

Gustavo Flores

Week Journal 4

I have to say that my third week at the office was rather slow, taking into account the fact that the House of Representatives was not in session this week. This week was pretty laid back in comparison to previous weeks when we were in session; things can get a little hectic around here. This allowed the staffers who work at the office more time to spend with the interns. We had Brown Bag Lunches almost every day with a different staffer where we were able to sit down and discuss their journeys through college and the events that led them to the office of Congressman Becerra. I have a lot of respect for the staff and all the interns who work at the office. One of the main reasons I love working in Capitol Hill is because politics and other important issues are all that people talk about, it is rare to come across people gossiping or participating in other irrelevant conversations. Lunch with my colleagues, Oscar and Miguel, is always interesting. I enjoy being around them because they are two very intellectual and knowledgeable students. We always have interesting discussions about politics and other relevant topics of discussion. I like that our friendship goes on beyond the office setting. We usually go out for dinner after work and on weekends, we sometimes get together at Miguel's apartment to hang out and eat pizza while watching movies. Making friendships has made the transition away from home much easier to handle and thus helped to avoid getting homesick.

I usually don't go to work on Fridays because of the programming we have with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI), but this week we had a three day weekend due to the Fourth of July weekend and all offices were closed on Friday. My CAMP interns and I took advantage of this free time to arrange a field trip to Six Flags in Maryland. We woke up early Friday morning and hopped on the Metro, excited for the day ahead of us. The mood was great and the weather even better! The weather out here is so unpredictable but we were lucky that Friday because there was no rain and it wasn't too hot. As soon as we entered the park we headed towards the line for the roller coasters. We got on and off from one ride to another all day until we had ridden every roller coaster at the park. The most thrilling ride was titled Superman, and it certainly lived up to its name. There was an altitude of 222 feet with speeds of up to 73 mph. We all agreed that was the best ride Six Flags had to offer. After a day of nonstop excitement, we ended the night with a display of fireworks at the amusement park.

The cost of an exciting weekend deprived me from a good amount of sleep. We got back to our dormitories fairly late from our trip to Six Flags on Friday and that following morning I was scheduled to volunteer at the Fourth of July Parade with the Nation Park Association. Once again, I woke up early and made my way to the National Mall with Perla, one of the other CAMP interns, and other CHCI interns to volunteer. At first, I was a little skeptical because I was really tired and it seemed like it was going to be a boring day picking up recyclables at the parade, but I had no idea we were actually going to take

part in the parade itself. The event ended up being really fun while doing a good deed for the community by recycling all the empty bottles and cans that the crowd had used. We walked along at the tail end of the parade collecting recyclables while people cheered us on. It turned out to be a really fun event and I felt good for helping keep the streets a little bit cleaner.

Right after the parade was over, some of the interns and I made our way to the Lincoln Memorial to secure a spot for the firework show later that day. We took turns camping on the stairways throughout the day until the day grew dark. Hundreds, if not thousands of people gathered around that night to get a good view of the firework show. In the end, all the waiting was worthwhile as I gazed into the sky in astonishment as the fireworks went off from the reflecting pool near the Lincoln Memorial. It was an exciting moment that made me reflect on how privileged and fortunate I live in this great country. At same time, I felt extremely appreciative for being entrusted with the opportunity to be a part of cohort. I truly feel empowered and capable of accomplishing anything set my mind to, especially knowing that there people believe in me and people I rely on for guidance. These important realizations that come about as a result of internship.



am to
the

this

that I

who
can
are all
have
this





