

HEP/CAMP National Internship Program Week 8  
Noel Lopez-Gomez  
CSU Sacramento

Last week was the best week here in DC! The Annual Directors Meeting this past week was filled with joy. I was able to see some familiar faces: Patrick and the CAMP director at Sacramento State, Viridiana Diaz. I was glad to see them and go to the ADM. It was a small break from the meetings I had to do in the Hill. The first day of the ADM was only half day and the rest of the day, the majority of CAMP directors went to do hill visits to their Congress members to inform them about CAMP. These are the type of hill visits I like, meeting Congress members and not pushing them to support a piece of legislation.

Irene set up a meeting for me with my member of Congress and Congresswoman Matsui encouraged me to continue my path to public service. I told her that I want to represent my home district in California, District 22. I come from an unstable family with very little financial stability because my parents were undocumented field workers and when I met Congresswoman Matsui she gave me hope that I will be a future Congress member, "You're going to be very successful and maybe one day, my colleague." Words of encouragement from a leader you hope to be one day, really motivates you. When I got back home, I finished my homework for my summer classes that week.

Tuesday afternoon, some interns and I attended the "Walmart Renewing Our Commitment to CBCF and CHCI." Walmart senior leadership members, CHCI and CBCF interns were there to appreciate the donation of Walmart to two amazing programs. Congressman Joaquin Castro and Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee were there to show their support. We saw Domenika Lynch, president of CHCI. We thanked her again for her efforts with CHCI and making amazing opportunities like this possible for interns.

After this summer, if someone was to show me a picture of a CA, TX, NY, or FL Congress member I would most likely know who they are. When I turned around to get more food at the reception, I see Congressman Correa of CA. The interns and I introduced ourselves and Correa said hi and pushed his son to talk so he can finish eating. We were able to connect with his son, he told us how it is having a Congress member as a parent (he told us he is a staffer to his father but doesn't get paid), and how it's like interning at the Library of Congress this summer. His son asked me what I wanted to do and I told



him run for Congress and he smiled and then went to get his father. Congressman Correa gave me advice on how to run a campaign and gave me his business card so I can schedule a meeting with him. I was very happy after today and was ready to run for office!

Wednesday morning, I had the Constituent Breakfast with Senator Dianne Feinstein. I was ecstatic to meet a California Senator who has been active with various issues. She had to leave early because she had a hearing, but I will get a picture with her one day, and possibly her endorsement.

It was also the last day of the ADM. The interns said goodbye to all the HEP/CAMP directors. A lot of directors congratulated me for getting this opportunity and taking advantage of it.

The CHCI graduation was a memorable night. I met with Congressman Jimmy Gomez, Congressman Tony Cardenas, Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard, and Congressman Salud Carbajal. I thanked them for their service to California and asked on how to have a successful campaign. The members of Congress congratulated all of us and are ready to see what we will do now.

All 30 of us graduated from an amazing program and are now CHCI Alumni! I am so glad to have spent this summer with 28 other amazing people and jumpstart my political journey!

The HEP/CAMP interns celebrated by going to our favorite place, Bertucci's with Patrick, his wife, and two HEP/CAMP directors.

Friday night was a bittersweet night. It was the last night with the CHCI interns as they were all leaving on Saturday. We ate Costco pizza and talked about our favorite moments from the summer. I enjoyed this night. I am glad I made lifetime friends and future colleagues.

As my internship comes to an end, I do hope one day we will all reunite and make a difference in this nation and proudly represent the Latinx community.

