

Oversight Boot Camps

Our Team

Jay Branegan

Dan Diller

Bipartisan Oversight Boot Camps

The Lugar Center partners with the Project on Government Oversight and the Levin Center at Wayne State University to host regular Congressional Staff Bipartisan Oversight Boot Camps. The first was held in August 2015. This two-day event brought approximately 20 current Congressional staff members together with trainers who are experienced in the art of bipartisan Congressional oversight. Two more boot camps were held in 2016, and two in 2017, with another scheduled for August.

The boot camps, which are held in the House or Senate office buildings, mix staffers from both parties and both chambers who work together in small groups to develop and execute investigative plans for various hypothetical scandal scenarios. The sessions emphasize that a bipartisan approach is essential if the oversight process is to have credibility and lasting impact on policy and legislation. As Senator Lugar has said, “When the two parties work together, whether it’s on hearings, reports, oversight or legislation, both sides “own” the outcome and it is far more likely to withstand changes in the political winds.”

The trainers are experienced investigators, both Republicans and Democrats, who have worked for such committees as the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations and the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee. So far, more than 100 Congressional staffers have taken part in Oversight Boot Camp training.

Instruction Materials

The Levin Center at Wayne Law, one of TLC’s partners in the Oversight Boot Camps, has recently posted 16 short (5-10 minutes each) tutorials with tips on how to conduct good, fact-based, Congressional oversight investigations.

They are free and available for use on the Levin Center website:

<http://law.wayne.edu/levin-center/training-videos.php>

Press

In a recent Roll Call story about the Oversight Boot Camps, Levin Center Washington co-director Elise Bean noted, “It’s pretty obvious I guess, that oversight has taken on an increased role in the 115th Congress, but it’s always been the lifeblood of Congress.” She also said, “If you’re going to reach a bipartisan consensus on the facts, which in today’s world is actually quite difficult and actually has been very difficult for many years... you have to do the investigation together.”

For the full article, see:

www.rollcall.com/news/politics/training-new-congressional-investigators-part-senator-levins-legacy