

Student: Tim Wilkins

Placement: National Cable & Telecommunications Association

Program: DC Scholars in the Private Sector

I worked at the National Cable & Telecommunications Association (NCTA) as an intern for the Legal Department. NCTA is the principal trade association for the U.S. cable industry. Its members include the nation's primary cable service providers and many of the nation's leading cable programmers.

While at NCTA, most of my work revolved around NCTA's involvement in FCC rulemaking proceedings. NCTA and the FCC are in constant conversation about a host of issues that affect the cable industry. I focused mainly on issues related to accessibility for disabled cable subscribers. I was often tasked with researching legal issues and helping to draft comments to be submitted to the FCC as guidance in its rulemaking. I also worked with NCTA's Legal Staff to anticipate issues on the horizon, such as patent reform and the privacy concerns related an "Internet of things".

My experience working at NCTA was enriched through a number of opportunities only available in Washington, DC. For example, I was fortunate to arrive at NCTA in time for its annual Cable Show, a trade show that showcases some of the cable industry's biggest names and cutting-edge technology. NCTA was also kind enough to invite me to the Federal Communications Bar Association's Annual Meeting and Luncheon. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor attended and gave a speech to an audience of the nation's foremost communications lawyers. I sat in on fascinating meetings and conference calls, and I even made a brief appearance in the office ping-pong tournament.

Throughout my summer in DC, I also attended the weekly Summer Scholars seminars, which were consistently fun and enlightening. I was truly impressed by the entire Summer Scholars program. It is especially impressive to consider that the program is still in its infancy. Students will undoubtedly continue to benefit from this program for years to come.