

Consuelo Aileen Contreras

HEP/ CAMP intern

June 21, 2015.

Week 2

My First week as an intern at the Office of Migrant Education (OME) was amazing. I am very happy that work with such a wonderful team. I feel so welcome in the office. I love our work environment and I really appreciate that they are always willing to teach me because I know they are taking time from their jobs to help me. I am very excited to work on the different projects they have assigned me. But most important I am grateful to have the opportunity to be an intern in the department OME. They have made clear to me that I am not just one more intern in Washington DC, I am a member of the team and it feels great to be part of something so special. My boss Lisa Ramirez is a wonderful caring leader and I admired her so much. She has



become one of my role models. Even though she is really busy she has taken the time to talk to me and get know me. I have to say I am very lucky to be able to learn from her since she has helped and impacted so much the migrant community. Also, my supervisor Tara is always there for me to support me. The thing I like the most about her is that she doesn't mind teaching me even though she has an extremely busy schedule. I am thankful to have such a patient caring supervisor. We also have Celeste. She has great working skills and I am

looking forward to learn some of those amazing skills. I remember my first day I work I was so scared and I felt I was going to pass out. My legs were shaking. But then I met Pat. She was extremely welcoming and helped me settle in. I was so happy to have Pat helping me, she is so wise and there were not questions she didn't have an answer for. I do want to take the time to thank Steven for helping me so much my first day at work with all my technical problems and Debbi for having chocolates at my desk. Those chocolates made a difference in my life. I know I still have a lot to learn, but I am so lucky to have such an amazing team by my side.

I also attended the Wine and Cheese event hosted by the Head Start program. I was amazed to hear the interns tell their story in public. I know how terrifying it can be to say your story and the barriers they have gone through to be where they are. But it was very inspiring to listen to them. It gave me motivation to talk about my story because I want to impact people as much as they impacted me by sharing their story. Something I have learned



during these two weeks is that people want to know our stories and we should not be embarrassed of our story, instead we should embrace who we are and the way it made us be the way we are.

On Friday I had a meeting with CHCI. This has been my favorite meeting so far. I learned so much about public speaking and the way you should talk to people according to their personalities. We also had a financial adviser that came to talk to us about how to manage our money and how to help our parents on their retirement. As a Hispanic/Latina these have been



topics I have never touched on with my family and I am so happy I am learning so many different things in DC and I can go back to the community and share all this information with them. I am thankful that the HEP/CAMP Association has facilitated all this for us.

I do have to say that Saturday was my favorite day. Some of the other girls and I went kayaking. I had never done that before, therefore I was completely new to it. As soon as we got there I asked the workers where I could leave my purse and they said that I could take it with me. I didn't want to because I see people doing it in the movies and they always fall. I was completely sure I was going to fall as well. Lucky, Magaly one of the interns and I didn't fall. It was so relaxing to be out in the water admiring the beautiful city. I was so happy to be out doing something new, something that I never thought I would have a chance to do. These simple things are the ones that I will never forget because they give me the motivation to get going. Later at night, I hung out with some of the CHCI interns, Carmen and Zaira. We played Charades. Once again something I never played. But it was extremely fun. Since I came to DC I have done so many new things and met so many people. This has been a life changing experience; I truly believe I will learn more in these 8 weeks than in my whole life.



There is a variety of food in DC, but my favorite so far has been the Georgetown Cupcakes. Even though many people say there were not amazed by them I have to say I was.



They are so good, definitely the best cupcakes I ever had. My favorite was the coconut one. I just can't wait to keep tasting more food that I never tried and hopefully I will find another favorite dish that is not a cupcake before I leave.

Lastly, I went to the textile museum. It was so amazing to see all this beautiful clothing that was made many, many years ago. I was speechless when I saw all the little details that were once done by just sewing. What is more amazing to me is the significance of the clothing. The clothing represented their religion, where they

were from, their social status and many other things. Today there are so many machines that made all the designs in our clothes and we dress according to what is in fashion. I wish our clothing had a bigger meaning.

I can't wait to see what new experiences I will encounter this week and I am ready to learn and explore from this amazing city.