

# BSOS ALUMNI CAREER PROFILE: RESEARCH ASSISTANT

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Research Assistant, Federal Reserve  
**Majors:** Economics and Mathematics

## What do you enjoy most about your current position?

My favorite part about being a Research Assistant at the Board is the exposure to research. Much of the exposure comes from working on a wide variety of research projects and being able to talk to many economists. The job also affords me the opportunity to learn about new fields and tools that I was certainly not aware of during undergrad.

## What is a typical day like in your position?

My days can generally be split into light production work and research.

A typical day of production work involves...

- working with equity markets data to produce figures and charts;
- building new datasets;
- reading relevant literature is the norm when projects are in their infancy; and
- creating new models and specifications.

Also, as my section focuses on equity markets and corporate earnings, I spend some time everyday reading up on the markets.

## Which undergraduate experiences did you find most helpful in preparing you for this position?

Writing an undergraduate thesis was the best preparation to be a Research Assistant. The main thing about writing a thesis for me was gaining an appreciation for what goes into research. I also completed an internship at Power Auctions and I think it was great preparation for working in a collaborative environment, like I do now. Some of the auction theory is also very applicable to a few of the research projects I am working on.

## How has your coursework helped you in your current position?

The econometrics courses I completed were reasonable preparation for some of the modelling that I currently conduct. The exposure to some of the techniques was very helpful. However, I think few things beat doing your own empirical work like in the honors thesis sequence. I took a lot of math courses and found them to be very good preparation for my position because it made picking up some of the newer econometric techniques easier. Additionally, any kind of course involving some statistical packages like SAS, STATA or R would be an excellent choice for undergraduates seeking to get ahead.

## Any job or internship advice?

Find internships in either pure data work or research. Working with data is a large part of my job, so the more familiar someone is with that part already, the better the candidate.

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## Any additional tips?

If you are interested in pursuing graduate school or even just going on the job market, start getting to know your professors. They can serve as mentors or potential references. Also, just read as much as you can!