

Monserrath Sanchez

HEP/CAMP Journal

Week 4

It's crazy to realize that I am at the midpoint of my internship already! The whole experience has been an amazing learning opportunity. I can tell we have all grown from our first week on the Hill. I still remember how we felt so lost our first week here. Now I can get around The House side with no problem, although the Senate side can be a little more complicated for me due to the fact that I hardly go over there.

Monday June 13, 2016: On Monday I “officially” introduced myself to the entire staff as well as to Congressman Xavier Becerra. It was kind of funny because everyone (even the Congressman) told me, “We already know you work with us Monse!”. Work was really sad on Monday because of the tragic shooting that had happened in Orlando, Florida this past weekend. As soon as I opened my constituent email inbox there were thousands of concerned constituents about gun control. Many of them also called and I heard very concerned family members that just wanted a law passed in regards to gun control. I was really affected by some calls in which parents were crying asking me to please pass their message along. I decided to help the staffer who handles the issue and I began to research for him. I knew it would be a hard task because this issue has been a hot topic for a very long time, but I knew I wanted to help in any way I could. That evening at 4:30 there was a vigil on the Capitol steps, which was organized by the LGBT Congressional Staff Association and the Congressional Muslim Staff Association, I really wanted to attend so I asked my supervisor and she said, “of course, we can go together!”. We headed out and there were a lot of people there from interns all the way to members of Congress. The Chaplain of the U.S. House of Representatives, Father Patrick J. Conroy gave a prayer which was followed by a moment of silence for those who lost their lives or were injured.



Here is U.S House or
Representatives Chaplain, Father
Patrick J. Conroy leading the
prayer for all who lost their lives or
were injured.

Tuesday June 14, 2016: Tuesday morning was similar to Monday mornings. My inbox had a lot of gun control emails. I continued to do my research for gun control and completed my memo. I can honestly say that I love my office because I am never afraid to ask them questions they are always so nurturing towards me. I was walking down the hallway on my way to the Capitol and I bumped into Congressman Becerra, he asked about my internship experience so far. I was able to have a conversation with him about my recent task and he explained to me his own views on the issue and I realized that we both had the same ideas in regards to the issue and now it was time for something to be done. As I walked back to the office, I realized how lucky I was to be working on Capitol Hill, I literally could walk anywhere and just show my badge and be allowed in. It was also crazy to think that I was working in an important office instead of just picking onions back in California. I attended a reception hosted by the Border Trade Alliance and the Wilson Center's Mexico Institute. They spoke about how the U.S. and Mexico could work together to improve the border. I was able to meet and have a conversation with Congresswoman Norma Torres (CA-35) and Congressman Henry Cuellar (TX-28). It was very interesting to listen to their perspectives on the questions I asked them. Also, the reception had a lot of food which meant I did not have to make dinner!

Congresswoman Norma Torres (CA-35) and Congressman Henry Cuellar (TX-28) giving a speech during the reception



Wednesday June 15, 2016: We had the Summer Tri-Caucus on Wednesday evening, which consisted of the Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies (AIPACS), Congressional Black Caucus Foundation (CBCF), and the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI). This was a great event to network with other interns that could help me along my professional career. I found some interns from both the CBCF and AIPACS that were from California, we talked about our experience so far and what we plan to do when we head back home. Aside from meeting amazing interns at the Tri-Caucus, I was able to meet some inspiring members of Congress. There were three members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC): Congresswoman Linda T. Sanchez (CA- 38), Congressman Luis Gutiérrez (IL-4), and Congressman Tony Cardenas (CA- 29). Both Congresswoman Sanchez and Congressman Gutiérrez gave beautiful speeches that empowered young Latinos like myself, some people did not recognize Congressman Cardenas because he arrived late and he did not have his pin on; although, because I am trying to memorize all of the members of The House Democratic Caucus, I was able to recognize him. Congressman Mike Honda (CA-17) is part of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, his sweet speech gave me hope and faith in myself. This event was a great event to network with

future leaders of our nation and fangirl over current leaders that represent our communities in Congress.



Pictured: Congresswoman Linda T. Sanchez, Congressman Mike Honda, and Congressman Luis Gutierrez

Thursday June 16, 2016: Thursday was crazy due to Senator Chris Murphy's (Connecticut) filibuster. Senator Murphy was on the Senate floor pushing for gun control reform. A lot of constituents were calling all of their offices once again. It was also cool to see Senator Feinstein from California (my senator) advocate for the gun safety reform as well. Senator Feinstein said she will be working to pass a compromised bill with Senate Majority Whip, Senator John Cornyn (R-Texas). I was walking around while running an errand

Friday June 17, 2016: As usual Friday was dedicating to CHCI's programming. One of the speakers was not able to make it so we had half an hour to ourselves. The first activity involved picking three people who you look up to, then you had to share it with someone else. I shared mine with Aleya, I am glad I chose her because I was able to understand her a lot more. I was able to understand Aleya on a more personal level. Later on we had a discussion about sex and abortion. It was interesting to learn all of the fact about how the Latino community views sex and abortion. My favorite activity was learning about you Latino Identity; it was interesting to see how everyone else had their own image of a "perfect" Latino. At the end we all realized that none of us are "more or less Latino". After the discussion Crista passed out \$200 gift cards that Macys gave to us to buy professional clothes



We're all smiles after a successful day of Friday Programming.

Saturday June 18, 2016 & Sunday June 19, 2016: On Saturday we volunteered at Casa Ruby, which helps out the homeless LGBT youth community. It was fun being able to give back to the LGBT community and show them that we are there to support them. After we finished volunteering we went to Los Hermanos, a Dominican Restaurant. The food there was DELICIOUS! They served you so much food, I didn't even finish half of my plate and I was already full. Cesar Garcia, a CHCI intern and CAMP alumni, invited us all to go shopping with him to Macy's. It was fun to watch Jose, complain about how much time we girls take to go shopping. Later on we headed to restaurant that played a variety of Latin music, and we danced the night away. Sunday was my day to do laundry and finish up any research I still needed to finish. I usually like Sundays because it's my personal day to have some time to myself and reflect on my week.

