

HEP/CAMP National Internship Program Week 5
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This week was pretty nice and relaxing. On Monday, it was a quiet day at the office. Justin, an office legal staff, let us out early because he decided that we could use a little break from work. So when I got off work I went grocery shopping at Walmart and made a nice dinner back home.

On Tuesday, I was catching up on work emails and some overdue Netflix time. At night, a couple of the interns decided to celebrate 4th of July with a pizza party and a movie night. That night was a night where we all started connecting on a personal level and I am glad that I have met all these amazing people this summer.

On the 4th of July, we attended the National Independence Day Parade, it was a long parade but it was filled with so many performances! After the parade, a couple of us walked around National Mall and really took in the symbolic messages of each monument. Many of the monuments represented an individual from American history who has influenced society or has made an impact. One day I hope to be one of those monuments.



Unfortunately, I was not able to watch “A Capitol Fourth” live at Capitol Hill, but we were able to watch the fireworks from the Washington Monument. I enjoyed the fireworks because Washington D.C. is full of patriotism. People from different cultures smiling, seeing the colors of red, white, and blue in the sky showed how proud they are to be American. I am proud to be an American with a Mexican background.

On Thursday, I was preparing to schedule calls and meetings for the HEP/CAMP directors. It did get difficult because some directors are harder to reach than Congress members. After scheduling meetings, I got ready to start meeting with members of Congress about the Fairness for Farm Workers Act. Next week, I will begin to experience what lobbying is. Fortunately, I was placed in a lobbying office so I have been getting advice from all the staff.

On Friday, I was able to meet Alex Wirth, CEO of Quorum, a public affairs platform. He gave us plenty of business and entrepreneurial advice (I was ready to start my own business!!!). After meeting with him, he suggested we connect with him on LinkedIn and possibly contact him in the future for any job opportunities. Then, we met the communications specialist Ruben, from Fair Vote, an organization that pushes for the end of unfair gerrymandering. I stayed in touch with him because there is a Fair Vote in California and I would like citizens to understand their voting rights and exercise that right with confidence.

This weekend was a little crazy. A couple of interns and I decided to go hiking. I have never been hiking before so my idea of hiking was walking up a FLAT trail to the top. When we were heading to Old Rag Mountain, I expected it to be small like the mountains back home in the Central Valley. The hike was 10 miles overall and it took us 7 hours to go through the whole “hill!” I was exhausted after each step, but I knew I wanted to get to the top to see the view. I struggled each time because my body was aching after jumping from rock to rock. Everyone

was pushing me to keep going and I didn't think it was possible for me to do it. Other hikers would pass by us and encourage me as well saying that the top was not far. I pushed myself to the top and my body was bruised and cut from the rocks, but I was glad to see the beautiful view.

This week was tough, but not as tough as climbing Old Rag Mountain. However, next week I start lobbying for the Fairness for Farm Workers Act and I am very excited!

