

Julia Santiago
Week 8

As I start thinking of how many days I have left in D.C, I wonder “Where did the weeks go?” As of today, I only have 13 days left! 13 days! Time here in D.C. has been wonderful. I’m feeling mixed emotions, on one hand I have gotten used to D.C, the humidity, the cramped metro, and wonderful places. On the other, I can’t wait to see my family, hug them, and go out together.

On Wednesday, I had the pleasure to be a leader for high school students from California. They were rising juniors and seniors. I took them to talk to their representatives from their districts; it made me happy to see young faces motivated and excited to meet their Congressman. I told them my experience as a first-generation student with a farm working background. First, we met with Congressman Jimmy Gomez. We all introduced ourselves and I was surprised to find out he had gone to Idaho before. He told us his story of how he started at community college then went to UCLA. What I liked about Congressman Jimmy is that he is humble and inspiring. He answered as many questions as he could in 30 minutes.

Next, we met with Congressman Pete Aguilar. From my group of 6 high school students, we had only 1 constituent from his district. She told us she had done her research and had many questions for him. Congressman Pete Aguilar told us what made him run, and it had to do with issues effecting his community. The high school students thought I was going to be there with them for the rest of their week, but were sad to find out it was just for the day. I wished them the best high school experience, gave them my business card, and told them to reach out if they needed anything.

On Thursday, my supervisor had another training for The Initiative interns. Emmanuel gave us tips and advice to make our resumes better. He told us we should have different versions of our resumes, therefore, it can suit the job or program when we apply.

Friday morning, Professor Augustine had a lecture about gentrification. Gentrification is an issue many marginalized communities face. For example, I learned about a town in California that the residents are being forced to leave because of new complexes being made. Friday afternoon all CHCI interns headed over to the U.S Department of Treasury to listen to a workshop, “Money Matters.” I got to learn about how I can access my credit report, what sites to look at my credit history, and that by checking your credit score frequently it doesn’t affect your credit history.

Friday evening, the CAMP interns attended a reception for the Celebration with Farmworker Dreamers and Dreams of Farmwork. At this reception, Migrant Seasonal Head Start interns heard stories from DREAMers. The reception ended with a wonderful Mariachi group from Florida. The best part was that they ALL come from farmworking families. This reception raised money to help the foundation. Amazing!

On Saturday morning, Wendy, Eduardo and I volunteered at a Columbian Festival. It was one of the hottest days in D.C. We helped set up tables, scan tickets, and pass out vendor badges. I tried an arepa for the first time! Despite the heat, many people attended.

Sunday evening, I had the privilege to get a tour of the White House! I saw the Oval Office and Press Room, which is smaller in person. It’s crazy to think that many Presidents have been there including Former President Barack Obama! The moment was so surreal; never did I think I would be standing

inside the White House. We had a wonderful guide and photo taker, Belsis. After the tour of the West Wing, she told us she was going to try to get us a tour for the East Wing!

Before calling it a day, I received a call from my CAMP Director, Evelina. I was going to see her the following day at the HEP CAMP Association meeting. Finally, I was going to be able to see a friendly face from Idaho that I knew.

