



The National HEPCAMP Association DC Internship

Weekly Journal Entry

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Date(s): 07/10/23 - 07/16/23

Monday, July 10, 2023

A Day in the Life of an Intern

I started work by finishing the co-sponsor report from last week. Each week one of us gets assigned the co-sponsor report. The purpose of this is to keep our congress members up to date on what the office is signing them up for. Once I was done with the co-sponsor report, I started today's news clips. I was amazed to see that today's NY Times headlines revolved around the high heat Arizona is going through including Phoenix. I think that becoming more aware of what goes on in the community has allowed me to think of how I can help my community. The news clips go out to all staff, interns, and Grijalva's wife. Through the news clips, we as interns are able to bring issues occurring to the member's attention which can lead them to want to research more about it.

Lezlie and I got to work on flags. The flags are requested by constituents and they are flown over the US Capitol. Afterwards, we package them and send them to the constituents. So today we got to work on packaging them and later took a trip to the mailing room to drop them off. After that, I attended an informational meeting on the recent SCOTUS decision on loans and affirmative action.

When we got out of work we headed to Chinatown to go to the gym. Even though we do have a busy schedule, we try to go to the gym every day. After the gym, Antonio invited me to play volleyball. I really didn't want to go as I was tired and hungry but he convinced me. We went down to the National Mall where there are volleyball courts and played volleyball. Today has been one of my most productive days so far.

Tuesday, July 11, 2023

United States Department of Agriculture Latino Meet and Greet



The HEP/CAMP Interns got invited to a meet and greet with Latinos who work at the USDA. We were honored to be in the presence of Xochitl Torres Small who is going to become the Deputy Secretary of Agriculture. It was actually her first public meeting with this title. She has been an individual that since the beginning of our journey has motivated us not only with her story but with her encouraging words. I would also like to thank Lisa Ramirez who is the Senior Executive Director, Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement (OPPE) at USDA. She has always been there for us from the beginning. She emphasized during our meeting that we have grown so much from the last time she saw us. She has been such a great role model and resource for us. I have been able to really appreciate all the individuals who have rooted for us from the beginning and have always been there for us as resources. Many might not know us personally but our background is what brings us together to push each other to success.

At our meet and greet, we had the opportunity to discuss our internship and seek advice on how to improve our performance. Additionally, we enjoyed some delicious tacos, chips, and salsa. I really enjoyed getting to know more Latinos who are working in our farming communities and what their passions are. I am currently struggling with finding my passion and figuring out what I really want to do. Being able to hear people who are currently successful talk about their journey to finding their passion makes me a little less worried.

The types of events that we attend make me feel welcomed and give me hope for our country to have more representation in politics, government agencies, and just leadership positions in general.



Wednesday, July 12, 2023

Leadership at its Fullest

My day started bright and early at the White House. Irene Bueno the Co-founder & Partner of NVG scheduled a tour for us at the White House. When we went into the White House we were able to see pictures from past presidents and even celebrities. When we moved to the second floor, we got to see the different rooms of the White House including the red room, blue room, and green room. The house was not as big as I expected it to be but the architecture and art in it were beautiful. The tour lasted around 20 minutes and afterwards we headed to get breakfast at a restaurant.



After breakfast, we headed to the capitol to meet the CHCI Next Gen Leaders. These students are currently high school students who through CHCI are coming to D.C. to learn more about Congress and the government itself. I had four students who were mostly from Arizona but one of them was from Colorado. They seemed so eager to be there and it honestly reminded me of when I came to D.C. when I was in high school. Chris and I tried to give them the best experience possible and answered all their questions going from college to questions on my current internship. We started our day with them by first getting lunch in the Longworth Cafeteria. After lunch, we headed to Rep. Ruben Gallego's office as we were going to meet with one of his staffers. Our next meeting was with Mark Kelly

who is the senator of Arizona. The students really enjoyed getting to hear more about what goes on in the office and what their members are doing for their community. After we had free time and we gave them a tour of the Capitol going from the rotunda to the Supreme Court justice's original court. Lastly, we went to the Congressional Library where they got to tour and see the art.

It was truly heartwarming to see how grateful the students were to us and how they even asked for our contact information to stay in touch. They even asked if they could use us as references. It made



me feel that I was able to motivate other students to keep pushing and not be held back by their background and socioeconomic status.

Thursday, July 16th, 2023

Hearing after Hearing

Today I got to attend a hearing on the Career and Technical programs going around the states and how they are helping students pursue higher education. I was amazed to hear about a program that allows students to earn a certificate while in high school by taking dual credit courses. I think that it's really important to focus on the gaps between high school and college that are not allowing students to pursue higher education. After that hearing was finished I had to run from the Senate Visitor Center to Rayburn and it took me around fifteen minutes through the tunnels.



The second hearing was on the water plants in Nogales and how they need funding. I had never heard about this issue before and to think that it had been affecting so many people. I had to write a memo for this hearing as my congressman is really interested in these issues.

My day at work ended with a capital tour given to us by our supervisor Carlos. I really appreciate that Carlos and Nick always try to give us a good time and take us out of our daily routine.



Friday, July 17th, 2023

La Republica Dominicana



During our programming session, we delved into topics such as reproductive justice, health justice, and LGBTQ+ rights. Admittedly, I wasn't well-versed on these subjects, but the session provided me with valuable insights into diverse viewpoints, current policies, and the significance of these issues to the community.



The Ambassador of the Dominican Republic hosted us today at her home, the embassy. We had the opportunity to meet with the ambassador and she welcomed us with amazing food and a great speech. I learned a lot about the Dominican Republic's economy and why her presence in the United States is important. We hung out at the embassy for quite some time and had the opportunity to talk to her one on one and know more about her past and how she got to where she is now.



Saturday, July 15, 2023

Volunteering

Today we decided to volunteer at the DC Kitchen which is a nonprofit that makes more than 10,000 meals daily for students, shelters, and the homeless. We started at 9 am. We first started putting together meals but soon they moved us to the back. I was helping Ms. Randa, an amazing woman who loves helping her community. She taught me the importance of giving back to her community and how she even started a nonprofit organization. I aided her through the day by cooking meals and packaging. When our shift was over they were so grateful and happy that they wanted us to come back before we left. That made us sign up for it this upcoming weekend. I think that these types of organizations are amazing and truly help our community.

