

My Journal

By Karla Denise Arana
Week of June 2-10, 2018

When I arrived in Washington DC the first day, I realized how amazing this opportunity is and how thankful I am to intern with the HEP/CAMP Association. The first person I met when I arrived in Washington DC was Patrick Doone, the HEP/CAMP Association Internship Coordinator. Patrick has been willing to help us as interns and be a support system for us. He truly made the first week an unforgettable experience! Meeting the other interns was also an amazing experience because they are people who I can relate with and who share similar experiences as me.



The second day I began to explore the city. I was in Washington DC, ready to make this a life-changing experience, and make long lasting relationships. As I spent the day with the other HEP/CAMP interns, I knew we were going to be good friends and they were going to be part of my life forever. As I was admiring the beautiful buildings, I also started noticing the diversity of people around me, making reality set in. I was shocked as I realized how the diversity within the city population contrasts with the lack of diversity on Capitol Hill.

During the week, I attended the CHCI orientation, where I met the other CHCI interns. The CHCI orientation week was very helpful in preparing me for my upcoming weeks working in Capitol Hill. I was exposed to the concept of networking, which I learned is essential to being successful in Washington DC, and during orientation, I met many wonderful and successful people who are willing to help me and the other interns during every step of our internship, and of our careers.



During my first week, I also visited the office where I will be interning and met the staff who works with Congresswoman Roybal-Allard. The entire staff there was very warm and welcoming, which helped ease the nervousness in me. I visited the White House, which is an experience I'll never forget! Just being in Washington DC motivates me to keep working hard towards my goal of improving my community and bringing more diversity into Capitol Hill. I hope each week continues to be filled with enriching experiences where I gain more knowledge on how to help the Hispanic Community.