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Week 2

“You should never view your challenges as a disadvantage. Instead, it’s important for you to understand that your experience facing and overcoming your adversity is actually one of your biggest advantages.” –Michelle Obama

This week was the beginning of my internship at the Office of Migrant Education. On Monday, I took the metro with Catherine and Julia and surprisingly, we arrived at our destination at the Department of Education with no complications. The metro was busy but that was expected as it was 8:00 a.m. on a Monday. My morning began with a small tour to Catherine’s and Julia’s offices and then we ventured to where my office was located. The Department of Ed has seven stories and the Office of Migrant Education is located on the third floor, which is where I am working at. Due to the fact that my background security check had not been cleared, I was not able to receive my badge, which meant that I had to be escorted in and out of the building. When I arrived at my office, I introduced myself to my coworkers and they all seemed very eager and pleased to see me. My first day consisted of a few reading assignments regarding the implications of the Office of Migrant Education and the different programs that the office oversees. I also was given a building tour by my lovely co-worker, Carla. Carla is such a fun and insightful individual and she has really made my first week such a fun time. During my tour, I found out that the Department of Ed has a library in the basement where anyone can come in and take a reading break whenever, which is something that I definitely see myself doing in the future. On Thursday, I attended a CHSA networking event where I got to learn a bit more about the group and what they are dedicated to. Attending these networking events not only allows one to get free food but they are also great opportunities to connect with people from all over with different backgrounds and that is something that is very important especially in a city such as Washington D.C. The Department of Education is about 15 minutes walking distance from the Capitol building and where most of the briefings and hearings are held at. I recommend planning out any specific briefings you are interested in so that you can let your supervisor know that you will be gone for a specific amount of time. My supervisors at the Office of Migrant Ed really capitalize on my internship experience so they are very flexible in allowing me to attend an event that is on the hill or outside the office. After CHCI programming on Friday, a few of the HEP CAMP interns and I made a small trip to Georgetown to visit the famous Georgetown cupcakes. These cupcakes are definitely over-hyped and over-priced but the experience was very unique and it is something that every intern should do just to do since Georgetown is about a 20-minute walk from the GW campus. On Saturday, my roommate Metzlin arrived from Oregon state. Other HEP CAMP interns and myself, greeted Metzlin at the airport and we took her to a restaurant in Columbia Heights that had pupusas and other Latinx foods. I was really excited to finally meet my roommate since being by myself was starting to feel lonely and boring. I am really grateful to have a roommate now because it feels like I have a whole new friend that I have connected with in such a short amount of time.

The quote from Michelle Obama reminded me of something the director of OME, Lisa Gillette, emphasized to me on the first day of my internship. After I told her my background on farm work and a bit about my family, she really stressed the idea that all of the experiences that I have faced as a young child have ultimately created the smart, independent and resilient individual that I am today. Lisa explained how I need to take pride in my upbringing because not a lot of other interns come from the background that I do, which sets me apart and allows me to bring a whole new perspective and dedication to the workplace. Lisa made me feel very proud of my community and my background, which empowers me to embrace my adversity and use that as an advantage to always give everything my all and be a representation of the hard work ethic that is prevalent in my community.

