

# INTERNSHIPS: HELPING GROW LIBERTY

**SO WHERE DOES** the future of the liberty movement come from? You help us grow it through internships.

The Illinois Policy Institute provides internship opportunities for highly qualified university students who display a dedication to free-market principles and who wish to acquire hands-on experience in crafting and promoting pro-liberty approaches to policy problems. Internship experience is designed to provide participants with a solid introduction to free-market philosophy and policy, plus give them work experience.

Interns assist the institute with research tasks and contribute to the completion of special projects, such as our initial work showing red-light cameras had taken \$1 billion from Illinois drivers in a decade. In many cases, interns make significant contributions to our efforts and earn author credits on publications. Our interns have come from such schools as the University of Chicago, University of Illinois, University of Notre Dame, Hillsdale College, University of Michigan, College of the Holy Cross, Georgetown University, Indiana University, Baylor University and Harvard Law School.

Interns gain experience, and sometimes the institute gains valued employees. Seven full-time staffers were formerly interns.

Below are the comments from some interns turned employees, as well as those who are elsewhere leading or preparing to lead the liberty movement.



## AIMEE MORRISSEY

“At such an early stage in my career, I wouldn’t have expected to gain the level of substantive experience that I did at the Illinois Policy Institute. The practical expertise and analytical rigor I gained at the institute were critical steppingstones that led me to my internship in government affairs at Boeing and my current role at the Penta Group in Washington, D.C., where I continue to rely on the careful research and writing skills I developed at the institute. The institute staff’s focus on purpose, humility and genuine impact stood out to me as an intern, and the people I worked with certainly embody the values of the organization in their daily interactions. I remain grateful not only for the substantive skills I learned and the professional relationships I built, but also for how this experience fundamentally shaped my policy perspectives and values, which continue to guide my work today.”

Aimee Morrissey served as a policy intern at the Illinois Policy Institute as an undergraduate student at the University of Notre Dame, majoring in political science and minoring in constitutional studies and business economics. She is interested in the topics of education and school choice in Illinois. She is currently a strategy associate at the Penta Group.



## JOE BARNAS

“My time as a marketing intern at the Illinois Policy Institute prepared me for everything I do today as market-

ing director at a nonprofit, public-interest legal organization. Whether it was contributing to the effort to defeat the progressive income tax ballot amendment, learning the ropes of AP style, analyzing municipal comprehensive annual financial reports to uncover taxpayer-subsidized boondoggles, filing FOIAs to build a database of red-light camera revenues or amplifying the voices of everyday Illinoisans through Illinois Policy’s ‘Your Story’ project, my internship not only helped me develop tangible skills at the intersection of policy advocacy and marketing, but also gave me the opportunity to contribute to the fight to restore prosperity in the state I’ve always called home. The mentorship I received during this experience challenged me, pushed me to develop my abilities and fostered intellectual growth in a way that set me on the path I am on today.”

Joe Barnas was a storytelling intern for the institute’s marketing team, where his photojournalism work on the state’s red tape and tax burden was viewed millions of times. He earned a B.A. in public policy and economics at the University of Illinois-Chicago and an M.A. in medieval and renaissance studies at the University College, London. He is currently director of marketing for the Thomas More Society.

work of the organization before joining the staff full time. I think more organizations should give people opportunities to see if the work they do is something that drives them; it’s the best way to set them up for success. Writing articles, keeping tabs on state and local sources is not meant for everyone, but I knew it was for me from my first days here. I knew it because I would think about work-related topics organically outside of the workday. It’s something I get to do, not something I have to do. Once I had an opportunity to contribute to the mission of the Illinois Policy Institute in any capacity, I was determined to make it my full-time job. I knew if I made myself valuable enough and contributed enough to the organization, then it would only make sense to bring me on staff.”

Dylan Sharkey is the institute’s assistant editor, focusing on the effects of policy decisions in everyday life. He graduated from the University of Iowa with a bachelor’s degree in political science and from Northwestern University with a master’s in public policy and administration.



