



2012 Alumni Report



2012 Saskatchewan Legislative Interns (left to right): Elliott Bourgeault, Cody Gieni, Reagan Reese Seidler, and Jason Kiefer

Saskatchewan Legislative Internship Program

The Year of Men

Jason Kiefer

2012 Saskatchewan Legislative Intern

This was the eleventh year of the Saskatchewan Legislative Internship Program (SLIP) and after all those years, we had many firsts.

To begin with, this year was the first time the Program was an all-boys club with four males. This made Monique Lovatt's job more challenging as she tried to keep us in line and out of trouble. While this allowed us to share a hostel room during our out-of-province trips, helping to keep the costs lean, there was a noticeable downfall of four guys sharing small sleeping quarters for a week straight (#openthewindow).

Another new development is that SLIP is now on twitter. You can follow current interns at

@SLIPinterns. This proved to be a great way to let people know where we were and what we were up to. Spearheaded by Reagan Reese Seidler, there was a great mix of informative and fun tweets as we gained followers and recognition in the twitterverse and the public in general.

We quickly learned that nothing compares to observing Question Period live in the Speaker's Gallery, while following the live tweets of @MMandryk and @SLangeneggerCBC sitting across the way in the press gallery. We may have joined the conversation once or twice; the only way to find out is to follow.

Speaking of following, we hope future interns will be able to follow our lead as we made a trip into the northern area of Saskatchewan this year. Specifically, we went up to La Ronge and not just

to go fishing, although fishing was a delicious bonus.

We owe a special thanks to Doyle Vermette, MLA for Cumberland and Al Rivard his constituency assistant for showing us around and setting up some excellent meetings. We met with the mayors of Air Ronge and La Ronge and with Métis local president Laura Burnouf and Métis Nation Saskatchewan Region 1 Area Director Al Rivard. These meetings provided us with information about features and issues unique to northern Saskatchewan. Earl Cook, the Culture and Language Coordinator at Nortep-Norpac, was also kind enough to give us a brief presentation about the uniqueness of Northern Saskatchewan's geography.

MLA Vermette also took us up to Grandmother's Bay for some fishing and a shore dinner with friends. We had a lot of short, impromptu meetings with various community leaders which really exemplified the best features of the North, the friendly nature of its people, and the strong sense of community.

For the first time, Saskatchewan Legislative Interns attended the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Conference, which was held in Saskatoon this year. As with previous years' interns, we also had been to the annual conferences of the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association (SUMA) and the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM). We also had private meetings with several municipal mayors.

Because it attracted municipal leaders from across Canada, the FCM event furthered our knowledge of the municipal sector. The size and importance of this sector was reflected by the attendance at the conference and the issues discussed. In addition to municipal leaders, we had the opportunity to meet several federal politicians who attended the conference, including Bob Rae, Thomas Mulcair, and Olivia Chow. Attending the FCM conference would not have been possible without generous funding from SUMA and we cannot thank this

Association enough for its continued support of SLIP.

Being able to do new things follows, and is made possible by, the activities and actions of Saskatchewan Legislative Interns who preceded us. Ideas for meetings are drawn from previous interns' experiences and recommendations. Some of our favourite meetings were identical to those experienced by former interns and had been setup because of the positive recommendations given. Getting to meet alumni and hearing stories, while seeking their advice, enhanced our experience.

An example of advice from previous interns which we pursued this year was to meet with deputy ministers. During our internship, we nearly met every single one. Planning these meetings was challenging when ministries were restructured this spring and several deputy ministers were reassigned to new duties.

The interns' annual steak night is an established event for the Program. Very early in the internship, we had people asking about it. I hope it is continued by future interns, as the support from politicians, their support staff, legislative and university officials, and members of the general public is phenomenal. It also allowed us to meet or re-meet alumni.

The alumni community of former Saskatchewan Legislative Interns is growing (nearing 50). The support from many former interns is heartfelt and thanked. I hope to continue meeting alumni in the future and am thankful for the new community I am now part of.

