Since its inception in the late 1980s, the Fraser Institute intern program has hosted a plethora of students who have gone on to do some very impressive things. Our former interns can be found reporting the news, creating public policies, and even leading political parties. Periodically, we like to catch up with our interns and in this interview we talk with Tim Mak, a Politico reporter currently covering the US presidential election.
“Work hard at work worth doing”

**CSR:** As a former intern at the Fraser Institute, can you explain what you did while you were here?

**Tim Mak:** I was formerly a Donner Canadian Award intern at the Fraser Institute’s Vancouver office, helping with the organization’s annual ranking of charities and non-profits.

**CSR:** Where are you currently working?

**TM:** I am currently working in Washington, DC, as a reporter for *Politico*. I work on the breaking news desk, which means that I’m a general assignment reporter who covers the changing news cycles without any particular beat or specialty.

**CSR:** How did your time with the Fraser Institute affect your current work?

**TM:** The Fraser Institute is where I developed a lot of my policy interests, and learned about how to work in an office environment. Institute founder Michael Walker once saw me eating a sandwich in the kitchen and lectured me (in his jocular way) for taking time away from my desk—I haven’t eaten lunch since!
“Sitting down for a cup of coffee with campaign strategists, lobbyists, or politicians can be an invaluable use of your time”

**CSR:** Do you have any tips for students?

**TM:** One quote comes to mind: Teddy Roosevelt said that “The best prize life has to offer is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.” I’d suggest spending as much time as you need trying to find that work for yourself—and then hustling hard at it.

**CSR:** How have you been gearing up for coverage of the US election?

**TM:** Interviews! Reporting involves a lot of socializing and gossip-swapping, even though this may sometimes be uncomfortable. Sitting down for a cup of coffee with campaign strategists, lobbyists, or politicians can be an invaluable use of your time.

**CSR:** Have you had any particularly memorable interviews?
**TM:** In 2009, I had an interview with a no-name state senator from Massachusetts who did an interview while simultaneously nailing lawn signs and walking his dog. He was assiduous, to be sure, but he was campaigning for United States Senate, which was basically impossible for a Republican in Massachusetts to win. But with a few lucky bounces, and despite most predictions, he got elected soon thereafter and became Senator Scott Brown, now one of the best known senators around.

To read some of Tim Mak’s Politico work, visit [politico.com](http://politico.com). You can also read some of the articles he wrote for the Fraser Institute by visiting [fraserinstitute.org](http://fraserinstitute.org).