



HACU

NATIONAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

HISPANIC
ASSOCIATION
OF COLLEGES &
UNIVERSITIES

Spring 2013 Intern Newsletter

January 12 - April 27, 2013



From the Desk of the Director

This spring, we welcomed 55 students of diverse backgrounds to the first internship session of 2013. This year marks the 21st consecutive year of the HACU National Internship Program (HNIP), and we are continuously impressed by the caliber of our interns. It seems that every year they set the bar higher!

Yet the looming across-the-board cuts to federal agency budgets stand to negatively impact our program by reducing the number of talented interns that we are able to bring onboard. While the possible effects of sequestration have caused anxiety for all of us, we are positive that you will finish this session on a strong note.

As some of your fellow interns featured in this issue have related, you will make the most of the professional opportunities available within your offices during this spring session. Your contributions in these settings will function as a testimony to why programs like HNIP are so critical. We are proud of how well you have represented HNIP within your agencies and your local communities—whether here in D.C. or in field locations across the U.S.

As the session draws to a close, please stay tuned for updates regarding the HACU Capitol Forum. HNIP interns will have the opportunity to join HACU-member delegates in conducting legislative visits on the Hill. This will be an excellent chance to advocate for the need to preserve the funding streams that support HNIP and other important programs that benefit students and our Hispanic-Serving Institutions.

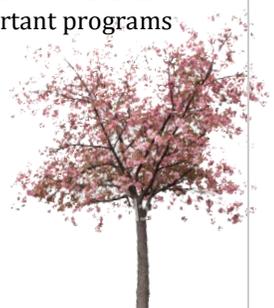
Wishing you many successes for the rest of the session,

Maria Elena Vivas-House

Maria Elena Vivas-House
HNIP Senior Executive Director

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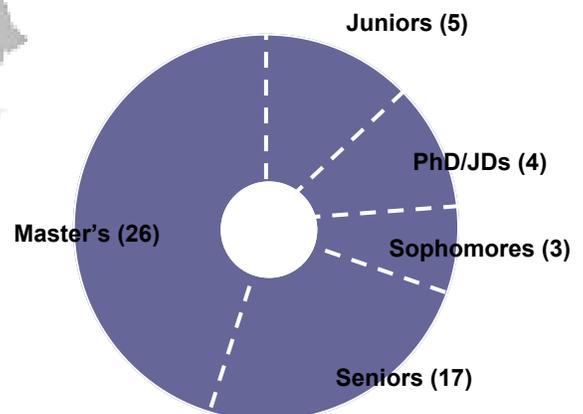
Event Calendar - Save the Date!

March 1	Fall 2013 HNIP Application Opens
March 29	U.S. Library of Congress Tour
April 4	Spring 2013 Intern Workshop
April 15 - 16	HACU National Capitol Forum
April 18	Spring 2013 Intern Farewell
April 19	Spring 2013 Final Performance Evaluations Due
May 27	Memorial Day (<i>HACU Offices Closed</i>)
May 31	Summer 2013 HNIP Session Begins
June 17	Quarter Summer 2013 HNIP Session Begins



Who are the Spring 2013 Interns?

Quick stats on the current cohort:



Thank you to our partners for their continued support!

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

Library of Congress

- Copyright Office
- Office of Strategic Initiatives

Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation

U.S. Agency of International Development

U.S. Department of Agriculture

- Agricultural Research Service
- Economic Research Service
- Forest Service
- Hispanic Serving Institutions National Program
- Natural Resources Conservation Service

U.S. Department of Commerce

- Bureau of Industry and Security

- Census Bureau

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

- National Institutes of Health

U.S. Department of Interior

- Bureau of Reclamation

U.S. Department of Transportation

- Federal Aviation Administration

U.S. Department of Treasury

- Office of the Comptroller of the Currency

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

- VA Learning University
- Veterans Health Administration

My Fascinating Experience at the Library

Tarif Ahmed
Anthropology Major
Boston University

U.S. Library of Congress
Office of Strategic Initiatives
Washington, DC



LIBRARY OF
CONGRESS

It is hard to believe that we are already halfway into our internship here in Washington, D.C. To think that I would be walking on Capitol Hill for the majority of the week is still a bit hard for me to grasp!

