

Well the setting of the sun indicates the end of the first week into my journey of the DC internship and the beginning of a new one. I will be writing my weekly bios in a detailed format so that when I read these bios to my family, I can specifically remember how each day went for me. This week has given me mixed feelings such as anxiety, fear, excitement, and curiosity. This week has been a big one for me due to the fact that I have moved clear across the country to an unknown region of the United States. As stated before, the farthest I had ever been into the country has been Chicago when I attended the United States Hispanic Leadership Institute this past winter. I remember the night before I was to fly to DC, my heart was beating out of my chest due to the intense nervousness I was feeling about this great transition. I can gladly say my transition to this city has been a smooth due to the great support I have had from my great mentors (Patrick and Betsy) and from my newly found friends. It is great to know that I was not the only one facing these fears and struggles. I also enjoy the fact that we have been able to bond greatly with one another in a short amount of time. It's funny, the first thing I remember when I walked out of the DC airport was the change of weather compared to that of Oregon. I felt a heat wave along with humidity hit my skin. To be honest, I actually enjoyed the weather because I am the type of a person who prefers hot weather to brisk weather. Once we left the airport, we began to go towards our dorms. I was still in awe during the drive to our dorms for the reason that I saw monuments only seen on TV with my actual eyes. For example, I noticed the Washington monument and the Lincoln memorial during the drive. I remember Diana making the comment "it doesn't feel like I'm actually here". That one comment pretty much summed up how I was feeling that first day because I still could not believe that I was in the nation's capital. After a good ten minutes, we finally got to our dorms and I felt a little skeptical as I walked towards my room for the reason that my past dorm at Oregon State had been less than average.

As I put the key into the lock, I felt a little iffy, but upon opening it, I felt a great relief for the reason that the dorm has its own bathroom! You have no idea how much this little thing made me feel, but anyways, after staying in my room for a good half hour, the interns and I went with Betsy to this pizzeria a few blocks away from the dorm. Once we got to our seats in the pizzeria, the interns and I began speaking with one another about where we came from and how it was that came across this internship. At that time, I was finally able to remember the intern's names (Vianey, Samantha, Elizabeth, Ariana) and of course Diana, but I already knew her name since we are part of the same CAMP program at Oregon State University. After a good couple of hours, we asked Patrick if we could leave to get some supplies at the local CVS pharmacy. He said it was fine and then we decided to look for emergency toilet paper due to the fact that the dorms were not stocked with any toilet paper at all. Once the girls had purchased their supplies, we decided to call it a night and each of us went to our separate rooms. It took me a good half hour to unpack my supplies and to get ready for bed. But after an hour of lying in my bed, I heard the key of the door begin to turn and at once I knew that was my new roommate. He seemed like a good kid and I found out that his name was Alberto, but his nickname is Chive for the reason that his middle is Silvestre. After having some small talk, we decided to walk around town in order to explore our new home. He explained to me that he was the first community college student to become chosen for this internship and that he plays football, is involved in MECHA, and is also the president for the school's senate. Overall, my first day was a great experience! My second day it was great because I started the day off with God when we attended church because God is the one who has our lives already planned out. Everything that we do is through His will and we must not do things the way that we want them to, but the way

that God wants it to be done. I only remember bits and pieces of the second day, so bear with me...after church, we went to visit the local markets and stores in order for us to get accustomed to the local businesses. Then, we decided to take the metro (underground subway) to a marketplace that contained a variety of local goods and foods such as peaches, strawberries, paintings, crafts, etc. It reminded me very much of the local flea market that I have become accustomed back in eastern Oregon. After looking for an hour or so, Patrick decided to take us on a walk towards the Capitol Hill. My excitement increased because I was about to see our nation's capital building where much of our country's legislative work takes place. It began to hit me that I was actually going to live in Washington, DC for the next two months. To move along with my thoughts, the group was walking along an area that was covered with a rich amount of trees and brush and upon looking at the greenery, I saw a white tip behind the green and as the group continued to walk down the street, we saw what is ultimately the Capitol building of the United States of America. Once I saw this magnificent work of architecture, I began to think of my parents, but in order to stay on track with my thoughts; I will touch back to this later. Due to the lack of supplies that the intern class had, Patrick decided to take us to a nearby Target in order to purchase a variety of things. This was an entirely new experience for me because a member of my family was always with me whenever I needed to purchase past supplies. It was during this experience that I realized that Alberto was going to be a great roommate because he was incredibly organized with his notes and his living style. I was also impressed by his life story because in spite of all his hardships and failures in his life, he has been able to triumph through it all in order to reach the opportunities that not many are able to reach. He has something inside of him that drives him to go above and beyond in both his studies and his involvement within his extracurricular activities. Not many people have these types of values instilled within them and seeing someone like him have these values at such a young age gives the potential to become someone of great importance in life.

As for me, who knows where life will take me. All I can do is put my life into God's hands and accept both the hardships and successes with the thought of God in each of them. After a long day of exploring the city, it was time to go back to our dorms and for me to prepare my business clothes for my first day where I would work in Oregon's Senator Jeff Merkley office. My entire workweek consisted of me sorting emails, training to give tours of the Capitol building, handling schedules/calls, and running errands for the staff members. The work was pretty standard, but the highlights during the internship hours occurred when the interns and I were able to converse with the senator despite his busy schedule. Due to office regulations, I am not allowed to share any details, but I can tell you that the Senator is extremely humble and he has lived an incredible life to where he is today. Another highlight of my work occurred this past Friday when the Oregon Delegation prepared to give a tour to Oregon's World War II veterans. The most memorable moment occurred when the only African American veteran in the group was informed that there was a Rosa Parks statue within the statuary chamber of the Capitol building. He immediately wanted to take a picture of the statue and you could tell by his reaction that Rosa Parks had a deep impact in his life. Before I forget, I saw John McCain with my eyes no more than ten feet away. I did find hard to believe that Obama's past opponent was right in front of me. Some other highlights of the week included joining a rally march for the United Farm workers to fight for the immigration reform, celebrating one of the intern's (Ariana) birthday, and streaming my sister's graduation from my laptop. It was sad that I couldn't be there to witness my sister receiving her master's degree in Criminal Justice, but I am glad that I

kept my promise to her and streamed the entire graduation to share this unforgettable moment with her and my family.

Before I end my weekly bio, I just want to thank those who have supported my every endeavor and to those who have offered me opportunities that no one else could have ever offered me. My family has been the reason why I strive to make the best of what I have because their lectures, history, and struggles have taught me to never take my life for granted. My second family from CAMP has taught me that when the going gets tough, you must never give up. Better yet, you must put yourself into overdrive in order to become a well-rounded hard working student. Finally, I want to thank God because I cannot express how much I am grateful for this life that I have been blessed to have been received with such loving people. I will not take this opportunity for granted and with this being said, I will give 110% to make the most out of this unforgettable experience.