Message from the Speaker

Hon. Dan D’Autremont
Speaker, Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan



As a newly elected speaker, it is a pleasure and privilege to be the patron of the Saskatchewan Legislative Internship Program (SLIP). I continue to support and encourage both university students and graduates, along with MLAs, to participate in the SLIP program.

The SLIP program provides an opportunity for interns to gain an intimate knowledge and understanding of the operation of the legislature and the political operations of caucus, on both sides of the House. Trust and confidentiality continue to be the cornerstones of this Program and are critical to all participants.

Interns gain an in-depth understanding of our legislation process and the institutions of our democracy. MLAs benefit from interns who provide research skills and assist members with special projects and a fresh perspective to share and discuss ideas. The more closely the interns can work with their assigned MLAs, the more valuable the experience for both participants will be.

As an MLA, I have enjoyed every occasion that I’ve had to be able to work with an intern. I look forward to working with SLIP to make our internship program a more valuable experience for all participants.

I would like to thank Mr. Ken Pontikes for the leadership and oversight he provides to the interns and for his role in maintaining the success of the overall Program. I would also like to extend my thanks to Ms. Monique Lovatt for administering the Program here at the Legislative Assembly and for the guidance she provides to the interns on a daily basis.

Message from the Director

Ken Pontikes
Director, Saskatchewan Legislative Internship Program



Each year, I encourage our interns to make the most of the opportunity provided to them as Saskatchewan Legislative Interns. I point out that the Program can open doors for them to meet with interesting people and to attend significant events. The Program provides opportunities to travel within Saskatchewan to learn more about the challenges and successes of our province. They can also travel beyond our borders to learn how our parliamentary system of governance compares – in structure, process, and practice – with what exists in other jurisdictions.

We start planning each internship during an organizational meeting, involving the incoming interns and the Program’s administrators, in the late fall prior the formal start of the Saskatchewan Legislative Internship Program in January. The Program has certain elements which are at its core – primarily, the mentorship with Members on both sides of the Legislative Assembly, the academic research components, the Ottawa comparative-study tour, and our orientation period where the interns meet with the key individuals who support and interact with the day-to-day operations of our Legislative Assembly.

As for the other components of the Program – including in-province meetings and briefings, international travel, the community-service activities, and administrative duties – each year’s interns have the flexibility to pursue these components in a way that best responds to their common interests and to the issues and concerns that have or are gaining public attention. The Saskatchewan Legislative Internship Program has been well received over the years as our interns have sought meetings with people who have special insights into these issues and concerns. Our interns

have also been welcomed as observers to numerous events in Saskatchewan and during their out-of-province travels.

The non-core elements of the Program enhance the internship experience. These elements exist because of the financial support of several funders and sponsors – many of whom have been supporting the Program almost from its inception, eleven years ago. But, they also exist because of the enthusiasm and resourcefulness of our interns to re-engage with organizations and individuals year after year, as well as pursue opportunities to further enhance our Program and to open new relationships with people and organizations.

This year, through contacts with delegates they met at the annual convention of the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association, the Saskatchewan Legislative Interns travelled to La Ronge to meet with municipal leaders and others, to learn more about their challenges and perspectives, and to experience the hospitality and beauty of a small part of Saskatchewan's north. This trip is the first step in a long-term vision for the Program to expose our interns to the issues and opportunities faced by people living in northern Saskatchewan.

Our interns were also able to take advantage of the opportunity provided to meet national leaders and municipal politicians by attending the convention of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. Our interns would not normally attend this convention, but because it was taking place in Saskatoon this year, the interns felt that we should find a way to gain them observer status. With the support of the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association (who financed the nearly \$800 combined registration fees), our interns attended the convention. We owe considerable gratitude to SUMA for encouraging our interns to pursue this opportunity and for providing the financial support that made their attendance possible.

