

Carlos Vazquez  
DC Journal Week 6

Week six! With two weeks away from departure every day is extremely valuable and how I spend my very limited time here is very important. While I wish to do more exploring and continue to learn more about DC and all that it has to offer, I wanted to make sure to spend week six with those who have been closest to me throughout my time here.

As a part of CHCI, we are required to do a certain amount of community service hours so on Sunday the cohort and I volunteered at the Arlington Library to help Latino Conservative Week work on a Yoga event. Although it wasn't our typical volunteer event, we still found so much joy in all of it because the group that went to help was so full of energy and of course some of my closest friends were there so it didn't really feel like volunteer work at all!

Monday came around and we went back hard at work. I can't believe there is only two full weeks of work left, just imagining my first day in the office compared to where I am now is very FUN TO THINK ABOUT. Although I have been here for a little over a month, I still cannot get accustomed to the humidity! The weather here is something that everyone warned me about and although I felt that I would eventually get used to it, the opposite has happened and I continue to grow tired of it. I really felt it when Bianca and I walked to Columbia Heights where we ended up playing some pick-up basketball at a local court; I left dripping in sweat.

The rest of the days after work consisted of hanging around the city with groups of friends we made in the Department of Energy as well as the "819" interns from CHCI. I remember looking at people who would go off to study abroad or do internships across the country where they would make some of their closest friends and I always wondered whether that would be me and I truly believe that it is. I am always so thankful for the people who I am surrounded by and that I get the opportunity to build the relationships.

On Friday, CHCI took us to the US State Department where we were given the opportunity to speak to a couple of employees about some of the things they were able to do at their work. I've never been aware of what the State Department did or what actually went on in the building so I was really fascinated that everything that I learned there. The keynote speaker was one of the most impressive people that has talked to us this summer so it inspired me to look possibly into International Studies.

One of the highlights of this summer was going to the Kendrick Lamar concert with Jose, Chris, and Kim. A couple weeks after I found out that I was selected to go to Washington DC, I found out that one of my favorite artists was going on tour and will stop in DC so I immediately booked my ticket. The fact that the day had finally arrived was so excited to all of us because we had been talking about it all summer! It was also funny because I knew that I had gotten good tickets but I didn't know just how close we would be, once we got there the security guard took us to our seats and I really thought that he was mistaken because he kept taking us closer and closer! Overall, that was such a good decision because I have never been to a concert with that much people or for somebody that big so it was an experience that I know I will be talking about for a long time.

Saturday started off a little slow because I had originally planned to possibly go to Philadelphia that day but due to poor planning and overall expenses we had decided to not go and so we had no other plans

to jump on. Lucky for us, Lisa Ramirez invited Jose, Chris, and I to go with her and her husband to one of our colleague's home to eat Navajo tacos. I think this was also one of high moments of our summer because it gave us a chance to spend more time with Lisa and meet her friend Evelyn who also had connections with working in CHCI. I was not sure on what to expect going to this dinner but we had a chance to hear some really inspiring stories from Lisa; I found myself to once again be amazed that we had the opportunity to spend time with somebody like her because we all found her to be a truly remarkable individual with so much positive energy to provide us all.

To cap off the Saturday night we once again met up with our friends from CHCI, aka the "819" crew that we always find ourselves hanging out with. Every time we meet with this group we always find ourselves involved in so many memories that I will truly cherish once I am home. One of the funniest parts of this night was when the group decided to run through a fountain and ended up getting soaking wet.

I've said this before and I'll end up saying it again but to think that this is one of the final internship journals I write is so crazy for me to comprehend. There is not a day that is going back where I don't find myself reflecting on my journey here and I still have two weeks to embrace all of it! I fully believe that these two weeks will fly by but there is so many memories to be made, so I expect Journal 7 & 8 to be filled with fun stories.



