

# From forest science to political analysis . . .

*The gap isn't as wide as you might think.*

**S**amuel Nitz (B.S. 2004) says he wouldn't have his current job without the data analysis and statistical skills he acquired as a Forest Science major. Sam is a researcher/assistant at a Washington, DC consulting firm that creates political surveys and analyzes political survey data. Says Sam, "While the end result of the data analysis for forest applications is different from that done for political applications, the methods are very similar." Sam is also a Political Management graduate student at George Washington University, where his studies focus on campaign management and research/polling.

Sam identifies the capstone course—Forest 590—as an important part of his training at the UW. He suggests students work hard in this class because it provides a final product that they can show future employers regarding their ability to integrate all of the strategies and tactics of forest ecology



*Sam Nitz (front, left) leads a group tour of the U.S. Capitol.*

and management. "Learning how to implement these strategies and tactics (and recognize the differences between the two) will be the most important skill to learn in your program," says Sam.

Sam also suggests students expand their course selection and other university experiences beyond those in Forest Ecology and Management.

"Having a wide range of experiences will help you with social and interpersonal interaction in

your job. Oh, and read a newspaper every day," says Sam "To go far in any job, you need to know how politics are affecting your job, whether local or international."

As Sam has demonstrated, getting a degree in Forest Science doesn't mean you will always have a forestry job. "Just make sure you take the path you want and incorporate lessons from your education into your job."