My work at the Library of Congress has an interesting, but not unpleasant rhythm to it. As an intern, it's eye-opening to be able to see some of the decisions that need to be made by a government agency that is this large. A very fascinating aspect I discovered about the library was how integral it is to the field of copyrights and digital property. While I may disagree with the decisions the library has made this past year regarding digital media copyrights, learning about the process in which these decisions get made was illuminating. The decision-making process involved extensive research which culminated in a rather large report called

"Section 1201 Rulemaking," and I enjoyed reading it very much. It was quite akin to a courtroom trial, and many Federal laws and previous cases were cited in the arguments and conclusions that were reached. The purpose of the guide was to aid the Librarian of Congress in making his official decisions regarding things like which areas of digital media are exempt from digital copyright laws.

We also had the HACU workshops. I think that it is a good idea to go to any professional development training. If I've learned anything of vital importance since starting my career search, it's that you must always take every opportunity that presents itself and I think that these HACU workshops are a great chance to review some of the techniques I picked up.

I was also able to arrange a lunch with my supervisor who is a very high-ranking administrator here at the Office of Strategic Initiatives. Getting to sit down with him in a more relaxed setting was good because I was able to build a better understanding of how he approaches his work. His perspective was very illuminating for me and I think that I'll do well this semester working at the library.



Tarif enjoys the warmer DC spring weather

Insight on Minorities in Federal Service

Nadine Tavera
Finance Major
University of Houston

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau
Office of Minority and Women Inclusion
Washington, DC

The Office of Minority and Women Inclusion (OMWI) is responsible for developing standards for diversity at the bureau; increasing the participation of minority- and women-owned businesses in the programs and contacts of the agency; and assessing diversity policies and practices of the regulated entities.

While working in the OMWI, I have been able to gain insight into the challenges minorities and women face because of the lack of their representation across the federal government, particularly top level positions within the agencies. One of the things that I quickly learned is that in order to better serve Americans, we must reflect the population of our nation by taking part in policy creation and decision making.

One of the key issues is the low representation of Hispanics in the federal workforce. Hispanics currently make up approximately 17% of the U.S. population, a number that is expected to double by mid-century, making us the largest minority in the nation. With these numbers, one of my duties is to create outlets and find ways to promote outreach to our Hispanic community on the opportunities government has to offer.

The CFBP is filled with great individuals that are driven towards service. One of the things that I find quite intriguing about this organization is that it is made up of both former private sector individuals and longtime public servants. Having this combination of the two really makes the agency unique as it is still establishing its foundation.

Making the move from Houston, TX to Washington, D.C. has been a wonderful experience. The buildings, monuments and memorials are absolutely breathtaking! The beautiful DC architecture really comes to life at night when everything is lit up. One of my favorite things to do in the city is going for an evening jog around the Capitol and ending at the Lincoln Memorial. I am also looking forward to the National Cherry Blossoms Festival coming up this spring.

I am excited for what is yet to come. Through HNIP, I am able to have an even better D.C. experience than I had hoped for as I am creating new networks and gaining exposure to new opportunities for the future.



Consumer Financial
Protection Bureau



Nadine poses in front of the U.S. Capitol Building

Out & About in DC...



The interns pose for a group photo with a replica of the Statue of Freedom during their tour of the U.S. Capitol Building.



Nidia Yanez, Patricia Acosta and Maybelline Soto (above) take in French culture with Gerardo Garcia and Ana Manzano (right) at an evening program of the L'Alliance Francaise in Dupont Circle.



Maria Elena Vivas-House (in yellow) mingles with interns at the 1st Annual HACU Alumni Association National Happy Hour.

and across the U.S!



Shekinah Kelly and Viviana Lopez Rivera enjoy a game of pool in Philly.



Daira Gonzalez shops for outdoor recreation gear in St. Louis, MO.



Sergio De Hoyos (far right) enjoys a cross-country skiing trip with his HACU Alumni mentor and agency staff.

Skiing My Way Around Denver

Sergio De Hoyos
Civil Engineering Graduate Student
City College of New York

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation
Denver, CO



Sergio explores the Rockies in Denver, CO

My internship with the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) has been set up so that I can have the experience of working with different groups within the Technical Service Center. One of my assignments is working with the Water Conveyance Group building the Seismic Safety Program where my duties include reviewing power plant blueprints to locate non-structural component, data entry and classification.