In this year's Alumni Report, you will read more about interns' experiences. We thank the people

and organizations who support our Program and its objectives. In particular, we thank the busy people who are willing to give an hour or so of their time to meet with our interns and to share their knowledge and insights with them. This Program is richer because of their willingness to meet with the Saskatchewan Legislative Interns.

2012 Interns' Impressions

Elliott Bourgeault



Over the past seven months the Saskatchewan Legislative Internship Program has provided me with many fantastic and unique experiences.

I have had the opportunity to learn unbelievable amounts about Saskatchewan politics from a vantage point that is only attainable through this internship program, while also developing a set of knowledge and skills that will undoubtedly help me in my future endeavors. My experience has helped me to further narrow the trajectory of my future career, and my time at the Legislative Building will always be remembered as a significant period in my life.

The comparative-study component of the internship program stands out in particular. Our time in Berlin allowed me to marry my dual interest in politics and the German culture and language. I also had the opportunity to gain a vast amount of knowledge and perspective during our time in London, Ottawa, and Toronto. This year was also the first year that the interns made a trip up to northern Saskatchewan, which was an incredible, informative, and encouraging experience.

As a result of the Saskatchewan Legislative Internship Program I feel as though I have a much more thorough understanding of politics and the people involved both at home and abroad. The things I have learned and the people I have met will definitely leave a permanent mark on my life.

Cody Gieni

As with an experience which can be characterized as fun, time moves far too swiftly. The Internship is unfortunately no exception.

How amazing it has been to bounce around inside the marble palace for the past seven months. Meeting new and interesting people, all of whom have a great depth of knowledge regarding the history and function of our government, has provided me with the opportunity to expand my understanding of this wonderful world called politics.

We have had the opportunity to meet many remarkable people, discuss fascinating topics, and learn invaluable lessons. Whenever I spoke to my friends and family about the role and duties of legislative intern, they widen their eyes in amazement. Often I would exclaim “Yes, this is a real job and I am ever grateful to have been selected for it”.

To everyone we met with and everyone who assisted us in their official capacity, and often beyond, I give many thanks. This has been a great experience. I am excited for the doors which it has opened and for the wisdom it has given me. I will consider my time here with pride. Praise be to the Saskatchewan Legislative Internship Program, may it continue to grow!

Jason Kiefer

Of all the wonderful experiences in the internship program, what stood out for me is the people I met. It took no time for my colleagues and me to become in sync and forge friendships which already signalled that this would be a fun experience.

During orientation meetings I was amazed at the people who work in the public sector. Somehow, Saskatchewan seems to have attracted highly

knowledgeable and passionate individuals into the public sector. It was like the province has continually found the perfect person for each position. These individuals view their job as a civic duty and they try to better society with their hard work.

Then, there are the elected officials. I think most people view politics as dirty and that this view spills onto the people in the political system. This view is primarily due to the scandalous stories in the media about politicians in Canada and around the world, paired with attack ads during elections, and the behaviour of officials during Question Period (perhaps the most publicized part of proceedings in the House).

However, after being invited into the political world as an observer and getting to know elected officials personally, one thing becomes eminently clear – those who choose to run in elections do so with good intentions of serving and bettering society. While I did see some of the “dirty” side of politics, I would compare politics to hockey. Just like hockey, sometimes players have to get “dirty” to win, whether this means sticking up for a teammate or playing to set the tone early in the game as they try to strike fear into their opponents and letting them know it will be a tough battle.

Being a gritty player does not make the individual dirty as they want to win the game not just for themselves, but for the fans. Elected officials play politics to “win” or better the society they live in. I, for one, gained new admiration for these individuals.

The internship program also gave me many wonderful experiences. The conventions, conferences and meetings we attended increased my knowledge of the many sectors and organizations in the province. Saskatchewan has a true community mentality and I felt welcomed wherever I went.

