

On the Job: Internship program benefits students & CTF

The research branch of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation (CTF) received a boost this past summer as two interns joined us in the fight for lower taxes, less waste and accountable government.

Amber Ruddy (Schomberg, Ontario) and Lisa Anthony (Toronto, Ontario) worked out of the CTF's Ottawa office and helped research various federal, provincial and municipal matters. The pair increased our capacity to engage in in-depth and groundbreaking research that will ultimately help our advocacy efforts. They even ended up spearheading a few of their own ideas.

In return, Amber and Lisa were provided with a rare opportunity to work on the frontlines of the taxpayers' movement and gain valuable research, communication and advocacy skills from the vantage point of the nation's capital.

Here is a summary of their experiences in their own words.

Amber's experience

"Having worked with the Canadian Taxpayers Federation for the summer, I learned firsthand how to research and investigate stories of government waste. For example: I was responsible for filing Access to Information requests, which are used to update reports and articles written by CTF spokespeople. As well, I helped create a database of the most ridiculous government handouts and grants in recent years. Collecting entries was not the hard part, deciding which ones made the cut was the challenge!

I also learned how to effectively write press releases and ensure they successfully reached the media. I drafted the initial version of the CTF's press release which called on MPPs in Ontario to return to the legislature and order Toronto city workers back to work. Building on this, I created and conducted a survey with media outlets that receive the CTF's *Let's Talk Taxes* commentaries. The survey provided feedback to all directors on how to make their bi-weekly commentaries more effective.

One of the most interesting projects I undertook was compiling a list of MPP and MLA pension plans across the country. This chart (see the TaxFacts section at taxpayer.com) will be used as a reference tool by media, researchers, CTF staff and the taxpaying public at large. The CTF plays an important watchdog role.

I look forward to being able to apply the advocacy and research skills that I have learned at the CTF to a number of issue-based campaigns that I will be leading when I return to university in September. Campuses in Canada are dominated by radical groups disconnected from reality. They routinely call for more government intrusion into our lives and more government confiscation from our wallets. Armed with what I have learned from working with the CTF, I will be leading the charge

against these groups on campus."

Lisa's experience

"As I complete my Master's Degree and consider future career opportunities, interning at the CTF gave me excellent practical experience as well as networking opportunities. Researching was a major component of my work at the CTF, which has provided me with extensive knowledge regarding specific and current government issues such as the debate

surrounding Employment Insurance reform.

Further to this, I had the opportunity to explore issues that are not at the forefront of public and media attention, such as analysing the growing divide between private and public sector pension plans. These issues are significant to all Canadian taxpayers and I was pleased to help the CTF in its efforts.

The work experience and knowledge that I have gained from interning with the CTF has been invaluable in my professional and political life. Every day we see examples of government waste and misspending. Digging deeper into current issues and exploring the extent of government spending has motivated me to want to continue working on behalf of Canadian taxpayers in some form in the future."

Applications

The CTF is accepting applications from students for internship positions that can be filled in Edmonton, Winnipeg, Ottawa and Halifax.■



Students Lisa Anthony (L) of Ryerson University and Amber Ruddy (R) of University of Western Ontario spent their summer as interns in the CTF's Ottawa office.



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