Another big project is with the Sediment and River Hydraulics Group and it's related to the removal of two hydroelectric power dams in Elwha River, close to the Olympic Peninsula in Washington State. These dams were removed due to high sediment clogging, effectively cutting the sediment transport capacity of the dam. My task is to find out how much sediment is now stored along the river in order to understand the speed with which sediment is being transported into the ocean and estimate the time it will take to flush out all sediment.

I also had the opportunity of participating in a division meeting which gathered all engineers and other employees to speak about the budget and the work the TSC is involved in. It was wonderful to learn they even have projects in Puerto Rico, close to my home.

I have also been very busy completing my last master's project. I decided to apply for a Ph.D. program in Civil Engineering-Environmental and Water Resources Engineering at George Mason University. Hopefully I will begin in Sept. 2013.

My experience so far has been great. It is my first time visiting Denver, Colorado and is the furthest west in the US I've ever gone. It is also the driest place I've ever been in. Thanks to Maritza Huerta, a great mentor assigned by the HACU Alumni Association, I had my first ever cross-country skiing experience.



Teamwork: The Key to a Successful Internship

Bernice Ramirez
Public Policy Analysis Graduate Student
Carnegie Mellon University - H. John Heinz III College

Library of Congress
Office of Strategic Initiatives
Washington, DC

Every day, I am greeted with cheerful good mornings as I walk to my desk in the Education Outreach section of the Office of Strategic Initiatives. Being embraced by this team has been an important part of my experience as a HACU intern this spring semester.

Although I am not new to the city, I am new to work in the federal government, and I could not have asked for a better introduction. My first step was to meet with each member individually, and then I took up tasks for each and set a schedule or deadline to check in as appropriate. I made sure to keep the group apprised of my progress in staff and in one-on-one meetings, which led to more responsibilities. It motivates me to know that I am trusted with work that could affect the strategic direction of key projects.

In the office of education outreach, I am applying the quantitative analysis skills I learned in my graduate coursework at Carnegie Mellon University. This means that when I revamp the Education Outreach workshop surveys, I can brush up on this expertise by consulting the library's expansive resources. Research is exciting when I can order the latest books on an innovative field, like when I explore the question of technology use in the classroom for a colleague.

The team and I share a passion for education and for quality work. Knowing this encourages me to share my opinion and always ask questions. When we are not in meetings, we often discuss current events or articles that are circulated in the office. My team is demonstratively invested in my professional development; a colleague even helped me prepare for a major interview when I shared my good news with her.

So far, I have helped develop performance metrics for a multi-million dollar grant program, published four blog posts on the Teacher's Page that has over 26,000 subscribers, and joined a team meeting with the Librarian of Congress, Dr. Billington. As a result of my internship, I am more confident in my abilities and I have gained clarity around my preference for a collaborative work environment in which I can find new solutions to challenges. Thank you, HACU and the Library of Congress, for this incredible experience!



In their own words:

Interns reflect on how their HNIP experience has contributed to their professional growth

“The HACU workshops’ keen recommendations have helped me a lot with my application process to PhD programs. I’ve already had two interviews of four universities I applied to.”

- Eric Vazquez, U.S. Census Intern

“As a graduate student toward the end of my Master’s program, it’s crucial that I begin to make professional connections that can help me in different aspects of my life, and the HACU internship experience is a prime location for it.”

- Mack Simon, Library of Congress Intern

“I truly felt I was part of the Library when I attended a networking event for Digital Preservation enthusiasts. I was able to connect to another manager from the Library’s collection department. It was shocking to see how I have grown professionally in this internship while contributing to the Library’s mission.”

- Jose Padilla, Library of Congress Intern



“Each day I am assigned something new to take on and learn a little bit more about the culture of this workplace. So far this experience continues to motivate me and push me to work harder for my future goals and dreams. I continue to feel extremely blessed and look forward to what each day brings for me.”

- Marisa Torres, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Intern

“I serve as a Medical Interpreter at the National Institutes of Health where I have developed many close friendships with my fellow coworkers and my patients. I come to work every day knowing that every patient I help will be a once in a lifetime opportunity.”

