it.

Met with Representative	Met with Senator	Met with Senator	Taught 50 people to call Congress
Gave 2 Presentations	Raised \$500	2 Bird-Dogs	Mobilized 50 people to email Congress
Attend 4 Networking Events	Talked to 3 classes about volunteer ops		

**The Big Picture:** You are trying to engage and put pressure on the two U.S. Senators and one U.S. Representative who represent you in Congress.

**Tactically, you'll utilize the following methodology to influence your leaders**

- **Direct lobbying meetings.** You'll attend scheduled meetings with the local offices of your members of Congress or *phone* meetings with the D.C. offices of your members of Congress.
- **Public Pressure.** Generating the public to call, write and email their Congressional Offices.
- **Influencer Outreach.** You'll reach out to the people in your district who tend to have influence over members of Congress. These might be campaign contributors, unions, companies, the Chamber of Commerce, etc.
- **Bird-Dogging.**



- **Homework.** The more you know about your leaders, the better you'll be at developing strategies to engage them in the cause.
- **Your Brain.** We strongly believe in the marketplace of ideas. With thousands of people involved with The Borgen Project every year, it goes without saying that many of the best ideas are going to be discovered by individuals like yourself.

## ONGOING ASSIGNMENTS

The Weekly Tracker will walk you through day-to-day assignments, but make sure you've also invested time in big picture items.

- **Intelligence Gathering.** You need to know your three Congressional leaders inside and out. You need to know when they're making public appearances, where they're speaking, what issues they're engaged in, etc.
- **Invest in your knowledge.** Make sure you are taking time to learn more about the legislation and issues you'll be promoting. Study up on politics, fundraising and other topics that make you more effective in your internship.

## FAQS

**Can I meet with other leaders besides my three?** Yes, and No. At the grassroots-level, political leaders usually only meet with people who they represent. That said, members of Congress will often meet with people representing groups in their "area." For example, if you live in Seattle, the Congressional leaders whose districts are in cities next to Seattle will often meet with you. Another option is if you're in college, you can meet with the leaders where you attend school and the leaders where your parents live. The main thing is to have ties to both places (known as Dual Constituency).

**Can I get a reference?** Yes. At the end of your internship, your manager will decide on whether or not you can list them as a reference. However, be forewarned, references are earned, not given. You will not receive a reference for "participating" at The Borgen Project. You will need to meet the weekly expectations and have an impact.

**Can I get college credit?** Yes. You'll need to arrange it through your school, but we're happy to sign any paperwork needed to verify your internship.

**What happens when employers/grad schools do background checks?** An employment background check is different from a reference check. With background checks they just want to verify the dates you worked at a company. However, they'll sometimes ask questions to verify your impact.

**I'm not sure what to work on?** If you ever run out of things to work on...

- Make sure you're working toward the big picture goals.
- Visit the [go-to assignments page](#) or the [Point Chart](#).
- Feel free to jump ahead in the Weekly Tracker.