



**ROSS BUCKLEY** is a legislative advocate for the Personal Insurance Federation of California. He graduated from Cal Poly in 2010 with a degree in political science.

## **ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT**

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Due to his undeniable interest in government and politics, Ross Buckley always knew that he wanted to study political science. Ross says Cal Poly's "Learn by Doing" philosophy has carried its influence to his professional life. During his first days at Cal Poly, Ross enjoyed studying government and law, however, he did not know how he wanted to apply these interests into a career. One class Ross took that he found particularly influential was the United States Congress course with Professor Chris Den Hartog, during which he learned the ins and outs of the U.S. legislature through class simulations. This hands-on approach that embodied "Learn by Doing" assured Ross that he wanted a future career working in the halls of a state or federal legislature.

In 2010, Ross volunteered for Cal Poly alumnus Katcho Achadjian's California State Assembly campaign. The campaign showed Ross how social a person must be when pursuing a career in politics. It highlighted that networking and connecting with all kinds of people is vital to success. The campaign also provided him with the knowledge of California state government that is not necessarily discussed in political science courses that are typically focused on federal and international government issues. Ross vehemently recommends getting involved in a local campaign when the opportunity strikes, especially

because volunteering or interning for a campaign can eventually lead to larger opportunities. After graduating in 2010, Ross was offered a job in Assemblyman Achadjian's office as a legislative aide. This position became a starting point for Ross' time working in the California legislature. He worked for Achadjian for almost seven years in San Luis Obispo and Sacramento, gaining experience in every single one of the office's positions including Legislative Director, Capital Director, and finally Chief of Staff.

Ross currently works as a legislative advocate for the Personal Insurance Foundation of California. Ross represents the interests of eight of California's leading automobile and homeowners' insurers, including State Farm, Nationwide, and Liberty Mutual Insurance companies, in the State Legislature and the California Department of Insurance. Ross says that throughout his professional career, the education he received from Cal Poly built the foundation he needed to succeed and progress further into the political realm. Ross acknowledges that there are similarities between the work he does in his profession and the work students do in college. Ross explains, "The assignments in college that may seem tedious are actually transferable to professional politics not just when it comes to writing and conceptualizing, but also when it comes to establishing a solid work ethic." Ross emphasizes that in order to make the most out of a profession or employment, one must treat every task at hand with the same level of importance.