

**Student: Stephanie Minnock**  
**Placement: TimeWarner Cable**  
**Program: DC Scholars in the Private Sector**

*Background:*

This summer I had the great pleasure of working at Time Warner Cable's Government Relations office under the tutelage of Rachel Welch. The Government Relations office consisted of an Executive Vice President and Senior Vice President, a two-man department focusing on special interest groups, a federal regulatory specialist focusing on media, a federal regulatory specialist focusing on wire line and wireless services, a state and local government coordinator, and a four-person government relations group, which I primarily worked with. However, throughout the summer, I worked on projects for both federal regulatory specialists and spent time attending events with the special interest group team.

*What the job entailed:*

Throughout the summer, I attended numerous events, with over 56% of my days being spent at least partially out of the office. Within a week of starting, I attended the Cable Show for three days, volunteering with the NCTA's staff to ensure Congressmen and Congressional staff were properly checked in and escorted to their destinations. I attended numerous seminars at the Cable Show, and, of course, got to check out all of the booths and wares that different companies were displaying.

I attended at least a half dozen different social events that TWC was invited to or involved with. I attended or watched online at least a half dozen different committee hearings on telecommunication issues. I was invited to numerous meetings on the hill and off, including a breakfast with a Congresswoman, a Congressional staff briefing, and a policy seminar regarding the state of competition in Internet Service Providers.

When not gallivanting around Washington, I spent time participating in conference calls, conducting research on retransmission consent fees, the state of competition in the market (through analysis of SEC 10-k and 10-Q filings), determining station owners in all 210 Designated Market Areas, writing summaries on hearings, summarizing a 5GHz wireless study, analyzing the increasing role of the Online Video Providers, and summarizing studies on the retransmission consent fee regime.

From all of these events and projects, I learned a great deal about the telecommunications industry. I learned about the various issues facing the cable industry: the increasing price of video content, the impact that cyber security legislation may have on ISPs, the impact of regulation on the cable industry, and the importance of public perception and consumer satisfaction. I also learned a great deal about the government relations industry and the political process. As I spent a significant amount of time researching and summarizing studies regarding retransmission consent fees, I learned the most about this issue and had the opportunity to present what I thought to be the best arguments against retransmission consent fees to the government relations team.

*Why being a part of the program was valuable:*

Before coming to DC, I thought that I would dread working all day and then having to attend a seminar each Monday. However, that was far from the case. The

speakers were engaging, the questions asked by my peers were thoughtful, and the setting was more than comfortable. I thoroughly enjoyed learning about different aspects of the Telecommunications field from the variety of experts that were brought in. Furthermore, the topics discussed complemented what I was learning at TWC, allowing me to solidify my newly accumulated knowledge and feel connected to each speaker's topic. Meeting CU alumni working in the Telecommunications field provided a similar experience—I had some basis from which to speak with them about all manners of telecommunications issues.

The social aspect of the program was also invaluable. I spent time socially with many of my peers and truly enjoyed getting to know them. It was fun getting to spend every Monday night with a group of people whose opinions I respected and seeing how they reacted to each new speaker and topic. Furthermore, many of my peers were at hearings that I attended, and being able to say hello and make small talk with a familiar face is always comforting. Beyond developing lasting relationships with my peers, I also developed new relationships with alumni by going to lunch or happy hour with them. As I am spending the fall in DC as well, it was important for me to develop this network both professionally and personally.

#### *Highlights:*

The weekly seminars, as I've intimated, were definitely highlights. So too were the multiple hearings, the Cable Show events and seminars, and the social events after work. Both my mentor, Cinnamon Rogers, and my supervisor, Rachel Welch, were fantastic at introducing me to a variety of people, which made these events all the more interesting: I always had someone new to speak with.

TWC interns and the Hispanic Caucus's interns sponsored by TWC took a trip to New York City during the summer, visiting the headquarters, a local TWC store, and TWC's Spanish speaking news station, Noticias. This was another highlight of the summer. Traveling around New York City, being exposed to the many other branches of TWC's business, and touring a working news station were eye-opening experiences. Before then, I had not realized how many different opportunities were offered within one company: not only are they providing cable and high speed data, but they employ retailers, operate news stations, actively create advertising campaigns, and provide various services to businesses in their footprint.

If I had to choose one event that stood out in my mind, it would have to be the last social event at Bryan Tramont's house. The interns met before other alumni and telecommunications professionals arrived to discuss our various experiences over the summer. Bryan was an impeccable host and facilitated the conversation with the no-nonsense attitude and dry sense of humor one would expect from him, despite being a bit under the weather. The atmosphere was relaxed; at this point the program participants were familiar with and comfortable with one another. When other professionals arrived, it was easy to transition into conversation with them and learn about their various roles within the industry. It was nearly the perfect blend of networking and socializing—the combination of good conversations, delicious food, and potential contacts made this event the ultimate highlight of my summer.