

## The National HEPCAMP Association DC Internship

### Weekly Journal Entry

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Date(s): 7/17/2023 - 7/23/2023

### Monday & Tuesday

#### “Socials!”

Monday and Tuesday at work were filled with many different tasks and opportunities. I got to attend a hearing that was very intense on topics I care deeply about, DACA, and healthcare, and the right of DACA recipients to healthcare, in this case specifically Medicaid. I got to sit in the front row and hear some of my favorite legislatures make good arguments, like Rep. AOC, Casar, Lee, Crockett, and Porter. I even got to take the girl scout volunteering in our office this week to the hearing; before arriving she didn't have much interest in politics but after the hearing she said she actually really liked it. After the hearing we got to take a picture with Representative Summer Lee, and she was so kind.

Most of the time spent at home these two days was prepping our speeches we were going to give at our National HEP/CAMP Association Directors Conference. Antonio was a big help in giving us advice on what to say and directing us on how to tackle our time at the conference (through his internship at OME he was helping plan this conference). Tuesday night though, I got to attend an intern social CHCI held for Latino interns who were interning on the Hill to be able to connect and bond! I met so many incredible people and created some new friendships!



Wednesday

“Patrick Reunion!”

This morning we spent meeting with HEP/CAMP directors and staff from all over the country and as well as getting to share our internship stories and experiences with them all. Most importantly though was reconnecting with Patrick. We were all so excited to see Patrick and hear all the stories and wisdom he has. Patrick has definitely become another mentor to me throughout this internship, and I really appreciate him and all his support. After spending our morning at the conference, Antonio, Patrick, and I went to have lunch at the Library of Congress, the first for us all. I got some yummy pho and brownie for a subsidized price due to working on Capitol Hill, a perk I really enjoy.

After eating lunch, I headed back to work to go attend a lecture series Senator Cory Booker was going to give. Although by the time Nikki (girl scout) and I got to the lecture room, it was at full capacity, the Senator still allowed us to come in and even invited us to sit in the Senate seats, so we didn't have to stand. It was an amazing experience hearing him speak, let alone getting to sit in the Senate seats. Nikki and I were star struck.

Once I got off work, I headed to China town to go get dinner with Patrick, the rest of the HEP/CAMP interns and the HEP/CAMP internship selection committee and the past and current president of the HEP/CAMP Association. We ate some yummy Chinese food and got to meet all of the amazing people who helped us get here by selecting us. The day was a long one, so once I got home, I went straight to bed.



Thursday

“Two years later...”

Thursday was the last day I would get to spend with my good luck charm, aka what I called Nikky (girl scout). She was my good luck charm because every time we did something together, something fun or lucky would happen. For our last adventure together we went to deliver birthday cards, where I had her take a picture with an Elvis cutout we found when delivering cards. It was bittersweet to say bye to her at the end of the day.

After work, I had a few minutes to get ready before I headed out for dinner plans. I grabbed dinner with a mentor I made my senior year of high school through a pilot program that helped me launch a club at my high school. Stephanie Villanueva was my mentor through the program and although we only spoke via online, nonetheless she was very supportive and inspiring. She is from the D.C. area, so when I found out I was coming here for the internship, I reached out, so we could finally meet in person. This was the first time we had ever met and we had known each other for over two years. I was really nervous to meet her, but she was extremely sweet and I got to learn so much from her and her new role working for Diversity and Inclusion in her new job position. We spent over two/three hours talking about everything that came up. I am really looking forward to catching up with her again.



