

In D.C. it often feels as though interns do not usually do meaningful work. I would like to say that my experience has been the complete opposite of that. Apart from me 100% enjoying the work and the people in the office, there are other things that we do that make a difference.

Something that I did in my office this week that I really enjoyed was getting to attend a presentation hosted by Dr. Lisa Ramirez and the Office of Migrant Education. Twenty-two Latino high school students from Texas and California came to visit the Department of Education. They are all part of a program called The Ivy League Project. The purpose of this program is to get more Latino students into top achieving Ivy League schools. It is a very competitive program that students have to prepare for. The visit from these students on Monday was special because the Secretary of Education, Dr. John King attended and also spoke to the students. This was the first time in at least ten years that the Secretary of Education spoke to migrant students. Another reason I really enjoyed this particular presentation was because I had the opportunity to help write briefing material and talking points for both Secretary King and Dr. Ramirez. Regardless of the size of the difference I might have made and the amount that I helped, I know one thing for sure, I really learned a lot about the work that goes on behind the scenes when a person of importance speaks to a group of people; I did my best to be much help to the person in my office who I was trying to help.

During the week we also met with Giev Kashkooli, the 2nd Vice President of the United Farm Workers. We met with him and we had the opportunity to share our stories as farmworkers with him. He also gave us information about a bill that congress will be voting on in about two weeks that negatively affects farmworkers. This bill would take rights away from farmworkers, such as designated representation, that allows the farmworker to choose someone they trust to represent them when it comes to their medical records. Giev said sometime next week we would have the opportunity to visit our congressional office and lobby against this unprogressive bill to our own congressmen and women. I am very excited to be able to fight for this cause and again, hopefully make an impact as an intern. That day I also had the opportunity to attend an event hosted by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services. The purpose of the event was to thank all of those around the country for welcoming new immigrants and citizens into the country. One of the presenters at this event stated, "there is nothing more patriotic that welcoming new citizens into your country."

Other exciting things we did this week include going up to the top of the Washington Monument. Going up there was a whole different way to experience the

monument. After that we were invited to a barbeque hosted by Krista Bustamante, who works at the State Department. I was very excited to attend the event because other Latinos who work in the government were there. I also met a few other Latinos who work on the hill and are from Idaho.

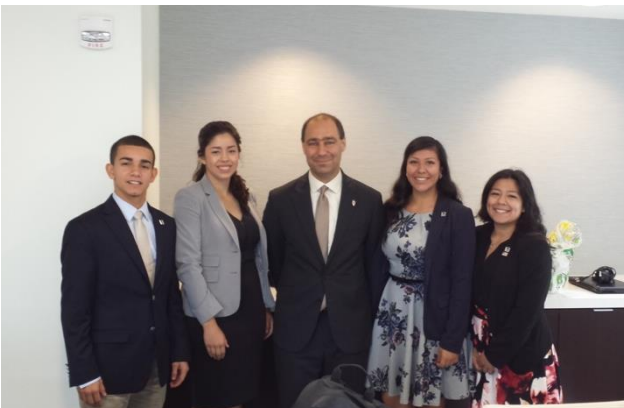
The highlight of my week definitely goes to today, Sunday. Dr. Ramirez invited us to her house in Virginia to a Vision Board Party. All of the HEP/CAMP interns attended as well as some of Lisa's friends. This activity was very relaxing and very thought provoking. It made me think about the things I want for my life and how I am going to achieve all of my goals. It was a silent activity where everyone cut pictures out of magazines and glued them on their board. The boards were divided into four sections being health, family and friends, professional and academic, and the travel. I really enjoyed this time to myself because it helped me sort out all of my goals and how I am going to get there. After the vision board party, we came back to the dorms and prepared for our fourth of July celebration.



Snapping some quick photos at the Barbeque



The White House Program for New Americans Event



Our meeting with Giev at NVG



Just in case you were wondering what the view is like from the top of the Washington Monument