

Mannkal Speech – Conor Ransome

Good evening, I'm Conor Ransome and I'd like to share with you how I became so passionate in my advocacy for free markets and what this scholarship means to me.

For myself, it all began with *Atlas Shrugged* and what they say is true, it really does change lives. I read it during my first year of university and as far as my lecturers were concerned, it was all downhill from there.

Ayn Rand's writings have greatly influenced my life since then and when I saw this opportunity arise late last year, I knew I had to apply. Fortunately I was successful and this scholarship gave me the opportunity to work and study alongside like-minded individuals at Atlas Network in Washington, D.C. for Mises Canada, a Canadian think tank dedicated to the advancement of Austrian School Economics.

Whilst in D.C. I was fortunate enough to meet the President and Executive Director of the Ayn Rand Institute Dr Yaron Brook at an event entitled *The Value of Inequality*. I thought being a Congressional Staff Briefing perhaps I wouldn't have much time to ask questions, given he would surely be swamped by the interns there. That turned out not to be an issue, apparently Dr Brook was too radical for the Republican interns, he scared all bar one away. That probably was from him calling to end all welfare programs and stating that the ideal tax rate for all taxes was 0%.

This event, the opportunity to meet Dr Brook and get my copy of *Free Market Revolution* signed was without a doubt the highlight of my time in DC. I thoroughly enjoyed my time abroad, met people I won't forget, exposed myself to new thinkers and ideas, and worked on a project that will continue to make a positive impact on Mises Canada's operations going forward.

I'd like to finish by thanking Mannkal, Ron Manners, Paul Mc Carthy, Rebecca Vidler and Genevieve Mitchell for making this opportunity possible. It has not only given me hope for the future of the battle of ideas, but has provided me with a truly unforgettable experience I will take with me throughout my life.