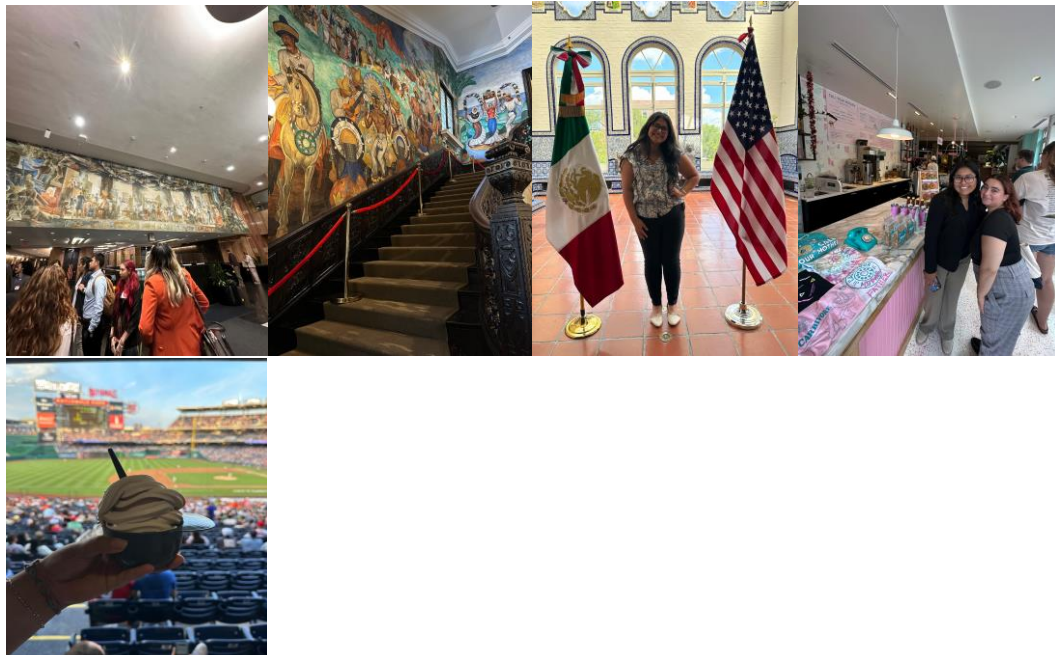
Friday

“Mexican Cultural Institute!”

For Friday’s programming we had a very early start at the United States Department of State. We got to hear about internship opportunities at the Department of State and here from a group of Latino panelists that were a mix of Foreign Officers, Civil Officers, and Contractors. After spending the majority of the morning at the Department of State, we got to eat out for lunch, so my friends and I headed to “Call Your Mother.” “Call Your Mother,” is a very popular bagel place, where President Biden and Vice-President Kamala Harris went to eat after they got inaugurated. Although pricey, the bagels were amazing. Even though the bagel shop was just a few blocks away from our dorms, my friends and I did not want to walk so we attempted to take the bus. Unfortunately, I was trusted with bus directions, which was not good because I ended up getting us on the wrong bus all the way to Georgetown-opposite of where we had to go. Instead of having time remaining to relax at our dorms before heading back to programming, we spent the extra time figuring out how to get back home.

Once we got home, we had 10 minutes before we had to head back out to Columbia Heights to get a tour of the Mexican Cultural Institute, the old Mexican Embassy, and then receive a lecture about the economic relationship between Mexico and the US. The Institute was beautiful and I took way too many pictures.

When our tour was over, we headed back home to get ready for the baseball game, our program got us tickets for. We were going to go watch the Giants vs Nationals, I don’t know much about sports but I did enjoy the concession food we got!





## Weekend

“Back at the D.C. Kitchen!”

To complete the last few hours of our community service requirement, I went back to the D.C. Kitchen to volunteer. I love this place, the environment and staff are so welcoming. For today's volunteering I cut up a lot of watermelons and potatoes. When we finished volunteering, my friend and I had a shopping day in Arlington, where I got to visit my first ever 5 Below. I was obsessed and I did not want to leave. I wish they would add this chain in Idaho, because I found amazing deals!

Sunday morning, I unfortunately fell victim to a sprained ankle/foot. While I was walking down some stairs, I missed the very last step, and landed really bad on my ankle/foot. I definitely felt the pain right away and my foot instantly puffed up. So, after I finally came home, I started every procedure to make the pain go away. I highly appreciate my roommate and friends because they all went parent mode and got me foot wraps, ice to put on my foot, ice cream, and my friend made me nachos. I felt so much love and pain at the same time.