I could ramble on and on about the experience afforded to me because of the SLIP, including the

personal experiences with my wonderful MLA mentors, David Forbes and Greg Lawrence. They contributed to my expectations of what I would gain from the Program being surpassed.

I will be forever thankful to the SLIP, to everyone I met during the program and to my colleagues for the once in a lifetime experience.

Reagan Reese Seidler



For seven months, I got to see the life of an MLA from its most public to private moments. Of all that I learned as an intern, no lesson was more important than the revelation *I do not want to be a politician*. There are many ways to improve a community, and I am convinced my role lies elsewhere.

That being said, in my time here, I met some outstanding individuals to whom the people of Saskatchewan are deeply indebted. In particular, my MLA mentors, Danielle Chartier and Corey Tochor, are such shining ambassadors for their communities. Setting partisanship aside, it would be a loss for the entire province should they choose another line of work.

Saskatchewan should be proud of, and thankful for, the work of our elected representatives. As a group, they sometimes cause trouble (as interns know well). As individuals, MLAs sacrifice quite a lot to serve their communities. I have the highest respect for their service, and wish to thank them all.

I am grateful that the universities and the Legislative Assembly continue to work together to make this Program possible. In addition, I extend two special notes of thanks: to our committed Director, Ken Pontikes, and to our Legislative mom, Monique Lovatt. Lastly, to my intern colleagues: thanks for some great moments. Remember all of these things: the burnout, the sheep, and that blood is thicker than ink.

New in 2012: Tweet and I Shall Follow

Reagan Reese Seidler
2012 Saskatchewan
Legislative Intern



In an effort to satisfy a growing fan base, the @SLIPinterns have emerged on Twitter for the first time. The effort has proven to be quite useful.

Twitter has provided a low-effort means of informing our followers about the breadth of the interns' activities, raising our profile among #skpoli junkies, and maintaining our network of contacts. Most interestingly, perhaps, the twitter account is an easily accessible and permanent record of what we do day-to-day, making it a sort of 'legacy project' for interns throughout the years.

We encourage all former interns to follow the account and stay in touch. @SLIPinterns

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2012 MLA Mentors

The Saskatchewan Legislative Internship Program thanks the following Members of the Legislative Assembly who volunteered their time to serve as mentors to the 2012 Interns. Without their participation and leadership, this Program would not be possible.



Top Row (Left to Right): Danielle Chartier, Saskatoon Riversdale; David Forbes, Saskatoon Centre; Greg Lawrence, Moose Jaw Wakamow; Warren McCall, Regina Elphinstone-Centre
Bottom Row (Left to Right): Scott Moe, Rosthern-Shellbrook; Kevin Phillips, Melfort; Cathy Sproule, Saskatoon Nutana; Corey Tochor, Saskatoon Eastview

Saskatchewan Legislative Interns Publish Articles in Municipal Magazine



The Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association invited each of the 2012 Saskatchewan Legislative Interns to write an article, on a topic of their choice, for the Fall 2012 edition of its quarterly publication, *The Urban Voice*. The articles had to discuss municipal issues and provide some insights which the interns had gained during their internship experience.

The four articles prepared by the interns are:

- “Reusing Germany’s Approach to Recycling”, by Elliott Bourgeault

- “Does Co-operation Mean Amalgamation?” by Cody Gieni
- “Changing Low Voter Turnout” by Jason Kiefer
- “Ontario Town Re-imagines Concept of ‘Federal Government’ to Battle Industry Canada” by Reagan Reese Seidler

The articles can be accessed on-line at: <http://www.kelmanonline.com/httpdocs/files/SUMA/urbanvoicefall2012/index.html>.

The Saskatchewan Legislative Internship Program extends its thanks to SUMA for giving the opportunity to the 2012 Interns to share their observations through this publication.

SLIP Milestones

Michel Carpentier (2006) is the director of licensing and charitable gaming within the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority.

Craig Fink (2010) is currently an intergovernmental policy advisor with Alberta Health (Government of Alberta).

