

Rosa Carballo  
University of Washington  
HEP/CAMP Association Intern  
Office of Migrant Education  
Week 1

*“Every moment is an organizing opportunity, every person a potential activist, every minute a chance to change the world.” –Dolores Huerta*

When I first started the application process for this internship, I remember intensely scanning over all the weekly journals that were posted on The National HEP CAMP Association webpage and admiring all the amazing and memorable moments that the interns had the opportunity to experience. I was very timid in my application because I felt like I was not as bright as the other interns and I had a lot of self-doubt during the weeks leading up to the application deadline. However, as I started to write my personal statement, I was able to illuminate my passion for advocacy regarding Latinx individuals, specifically farmworkers, and my devotion ultimately allowed me to develop confidence in myself and my application. Throughout the duration of my nine-week internship, I will highlight my experiences as a HEP/CAMP intern and as an intern of the Office of Migrant Education. My weekly bios will consist of life-changing moments, challenges, achievements and pictures, lots of pictures. I hope my journal entries act as a symbol of encouragement and motivation to always believe in yourself and your abilities because never in a million years did I think a young Latina like myself would be interning in an astonishing city like Washington D.C.



When I landed at Ronald Reagan National Airport, I called my mom to assure her that I had arrived safely and I texted Patrick to notify him that I had landed. Patrick is a HEP CAMP director at the University of South Florida and was also our intern coordinator who acted as our guide and support system for the first week as we learned to navigate D.C. At the airport, I met up with Betsy who was Patrick's wife and the other five interns. This summer I am interning with Julia, Marlene, Eduardo and Catherine. We had a sixth intern; however, she left due to a family emergency. Patrick also informed us of a 6<sup>th</sup> intern who will be arriving in week two of the internship and of possibly a 7<sup>th</sup> intern who could fill the position of the intern who left. When I stepped outside of the airport, I remember feeling the rush of hot air hitting my face and the humidity making my curly hair poof up. Back home, people would tell me how hot and swampy the temperature was; however, I still was taken by surprise when I initially stepped outside. On the first night, we settled into our hotels and later ate dinner at Bertucci's, which is an Italian restaurant. At the restaurant, we got to learn a bit more about each other and that was really nice to hear different stories from people who came from the same background as me. When we were walking back to our hotel, Patrick mentioned how the White House is a few blocks away from where we were staying and Catherine and I suggested we go see it. So, we all ventured to go see different historical monuments that I had only ever seen in pictures or in movies. Seeing all the different monuments like the White House, Washington Monument and Lincoln Memorial was such a unique experience that made it seem like I was in a dream. Going to Washington D.C. was my first ever time on the East Coast and coming from Washington State, everything was just so brand new to me. Patrick was there to answer all of our questions and he was very eager to show us around, which made me feel very appreciative of him being there with us. The next day, we got to settle into our dorms at the George Washington University. My dorm has its own private bathroom and a kitchen which is really convenient. After settling into our dorms, we went around town and Patrick showed us how to use the metro, which is a train that runs underground and serves as one of the primary public transportation systems for the D.C. area. The metro still seems a bit difficult to use for me, but I am sure with time I will start to get the hang of it. Patrick took us to target in Columbia Heights where we got to buy things we needed for our dorm. Columbia Heights is a really cool area with a large Hispanic population and there was even some people selling some *fruta picada* and *elotes*. On Monday, we had a chance to go visit some Smithsonian museums in an area known as the national mall. We visited the Museum of Natural History and I got to see so many cool statues and got to learn a lot about wildlife. That same day, we also got to see the Memorial Day parade and it was neat seeing the different marching bands across the country. On Tuesday, we began our Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI) training with 25 other interns throughout the country. Seeing a room filled with impressive and educated Hispanics made me feel very proud of my culture and I truly was inspired by a lot of them. Throughout the week we learned a lot about what the organization was and as well as how to succeed at our offices. A lot of former CHCI alumni would come in and share their experiences as interns in D.C. and that was very reassuring and motivating to witness. On Thursday, we got to meet with our offices and that was relieving to meet with the people we will be working with before our first day. Friday was Patrick's last day with us before he headed back home to Florida and we went to El Chalán, a Peruvian restaurant, to discuss how the week went and also the work weeks ahead of us. It was saddening seeing Patrick go, but I feel way more confident maneuvering myself within the city and knowing I am in good hands with CHCI. On Saturday, we got the opportunity to join the CHCI interns on the ropes course activity, which was such a fun experience and I felt like I got a lot closer with the CHCI interns.



This week has been overall, a surreal experience and I cannot believe I have accomplished so much in only one week. The quote above sets the stage for how I want my internship experience to be like. I have learned throughout the week that this internship is something that not a lot of people get to experience and because of that, I need to treasure every single moment and take every opportunity that comes my way. My mission is to make the most out of my internship and I intend to achieve that objective with networking, building positive relationships and ultimately being my true self who wants to bring change to the injustices that my Latinx and other marginalized communities face. Every moment that I am here is a chance for me to learn something new and take back to my community back home. Thank you to everyone who has supported me so far in my journey and I cannot wait to see what this internship experience will bring for me in the future.