

2012

In Search of His Calling

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Recommended Citation

Mileham, Mardi (2012) "In Search of His Calling," *Linfield Magazine*: Vol. 9: Iss. 2, Article 11.
Available at: http://digitalcommons.linfield.edu/linfield_magazine/vol9/iss2/11

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In search of his calling

When Joe Gladow '14 left for an internship in the office of Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, he expected to return with a solid idea of his career path.

But the opposite occurred. Now, his career options seem endless, in areas that had never crossed his mind—investment banking, business consulting, marketing, public policy as well as the law or politics.

"I went into this thinking I would figure out what I want to do for a career," he said with a grin. "I have expanded my horizons. A lot of students have the notion that you have to go into a field that relates to your major. I now realize that's not true and there are many more things I can do that I had not thought about."

The Kemper Scholars

The Kemper Scholars program, sponsored by the James S. Kemper Foundation of Chicago, Ill., selects students from 16 liberal arts colleges around the country to prepare them for leadership and service, especially in the fields of organizational administration and business.

Each student receives an annual scholarship of up to \$10,000 based on need during their sophomore, junior and senior years of college. They also receive stipends to cover the costs of their work as interns in major nonprofit organizations in Chicago during the summer following their sophomore year. Scholars work in positions where they can learn about financial management, organizational strategy, fundraising and nonprofit administration.

In addition to Gladow, of Shoreline, Wash., the other Linfield students currently in the program are Cody Purchase '15 of Boise, Idaho; Terran Sobel-Smith '15 of Canby and Blake Densley '14 of Renton, Wash.

Gladow, an international relations major, is one of four Linfield students selected for the prestigious Kemper Scholars program (see sidebar). Each scholar spends two summers in internships – one year in the public sector and the next in the private.

Gladow was placed in the Chicago mayor's office because of his interest in politics. He was one of only two undergraduate students working alongside 23 graduate students from colleges and universities around the country including Harvard, Princeton, the University of Michigan and others.

The bulk of his time was spent on research, and the skills he developed through his study in Linfield's political science department were invaluable.

"I had an understanding of how to conduct the research, and also how to glean from it the most pressing point to support a certain case or policy," Gladow said.

He worked on several projects relating to education, international relations and business development. Once the research was completed, the teams prepared reports with ideas of how Chicago might develop policies that fit the unique characteristics of the city.

Gladow never met Mayor Emanuel, but he did get an inside glimpse of how the machines of Chicago politics and infrastructure work. He toured the police training academy, Soldier Field, After School Matters (an after-school arts program for children), the Jardine Water Purification Plant (the largest water treatment plant in the world), and met city officials such as the fire commissioner and director of health and human services.

Although he admits to being intimidated initially by the graduate students and mayor's staff, he also recognized the enormous learning opportunities. Most of the grad students were studying for master's in public administration or public policy degrees, and he was able to learn from them and



Career options seem endless for Kemper Scholar Joe Gladow '14, who interned in the office of Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel last summer.

hone his skills in research and analysis.

One of the most valuable aspects of the internship was learning how to be a professional and work in a professional environment. Gladow wore a suit and tie each day and learned how to interact in meetings, work in professional groups, meet deadlines and collaborate with diverse personalities. His weekly mentoring sessions with the Kemper staff gave him insight into corporate culture, how to interview, how to understand different management styles, and how and why some businesses are successful.

"Beyond the practical aspect of being able to find opportunities through this network of people, is the chance to meet and get to know people from diverse backgrounds," he said. "I'm more confident. I have learned that I can interact with anyone and I can offer insight in any situation."

His internship also helped him develop a more critical mindset. "The skills of doing research and translating it into policy, instill in you this more critical way of analyzing things for a practical purpose," he said. 🌿

– Mardi Mileham