



J-1 VISA

EXCHANGE VISITOR PROGRAM

Search J-1 Visa →

- J-1 VISA BASICS
- PROGRAMS
- for
- PARTICIPANTS
- PROGRAM SPONSORS
- HOST FAMILIES/EMPLOYERS

Route J-1



J-1 Intern Sees Democracy in Action from the Inside

Posted on Tuesday, September 13th, 2016 at 8:53 pm.

Written by J-1 Intern Chi Fai (Tony) Chau from Hong Kong



Tony Chau interning at New York State Assemblyman Ron Kim's office.

About Keri Lowry



Deputy Assistant Secretary, Private Sector Exchanges

Keri Lowry is the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Private Sector Exchanges, where she oversees the Exchange Visitor Program, which brings over 300,000 foreign citizens to the United States annually to teach, study, hone their professional skills, strengthen their English language abilities, connect with Americans and learn more about the United States.

[Read More](#)

Categories

- [Employers >](#)
- [Everyday People >](#)
- [J-1 Visa >](#)
- [Participants >](#)
- [Program Spotlight >](#)
- [Videos >](#)
- [Who's the Person Behind >](#)

During my internship with Assemblymember Ron Kim (District 40), I worked as a constituent liaison, helping to address and resolve the everyday issues that many New York residents, including immigrant communities, often face. It was an unforgettable time for me because I have not participated in this sort of experience, even in my hometown.

Through this experience I found myself much more confident than I believed, and I realized I was good at communicating with people, even when they were of different races and backgrounds.

It was a pleasure to have my supervisor's and visa sponsor's trust bestowed in me. Throughout my 10-week internship, I had many opportunities to oversee different kinds of tasks. It gave me a chance to get in touch with people from all walks of life. Putting myself into other's shoes was a good mindset for dealing with diverse constituents' inquiries. It helped me handle many unexpected situations with an ultimate goal of creating a productive platform that brings results and resolutions to every concerned body and individual in the constituency in an amicable, but professional, fashion.



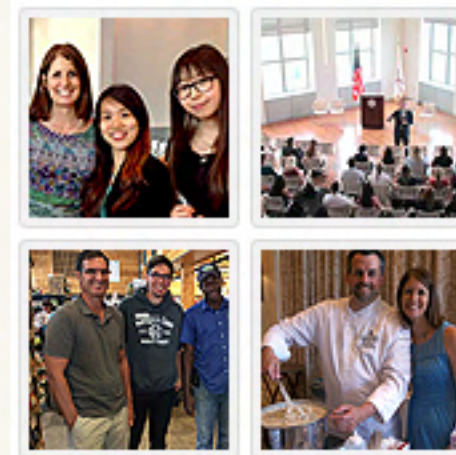
From right to left: Tony Chau and Yang Le Lim, exchange visitors from Hong Kong and Singapore respectively, and their supervisor Tony Cao at New York State Assemblyman Ron Kim's office.

In addition to the internship, I also had the chance to volunteer in some after-hour campaign activities, which mostly involved petitioning district residents. I was very interested when my supervisor asked if I wanted to join, and motivated to get involved. During petitioning, my Cantonese helped a lot in reaching out to Hong Kong immigrants and others of Cantonese descent. Most of the time I received positive and productive responses from the Cantonese speakers, because it is rare for someone who speaks their common language to petition in the United States. Even when they did not understand what I was exactly asking, they were willing to help right away. I think that is why I got the most signatures among other volunteers, and my supervisor praised me, stating, "Your eloquence and professionalism made you a natural petitioner."

I am truly honored and appreciative of these valuable experiences. In particular, for an intern from overseas who had little sense of the practical underpinnings of American democracy, this was a great opportunity. Through my internship, I really learned more about how state representatives' offices work, and even got the chance to volunteer and witness politics at a grassroots level.

Categories: [Participants](#)

Flickr



[View more photos >](#)

Follow Us

[Follow @J1Exchanges](#)

[Follow @ECAatSta](#)