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## From Berkley to the halls of White House

BY PATRICIA MONTEMURRI • FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER • FEBRUARY 28, 2009

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The March issue of Vanity Fair magazine features a photo spread of the top players in the new Obama [White House](#), as captured by acclaimed photographer Annie Leibovitz.

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There's Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

And Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner.

And Attorney General Eric Holder.

And on page 260, there's Media Affairs assistant Tim Skoczek, a 2002 graduate of University of Detroit Jesuit High School.

"It's a long way from delivering cakes," said Skoczek, 25, who started out as an unpaid volunteer for the [Obama](#) campaign in Chicago. To support himself, he delivered cakes. "It's been quite a ride."

Skoczek's office is in the Old Executive Office Building next to the White House. He can walk out of his building and into the White House. Two weeks ago, he watched from a West Wing office as the Obamas departed on the Marine One helicopter.

Skoczek's own road to the White House began 18 months ago, when he quit his [job](#) refilling computer ink cartridges at a Detroit-area firm to volunteer for the Obama campaign in September 2007.

That turned into a paid campaign job as a media monitor, which often meant Skoczek got to the Chicago headquarters at 3:30 a.m. weekdays -- and 5 a.m. on weekends -- to read newspaper Web sites and blogs and monitor TV and radio newscasts and talk shows. Skoczek blasted e-mails about pertinent material to top campaign staffers, and some of them reached Obama on his BlackBerry.

"I sent out hundreds and hundreds of e-mails a day," said Skoczek. "It was a blur."

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KEVIN WOLF/Associated Press

Tim Skoczek, 25, coordinates news media coverage of President Barack Obama. The Berkley native landed the job after volunteering.

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