

Student: Stephen P. Walter
Placement: Comcast
Program: DC Scholars in the Private Sector

Once again I've had a wonderful summer with the Preston Padden Scholars program. I spent my summer in the Washington D.C. office of Comcast, working with their policy team on issues from broadband competition, to cybersecurity, and everything in-between. It is a great company to work for, and an extremely talented group of people to work with. I'm so grateful to Silicon Flatirons for organizing this, and grateful to Comcast for allowing me to work with them, and learn from them.

Comcast's policy team is led by Rebecca Arbogast, who could not have been nicer, or more encouraging to me. I worked directly under Rudy Brioché, Elizabeth Chernow, and Madura Wijewardena within the policy team. All three are talented at their jobs, and great people to work with. I learned a lot simply being around them that I hope to apply in future jobs. I also worked with Jim Coltharp, David Don, and Ryan Wallach, three very talented and experienced telecommunications experts.

One of my main responsibilities was to attend telecommunications policy events around the city, and report on them for the policy team. I attended events sponsored by the Free State Foundation, the Congressional Internet Caucus Advisory Committee, the Information Technology & Innovation Foundation, the Brookings Institution, and others. I also attended NCTA's Cable Show, Tom Wheeler's confirmation hearing, and a House hearing on the spectrum incentive auction. I polished my writing skills by condensing the major topics of these events into 2-3 page memos, for which I was grateful to receive some feedback.

On my own I also attended FCBA events, including a very interesting discussion about the implications of *City of Arlington v. FCC*, where solicitor general Don Verrilli, and Tom Goldstein, attorney for the City, discussed the case and its implications with attorneys like Jon Nuechterlein and Chris Wright. I learned a lot at events like these, about a wide range of issues including, cybersecurity, the IP transition, broadband competition, copyright policy, and the upcoming spectrum auction.

I also learned a lot from our weekly meetings, where we heard from two FCC commissioners, an FTC commissioner, and telecommunications thought leaders from across a wide range of perspectives and backgrounds. I particularly enjoyed Blair Levine and Phil Verveer, the other speakers were very good, but I spent a lot of time on broadband competition and the NSA this summer and Levine and Verveer spoke, respectively, about those topics. I feel like how much you get out of the weekly speakers depends on how much you put into it. If you come prepared, having read what the speakers work on and what others have said about the topic, then the speakers are even more rewarding.

I also had the opportunity to research a number of topics, pertaining to Comcast's policies, ranging from broadband testing, to adoption. I learned a lot about how ISPs work as a business model and also the challenges and opportunities they face in Washington. This summer I got a better sense of how the different players in the telecommunications space interact with each other; whether they are trade groups, government relations offices, the FCC, Capitol Hill, or public interest groups.

Finally the opportunity to work for Comcast this summer, through the Preston Padden Scholars program and the Silicon Flatirons, has expanded my professional network and helped me make connections with potential employers. I anticipate relying heavily on the contacts and friendships I made this summer in my search for post-graduation employment.

Thank you so much for this experience, I believe I've made the most of it, and I hope to be able to repay your kindness in the future.