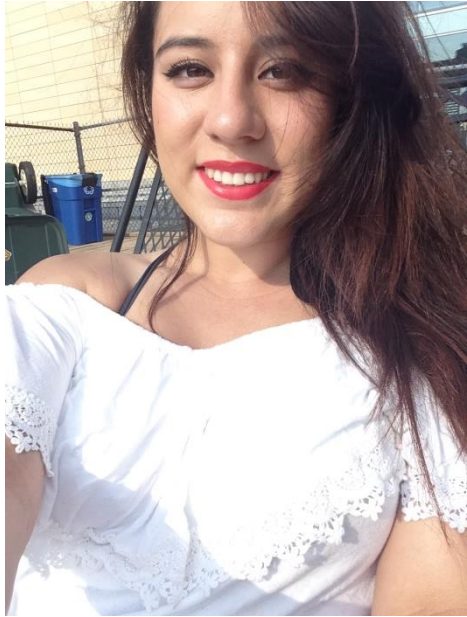


Consuelo Aileen Contreras

Week #5

7/12/2015

I can't believe how fast time is passing. I remember when we first got here and Patrick, as well as his wife Betsy told us that time would fly by and we needed to take advantage of it. At the time at thought we had so much time left. There was so much time to do whatever we wanted to do. Today is the end of week five and I can't believe I have only three weeks. Can we please rewind the whole thing?



I have learned so much during this experience and if I could go back, I wouldn't change anything. Because I do believe everything happens for a reason. I know in my last journal I wrote how I got robbed. Today, I want to write about how I was only robbed, but not killed. After they stole my phone I was 100% sure I would never find it again. But that was not the case. They took my phone on Tuesday and on Friday an intern in D.C. got killed because he fought the guys when they tried to take his phone. When I read this I was speechless and happy that it wasn't and that I got robbed by probably a person in need and hunger. At least thinking that comforted me. But, the biggest surprise came until later on Thursday. The police contacted me telling me that they had found my phone. I couldn't believe they had found it. I asked the officer how did they found my phone and he told me that after that intern got killed they had an investigation to find the man that killed the intern. When they found him, they also found my phone and the phones of many other people. I was in shock when he told me this. Washington D.C. is a beautiful city and I know even though it is beautiful and there is a lot of security I need to be careful because it is a CITY and it can be dangerous.

I had an amazing week at work like always. But, this week was extremely sweet. I am saying it was sweet because my coworkers gave me a lot of candies. Julio went to Mexico and brought me a Ricaleta and a tamarindo lollipop. Oh man! I was so happy. Mexican candies are my favorite. As soon as I saw them I had to eat them. I just couldn't resist. Thank you Julio for the candies. Also, Lisa Gillette gave the whole OME team their favorite candy to celebrate her ten year anniversary at the Office of Migrant Education. She gave me huge bag of skittles. Thank you Lisa for being so thoughtful. I love the Office of Migrant Education, but I love the people the most. They are so nice and caring. I just feel at home when I am there.



Also, I had a chance to speak with my boss Lisa Ramirez. She is just amazing. We were talking about our life and I just love to hear her advice and how she has overcome all the obstacles in her life. I learned so much about life just by talking to her. She is extremely wise and always knows what to say to make you feel better. She is such an inspiration and I hope one day I can be more like her.

Something important that I did this week was meeting with Giev. The vice president of United Farm Workers. The other HEP/CAMP interns and I met with him to receive training on how to help all the migrant workers back in our communities. It was very helpful and I just can't wait to go back home and put everything I learned in practice.

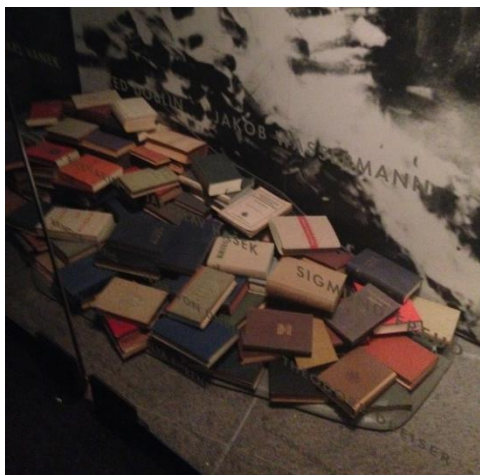
I have met many people since I got here. Before D.C. I didn't know the importance of networking, but now I do. I have been trying to stay in contact with the people I met because I know they are good resources I can contact them in future if I need something. Almost everybody here is willing to help you and wants to see you succeed.

The weekend was really fun. On Friday, I got to go to the Navy Yards Park to listen to live music. It was amazing. I went with Celeste, Pat and Araceli from OME. We had an amazing time just sitting in the grass listening to the music, eating tacos and seeing the families and people around us. The bands were playing by the river and we had an amazing view. I felt so relaxed and happy to be there.



On Saturday, I went to Alexandria for their 266<sup>th</sup> birthday. Alexandria it's a beautiful town. We walked through the stores and then by the river. The environment and people were amazing. I went with Magali one of the other HEP/CAMP interns and we just had a blast. We got cartoon drawings of ourselves and then we watched the fireworks. I have to say that after watching the ones for 4<sup>th</sup> of July in

D.C. there won't be any fire works better than that. But they were still very beautiful. I hear many people saying here in D.C. that "once you go D.C. there is no going back" and at first I didn't understand it, but now I do. There are many beautiful places as well as history in D.C. and I don't think you can find that anywhere else.



Now, that I am talking about beautiful places I will like to talk about the Holocaust Museum. I swear to you that I felt like I travelled back in time during the Holocaust period. Seeing the exhibits almost made me cry. It's a wonderful museum and it touched my soul. I think it's a very important museum because we can't forget about what happen and just

ignore it.

Since I got here I have grown so much as a person. I do want to thank the HEP/CAMP association for this opportunity I know that I wouldn't have been able to be here if it weren't for you. This has been a life changing experience. Thank you.