

Week 3: Washington D.C. Through the Scope of My Eye



I am a witness of the indefinite changes that are happening in Washington, D.C. My third week of my internship made me aware of how Congress is extremely meticulous and crazy at the same time. I am starting to believe that Washington, D.C. is a whole separate world compared to the rest of the United States. Overall, my first full week of working in the office of Congressman Raul Grijalva was great! Frankly speaking, I felt more confident in the assignments that I was given, and I felt more confident answering phone calls and providing research for the staff members. Needless to say, apart from my peaks, I also had times where I became stressed. I do not let these negative thoughts flood my mind and I move on to the tasks at hand. One of my major assignment was to

take a co-sponsorship on behalf of Congressman Grijalva to the cloakroom. Walking through the tunnels and halls outside the cloakroom in the House Floor made me feel like I had an incredible responsibility in my hands. Although my poor sense of direction provides a disadvantage, I always find my way through the Capitol. I also had the opportunity to escort constituents to the House Gallery.



On Wednesday, I attended a press conference of the Committee of Natural Resources, where Congressman Grijalva leads as the Chair, to announce the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Permanent Funding Act. I am surprised to see that actions are being made in order to secure and conserve the environment. Perhaps I have this perception because Congressman Grijalva works directly with environmental issues, but it seems that the media is disregarding the efforts of representatives that are diligently working to fix environmental issues. I am glad I am able to witness this event as it allows for me to create an internal discussion over such topics. I question the reality that I know through the eyes of the world wide web, and real-life events as they are.



Aside from work, I attended a tri-caucus networking event where I had the chance to connect with the Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies and Congressional Black Caucus Foundation interns. It was overwhelming because of the large crowd in a small space, but I was enlightened to have conversations with the other interns and their experiences. To add the cherry on top of the event, the food was amazing.



On the Friday's scheduled program, I attended class along with my new roommate, Wendy. One of the things that stuck out



to me was the long conversations between the professor and the interns during lecture. I'm not going to lie, I honestly thought the interns were dragging out lecture, and I did not understand why the professor did not move on with the next topic. It was later explained over dinner with the CAMP interns that having class conversations for an extended period of time was normal. Perhaps it is due to my science major that I do not

have extended conversations with professors during class. We typically ask a question or two and move on with the slides and lecture. It was definitely eye opening.



That same day, we had the opportunity to visit the National Museum of African American History and Culture. Since it is a relatively new museum, it is difficult to gain access because of the large crowds of people wanting to see the exhibit. The museum allows guests to not only see, understand and feel the struggle, injustice, discrimination, torture, and fear that African Americans experienced through time, but it also exhibited the success, fight, and achievements. There were displays such as photographs of African American men being lynched with a crowd of white people surrounding the horrifying scene. One of the most memorable, yet heart wrenching displays, was the open casket of the 14-year-old boy, Emmet Till. The

pain that his mother went through and her brave decision to have an open casket funeral with his pictures placed around his body is a hard and sorrowful one.

On the weekend, I had the chance to visit the White House and the National Mall in the morning with my roommate, Wendy, and fellow intern, Eduardo. The views of the landmarks are definitely different at night and day. We walked through the Franklin Roosevelt Memorial, Thomas Jefferson Memorial, Martin Luther King Memorial, the Washington Monument, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, World War II Memorial, and the Eisenhower Executive Office Building. The thought and symbolism that is placed on the memorials is extraordinary and genius. So much history pours over these monuments, and I get to see them before my own eyes. I wonder if years from now, we will have a historical figure who future generations will look back on, and I will be able to reflect on those historical moments.



Later that afternoon, I went kayaking with Julie, Rosa, Metzlin and Eduardo near the Francis Scott Key Bridge. I loved every single second I spent on the boat. I paddled like there was no tomorrow, and stopped to absorb the view and drag my hands along the Potomac River under me. I definitely want to go kayaking as many times as possible before the day for me to leave comes. As we all know, time flies by in a blink of an eye when you are having fun, am I right?