## LARRY HAN

“During my time at the institute, I was able to work with an excellent group of people on research that contributed to meaningful change for a lot of Illinois residents. I not only discovered and made inroads for important policy reforms, but also discovered and strengthened my personal values.”

Larry Han was a policy intern at the Illinois Policy Institute, writing and conducting research alongside the policy team. He is currently pursuing a double major in philosophy and political economy at Georgetown University with plans to attend law school after graduation.



## DYLAN SHARKEY

“My early days at the institute gave me a chance to understand and appreciate the



## CHRIS COFFEY

"Interning at the Illinois Policy Institute has accelerated my personal and professional development more than

I ever could have hoped for. I've improved

my data analysis and research skills by performing such tasks as examining crime statistics and studying legislation. The experience has positioned me well for my future endeavors as a law student and beyond."

Chris Coffey was a policy intern at the institute who now works with the policy team. He graduated with his bachelor's degree in history from the University of Michigan with minors in medieval and early modern studies and public policy. He spent a semester studying abroad at Pembroke College, Cambridge, England, and will be attending Harvard Law School.



## MICKY HORSTMAN

"I started working for the Illinois Policy Institute as the media relations intern the summer going into

my junior year in college and remained active for over two years – even during the school year and while enrolled in classes. The institute helped me publish works under my own byline, which allowed me to grow an expansive, professional portfolio. I remained an active intern until graduation, before becoming a full-time employee, and had I not continued on with the institute, I know I would've been a top applicant going into any media, communications or public relations interview. I acquired skills at the institute that are

crucial to being at the forefront of the shifting media landscape. I always felt respected and had my voice heard while strategizing content ideas for publication. Few internships allow young people to have a serious seat at the table and feel valued while doing so."

Micky Horstman serves as the communications associate for the institute after serving as a communications intern. He graduated from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana with a bachelor's degree in political science and four minors: journalism, public relations, media and legal studies. He wrote for the Daily Illini as an opinion columnist, served as president of Kappa Alpha Pi pre-law fraternity and choreographed for Illini Student Musicals.



## KURTIS KARG

"In a state dominated by one political party, the institute manages to make huge splashes on the state and national level, whether it be re-

search, social media, press

releases, etc. Experiencing firsthand how a team shares common goals and a collective drive towards an overall mission and manages to significantly raise awareness was something I definitely learned from. More than anything, I learned that the work of a non-profit that dives deep into issues that often get little attention can uncover huge findings that can benefit people all over the country."

Kurtis Karg was an editorial intern at the institute. He grew up in Glen Ellyn, Illinois, and graduated from Indiana University, where he received a bachelor's degree in journalism, with a specific focus on public policy and politics. He is currently a graduate student in public policy at Northwestern University.



## **PATRICK ANDRIESEN**

“My internship with the Illinois Policy Institute helped me find my passion and jump-

start my professional career through unparalleled exposure to policy makers, thought leaders and cutting-edge policy research. The individualized projects and trainings throughout the program gave me the opportunity to develop and refine the writing, analytical and investigative techniques I leverage in my work today.”

Patrick Andriesen is a writer with the institute. He focuses on investigating the outcomes of public policy on Illinoisans and creating content that considers free-market solutions in the context of city and statewide legislation. He is a graduate of Indiana University’s Kelley School of Business with dual bachelor’s degrees in business analytics and marketing.



## **ELLIOT PARRISH**

“I had some experience writing press releases before joining the institute, and I knew the basics,

but I learned so much more while at the institute. I learned that a good press release has clear takeaways and isn’t bogged down in technical language. Most importantly, they leave journalists curious, wanting to reach out and learn more.

I also learned how crucial the review process is to a good press release. Following the process has taught me many best practices to boost accuracy and chase perfection – all of which I’ll keep in mind during my future work.”

Elliot Parrish is a graduate student of political communications at American University in Washington, D.C. He earned his bachelor’s degree in interdisciplinary studies in communications, legal institutions, economics and government. His previous professional experiences include internships in the Chicago mayor’s office, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, the American Lung Association and the Foundation for Defense of Democracies.