

### Interning with Congressman Jim Cooper - Summary

This summer I interned for Congressman Jim Cooper in his office in Washington, DC. I assisted with basic office duties, led tours in the Capitol, and coordinated mailings for Representative Cooper. I also drafted constituent response letters and researched congressional issues for his staffers in areas in which I was most interested. I utilized extra time when the House of Representatives was in Recess to conduct my own research project on healthcare systems around the world, inspired by T.R. Reid's *The Healing of America*, which I read earlier this year. In addition to working in the office, I attended hearings, briefings, and receptions hosted by special interest groups ranging from OxFam International and fashion designers like Diane von Furstenberg, to the Bipartisan Policy Center. These meetings allowed me to learn about more about the issues our nation currently faces and meet many politicians including Representatives Nancy Pelosi, John McCain, and Steny Hoyer. On days when we had less work in the office, our internship coordinator sent our group to explore Washington, D.C. I ended up being able to visit the National Gallery, National Botanical Gardens, Newseum, Smithsonian Zoo, National Cathedral, Library of Congress, United States Bureau of Engraving and Printing, Supreme Court, White House, Washington Monument, war memorials, and many other historical landmarks. One last aspect of this internship that is unique to Congressman Cooper's office is the amount of time I spent reading, writing and talking with him. When the House was in session, Mr. Cooper scheduled anywhere from forty-five minutes to an hour for "Intern Time" every day, in which he asked his interns to have read an article from a major newspaper and be prepared to discuss (and most often argue) our opinion on the issue. Finally, Mr. Cooper assigned his interns to read and prepare reports on two books, *The Social Animal* by David Brooks and *Justice* by Michael Sandel, and offered constructive criticism on our writing.