Nicole Hamm (2011) upon completion of her classes will be articling with the Regina law firm of Olive Waller Zinkhan & Waller LLP.

Lance Hammell (2011) received the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal.

Justin Leifso (2006) is employed as a Performance Audit Manager with the Provincial Auditor Saskatchewan.

Elise (Lonie) Sammons (2010) is employed with the federal government in the Indian Residential Schools Adjudicate Secretariat.

Shaheen Lotun (2011) has completed a Bachelor of Arts degree in human rights and African studies at Carleton University. This fall, she will begin a Master of Arts degree in women and gender studies at the University of Toronto.

Stewart Low (2006) is located in Saskatoon where he is currently the acting director of the Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program Entrepreneur and Farm Unit of the Saskatchewan Ministry of the Economy.

Wendy Moellenbeck (2002) has completed her Masters of Public Administration from the Johnson Shoyama School of Public Policy. She has returned to the Ministry of Education. On November 10, 2012, Wendy will be marrying Kevin Therens.

Lucilia Periera (2007) is currently a senior intergovernmental advisor within the Government of Alberta.

Justin Redekop (2008) has convocated with a Master of Public Administration degree from the Johnson-Shoyama Graduate School of Public Policy (University of Saskatchewan).

Reagan Reese Seidler (2012) has published an article, “Saskatchewan’s Uranium Royalty and Implications of Change”, in the 2012 edition of the *Saskatchewan Economics Journal* which is published by the University of Saskatchewan. Reagan is now pursuing a Master’s degree in political science at the University of Saskatchewan. He has also been appointed as a youth writer for the *Catholic Register*.

The preceding information on former interns includes only that of which the Program is aware. All SLIP alumni are invited to keep the Program informed of changes in employment, the receipt of awards, and interesting personal events and accomplishments in their lives. We love to hear about the babies being born for former interns!

This information can be sent to Monique Lovatt and/or Ken Pontikes at any time. We will publish the information we receive in future editions of the Alumni Report.

Travels to Northern Saskatchewan

Cody Gieni

2012 Saskatchewan Legislative Intern



This is the first year that the Saskatchewan Legislative Interns were able to make some type of trip into northern Saskatchewan. The majority of what we do is concentrated in southern Saskatchewan and often we forget that the top half of our flag is green.

With the assistance of Al Rivard, constituency assistant to MLA Doyle Vermette, meetings were arranged with the Mayors of Air Ronge and La Ronge, the president of the local Métis Nation, and

the Chief of the La Ronge Indian band, as well as doing some fishing.

On our first day, we spent the morning with the mayors of Air Ronge (Gordon Stomp) and La Ronge (Thomas Sierzycki). It was very clear to us that these two mayors have contrasting opinions on a variety of topics, including their relations with the government, the role of industry in municipal affairs, and of course municipal amalgamation. Other topics we discussed included: the role La Ronge plays in the north, infrastructure and the lack of provincial support for it, the Prince Albert Hub model, the difficulty with supporting minor sports, the future of Northern Saskatchewan, the problem with having a lack of competition in their service sector, the challenges for the Northern Administrative District, dealing with problems outside of their jurisdiction but within their boundaries (mental health, long term home care, homelessness, addictions services), the northern action plan and their relationship with the Lac La Ronge Indian Band.

In the afternoon we drove with Doyle Vermette up to Missinipe and then Grandmother's Bay to spend the afternoon listening to constituent concerns regarding an overstock of walleye.

On Tuesday we met with Métis local president Laura Burnouf and Métis Nation Saskatchewan Region 1 Area Director Al Rivard. We learned about the organization of Saskatchewan's Métis Nation, the history of Métis in Saskatchewan, the provision of education for northern people, the Gabriel Dumont Institute, the Northern Enterprise region and its future (they are very unhappy with the governments sudden and frankly unjustified move to shut them down), Métis rights, the role of duty to consult and its shortcomings when it comes to accommodation, the trap line, and the future of Métis in Saskatchewan. This was an interesting meeting and I highly recommend to future interns to organize a similar meeting.

