

“Young Bright Minds”

Journal Week 5

By: Catherin Flores Grandos



Week five has flown by quicker than I expected since I arrived. I believe it was because I have been enjoying myself a lot with all the new experiences. I was also excited because I was finally able to get my badge for work! It took a long time and it was something I was struggling with for a couple of weeks, which limited my work. Everyone helped me to make sure I was able to get my badge, especially my bosses. Now I can walk around without escorts and attend any hearing or briefings without worrying if there are enough escorts that could take me back to the office.

This week I was able to have a one on one lunch with Tara Ramsey, the Director of State and Grantee Relations. She took me to the Native American Museum where they had a variety selection of cuisine from different tribes. We spoke about the future and living in D.C. It was so great to have time to speak with her and I felt very honored. She provided great advice or me and she was able to teach me so much. I was so excited to have this opportunity.



The highlight of my week was being able to give high schoolers from Puerto Rico a tour of the capital. CHCI created a program for high schoolers around the country to be able to come to Washington D.C for a couple days to attend leadership seminars, explore the city, and get a chance to meet with representatives. I was on the schedule for the second week to work with the New York Students, which was great. I also decided to help with the rest of the students for the first week. All the students had bright mindsets and were very focused on making Puerto Rico a better place. I found it funny how I'm usually always the one being told I have young bright mind and now I finally had the chance to tell someone else the same. My favorite moment of this experience was meeting Congresswoman Nydia Velázquez from New York. The students were very excited to meet with her, because she was the first Puerto Rican women to be elected to Congress. When we saw her, we all ran to the Senate floor to take pictures with her, because she was in the middle of voting. In the picture above, she is telling the students to keep striving and to keep on being the best they can be. We only had three minutes with her, but it was an amazing experience that I will never forget nor the high school students.



I also have to attend the congressional baseball game this week!! It was one of the funniest things I have ever experienced. The game was slow, so a bunch of us left early. It was still a lot of fun and we were able to get a lot of free stuff. On another note, I cannot believe that there is only four weeks left until I am done and I get to go home. The time keeps flying by and the thought of leaving also saddens me. This city has grown on me a lot and it has given me so much to think about. I hope to make the best of the rest of my time here and create opportunities to grow...