

Jose Flores

Weekly Journal: May 30-June 5, 2016

May 30 was Memorial Day, and there is no better place to be than in Washington, D.C. on this special holiday. Memorial Day serves as a day to remember the people who died serving this country. In D.C., Memorial Day is more than just a reminder; it is a celebration of courage and bravery, selflessness and service. To start off Memorial Day, the five of us CAMPers went to the Arlington Cemetery. We walked by rows and rows of white gravestones of fallen soldiers. Despite the large amount of people, the cemetery was quiet out of respect for our fallen. We also attended a wreath-laying ceremony that honors those who died serving the country that are unknown to us. As I stood there watching the wreaths laid in honor of our fallen, I was overwhelmed by the surges of emotions, so I stood there, numb but grateful and humbled by the amount of sacrifice done in the name of freedom and liberty.



Afterwards, I attended the 2016 National Memorial Day Parade which took place in D.C. It was a lot of fun seeing the different marching bands, the big floats, the old cars, and especially seeing the veterans that served in our country's different wars. I have never felt more American than I did that day.

I started my first day of work on Tuesday. Despite all the nervousness and anxiety, it was a very easy day, as there was not much for me to do as I was not yet trained to begin to work. I spent the entire day reading over the intern guide, familiarizing myself with Senator Schumer's website, learning how to navigate different websites that serve as tools of research, and trying to understand what an intern's role in the office is. I tried to absorb as much information as I could; I asked several questions regarding behavior, expectations, and really anything. I liked

that it was a slow first day; I was better able to absorb the shock of my first day and adapt to the new situation I am now in. Sitting there on my computer, I realized the opportunities that were available; now I just have to learn how to take advantage of them.

My first week of work was very similar to my first day; it was slow but I tried to take in as much about the process as possible. Towards the end of the week, I was trained to answer phone calls.

I learned that I enjoyed fielding calls; I was able to hear the opinions of several Americans in the state of New York. Even though I did not always agree with the constituents' opinions, it was enlightening to hear the differing opinions and the reasoning behind them. As people called, I felt democracy working within our country as people's voices were heard by their representatives.

I also embarked on a scavenger hunt through the Senate, the House, and the Capitol. The Capitol is perhaps the most beautiful building I have ever seen. It was decorated by busts, statues, and paintings of historically important people and events. The ceilings were high, and the walls were beautifully decorated; there seemed to be no dull spots within the Capitol. I have only seen very little of the Capitol; I hope to see more of it.

This last weekend was not as exciting as the first one as we did not go out to explore but stayed in and attempted to relax after just our first week. Perhaps it is a little unnerving that we need to relax after just one week but I do not believe that we needed a break from work; I believe that we are just anxiously waiting for the next week to begin. I am awaiting the challenges next week has to offer. I have spent this weekend mentally preparing myself for these challenges and for the opportunities that await. Currently, I am waiting to hear back from some of the staffers in my office about any opportunities to do some research with them.

