

Gloria Ramirez

As I look out my airplane window, it all begins to sink in. Two months ago, I was doing the same thing, but with different emotions: fear, nerves, and anxiety. Today, I am filled with joy, pride, and excitement. There were definitely times that I doubted I would make it through the two months, not because I did not want to be her, but rather because I was leaving a huge responsibility behind; my family.



As the oldest child, I took on the responsibility of paying the bills, making the doctor appointments, translating, cleaning the house, and caring for my siblings. Leaving for college was hard enough, but at least I was able to come home whenever an emergency popped up. Going to D.C. meant completely leaving those responsibilities behind. As hard as it is to admit, it was kind of like a vacation from home. It was hard for me to call home because I knew there was nothing I could do to help my family. I actually could not find enough stuff to do in D.C. and would end up napping more often than not. It was a weird two months to say the least. Now, on my way back home, as odd as it may sound to others, I am excited to get back to my responsibilities.



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I will be the first to admit that my role in my family is not the most fun, but I know the difference I make for them is extraordinary. My parents sacrificed so much for my siblings and I. The least we could do is make them proud, and that is exactly why I never looked back after leaving for D.C. Thinking back, I believe I did just that and I feel more prepared than ever to complete any tasks ahead of me. Through any discomfort, home sickness, and doubt, I pushed to deliver my best work and work to try to enforce change. It is important to point out how I would not have accomplished any of that without all of the people who have supported me through it all. I have been so fortunate to meet and connect with others who dedicate their lives to helping others, that is who the C.A.M.P. staff are. I am beyond grateful and humbled to know that people who come from similar backgrounds to me make such an immense impact in many lives. Walking away from this amazing opportunity, I am inspired to try to do the same. I have so many plans for the near future. I will give back to my community in the way it has given to me.



In closing, referring not only to my journal but my internship as well, I have never felt so prepared to take on life. Spending two months on my own has been an interesting introduction to adulthood, especially when they are spent in one of the most expensive cities in the country! I have learned to survive on my own while still helping my family. A skill which I will utilize forever. Most importantly though, I have learned how vital it is to help my Hispanic community and community and general to thrive in this day and age. For us to succeed, we must succeed together. A little something I learned during my time in a government position. However, the best lesson I learned was from my fellow H.E.P./C.A.M.P. interns. They taught me that no matter what our background may be, a success story is awaiting all of us, it just takes a little hard work. Hard work that I am putting in every day that I am blessed enough to live.