

Gloria Ramirez

My last full week of work just passed. One more day. That is all I have left in the office. It is insane to think about. Seven weeks ago, I arrived being fearful and nervous of my future in D.C. Not a day had gone by where I did not have someone from my family looking after me, and coming here was a whole new experience. Now, all on my own, I have learned so much about myself. To top things off, I visited New York City. Who would have thought a small-town girl like myself would make it not just one big city, but rather two?



My work week was bittersweet. The more projects I got to work on, the more bitter it was. As I began feeling like I was making a bigger difference, time has gone by and it is time to go back home. I have loved every moment I have spent in my office. My appreciation for my placement in the Merkley office is immense. The staff has gone above and beyond to be inclusive and make me feel welcomed. This week, I really focused on connecting with my colleagues even more than usual. To make sure that they knew how much I appreciated their time and help. They all had wonderful advice and offered to help me with future endeavors. To top things off, I got to say goodbye to Senator Merkley and he presented me with a certificate and picture signed by him. It is incredible to me that with so much on his plate, he literally makes time to appreciate his staff. It has just been such an honor to be a part of team Merkley. There are just no words to describe how great my experience has been.



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With the work week over, some of the other HEP/CAMP interns and I decided to celebrate our last weekend on the east coast by visiting New York. After our trip, two things are for sure, I am more appreciative of D.C.'s transportation and I do not want to live in a major city. As beautiful as some parts of New York are, overall the city could use some improvements. One example being that locals can be very hostile and rude. On the other hand, the diversity is spectacular! I heard so many languages and accents. There was always something going on and the shopping was, although expensive, great!



Overall, I am ready to be home. With one week left, I am counting down the days. I left home risking everything for a better tomorrow. My parents need me and it can get hard to juggle all of my responsibilities, but I happily do it. As soon as I get home there are so many things I have to take care of, but unlike before I feel so prepared to take them on. This whole experience has been for the betterment of my family's situation and it has done just that.

