

## Final Journal

Reflecting and reminiscing were the key factors of my last week in DC. The time did not stop this summer. I still hold vivid memories of the first day in DC; I remember the nerves and excitement as my plane landed. I remember that I specifically feared the unknown. What was expected of me? What was the whole experience going to do for me? Am I good enough?

This internship has transformed me and my life. The experience was beyond what words can describe. As I sat there thinking about what I would say in my last journal, the many thoughts in my head contrasted my ability to express the true impact this internship has had on me. My heart is full of gratitude. The amount of knowledge I have gained from interning was life changing. At the end of the day what HEP/CAMP Association does for students like me is create a domino effect. You see, because of the support I had from the association, BSU CAMP and this internship, I strive to serve my community. Each day I was interning and learning, it pushed my passion for my future career goals. The direct impact this has on me is beyond exceptional, but what it does for my parents is the beautiful part.

Before I left on this internship I knew I would miss home because while I am having a great experience learning, my parents stay working to provide. My father recently had surgery, but it wasn't successful. This summer, he was still in pain but pushed through and went back to hard physical labor. 3 months of working passed the pain, we went to doctor when I got home, and the doctor had said that he was working through 3 months of infection and lack of healing from the past surgery. Seeing my father in such a vulnerable state triggered me and put me in deep thought. What this story has to do with my internship is that each day I learn and grow will lead to the day my parents will no longer have to struggle and work through the pain. What this program does is create the hope of better days through empowerment and enlightenment through education.

Education has the power to change lives and create change for communities with a lack of representation. I am excited and eager to keep learning and growing this year and the many years to come. I am proud of where I am and who I am. I am no longer going to be silenced, I have gained courage this summer to stand up and speak out. I am a future change maker as well as other young Latinx individuals. Thank you, HEP/CAMP Association, for this wonderful opportunity.

