

CIGIE Fellows Cohort Training Activities – March 2021

The New Congress (for CIGIE) – A Virtual Instruction Event

On March 12, 2021 Georgetown University GAI provided the CIGIE Community with four informative sessions as part of the virtual instruction event. First, Ms. Jennifer Shutt, the *Roll Call* magazine federal budget and appropriations reporter, provided the CIGIE Community with an introduction to the federal budget and appropriations process. She then briefed the CIGIE Community on the specific U.S. Senate and House of Representatives who oversee the specific budget and appropriation committees (including all relevant appropriations subcommittee chairs). Ms. Shutt noted that there will be tough conversations that take place on the Fiscal Year 2022 budget resolution, defense spending, and budget reconciliation. She stated that there would be appropriations policy disagreements on the Hyde amendment, U.S. Department of Homeland Security Customs and Border Protection and Immigration and Customs Enforcement funding, and the prospect of an annual cost-of-living adjustment for Congressional Members. Second, Mr. Nathan Gonzales, *Inside Elections* analyst, provided the CIGIE Community with an update on the 2020 federal election results (e.g., the President, the U.S. House, and the U.S. Senate). He also presented a preview of the 2022 battleground U.S. Senate and Governor elections. Additionally, Mr. Gonzales explained the Congressional reapportionment process.¹ In short, the upper Midwest is losing U.S. House seats – and the “Sun Belt” and Rocky Mountain West will gain seats. Third, Mr. Matt Glassman, Georgetown University GAI Senior Fellow taught a session on the changing dynamics of Congress. He mentioned that:

- The federal government is unified under one party.
- There is hyper-partisanship in Congress.
- President Biden will not have a lot of time to navigate the dynamics of a new Congress.
- The Congress, itself, is still trying to navigate the crisis of a pandemic.
- Everyone will have to deal with the dynamic of the 2022 federal election.

Fourth, we were joined by Tim Alberta, a columnist from *The Atlantic*, who quite frankly, gave the CIGIE Community “real talk” on the Congressional partisanship – and the types of elected officials who can remain in Congress (as they never have to participate in competitive political races).

Top Activity Takeaways:

1. There is hyper-partisanship in Congress – and that is likely to continue.
2. Congress is already focused on the 2022 Federal Elections.
3. It is becoming increasingly difficult to get anything substantive done in Congress because many U.S. House Seats are incredibly safe (due to gerrymandering).
4. Those who work in the CIGIE community still have that important role of sunlight and accountability – and that mission will continue regardless of Congressional Leadership.

¹ Reapportionment is “The reassignment of representatives proportionally among the states in accordance with changes in population distribution.” For more information, please see “Reapportionment.” Merriam - Webster Dictionary, Accessed March 22, 2021, [Reapportionment | Definition of Reapportionment by Merriam-Webster \(merriam-webster.com\)](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/reapportionment).

“Bookless” Book Club/Knowledge Café

On March 24, 2021 CFP leadership team member Matt Hebert (DOJ OIG) led CFP participants in a one hour knowledge café activity. Participants viewed a brief YouTube video providing an illustrated summary of the book *Designing Your Life* by Dave Evans and Bill Burnett. After the 6 minute video, the CFP participants were separated into small groups and sent to Zoom breakout rooms to discuss the book’s main concepts. There were two separate breakout room sessions and each session lasted approximately 15 minutes. At the conclusion of the activity, participants assembled together to discuss takeaways and general feedback on the session.

Top Activity Takeaways:

1. Intentional reflection and analysis can be used to discern which daily tasks we find more interesting. After we identify these tasks, we can look for opportunities to work on projects that require more of these types of activities – and by doing so, increase our job satisfaction.
2. Three reflective tools can be used to help us answer the professional question, “What next?” In the Optimized Life exercise, you keep a Good Time Journal for three weeks, and use it to find a way to optimize your current career path so that you are doing more activities that make you feel engaged and energized, and fewer activities that make you feel bored and exhausted. The Alternate Life exercise imagines that your current job is obsolete due to industry collapse or AI replacement—how would you realistically transfer your current job skills to a different position or industry? Also using your Good Time Journal, how would this alternate life career compare to your current career in making you feel energized and engaged? Finally, the Fascinated Life exercise asks what would you be doing if money and image were no object? Utilizing a 5 year plan, is there a way you might be able to make a living at your favorite activity or hobby?
3. After imagining different ways to take your career to the next level, it is important to use prototype conversations to test your assumptions before committing fully into any significant career change. For example, reach out to people on LinkedIn or have coffee with someone doing the thing you’re interested in pursuing. Doing so can save a lot of potential heartache or wasted effort in pursuing goals which may not be suitable increasing your professional engagement and energy.