



**HM GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR
PRESS OFFICE
No.6 Convent Place
Gibraltar
Tel:20070071; Fax: 20043057**

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Washington Internships a Success!

During the Chief Minister's recent visit to Washington DC, he was the guest of honour at the Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars' (TWC) headquarters where he met the first group of 11 students to be participating in the Gibraltar Innovation and Entrepreneurship International Training Program. Over lunch with the interns, the Chief Minister said: "You are the pioneers, and I hope you can look back and see that you broke ground on something really special."

Mr Picardo also encouraged students to take the time to reflect on the opportunities provided to them during their internships: "I hope this experience is not just something you enjoy but something that helps you all immensely in the future. Understanding how corporations and the legal system in the U.S. work is a huge asset for your future."

The Chief International Officer and Senior Vice President of TWC, Pilar Mendiola-Fernández, told the present group of interns: "You are ambassadors who can help Washington D.C. to learn about the complexities of your location in the world."

Roshni Daswani who graduated from the University of Kent is an intern at the Consumer Goods Forum, a non-profit organization in Washington. 'Since I started working at the Forum, my communication skills have improved and I have gained an understanding of how business is really conducted "where the rubber meets the road." I think that interning with The Washington Center offers a great opportunity for personal and professional growth. An added plus is that Washington, D.C., is one of the most wonderful cities in the world.'

In addition to interning at different private and public sector organisations for 15 weeks, the students have attended classes and lectures on sustainable development, entrepreneurship, innovation, global trade, e-commerce, commercial trade, water management and green technologies. The full scholarship covers tuition, housing, visa fees and health insurance for each student.

A graduate of Glamorgan University, Daniel Strain-Webber is currently an intern with the Citigroup's office of International Government Affairs where he maintains national profiles on over 100 countries. 'I cannot express enough how beneficial I feel this experience will be to me in the long term. If you are considering coming to Washington - my advice would

be: do it! Not only will you get experience in a field you are passionate about, but you will get to live in one of the most influential cities in the world, get to meet and live with people from many different countries and network with some of the top professionals in your chosen field

The Washington Centre's faculty includes adjunct professors from local universities including Georgetown and John Hopkins University. The interns also attend a series of events with experts and leaders from the private, public and non-profit sectors, including Public Policy Dialogues on Capitol Hill and the Roundtable on Philanthropy and Social Responsibility.

Sean Ballester recently graduated from the University of Nottingham with a degree in architecture and he has been able to secure an internship with Ayers Saint Gross Architects. 'With projects spanning all the way from the United States to Saudi Arabia, this experience is proving to be crucial for both my academic and personal development. Living in Washington has been nothing short of an eye-opening experience, full of opportunities, largely thanks to TWC and all of the resources they provide. During my time as an intern, I have met people from all walks of life and made contacts that will prove to be instrumental in the future. I would strongly recommend this opportunity to other graduates who are eager to progress in their field of work - life in Washington DC is transformational!'

Chief Minister Picardo left the Gibraltar students with the following thoughts: "You are the pioneers, and I hope you can look back and see that you broke ground on something really special."