

Jose Flores

Weekly Journal 8

Tuesday July 12, 2016

On Tuesday, I attended a briefing on social security and its role in lifting children out of poverty. Afterwards, I typed up a memo on what was covered in the briefing and sent it to Rob Gardner, a staffer in Sen. Schumer's office. Writing memos on the briefings and hearings allowed me to connect with different staffers within the office and it helped me garner the respect and the attention of the staffers. There were a few times when the staffers sought me out to do some work for them.

Wednesday July 13, 2016

After work, I went to volunteer at the Hilton, where the LULAC conference was to be held. There I worked with Edna from LULAC to help set up a dinner event. I was able to meet and connect with Edna who is the Civic Engagement Programs Coordinator of LULAC.

Thursday July 14, 2016

Thursday was my final day in the office. I handed out thank you letters to staffers in the office and exchanged good-byes and see-you-laters with them and had lunch with my intern co-workers.



After that, I had the honor and the privilege to meet an amazing man, a champion of Latinos, Congressman Xavier Becerra, Representative of the 34th district of California. Monse set up this meeting with the Congressman, as she was an intern in his office. Speaking with the congressman was an incredible honor. He asked us about our time in D.C. and about ourselves. He listened so intently, he seemed genuinely interested in our experiences. I believe it is partly because we are HEP/CAMP interns, a program he helped save. Another part of why he appeared so interested may be because we come from a background similar to his. He can understand our experiences as he lived through them. Finally, I also believe that he is a natural listener and naturally very good with people. I believe his genuineness has led to him winning re-election for several years as people are naturally attracted to leaders like him. His words were inspiring and empowering for us. Although it was a short meeting, I am very grateful I had the opportunity to meet him.



After the meeting with congressman, we held our Farewell Reception for the CHCI interns (us), for NextGen and for other programs under CHCI. At the ceremony, several congressmen and congresswomen spoke to us. Congressman Ruben Hinojosa, Congressman Tony Cardenas, Congresswoman Michelle Lujan Grisham, and Congresswoman Sheila Lee Jackson all spoke at the ceremony. They were all very inspirational. After the speeches, everyone took pictures outside and had a great time at the reception.



Friday July 15, 2016

Friday was the last day for CHCI programming. Domenika Lynch joined us as we talked about our internship experience. We were all asked to choose a word to describe the experience and then explain why we chose the word we chose. I chose hope, and I chose this word because after hearing the stories of my fellow peers, my faith in humanity was restored. I was inspired by the incredible stories of my peers, and I saw the future leaders of America before my eyes. I liked what I see. The future leaders were people who looked more like the America I know. Seeing all these young Latino professionals with ambitious goals for their communities made me understand that the future of our country was in good hands. This activity was one of my favorites as everyone shared how the internship affected their lives.

Saturday July 16, 2016

On Saturday we volunteered with LULAC at their celebration concert. We were able to enjoy the concert and dance some salsa to Gilberto Santa Rosa and AB Quintanilla. I enjoyed a night of dancing and hanging out with my fellow CAMP peers. After the concert, we were hungry so we went to our favorite wing spot, Wingo's, which is located in Georgetown and I chowed down on some chicken wings.

Sunday July 17, 2016

Lisa invited the CAMPees/ CAMPers to her house for a surprise birthday party for one of our very own, Monse. There we enjoyed burgers and hot dogs in her back porch. For the evening, we had a mini talent show. I was asked to present my newly acquired salsa dancing skills for Lisa and her audience. I was pleasantly joined by a friend of Lisa's, Michelle. Michelle is an amazing salsa dancer, so she taught me a few new fancy moves to add to my already incredible set of salsa skills. We had other performers that evening. We had Crystal, a fellow CAMPees/ CAMPer

sing a song of her parent's homeland. It was very moving, her incredible singing brought tears to the eyes of those who were fortunate enough to witness the grand event. While I did not cry, I allowed her the satisfaction of my approval. Another performer was another friend of Lisa's. I believe his name is Ralph but I might be wrong. Regardless, Ralph sang us a Frank Sinatra song. It was one of the most beautiful songs I have ever heard. It brought a flood of tears to the face of many; however, I somehow managed to remain dry upstairs. After his extraordinary performance, I exchanged a few words and laughs with the incredible man to congratulate him. Mid-show, a cake was brought out for Monse! Everybody was pleasantly surprised. Lisa's daughter and her boyfriend also brought out tiramisu, which is a coffee-flavored Italian desert. It was full of deliciousness and made with love for a special friend.

Sadly, all good things must come to an end. Lisa gave us all a special gift. She gave us a story of a life; one that is full of dark moments and tough times, yet hopeful and empowering. She gave us the story of a girl turned to woman, a story to help us navigate our own lives. She gave us her story, wrapped between two covers and written on the pages of a book.