

The National HEPCAMP Association DC Internship

Weekly Journal Entry

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Monday, July 03

Mariachi at The Capitol

Yes, you read right we had mariachi at The Capitol. Mariachi Aztlan is the group that played and consists of many high school students from Pueblo High School which is in Tucson, AZ. I was really emotional as I saw these young people representing our culture. It was heartwarming to see all the parents who came to see their kids I personally think that these kids did amazing and were able to represent this genre of music perfectly. After the small concert, we took them to lunch which was hosted by the boss, Rep. Grijalva. I got to meet most of his family and I truly felt at home. All the people I met today really gave me a sense of family and union. I got to talk to this lady who told me she was working for Grijalva in the Natural Resources committee and when I asked her why she was on the hill, she said because I like working for Raul. She stated that she enjoyed working for Raul and that if it that it was not the hill she likes working at but with him. I truly felt lucky to have the opportunity to be represented by such an amazing congressman and also to have the opportunity to work within his office. As more time goes by I think that the nerves and anxiety go away.



Tuesday, July 4th

Americas Birthday

My first 4th of July. If I tell you that I had never celebrated the 4th of July before. Most of the time when we would have this holiday I would leave for Mexico. My priority has always been spending time with my family and my family in Mexico. But moving on we started our day by making a carne asada. All the interns got together and we made a potluck. I was in charge of the carne asada itself because I was the one who put up the coal and made sure the meat was getting cooked. That was the first carne asada I had planned and made. I felt like a true Mexican following my parent's roots lol. The food turnout was amazing and many want to do it again sometime before we leave. I really enjoyed getting together with them and sharing in some way our culture.

The rest of the day consisted of us camping at the Capitol. We were told that gates would open at 3 pm so that people could go and get a good spot. We got there around 4 pm and we noticed it was going to be a long way as the concert and fireworks would not start until 8 pm. We did not bring any drinks or anything and some of us had to go back to our dorm to get drinks and food. We waited under the sun for hours until it started. As interns on the hill, we get the perk of sitting down on the steps of the capitol while the rest of the people sit on the lawn. The concert was pretty short and fireworks did last a while. Overall I would rate it a 7/10. I do think it was overrated but I had fun with my friends because, at the end of the day, what's important to me is to spend time with my friends and make those long-lasting memories.

I feel like being in the capital has allowed me to learn more about American culture and what values they hold. I've been able to learn more about what a barbecue looks like or what sort of food is typical. I think I've said it before but I don't really identify myself as an American even though I was born here in the United States. I don't really feel a connection with it but I like learning about it and this summer has been a learning experience when it comes to culture.



Wednesday, July 5th

Lunch with Marco Davis

Today I got the opportunity to work from home. I have come to realize that working from home makes me less productive which was the reason I had been trying to work from the office through these past two weeks. But it did allow me to sleep in more than often.

All interns through this month have had the opportunity to have lunch with Marco Davis who is the President and CEO of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI). It was six of us having lunch with him at the National Democratic Club. The National Democratic Club is just for democratic members and organizations. Marco described to us the fact that this is where important people come to have lunch or even meetings but we sadly did not see anyone as we are in recess. The point of meeting with Marco was for him to get to know us and also to get to know him. We started our lunch by introducing ourselves, naming our school, major, and a fun fact. I have realized that through the five weeks I've been here I've introduced myself more than 100 times, I think I even have my elevator speech perfectionated.



Marco talked to us regarding his experience as an undergrad and how he never in reality felt the imposter syndrome. He told us that maybe it had to do with the way he grew up and who he grew up with. He outlined the fact that he went mostly to white schools throughout his time and therefore never felt imposter syndrome. He outlined the fact that we should not feel imposter syndrome as we are where we are because of our hard work. He motivated us to challenge those thoughts and not let them make us feel not worthy of where we are.

I think that hearing motivating words and advice from someone who is a CEO and has gone through the struggle. I've been able to see that more Latinos are in leadership positions and slowly as time goes by more and more will take those roles.

Friday, July 6th

Friday

This week's GW seminar revolved around self-identity, voting rights, and the recent SCOTUS decision. I was able to learn more about my self-identity and the aspect that makes me. I think that many of us didn't have an opportunity to take a break in life and actually think of what makes us who we are and how. I have learned so much more about myself these past weeks than I have before. We learned more about voting rights and how some people don't have the opportunity to go and vote. We discussed how the most unprivileged communities are minorities. Until now, I've been learning more about my community and how we are able to help them.



After programming we headed home to prepare for the birthday party we were hosting. It was going to be Abby's birthday this weekend so we decided to throw her a small birthday party. We made pizzas, mozzarella sticks, and even bought cake. We had a good time with the rest of the interns. We played "Were Not Really Strangers", which can be a really good bonding game but it can bring trauma for sure. I really enjoy getting to know everyone. I find it amazing that even though we are all from different places we are able to connect and have a good time.

Weekend July 7th - July 8th

Happy times

This weekend we did a lot of bonding. We started on Saturday by going to the pool. We got to play around in the pool, to say we were the life of the party. We had a really fun time at the pool and when we headed back home we ordered Wing Stop and did a movie night. We placed our mattresses on the floor and did a marathon on the Ouija board.

Our Sunday consisted of us having brunch at 4 pm. We've been better at getting together and actually going out. We went to a restaurant ten minutes away called the Founding Farmers. It was an American restaurant and many of us either had a burger or pasta. I would give my food a 6/10. It was okay. But I really enjoyed spending time with them.

