

## **Internship in Jared Polis' Congressional Office**

### **Position Description:**

As an intern in a congressional *district* office, the intern's primary responsibilities revolve around serving the constituents of Colorado's 2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District (constituent services). His/her duties generally fall under one of three constituent-oriented categories: casework, correspondence and/or communication, and outreach. Correspondence/communication can happen either in person (a constituent phones or comes into the office), or in writing (a constituent sends a letter, an email, or a fax). Many of the incoming calls are from constituents who aren't happy about something the congressman or the government has done or is doing. It is the intern's job to pass the constituent's concern to the staff member who is responsible for that particular issue area. Working directly with constituents creates multiple "teachable moments" that will add up to significant business as well as personal life lessons.

Another significant part of an intern's job will be to participate in responding to constituent correspondence (letters, emails, faxes). The intern will have numerous opportunities to work directly with other staff members in the drafting and crafting of any number of constituent letters. This will clearly help him/her hone his/her written communication skills, in particular, as well as offer him/her a window into the kind of language one uses in a political and congressional environment. Congressional responses are exceedingly important, especially considering that Congressman Polis' signature appears on each letter and represents the essence of his views on the particular subject.

Casework is probably the most important thing we do for constituents, and the least well known. Constituents can contact us regarding any problem or issue they might be facing with any federal agency. The prime areas and agencies are Social Security, Medicare, the Veterans Administration, immigration, housing, employment/labor, and education (as in federal student loans). At their request we can play an intermediary or advocate's role between the constituent and the agency.

Regarding outreach, the office will provide many opportunities for the intern to attend meetings, conferences, and events that involve the Congressman or his office. Examples include community Town Hall meetings, tours of local agencies or businesses (NOAA, NIST), the Veterans Administration, Governor's office, etc. Interns' duties will range from helping organize the event to staffing the Congressman at the event.

Overall, our goal is to provide an excellent learning experience that will benefit the intern's immediate academic requirements as well as his/her long term academic and personal goals, not to mention the needs of the congressional office. We stress the importance of his/her participating in creating that excellent experience by allowing him/her to concentrate on areas of interest that overlap with those of the congressional office. This way he/she can take his/her internship into the coming semester and beyond.