

Wendy Cueto

Week 3 Journal

Although it is week three of the program, this has been my first week in Washington, D.C. The process to get here was so quick that I cannot believe that I am actually here. Just last week I did not know how my interview with Representative Anthony Gonzalez's office had gone or, if I would be hired. On Monday morning, I received a call from Patrick Doone, – the HEP /CAMP Internship Coordinator who has supported me throughout this process – informing me that Representative Gonzalez's office was interested in offering me the internship opportunity and that I needed to leave for D.C. on Thursday.

The beginning of this week consisted of preparing for my travel to Washington D.C. as well as trying to accommodate as much bonding time with my family as possible. I knew that I would miss my family because I did not have much time to mentally prepare to leave so soon again, but that made me appreciate the time with them even more. I am truly appreciative to receive this opportunity and equally excited to venture off into a new experience.

Thursday arrival and I felt prepared for the travel day ahead. My travel to D.C. required two flights and endless coffee, but I finally arrived. At the airport, Sam who works closely with the CAMP interns in D.C. met me. She showed me how to navigate the metro system and helped me get settled in what would be my home for the next few weeks. I am very grateful for Sam's help and for all the support that I have received which has eased my transition. On Thursday, I also met my roommate Marlene and another CAMP intern, Eduardo. Marlene made me feel welcomed and we got to know one another better.

On Friday, I attended my first Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute seminar where I was able to meet the other CAMP/CHCI interns. Everyone was friendly and I noticed a comfort within the group during class discussion. We talked about the generational loss of native language and explored what it means to identify as Latinx or Hispanic. While hearing and sharing input with the group, I learned that everyone is passionate about expanding the Latinx representation within government offices so that there is equal representation of our community for the future of our people. This is something that I can relate to and it brings me satisfaction to know that the people that surround me share common interests, which will also motivate me.

I had the opportunity to visit the National Museum of African American History and Culture. This was such a breathtaking experience and I learned so much. The museum is so well thought out in terms of placement and details of exhibits that it makes your whole experience remarkable. I barely had enough time to go through all the floors, and during this visit, I was able to appreciate the African American History, as I was able to find similarities with the history of Latinx. These similarities were noticed through their mutual efforts for civil rights and their contributions to music and sports. I truly loved seeing how the museum was so popular and busy because it demonstrates the importance of the history that was being admired.





Friday evening served as bonding time for all of the CAMP interns. We had dinner at Bertuccis, an Italian restaurant, where we unwound, laughed, and made plans.

On Saturday, Marlene, Eduardo, and I went on a tour of the city. I got to see many of the historical monuments and the memorials that are located within the city. Among my favorites was the place where Martin Luther King Jr. gave his “I Have a Dream” speech and the Washington Monument. Both, gave spectacular views of the city which provided me with the perfect moment to reflect what it really means to be here as a Latina migrant farmworker. All of the memorials are to honor those who gave their lives to serve others and through this experience, I feel that it is my purpose to do that same as well. I am grateful for the opportunity to begin working in the first republican

House office that has accepted interns from The National HEP CAMP Association. I plan to make my journey here one that is filled with knowledge and purpose for the improvement of our peoples’ future.