We also had a brief presentation by Earl Cook, the Culture and Language Coordinator at Nortep-Norpac. His presentation was about the unique characteristics and circumstances of Saskatchewan's North. We were told that there are only two street lights in the entire Northern Administrative District and only two communities where you can do banking, La Ronge and Buffalo Narrows.

Our trip to northern Saskatchewan was a great success and we encourage future interns to arrange a similar trip and meetings early in their internship. Our regrets are that we didn't get out on the trap line and were unable to schedule a meeting with northern news media!

Attending the FCM Conference

Jason Kiefer

2012 Saskatchewan Legislative Intern

Being a 'have' province is a bit like being the friend with money. People want to visit you and they "let" you host gatherings.



This year, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Conference was in Saskatoon and the 2012 interns were there for the unforgettable and extremely informative event. In general, learning about the municipal sector was a highlight of the internship. It increased our knowledge in an area that some of us realized we knew little about. The FCM conference provided information on municipalities, individually, as local governments and as a national entity where, combined, they make up a massive sector, with many needs.

The conference also allowed us to contrast SUMA and FCM. The main difference between the FCM conference and the SUMA conference is that FCM advocates on behalf of municipalities at the federal

level, while SUMA performs these duties at the provincial level.

The main concern expressed by municipalities at the FCM conference was infrastructure funding from the federal government, as the current program is set to expire March 2014. Another major issue was the possible consequences of the federal omnibus budget bill, specifically some of the environment and fishery changes.

The Conference included many keynote speakers and informative workshops. We participated in several tours of Saskatoon that showcased new and innovative ideas and projects within the city. We were also invited to a youth reception where we met several young municipal leaders.

The 2012 Comparative Study Tour

Elliott Bourgeault, Cody Gieni, Jason Kiefer, and Reagan Reese Seidler
2012 Saskatchewan Legislative Interns

The SLIP interns travelled to Toronto and Ottawa from March 4 to 10, 2012, and to Berlin and London from June 23 to July 7, 2012. The following commentary is drawn from a longer report the interns submitted on their observations and experiences.

Toronto



One of the most interesting meetings we had in Ontario was with the Ombudsman, André Marin. After meeting with our own provincial Ombudsman in Saskatchewan, we heard from several sources that the approach favoured by each Ombudsman differed, especially the approach typically taken by the Ontario Ombudsman.

Mr. Marin's strategy is to be proactive. During our meeting, he contrasted his office with his counterparts in other provinces, portraying their work as more reactive in nature.

Mr. Marin was also quite pleased with recent inroads his office has made into the MUSH sector, which includes municipal, university, school boards, hospitals, nursing homes and long-term care facilities, police, and children's aid societies. He also highlighted the relatively new SORT teams (Special Ombudsman Response Teams) which conduct specialized investigations on high-profile issues. The SORT teams have been highly successful and are being emulated in other provincial jurisdictions.

Ottawa



One of the unique aspects about our time in Ottawa was the chance to learn about political institutions that we do not have in Saskatchewan, such as the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO). The PBO was formed by the Harper government as an aspect of their accountability agenda, following election promises in 2006 and 2008.

The PBO is mandated as an independent financial watchdog within parliament. Often, parliamentarians, and particularly the opposition parties, do not have the resources, capacity or information to properly scrutinize government budgets, estimates, costing or financial forecasting. The PBO is meant to address the information imbalance between the government and parliament by double-checking all estimates which the government releases.

However, the office now claims it is having a hard time gaining timely access to the information it needs for proper oversight. Mr. Kevin Page, the current Parliamentary Budget Officer, believes that information he seeks is as essential to a well-functioning democracy. In order for parliamentarians to make the best decisions, they must be properly informed. The PBO is continually seeking to make this a reality.

