



ANDREW ROBINSON is the Executive Assistant at Boundary Stone Partners. He graduated from Cal Poly in 2016 with a degree in Political Science.

Alumni Spotlight: Andrew Robinson

By Isaias Diaz

Andrew Robinson graduated from Cal Poly in 2016 with a bachelor's degree in Political Science and Global Politics. Currently he is the executive assistant for Boundary Stone Partners, a small government affairs consulting firm that also does strategic communication. His particular job deals with anything from scheduling to research, partner support, intern management, office management, accounting, billing, and human resources. Basically, Andrew's responsibilities include anything necessary to make a six-member consulting firm work.

As an undergraduate at Cal Poly, Andrew started off as a political science major focusing on global politics. He never really considered switching degrees, but he did consider double majoring in astrophysics. Andrew decided against it since it would've added an extra year to his timeline. He decided that he wanted to create his own academic experience and forge his own path. He was very passionate about outer space and decided to take a crack at viewing public opinion for NASA and aerospace from a political science perspective for his senior project. These experiences are what gave him a familiarity and expertise on the topic, which in turn have made his profile and background a bit more unique.

While at Cal Poly, Andrew credits the most valuable skills he learned as being able to conduct basic research, like knowing where to look for

information, how to look for it, and knowing which sources to trust. These lessons taught him lasting skills that he still uses today. The Cal Poly “Learn by Doing” motto was very helpful for Andrew, since it really helped him think about what he wanted to do and where he wanted to go.

Beyond the basic grocery store and lifeguarding jobs that got him started, Andrew held a few internships in college with the U.S. Department of State. In addition, he held an internship with Congress in Washington D.C. Those internships gave him an idea of what he didn’t want to do, since entry positions in the government sector, to him, felt like a cut-throat and grinding experience. Working for ASI gave Andrew an abundance of leadership skills. He loves working with others and doing outreach and working for ASI made Andrew realize that was the type of work he wanted to do.

Andrew credits becoming ASI chief of staff at Cal Poly as one of his most memorable and rewarding experiences. After losing the election his first time running, when the opportunity arose again, he decided to seize it. The activities that he did outside his curriculum and in conjunction with his academics.

In a sense, Andrew has always been confident about what he wanted to do even though his path evolved over time. He believes that as he takes each step on the path, his destination becomes clearer. Initially, Andrew thought he would go into the state department, but after working there, he decided against it. He started looking for some clean energy environmental consulting firms to work with and stumbled on a company that was 3-D printing rockets and he was sold. Andrew is really excited about being at the forefront of emerging commercial space policy. Andrew’s position involves working with cutting edge companies, new technologies, government affairs, and helping them reach their deadlines.

Andrew has dealt with self-doubt throughout his life. His time at Cal poly helped him to overcome that fear. Andrew realized that being involved with groups and people really helped counteract the feelings of hesitance and self-doubt. His message now is, “Face your obstacles head on, learn from it and conquer it.”

Andrew’s advice to current and graduating political science students:

“To the graduating students specifically, test out internships if it’s financially possible. Talk to professionals in your field; LinkedIn and alumni

groups are great resources. As far as internships go, that's how you figure out what you don't want to do. Learning what you don't want to do can be as valuable as figuring out what you do want to do. This gives you a chance to test out the position without locking yourself in."

Andrew also suggests asking yourself these two questions:

What are you most passionate about?

What are you good at?

Once you answer this, try to figure out how to connect those two things.

For example, Andrew was very good at talking and collaborating with people to solve complex issues, which is what inspired his political aspirations. He also liked space, so he thought, "how can I combine these two?" This merging of passions ended up taking him to where he is today, working on commercial space policy.

"To both graduating and current students: the world around you is not defined by what is but what can be. So, this goes back to thinking about what you're good at and what your passionate about. Find a way to connect those, even if it's something that doesn't exist yet. Think creatively and think outside the box. Take your skills and your passions and find a way to bring them together. Challenge yourself, think about what you can do to improve your community. Think about what you can do to improve yourself. Listen, always be growing and never be complacent."