

making the world a better place

At noon on January 20, 2009, **Tim Kennedy '98** lost his job — a fact college magazines don't often highlight when featuring its graduates. Then again, as Kennedy joined the ranks of the unemployed, so did every other political appointee of the Bush administration when Barack Obama officially became the 44th president of the United States.



Kennedy, formerly the associate director of legislative affairs in the Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, has experienced before the reality that job security is often in the hands of the electorate (he lost his job as special assistant in the Office of Speaker of the House after Republicans lost the House majority in the November 2006 election). Kennedy has worked in government since his graduation from Austin College as a double major in political science and religion.

To him, these jobs have been part of a calling that Austin College helped foster. "I have always wanted to make the world a better place," Kennedy said. "I visited Washington, D.C., during a family vacation in middle school and fell in love with the ideal and opportunities that Washington provides." During his senior year, after a JanTerm experience interning at the Grayson County Attorney's Office, Kennedy realized law was not the avenue through which he would try to better the world.



Kennedy's decision to "do politics" was not much of a reach for a student who was elected to positions at Austin College such as Student Assembly representative, student body vice president, and student body president, and who was a member of three winning Model United Nations teams. "Austin College provided me with countless opportunities to set strategic goals, develop action plans, and execute to

success," Kennedy said. "I especially appreciated the true hunger for knowledge and the constant encouragement to dig deeper. The quality of an Austin College education is second to none."

Not surprisingly, Kennedy didn't stay unemployed for long. Six days after the inauguration, he started a new job as a consultant for a small private contracting firm that supports the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Business Continuity and Emergency Preparedness. Though Kennedy has chosen a career related to government, he, like many Austin College students and alumni, believes the power to "make the world a better place" doesn't rest in the hands of a few political elites. "The true leaders of today," Kennedy said, "are the citizen soldiers advancing freedom in the streets of Iraq and mountains of Afghanistan; the inner city school teacher earning far less than she is worth; the volunteers serving food in soup kitchens across the nation; the healthcare workers serving our increasing numbers of older Americans; the uniformed protectors of our streets, borders, and airports; and the parents or mentors helping a child, supporting a teen, or putting a loved one through school."