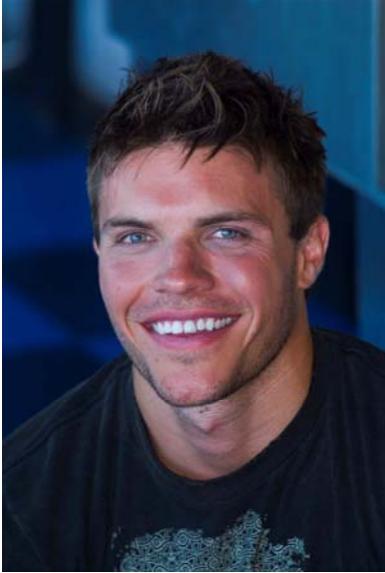


Truman Scholarship Testimonial



The Harry S. Truman Scholarship awards 30,000 dollars to students for graduate school. That's largely what attracts so many students to apply for it, and those 30,000 dollars has made earning a PhD possible for me. Yet, the greatest rewards of the Truman Scholarship consist not of the money. They consist of the countless opportunities that being a member of the Truman community offers.

Among others, the opportunities include massive help in determining one's career/life path, connections to top political, community, and activist leaders and institutions, a substantial advantage in applying to the graduate school and program of your choice, and finally an outstanding network of scholars.

Even before you win the scholarship, during the application process, you are required to discuss those areas about which you are most passionate, what policies you think should be changed, and where you see yourself in 5, 10, 20 years. The revisions and drafts are quite helpful in your own personal exploration and goal-setting. Once you receive the scholarship, you are flown to Missouri (home of Harry Truman) to meet the other 75 or so scholars that year, and introduced to top political leaders, the admissions officers of Harvard, Yale, Stanford law schools, the Kennedy School, Georgetown, and a host of other institutions. You'll find yourself playing volleyball with the dean of admissions of Berkeley Law or Hopkins.

The summer after you graduate from college you get a chance to work in DC for the department/institution of your choosing. The Truman Foundation provides housing and pays you a summer stipend for your work. I worked on Capitol Hill for Senator Dodd and at the World Bank--both of which I secured with the help of the Truman Foundation.

The Truman scholars are also an incredible resource. Not only have they already achieved top positions in government (including current governors), education, law, and policy, they are engaged in work that they share with each other. We constantly receive emails about what one person is doing in Kenya, or receive an email for a job opening to work as the vote recorder on the floor of the Senate or at a global environmental think tank. These scholars are committed to changing the world, and they already are. It's a privilege to be with them, and continually be inspired by them.

Students who have committed themselves to lives of service, who have already done substantial service in their own communities and the world, who work very hard in school and who actively seek to understand new ideas, cultures, and people are particularly well-suited for the scholarship. It's a scholarship dedicated to helping individuals who want to do good in the world. I cannot think of another body of students that would be more interested in that than BYU students.

From my own experiences with the Gates, USA-Today, and Phi Kappa Phi Scholarships, as well as those of my friends with the Rhodes, Marshall, Fulbright and others, I do not believe there is a scholarship available that provides more support, guidance, connections, opportunities, or preparation for a career in public service than the Truman Scholarship.

Ryan S. Keller
2003 Truman Scholar