Berlin



During the course of our week in Berlin, we had the chance to meet with several elected officials, including Martin Delius, the party whip of the newly elected Pirate Party in the Berlin Abgeordnetenhaus.

The state of Berlin has a mixed electoral system where individuals cast ballots for both the local candidate and the party of their choosing. Although the Pirate Party did not win any ridings, they did manage to get 15 seats allocated to them from their party list. This is particularly fitting as the party itself operates on the Internet outside of traditional geographical borders. Martin discussed in detail the role that “liquid democracy” plays – a software tool which gathers online feedback from party members on issues of the day.

He did note, however, that consensus does take time and that the party is often criticized for not having a ready statement on the issue of the day when it is asked by the media. Although the Pirate Party is unlikely to be part of a coalition, and even less unlikely to form government, commentators claim that they still provide value to the political climate.

Their views are often labeled as somewhat radical; however the mere fact that they are able to get some of them debated in the public may be considered a victory. One such view is their interesting policy proposition to include free Internet service as a right for individuals on state welfare. The party believes on-line access to information is necessary for a well-informed electorate.



From a comparative standpoint, one of the more interesting things we learned about was the German upper chamber, the Bundesrat. The Bundesrat essentially operates the same as the Westminster system’s upper

chamber by providing a second look at the legislation which is being passed in the lower chamber. However, it is its unique composition which makes it different from our Senate. Unlike our upper chamber, which is criticized as being undemocratic, the membership of the German Bundesrat changes with every state election.

Every state is given a set number of votes which they can cast within the chamber as a block. The city-state of Berlin for example has four votes.

Every member of the Berlin Abgeordnetenhaus has the right to come to the Bundesrat, but it is ultimately the governing party in the state which decides where they put their votes in the upper chamber. In the case of Berlin, which has a SPD-CDU coalition government, they have to negotiate where they will use their votes.

London



Our first stop in London was Westminster and the Houses of Parliament. While the grounds of the Parliamentary Estate were enthralling, so too were the many things we learned about its inner workings, especially the differences that we discovered from our system back home.

One such example would be the fear select committees are able to strike into the hearts of witnesses in Westminster. In the United Kingdom, there are many more MPs and many of them do not aspire to the future positions within the executive (Cabinet). As such, they take pride in being part of a committee and work very hard to keep the government accountable in whatever scrutiny role they are given.

This is not to say that the party whip system is absent or that



every vote is a free one. Rather, we observed that back benchers are not afraid to speak up when they see the government's action as being lack luster.

Experiences in the Community

Elliott Bourgeault, Cody Gieni, Jason Kiefer, and Reagan Reese Seidler
2012 Saskatchewan Legislative Interns

Each year, the Saskatchewan Legislative Interns are required to visit and then serve as volunteers at a community-based organization. In 2012, the Interns chose to meet with officials of the United Way of Regina and to volunteer at one of its agencies, Souls Harbour Rescue Mission. The following comments are drawn from a larger report prepared by the interns.



This year, the SLIP interns had the chance to meet with Joanne Grant, CEO of the United Way in Regina. Our time with Ms. Grant was very informative and we learned much about the role of the United Way in Regina and what the organization provides.

One of the observations we made was just how much education the United Way provides to local community-based organizations and their workers. One could look at the United Way as a consultant for new organizations by providing expertise on how to setup a successful organization and insight on what services the city needs. The community of groups that is created by the United Way makes the non-profit sector stronger by creating bonds and cooperation, ultimately being better able to serve the individual needs of the people and the larger needs of the community.

We were surprised to learn that there are approximately 4,015 non-profit organizations in Regina alone, which is a testament to the size of the non-profit sector in Saskatchewan as a whole. According to the Imagine Canada website, "the [non-profit] sector represents \$106 billion or 7.1% of the GDP (larger than the automotive or

manufacturing industries)". Upon further research, it was a revelation to read that:

Canada's non-profit and voluntary sector is the 2nd largest in the world; the Netherlands is the largest; the United States is the 5th; there are an estimated 165,000 non-profits and charities in Canada; half of these (54%) are run entirely by volunteers; 2 million people are employed by these organizations representing 11.1% of the economically active population; smaller provinces have a higher number of organizations relative to their populations.

