

Gustavo Flores
Weekly Journal

I was amazed by the city the first day I landed in DC. I have always admired the city by what I have seen on television or in pictures but everything is much prettier in person. So far, it has been a great experience being in a city rich with history, delicious foods, and phenomenal sites. Beyond the scenery, I have experienced a thrilling first week of orientation. CHCI has done a tremendous job preparing us for the following weeks to come as interns in Capital Hill by providing us with all of the resources necessary to succeed. I'd have to say that Friday's etiquette training with Sharon Eliatamby and the discussion about Hispanic Research with Mark Lopez were my favorite activities of orientation week. Sharon's presentation was very resourceful because she helped reinforce the importance of how to properly connect in today's world of etiquette. Simply knowing what to do and when to do it can have a big effect because how one handles oneself gives a strong clue about one's confidence and professionalism, as mentioned by Sharon. Mark's presentation had more statistics but it was equally exciting. It was interesting learning about the increasing percentage of Latinos living in different regions of the country. It was even more interesting taking into consideration the tremendous growth of our ethnic group throughout the course of America's history.

I consider myself very fortunate for many reasons, but I am beyond happy for embarking in this life-changing experience with all the other CAMP and CHCI interns. They are all young, motivated Latino leaders with big aspirations and a huge amount of potential. The staff has also been very welcoming and very resourceful. You can tell they are all passionate about what they do and it really does show with the work they do for us. Patrick Doone, the HEP/CAMP coordinator, in particular has been extremely helpful to the CAMP interns and me as we settle down in DC. None of us have ever been in DC, where everything is so different than what we are used to, but he always made us feel safe as we explored the city using the metro system. Our transition to DC would have not gone as smoothly had he not been here to guide us.

Above all, I am thankful for all those who have made this trip possible. Never in my wildest dreams would I have ever dreamt of interning in our nation's capital during the summer when I would have usually been working in the fields back in California.