



This week proved to be very fast-paced but filled with smiling faces. I was able to finally meet all the directors and members that make up the National HEP/CAMP Association! The ability to converse and relate with these individuals made me so grateful and proud to have been able to represent them throughout my time here in Washington D.C. Having a small part in helping them throughout the various sessions and meetings filled me with a sense of pride and a greater appreciation for all the work they do for students like me. The most impactful moments of the week would have to be meeting with Oregon Congressmen, our CHCI graduation, and running into Perla Delgado.

Understandably I was quite nervous when I found out that I would be meeting with some of our Oregon Congress Members on Monday. Knowing that Amas would be accompanying me eased some of my nerves but saying the wrong thing also frightened me. Yet many of the directors I was surrounded by encouraged me to speak up. They reminded me of the importance of my voice at the moment because I am the proof of what programs like the High School Equivalency Program and College Assistance Migrant Program can do for students that come from adversity can do with given opportunities. We are a community that is of need but also very hardworking and eager to make the most of what we are given. Programs like these are a starting point for many students to continue their pursuit of a higher education, enter the military, or obtain a higher occupational position that is often less physically straining. Knowing that our ambitions are supported and promoted only encourages us to bring others alongside us. We become mentors to others in our community which we see potential in, thus advancing our society as a whole.



On Wednesday I was filled with joy being surrounded by other Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute interns that contributed in making my time here in D.C. memorable. Being surrounded by some of the brightest and widely diverse group help me grow as a person. My perspectives were challenged and broadened week by week alongside them. Many of them opening up about their lives and struggles that made me reevaluate my own life. They forever impacted me along with CHCI to continue being a proud civically engaged Latina in my own community.

Finally, I was happily surprised when I ran into Perla Delgado. I hadn't recognized her, but she had remembered me from the Annual Directors Meeting from earlier in the week. While we were talking about how my internship experience had been thus far I noticed her daughter Paloma beside us just waiting for us to end the conversation. She reminded me both of my younger self and of my younger sisters back home. They humbly invited me to explore some of D.C. with them that evening and we ended up walking for hours on end! Thankfully they didn't tire out too quickly and we were able to grab dinner and talk until the sunset. This experience gave me a sense of home that I yearned for and ended my week perfectly.