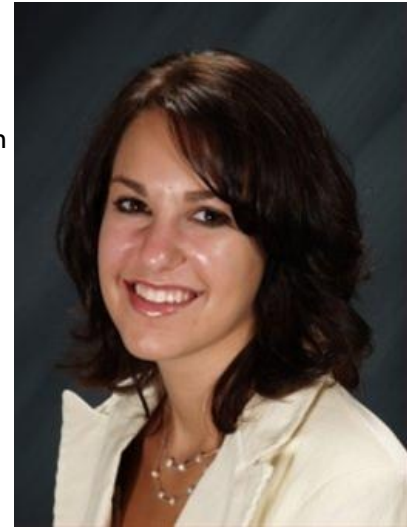


# Intern Spotlight: Jenny Schwope

Compiled by Miranda Lepinski, CSB Career Assistant



**Year at CSB/SJU:** Senior

**Majors:** Political Science and Gender and Women's Studies

**Minor:** Management

**Internships:** **Public Policy and Government Relations Fellow**, AAUW (American Association of University Women), Washington, D.C. ; **Research Assistant Intern**, Minnesota Office on the Economic Status of Women (OESW), St. Paul, MN

## **How did you find out about the internships and what was the application process like?**

AAUW – I extensively researched women's organizations in the Washington, D.C. area through various websites and by looking through the materials collected by previous students who participated in the Washington, D.C. Summer Study Program in conjunction with the McCarthy Center for Public Policy and Civic Engagement.

OESW – This opportunity came to me as a suggestion from an advisor who recommended that I apply. Both internships required an application which consisted of a cover letter, résumé, and letters of reference.

## **What were some of the internship highlights?**

AAUW – I gained practical experience in lobbying, advocacy writing, and had the opportunity to meet highly regarded individuals such as Lilly Ledbetter, Vice President Joe Biden, and Patricia Shiu. The whole summer provided experiences that put my academic skills into practice.

OESW – I have enjoyed having the ability to contribute to the mission of this office as one that conducts research on the economic status of women in Minnesota. I've had the chance to observe the Minnesota legislature in and out of session, and research a large part of Minnesota's history and contribute to women's history in Minnesota by producing a timeline on Women's Legislative History.

## **What was a typical day like? What were some of your major responsibilities?**

AAUW – I worked daily from 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; each day was a little different. I would usually have projects to work on such as writing news summaries for the email news bulletin that was sent to all AAUW members each week, writing blogs, compiling voter guides, lobbying members of Congress, attending staff meetings, and attending Congressional briefings and coalition events.

OESW – There is no "typical day" because I go to the Capitol once a week and then work remotely from campus the rest of the time. My main responsibility is to assist in the research and composition of the Minnesota Women's Legislative History timeline which will be published in the spring. I also update fact sheets and compile information for presentations and briefing reports on behalf of the Office. In St. Paul, I do an extensive amount of collaboration and research in the Legislative Reference Library, attend committee meetings, and go to meetings with our staff on the timeline project. From Saint Ben's, I research remotely and have set up interviews with influential stakeholders for the timeline project.

## **What were some of the challenges of your internship?**

AAUW – The greatest challenge of this internship was the lack of introductory training and supervision. When I arrived in the summer, there was no formal training process or orientation and we were just expected to know how to perform our tasks. Overall, it was a great learning experience in terms of adaptability and flexibility, which will be useful in any future workplace.

OESW – The greatest challenge of this internship is the limited amount of time we have to publish our timeline. There is so much fascinating historical research to delve through and it is so easy to get caught up in it all so managing our time throughout the project has been challenging.

## **What did you learn?**

AAUW – I learned a significant amount about various advocacy approaches and lobbying, and was able to observe several techniques in practice with membership mobilization. I also expanded my knowledge of non-profits. I also had a unique opportunity to observe pieces of legislation and how advocacy groups impact the policy-making process.

OESW – I am learning a lot about the history of Minnesota and the legislation that has affected women over the last 90 years. I also have the opportunity to observe how the Office, as a body which serves the House and Senate, interacts within the legislature.

**What advice would you give other students interested in internships?**

I fully believe that all students should have at least one internship during their undergraduate experience. It is a great opportunity to find out more about yourself, to build up your professional skills, and test out experiences that can have really meaningful rewards. For students pursuing internships, I would also recommend researching the company or organization that you will be working with because knowing as much as possible about that entity will better prepare you and set you apart as an intern, which reflects positively on you.