

Monserrath Sanchez

HEP/CAMP Journal

Week 2

I still cannot believe that I have been chosen to participate in such an amazing opportunity during such a patriotic time. D.C. is such a beautiful city with so much history and it continues to amaze me every single day. This week I officially started my internship in the office of Congressman Xavier Becerra. I was extremely nervous about how it would be but, I think it went well overall.



Monday May 30, 2016: On Monday morning we woke up early to go to the Arlington National Cemetery to see the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. On our way, we found out that President Obama would be there so we rushed to get there. Unfortunately, when we arrived the area was on lockdown because the President had already arrived, and we were unable to see him. Although all of Arlington National Cemetery is an amazing place, we went to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the John F. Kennedy Gravesite, and the Arlington House. It was just so breathtaking to realize that all of the fallen soldiers there had sacrificed their lives for our freedom. My favorite part of Arlington Cemetery was the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier; it was just so beautiful how the guards respected those fallen soldiers and their families as well. After a long day we all went back to prepare dinner, that night we made lasagna, it tasted delicious! I also prepared myself mentally for my first day of work.



Rep Becerra's Office

Tuesday May 31, 2016: I woke up early to make sure I had enough time to get ready for work, pack my lunch, and ride the metro with Jasmine. I felt really anxious about officially starting my internship in Congressman Xavier Becerra's office. I arrived at 8:40 (am), and met with my supervisor Victoria Rivas. She showed me my work station and introduced me to the other interns. Victoria handed me an intern guide to read. I was happy to know that interns are considered part of Rep. Becerra's staff and that our work is appreciated by the paid staff members. Today the office hosted a Brown Bag Lunch which is an office tradition where staff has an opportunity to sit down with interns & fellows discuss their positions on issues and what motivated them to intern in the office. This Brown Bag Lunch was with, Fabiola Rodriguez-Ciampoli, the Executive Director of the Democratic Caucus. After lunch, I was trained on how to answer the phone, sort newspapers, and log in constituent emails and calls. The day was really productive even though Congress is in recess. At the end of my first day, I felt really honored and proud to be part of the staff, as well as representing my Fresno State community and CAMP program.



Wednesday June 1, 2016: I arrived early and began my day sorting newspapers and delivering to the staff members. Then the other interns and I split up all of the constituent emails and started to log their concerns into the system. I continued to get accustomed to answering the phones and transferring phone calls to other staff members. Victoria told me that I could go to the I.D. Services office and get my ID. The other interns went with me, and then we went on a tour of the Capitol. It was a fun tour in which I was able to familiarize myself with the Capitol. Once we got back to the office, I continued to answer phone calls. Tuesday was also the last day for the spring 2016 interns.

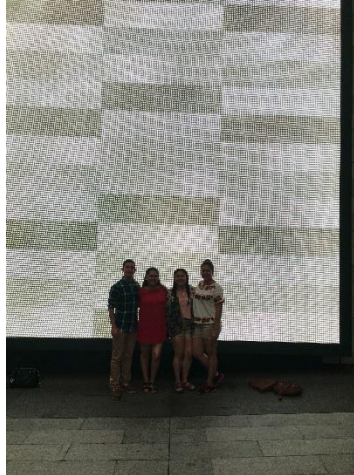


As a group we went on a walk to the National Mall at night and it simply looks amazing....

Thursday June 2, 2016: I started the day by passing out newspapers and logging in the constituent's emails. I took the initiative to ask the scheduler if he needed any help because I did not have any work at the moment. He told me to log in business card contact information into an excel worksheet. Once I was done, I asked if he needed more help, and he told me to ask the legislative director questions and log the answers into the worksheet. The legislative director and I made an appointment to talk more on Monday. The rest of the day went well. I feel like I am making an impact even if I am answering a simple phone call.



Friday June 3, 2016: On Friday we participated in the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI) Friday programming. We got lost on our way to the Facebook office, but we finally found it after asking an officer for directions. Ana Martinez, one of the speakers, said “No work is too little as an intern”, and as I reflect on my first week of working in a congressional office, I realize that it is true. I have enjoyed all of the tasks I have been given from going to the supply store to organizing the mail. The other speakers were all motivational because they shared their unique Latino stories on how they got to where they are today. After the Facebook seminar we had a dining etiquette class, and it was great because I was able to get a refresher on my table manners. All in all it was a nice day although, I did want to be working in the congressman's office.



Jose, Jasmine, Aleysa, and I after a nice dinner.

Saturday June 4, 2016 & Sunday June 5, 2016: This weekend was a lot more relaxing compared to last week's. I had to do my laundry go buy groceries for the entire week and do "adult stuff". I think it was also to have some time to get a little more situated with the city. It was also good for us to prepare for our next week of work, I know we will all do amazing things in our office within the next few weeks.