

Since I know these journals could help future interns plan their trip, I was thinking about some things that I packed that have proven to be the most useful so far. Now that I am halfway through this experience, I noticed that having a small flashlight is good so I don't wake up my roommate when I come in late. Bringing sheets, an iron, silverware and several spoons, snack containers for making lunch, one cup, one bowl, lots of Band-Aids, a swimsuit, Advil, a raincoat, and an absolute MUST – an umbrella. This week I also made a long trip to the post office at Union Station because it was the only one open after work. I would recommend buying stamps at home if someone wants to write. A few weeks ago, it seemed like I ruined my heels because I made the mistake of walking with them on grass and gravel. This week, I went to Gallery Place Cleaners right off L'Enfant Plaza metro stop, next to the Department of Education. There, I got my heels fixed for about ten dollars. It was so hard to find those brown heels so I am glad I didn't have to get rid of them. In this city, Dr. Scholl's are your best friends. I think I saved money by packing stuff ahead of time because finding it here can be time-consuming as well. Areli gave us the advice of donating items that we won't be taking home with us to one of the shelters nearby.

Now, this week was full of adventures. I often surprise myself at all the things that happen to us in just a single week. On Monday, I had lunch with my supervisor, Tara. I realized that I have not met up with Tara as much as I would like and I enjoy learning about how she has had such diverse experiences in different places. It really is as easy as sending a calendar email or asking if we can have lunch. My absolute favorite advice that she gave me was this: I asked how can a person remain connected to family as we seem to just get busier. Tara responded that it's important to just set a time, and having it always be consistent, for just a few minutes during the week to talk to a family member, like a parent or sibling. And that set time is for them alone and there is a recognized schedule that can go around it.



On Tuesday, after work, Dr. Ramirez invited Cinthia and me to go swimming at their community pool. I was so excited because I have been wanting to swim this entire summer. There are no community pools that we have found in the DC area, meep meep. It was hot and muggy as we walked back to the metro and drove over to Virginia. But then, as soon as we reached Lisa's home, it started raining and it got super windy. So, they ordered pizza and we watched a movie, *The Manchurian Candidate*, in their basement.

On Wednesday, I got to try Chick Fil'A for the first time. It's this yummy chicken burger place off the Crystal City metro stop. They have this cute theme that if you dress like a cow, you get free chicken!



On Friday we started our programming with CHCI and we discussed how we view ourselves as Latinos and stereotypes and discrimination Latinos may face. Then, the CAMP interns had the experience of going inside the Pentagon and getting a tour. Our tour guides were two Latina women who work as military and civilian personnel. What I loved was all their encouragement for us as we continue on in the future into our careers. There are so many people here that are cheering us on

Elizabeth Castro, CAMP Intern Journal
13 July 2014, 12:03PM, GW University

and I can see the connection as they describe that they want to give back to the next generation. We saw some interesting things within the halls of the Pentagon and random friends of our tour guides, Kelly and Cat, would take a few minutes to give us their run-down of events. I had never been in a place that represented all the branches of the military and we even learned how uniforms are made to show rank based on details like stitching on shoulders pads. We also got a sense of how serious the Department of Defense is as we were only allowed to take pictures in just one place.

Saturday morning, I woke up around 6:15am, and then Chive and I headed out to Arlington, Virginia. I was going to run my first 5K! It was called "Latinas Leading Tomorrow" and it was exciting how we already knew so many people at the race. It just goes to show how many people run in the same circles. I learned a few tips for racing as I was going and stayed pumped up with music. At first I was a bit skeptical about running a 5K because I have never trained or tried something like that before. But rising up to this challenge has to be one of the highlights of my entire summer.



After coming back to GW, CHCI had a barbeque for us at a park at George Washington University. We got to bond with the other interns from CHCI and those from the African-American and Asian/Pacific Islander caucuses as they have placements around DC too. What I loved was we met one girl who is African-American and traveled to Argentina and speaks wonderful Spanish. She was telling us "No tengo mucha confianza" or "I don't have much confidence (in Spanish)" but we carried an entire Spanish conversation with her and her speech was awesome.

After the barbeque, Samantha, Ariana, Chive and I went to the National Archives. That is where they keep the original copies of Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. The Declaration is pretty faded so people can't really read it anymore. My favorite was the Constitution because the script was so beautiful and it was amazing to see how some of the main structures of our government were laid out in this one document.

One thing about our group, after long exhausting days where we are out and about walking, we like coming together and resting. We push our beds together to make, technically, a king size bed and we all eat cookies and watch several movies. We have watched Tarzan, Forrest Gump, episodes of Gabriel Iglesias, Napoleon Dynamite, and so many more.