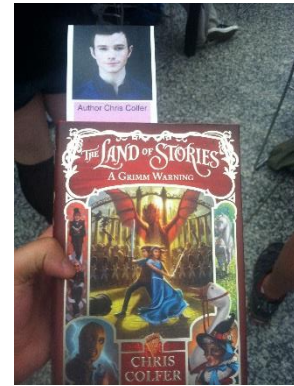


Ariana Rodriguez

Week 6

It's official only two more weeks until I return to my sunny state of California. I have to say that week 6 has been one of my favorite weeks so far. I had the opportunity to fulfil one of my childhood dreams and we had a weekend trip to New York City. The week was full of interesting and great events both during work and after it. The week began with a usual busy day at work. Yet after work I had the opportunity to go to author/ actor Chris Colfer's book signing. I have been a huge fan of Chris Colfer since his appearance on the hit TV show Glee and I had also read the first book out of his trilogy books The Land of Stories. I was really excited to be able to meet him and get my books signed. It was a great chance to see him in person after years of seeing him on TV. I could not believe it I was star struck! It was great to see him ☺ On Tuesday it was a very exciting day at work. As soon as I arrived to the office I was assigned to one of the policy staffers and asked to attend a briefing on Marine Mammal Stranding that has been occurring in California with Sea Lions. I was personally very excited to



attend the briefing because after taking Marine Biology during high school I have always advocated for marine life. When I arrived in the briefing it was great to see congressmen supporting the works of the Marine Mammal center that was taking actions to attend these stranding animals. It was also very sad to see that the funding of these marine rescue programs was being decreased. As I

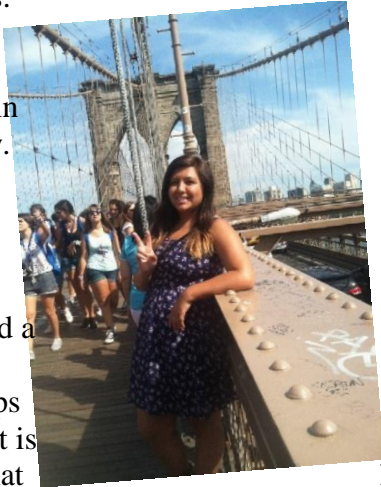
am a strong believer that we must all work together to preserve our environment as helping the ocean and green life will not only benefit the environment but it will also benefit humankind. After the Marine Mammal briefing I was assigned to attend an adoption event for the ASPCA. It was one of my favorite events that I ever attended. I walked into the event and realized the room was full of puppies, dogs and cats. It was a truly fun event where I had the chance to walk around and pet/ hold all the animals. I have always had a strong love for animals and being able to spend time with the brightened up my whole day. I am a strong believer that a pet can change people's lives. I know that I couldn't stop smiling throughout the whole event. After those events I returned to the office to write memos up for both events. Then after work all the interns were invited to an event that Congressman Becerra was hosting. The event was great as the interns had an opportunity to speak to the Congressman once again but also to meet other Congressmen. I had the chance to speak with Congressmen Mike Honda. I was amazed on how approachable these Congressmen were and how willing they were to just talk with us interns. Overall it was a great opportunity to be a part of these type of events. In addition on Thursday it was another crazy day at the office as Congressman Becerra was hosting another event but when there was a problem with the arrival of the food service I was asked to help. It made me feel great that out of all the interns they specifically asked me to help with the current "crisis". The whole office was nervous as we ran from place to place to be able to finally receive the food for the event. As we took the food up to the event as I walked in I recognized so many of the congressman. It was incredible to go from





seeing them speak in a video or TV to seeing them in person and them personally thanking us for our help. I can honestly say I felt like a rock star that day and I felt that I really helped the office. But that was not the end of the night as the CAMP interns left to New York City Thursday night. It had been a dream of mine to visit NY ever since I was a little girl and you could imagine how excited I was.

Most of the way Diana and I were just so excited that we could hardly sleep. We arrived in NY Friday morning at 5am, yes it was a long ride but worth it. We arrived in Time Square and it was just incredible getting to see the big city. All the CAMP interns and some interns from Santa Monica College stayed in a New Jersey apartment. It was just incredible being in NY. While we were there we saw so much from Time Square, The Statue of Liberty, Wall Street, Central Park, the Brooklyn Bridge and many others. As we were there we also had a chance to spend some time with the Head Start interns and just really have fun. We had some ups and downs throughout the trips but I feel overall it was just an incredible experience. Honestly it is all thanks to CAMP as it is because of the internship program that



has allowed me to achieve some of my childhood dreams and I cannot even put into words how grateful I am to the program. Throughout the trip I also realized that these people that I spent the past 6 weeks with always be in my heart. I want to take the time and thank Diana and Samantha for being some of my best friends, I love you guys. I have also really appreciated all that we have been able to accomplish together. We conquered the world in NY ☺ . But I just loved the whole experience and felt much closer to the Santa Monica interns as well as the Head Start interns. I feel that the bonds I made with them will keep going even when I return home. I feel that I have never loved my life more than I do now. Thank you HEP/CAMP. Thank you for believing in me and my fellow interns. I cannot believe I am leaving in two weeks ☹ but I have to live life to the fullest and make the most memories that I can. I am just so blessed to be here and be able to represent my School, my State and my family. One day they will be in NY and DC with me I will make sure of it.