Saskatchewan has long valued its volunteer attitude. Our province is known for pulling together in times of need. After this meeting, the interns realized that we had all underappreciated the role this important sector plays.



We will not take this experience for granted. We wish future interns luck in their pursuit to better understand the vital role the community sector plays in the well-being of Canadians.

2012 SLIP Steak Night and Fundraiser

Jason Kiefer
2012 Saskatchewan Legislative Intern

During orientation we already had people asking us about the SLIP Steak Night at the Bushwakker Brewpub so it would seem as though it has become an annual tradition of the Saskatchewan Legislative Internship Program. We were worried that ticket sales were initially slow, but as people's tummies started to rumble, our sales increased to near sell-out numbers (only a few shy).

While sales were good, it was the people who attended that made it great night. Many MLAs were in attendance. Along with legislative staff, former interns, family and friends, this year's steak night was a wonderful evening of socializing.

Accompanying our steak night this year was a raffle made possible by donations from the Legislative Building Manager, Steve Bata. The raffle created a lot of buzz. One of the prizes included a framed photo of Regina 100 years ago and at present, from the vantage point of the Legislative Building's

dome. Another prize was a rare behind-the-scenes tour of the Legislative Building.

In total, the steak night and raffle raised \$1675.68. This money was used to offset some of the interns' travel costs during their comparative study-tour. The 2012 interns would like to thank everyone who supported them in this year's fundraiser. A special thanks goes to Steve Bata for donating the prizes that made the raffle possible.

2013 Saskatchewan Legislative Interns Selected

The Saskatchewan Legislative Interns for 2013 have been selected. The four interns are:

Simon Hutton (from Yorkton) is currently enrolled in the College of Arts and Science at the University of Saskatchewan. He is in his fourth year of an honours degree in political studies, with minors in economics and history.

Michelle Neufeld (from Saskatoon) is completing an honours Bachelor of Arts degree in sociology at the University of Saskatchewan. She has a youth care worker certificate from SIAST.

Jenna Orban (from Regina) is working towards a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science and a certificate in international affairs and diplomacy at the University of Regina.

Paula Steckler (from Saskatoon) is in the fourth year of the Bachelor of Arts degree program (honours in political studies) at the University of Saskatchewan.

The 2013 interns were selected by a committee consisting of representatives from the University of Regina, the University of Saskatchewan, and the Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan. The director of the Saskatchewan Legislative internship Program and one of the 2012 Saskatchewan Legislative Interns also served on this committee.

The 2013 Saskatchewan Legislative Interns will begin their seven-month internship in January 2013.



2012 Partners, Sponsors and Donors

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Nicole Hamm, 2011 Saskatchewan Legislative Intern
Dawn Gibbons, 2009 Saskatchewan Legislative Intern
Kyle Toffan, 2005 Saskatchewan Legislative Intern

Brief Description of SLIP

The Saskatchewan Legislative Internship Program (SLIP) provides four university students with a unique educational experience each year.

The seven-month program will give participants the opportunity to use their theoretical knowledge of government and parliament in a practical setting. They will get first-hand experience with the day-to-day work of elected representatives from both the government and opposition sides of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan.

The Internship focuses on the role of the private member. It provides interns with a perspective of our legislators as representatives of their constituents and as law-makers within our parliamentary system of government. It also creates a new and desirable service for legislators by providing them with highly qualified and enthusiastic assistants.

Furthermore, as citizens who better understand the principles of our parliamentary system, participants in the program will provide a long-term benefit to the province and country.

Visit our Website at <http://www.legassembly.sk.ca/internship/>