

Elvia Valdovinos-Cruz | HEPCAMP DC Intern

Program: *Heritage University*

Placement: *United Farmworkers of America (UFW)*

Journal Entry – Week 1

Tuesday-----

We started by introducing ourselves to the cohort. I was surprised to see that we HEP/CAMP interns were going to be trained along with other CHCI interns. Although I never expected to be able to interact with over 30 other interns from all over the country, I am glad that I had the opportunity to be part of a very diverse cohort. Furthermore, we had the opportunity to hear from Marco A. Davis', President & CEO of CHCI, career trajectory which I thought was quite amazing.

Wednesday-----

The second day of orientation was very informative and very emotional. We all had the opportunity to learn key demographic facts about the Latino population in the United States. Mark Lopez, Director of Race & Ethnicity Research, educated us on the number of Latinos in the U.S. by regions or cities, where most Latinos reside, how many can vote, and how the Latino population is changing. I also had the opportunity to participate in a “show and tell” activity in which we all had to share an object that represented us, followed by an explanation as to why it was meaningful to each of us. It was an activity that put each of us “on the spot” but that also allowed us to learn each other values.

Thursday-----

The third day we all learned about what to expect in our internships and participated in a very informative workshop on how to write for the Capitol Hill. Thanks to Brad Fitch, President & CEO

of the Congressional Management Foundation, we were exposed to intern expectations, inner workings of a congressional office, and constituent services. Equally important, with guidance from Hannah Ceja, Director of Media & Communications of Raben Group, we were able to learn new skills on how to write effective policy briefing memos and constituent letters.

Friday-----

The last day of orientation was a networking day. We learned about the best practices for networking, both in person and in a virtual setting. After learning how to network effectively, we had the opportunity to connect with Ivelisse Porroa (Policy Director), Angelica Duque (Legislative Correspondent), Sol Ortega (Deputy Director Of Engagement), and Hector Colon (Legislative Director), which allowed us to put into practice the networking skills we had just learned. Overall, it was an amazing experience that helped me to step out of my comfort zone and connect with others.