



News Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS GRADUATE WINS WHITE HOUSE INTERNSHIP**

**HOUSTON (Jan. 31, 2008)** – UST graduate John Joerns spent the fall of 2007 working in the center of the nation’s capital after being selected as a White House intern. Specifically, he worked under a special assistant to the president in the Office of Public Liaison, a department that coordinates the president’s involvement with various causes and organizations.

Joerns’ internship was nothing short of exciting. On his first day, he witnessed the final departure of former Deputy Chief of Staff Karl Rove and the resignation of former Attorney General Alberto Gonzalez. In between the long hours he spent each day doing everything from answering phones, to taking care of schedule and travel arrangements, to helping with events and briefings and acting as a personal assistant to his boss, Joerns encountered many well-known political figures. During the internship, he saw Speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi, got an autograph from Justice Antonin Scalia, met Justice Clarence Thomas, spoke with former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger by phone and, along with a group of about 100 interns, had a private gathering with President George W. Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney.

Joerns also attended a White House press conference and heard lectures by news reporters Dan Rather and Helen Thomas at a National Press Club event. In fact, Joerns said it was not uncommon to see many other public figures walking around Washington, going about their business or getting coffee from a local Starbuck’s.

Joerns said he is grateful he had the opportunity to spend a semester working for the White House. In particular, he was very impressed by the devotion, commitment and vibrant energy of the staff.

“The White House staff members were busy, energetic and even funny,” Joerns said. “They were all very hardworking people that really made you feel like a part of the team.”

Joerns graduated with a B.A. in political science in spring 2007. He plans to attend medical school at Tulane University in fall 2008.