

The National HEP/CAMP Association DC Internship

Weekly Journal Entry

Name: Abigail Alejandra Sanchez

Date(s): June 12 - 18, 2023

Monday, June 12, 2023

Tribal Fellowship

Today, I had the opportunity to attend the 2023 USDA Terra Preta do Indio Tribal Fellow where I was able to attend 3 different sections. This was the beginning of the nonstop learning experience I was going to receive for the next few weeks. As someone who was raised in agriculture, I personally never had any knowledge of the different agencies that the USDA has. I was able to learn more about the Farm Service Agency (FSA), Research, Education, and Economics (REE), Farm Production and Conservation (FPAC). Also, I learned that DC is all about acronyms. So, tip number 3, when you hear an acronym write it down and in your free time search it up. After a while, you will get used to hearing acronyms and start to become familiar. Everyone present at the fellowship was so nice as well, they even gave me a chocolate bar shaped like a cowboy boot.



Tuesday, June 13 - Thursday, June 15, 2023

Opportunities Rising

For the rest of the days, I was mainly shadowing Joshua Moose through his meetings. One of the meetings that caught my attention was the Congressional Report Request - Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers where barriers and recommendations were identified to improve the program.

Something that caught me off guard was the new 41 monitors that arrived on Wednesday. USDA is that math problem we always wonder about in middle school. "If Sam has 31 watermelons, he sells 11 of them. How many does he have left?"

Midweek, thanks to Irene Bueno we were able to attend the Congressional Baseball Game as she got tickets for all the HEP/CAMP interns, we all had a good time watching the game. After the game, some of the interns and I headed out to look to find a restaurant, and while we did not find a restaurant, we did find an ice cream place open. The best part was that the business was closing in 10 minutes, so we got free ice cream that night.

The next day, I had the opportunity to meet Carlos Ortiz (REE-NIFA) who was leading the "From Learning to Leading: Cultivating the Next Generation of Diverse Food and Agriculture Professionals Program (NextGen)" program. Where we were able to talk about what I would be doing for the NextGen event.

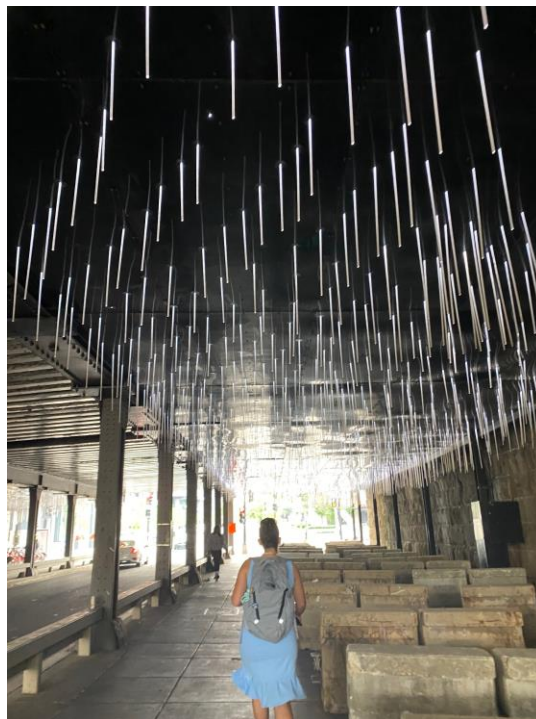


Friday, June 16, 2023

WEEKLY CHCI PROGRAMMING

The morning started as usual but instead of going to the NAB for our programming, we headed to The Washington Center. On the way there, we had to pass under the freeway and there were lights shaped like ice popsicles. Once we arrived, I attended 3 different workshops titled “Exploring Styles of Leadership 2.0,” “Identity & the Workplace,” and “What are your values?” During the first session, we continued the discussion we had during week two going more into depth into exploring, defining, and implementing our own leadership styles in our work and lifestyles. From there, we transitioned to exploring more of our values and identities in our workplace. We were able to dive into personal and professional value conversations. In the last workshop, we discussed how we can navigate our workplace to bring our full selves to work where we also went into depth about how our ethnicity, gender, sexuality, ability, class, education, and experience helps us mold our own unique perspectives.

After the programming ended, we headed back home, and with some of the interns we ordered wings, and chatted for a while.



Saturday, June 17, 2023

WHITE HOUSE TOUR

Today, I woke up excited to visit the White House for the first time. Through the USDA, we were able to meet Fabiola Torre-Lara, Confidential Assistant for the Office of the White House Liaison. She provided nine tour passes to the USDA interns for the Immigrant Heritage Week Open House at the White House. The interns and I received the tour pass and an email with instructions the night before. We met with all the USDA interns and Fabiola in front of the White House Visitor Center. We got in line around one o'clock and went through various security points, we finally made it to the entrance and started taking pictures. As we kept walking, we saw many pictures of other famous people that had visited the White House, and two of my favorite rooms were the Library and China Room. As we headed towards the exit, the outside was eye-opening. Being on the other side of the White House was something I would have never imagined I would be able to do. It was the moment I realized that here I was standing in DC inside the White House.

After we all headed out to a Mexican restaurant for some food and after chatting for a while we headed back to the dorms. From there I went ahead and changed into casual clothes to go watch Transformers Rise of the Beasts with some of the interns.





Sunday, June 18, 2023

MAKING A TRIP TO COLUMBIA HEIGHTS

One fact to know about me is that I am a Jehovah's Witness, and I decided to find a meeting location near where I am staying to still be able to participate in things I would normally do back at home. Back at home, I attend the congregation in Spanish. I found one of the congregations close to home, Columbia Heights.

I woke up in the morning and hopped on the metro around 8:45 a.m. as it is a thirty-minute metro ride. I was nervous to walk in but felt very welcomed once I did. Right at the beginning, I was greeted and introduced to many people. Once the meeting ended, I was about to leave when I was invited to go play volleyball with a group of people in the afternoon. Without thinking much, I exchanged phone numbers and before I knew it, playing volleyball on Sundays became a weekly activity.

