



Name: **Paulina Popovskaia**

Home Campus: **UCLA**

Major: **Global Studies**

Program: **Policy**

UCCS Internship Location:
**Northern California World Trade Center and
California Common Cause**

Personally I never thought I would be studying in Sacramento and am now thankful for my experiences with the program. I am a 3rd year Global Studies major at UCLA and chose to do this program fall quarter 2012 to build my resume, take a break from large lecture halls, and explore career options as well as a thriving city. As a result, I have gained incredible insight to not just how our government works, but also gained a sense of how the world operates. Since I wanted to explore a variety of interests, I split my time between two internships. Two full days a week, I was with the Northern California World Trade Center where I had the opportunity to work on the US Department of State International Visitors Program and attend meetings with high-level foreign leaders and Sacramento government and business leaders. The second internship I had was with a nonprofit policy advocacy group, California Common Cause that works for government reform and works closely with elected officials and the media where I researched important government documents, wrote blog posts for the national website, and contributed to an informative guide for the nonprofit's members.

Among the highlights of my experience are interacting with Assemblymember Fiona Ma and a group of female NGO leaders and lawyers from Afghanistan while discussing women as agents of change. With Common Cause I got to be there every step of the way as it uncovered the largest undisclosed contribution (\$11 million) to California's election in history and held a press conference with major media organizations following the court case that revealed money laundering from an out-of-state nonprofit. While the story was making headlines everywhere, I got to be at the forefront of the action. I also had the chance to attend a reception with newly elected officials where I got to personally meet and ask an inspiring group of leaders, particularly those who are women, for their advice, which is an opportunity I would not have had anywhere else.

From these experiences, I better understand where I want to be moving forward, have an understanding of the unique economic and political challenges facing the state, have developed my network and resume in a meaningful way, and have real-classroom experience complementing what I have studied at UCLA.

I will be using the connections and experiences I have acquired as a launchpad for success in other places such as Washington DC and beyond, which I am planning on doing in my senior year.