

## Summer of Service: Senator Johnny Isakson (R-GA)

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The majority of students at Harvard know exactly what they want to do with their lives upon graduation. I, on the other hand have thirty plus ideas floating around in my head and one of those graphic organizers—you know with the shapes and lines all connected—lying next to me at my desk scribbled on with my many aspirations.

Concentrating in economics, I have contemplated Wall Street, I have contemplated consulting; I've thought long and hard about a variety of start-ups; and I have even considered opening my own event planning business. The possibilities are endless and assorted in my head, but you know what they say? A thousand different doors are opened for you once you open the door to Harvard—actually I think I made that up—regardless, I might as well test them all.

I applied to intern with Senator Isakson (R-GA) in Washington D.C. to ultimately decide if the whole government-political-D.C. scene was my thing, and so far I am in love. I work under Senator Isakson's Legislative Director (LD) who deals with a number of issues, the most prominent being health care. There are the normal everyday duties I must fulfill such as responding to mail from Georgia's constituents, attending and summarizing various briefings which my LD simply cannot make, or sitting in on small meetings with various government agencies and advocacy groups discussing issues facing America today.

With that said, every day is different; every day is challenging; every day is unpredictable; and every day is fun. Fun in the sense you are not sure what you will be doing in the next three minutes. Sometimes I have front office duty and find myself on the phone discussing immigration with a constituent from home; other times those constituents are visiting D.C. and I turn into Capitol Tour Guide Taylor.

And then sometimes I have the privilege to do whatever interests me, and I find myself at an NCAA hearing on Collegiate Unionizing, or in the front row of a USAID lecture given by their administrator Dr. Shah, and then there was that one time I took a picture with Jase Robertson from Duck Dynasty standing on the House Triangle. Every day is fun! Not to mention when I walk anywhere, I am typically surrounded by one U.S. Senator or another—talk about exposure.

The possibilities are endless for me interning with Senator Isakson. My eyes have been widened and my ears have been perked. Every second of each day, something is happening. What this experience has taught me however—and it is something that is also very valuable being a student at Harvard—is to also close my mouth.

Working in the Senate has taught me just how much I still have to learn. I think everyone needs a reminder sometimes to sit back and let others do the conversing, because when we allow others to do the talking, we create a lull that may be filled with new knowledge rather than a moment for us to sermonize our own. As a wise man said—and I did not make this one up—God gave us one mouth and two ears for a reason!

The Senate is a place where new laws and legislation are discussed, reworked, and passed, in hopes of making the United States a better nation. As an intern, I have had the pleasure to watch bills be researched, bills be passed, and sometimes bills be shut down. It has been a wonderful experience to be a liaison for the constituents of Georgia and to be able to be a small part of the governmental process. This internship has taught me that regardless of your political affiliation, it is an honor to witness the ins and outs of the place where it all happens.

Since opening the door to Washington D.C., I have absolutely opened one thousand more. The number of influential and brilliant people I have had the pleasure to meet is unparalleled to anywhere else in the world (besides campus of course). I will forever be grateful for this experience, as well as very sad when it is all said and done. But who knows where I will end up over the course of one more short year at Harvard—like I said, the possibilities are endless.

Website: <http://www.iop.harvard.edu/blog/summer-service-senator-johnny-Isakson-r-ga#sthash.j6py72uH.dpuf>