

Jose Flores

Weekly Journal 3

Monday June 6, 2016

On Monday I began my second week interning in Senator Schumer's office. Monday was also the first day for about six new interns. That made us about 15 in total! The issue is that there are only 7 computers and phones. So 8 interns had no place to sit. However, these interns just pulled up a seat beside another intern and learned how to operate the phones or how to organize the mail. Throughout the day, a few interns would leave to attend a briefing or a hearing, opening up space for another intern. I attended a briefing on China and its influence abroad with another intern from Florida, Rueben. He and I worked on the memo together and sent it in to the

corresponding legislative aide. I love attending briefings and hearings and I am always on the lookout for one that is of interest to me.



On Monday I also visited Columbia Heights to get a haircut. As soon as I arrived, I noticed a pretty drastic difference between the area around GW and Columbia Heights. Although there were some nice restaurants right by the Metro stop, it was evident that there were some pretty poor communities within this section of D.C. According to my barber, who is from El Salvador, there are a number of ethnicities in the community, ranging from African-American to Central American to Middle Eastern. In the nation's capital, there is a wide range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. I felt it was the most perfect discovery I have made, as people of all walks of life lived together in harmony. It was uplifting and relieving; I never had a more relaxing haircut in my life!

Tuesday June 7, 2016

Nothing special really happened Tuesday. With so many interns in the office, it is difficult finding tasks. Whenever a legislative aide puts out that they need help on a project, all the interns fight for the opportunity to help. I like to say that in the office, it is all about "survival". To be successful and to survive, one must be ready to take on any and every task that is available to them. No matter how mundane the task, by putting yourself out there, you let staffers know that you want work and that you're willing to help. At one point in the day, I found myself with absolutely nothing to do so I offered to help a fellow intern with her project for another staffer. Basically I was to write down all the names of the cities and towns within every county in the state of New York. However, I hope that the next time she gets a project, she will think of me and allow me to help her work on the project.

Wednesday June 8, 2016

Wednesday was a slow day as well. At around one in the afternoon I was asked to go help out at the Committee of Rules and Administration, a committee that Senator Schumer is a ranking member of. There I helped Dana shred papers and take inventory. Although it was boring work, it is what interns do. I am not above doing this type of work, since I come from the fields. After work, a few other interns and I went to two receptions: the RV Caucus reception and the Hawaiian reception. These were the first I have ever attended so I was trying to learn how a person would conduct him-, or her-, self in such an environment. While I was there, I was able to connect more with my fellow interns.

Thursday June 9, 2016

On Thursday, all the CHCI and CAMP interns (with the exception of Jasmine) met with Congresswoman Linda Sanchez. Congresswoman Sanchez represents the 38th district in California. She is an exceptional woman; she fights for the rights of the poor and the weak. Her courage and demeanor are truly admirable. I saw how much people respected her and treated her; I wish to be treated with respect too when I grow up.



Friday June 10, 2016

Friday is programming day with CHCI. On this particular Friday, we went to speak with the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) and with Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). At the OCC, I enjoyed listening to Jimmy Hernandez, who spoke about his life and how he got to where he is today. It was inspirational to see a young Latino man being successful in the public sector. I feel like I can relate so much to him, so it got me excited to hear about his success.

At PBS, we also got to meet Juan Sepulveda; an inspiring and intelligent man. His story and the respect others had for him spoke for themselves; people genuinely revered this man and seemingly for good reason. He is very knowledgeable on the issue of politics, but he is also very good at understanding people and the way people think. His story inspires me to work harder and it is a reminder that anything is possible and that there is so much ahead of me that I don't know about yet. I just need to keep my head straight and stay focused on what is important.

Saturday June 11, 2016

For the first time in my life, I saw the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and the Bill of Rights; perhaps the 3 most important documents to the history of the U.S. All three documents were barely legible, as time has taken its toll on the documents. The ink was very faded and the paper was cracked; however, through the dim lighting, I can make out the names of our founding fathers on the document. Most prominently stood Hancock's signature, whose name magnificently carved the document where his legacy will remain forever. It was a tremendous moment in my life to finally see the documents I spent a number of classes learning about it. To think that the very people I read and learned about, the very people who founded this great country, who thought of how to protect the rights of the people, the very people I imagined meeting in the middle of the summer, arguing over how Congress should be set up or how the president's power can be checked; to know that they created and signed these exact documents is beyond my imagination and any description I could ever come up with.

After visiting the archives, the four of us (we were missing Crystal since she went home for the weekend) then went to the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History. It was cool seeing the Hope Diamond and the exhibits that the museum had to offer. I saw some of the oldest human bones that we have. It was a very interesting museum and I am very glad I was able to go.



Sunday June 12, 2016

Today we went to the National Museum of the American Indian. There I fell in love with the art of Kay WalkingStick. Her paintings really spoke to me; I can see the progression of her life through her paintings. At around 3:30, there was an event in the Atrium of the museum. They were showcasing a couple of American Indian dances. I was even asked to join; and of course I joined. It was a great

time, and although I will never truly be a part of a Native American dance, it is important that the Native American people are never forgotten and that there remain a level of respect for their culture and way of life.

All in all, another great week in the books. I love it here in D.C. Time is starting to fly by, but I will try my very best to enjoy my time here. As I have been told many times before I arrived here, I have the opportunity of the lifetime here as a Congressional Intern. There is so many things to do and so little time to do them! It's really the best place for someone like me to be in.