- Ana Manzano, National Institutes of Health Intern



The Third Time is the Charm: From Miami to Philadelphia

Shekinah Kelly

Senior Undergraduate in Technical Management
DeVry University

U.S. Department of Commerce

Census Bureau
Philadelphia, PA

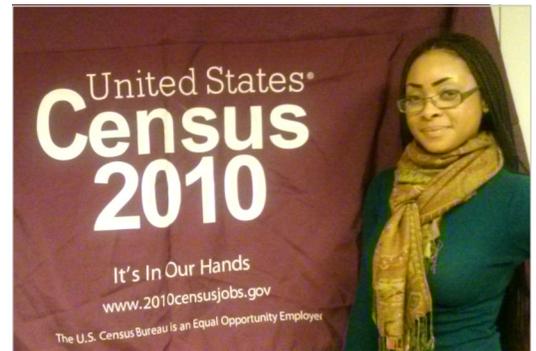
Being part of the HACU National Internship program has been a wonderful experience! Initially, I thought I was just coming to Philadelphia for the 10-week summer session but I am still now in my third consecutive HACU internship at the U.S. Census Bureau's Philadelphia Regional Office. By the end of this session, I will have lived in Philadelphia for almost 9 months—I wish I could share every detail about this time! I started working in the administration department where I was responsible for many new tasks, such as processing payroll for the regional office and field staff. I established an automation property management filing system in order to make over 1,000 files easily accessible for staff. There were many new skills that I acquired in this first setting that I will be able to use in a future office management position.



During the fall and spring sessions I have worked in the recruiting department, which has been very beneficial to my career planning. Some of my responsibilities include conducting testing sessions for candidates who apply for field representative, field leader and field supervisor positions within the Census Bureau. Since the Census has downsized from 12 to 6 regional offices, Philadelphia conducts recruitment for the metro areas of Philadelphia, Washington, DC, Maryland, Kentucky, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia. I have interviewed and prepared testing materials for over 500 candidates across the region. I was interested in recruiting prior to this assignment, but my interest has grown dramatically after my hands-on experience. I hope to obtain a recruiting position or something similar once I am finished with this HACU internship. The staff in the office has been very kind and I have developed many strong relationships that I will maintain even after I am finished here with the census.

Outside of work, I have definitely enjoyed my personal life. When I first arrived to Philadelphia from Miami, Fla., it was bit of an adjustment. I had to get used to walking everywhere, riding the trains, and dealing with unfriendly people on public transit. Over time, I adapted just fine to my environment and I now know how to get around with no problems. What I have enjoyed the most is being able to travel to different states on weekends to visit old friends and family and to explore new places. I have visited many places within Philadelphia in addition to many surrounding cities: from Hershey, Pa. up to Brooklyn, N.Y., down to

Baltimore, Md. and Washington, D.C., and even out to Wilmington, Del. I have many new friends in these places that I will keep in touch with and will definitely miss when I leave. I really want to thank HACU for giving me more than one opportunity to experience a new city and gain work experience that will impact my future. I look forward to being a part of the HACU Alumni Association so that I can help others learn about the opportunities available through HACU.



Using My Language Skills to Gain an International Perspective

Jose Antonio Perez

Senior Undergraduate in Latin American Studies & Spanish
University of New Mexico

U.S. Agency for International Development

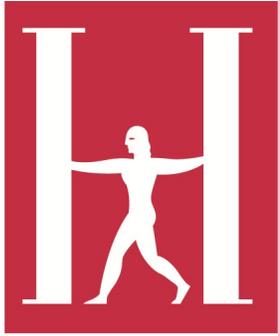
Washington, DC

My internship with USAID has been very exciting thus far. I had the opportunity to meet with the innovators and leaders of the World Water Council a few weeks ago as we prepared for the upcoming 7th World Water Forum. My background in Latin American Studies and my fluency in both Spanish and Portuguese helped me make a great impression. I got to speak with Ben Braga, the president of the council who was an event speaker. I was also able to interact with the heads of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Department of State Interagency representatives who deal with water issues that I am interested in, especially urban sprawl and sustainable development. My supervisor Christian Holmes, who serves as the Global Water coordinator, has been very amiable and supportive, which has really boosted my confidence.

This week has been similarly eventful and stimulating in many ways, starting with a Global Water Forum at the World Bank on Monday. I was able to learn about solutions to many of our future water problems from prospective doctoral students who represent some of our nation's brightest and innovative minds. I even connected with the mayor of Cortez, Honduras when I served as an informal translator in order to introduce him to my supervisor, as no one else in the room spoke Spanish. This has helped me network tremendously! I am excited to see what other opportunities this internship will present in the coming weeks. *Gracias, HACU!*



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



HACU

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Letter from Your Spring 2013 Intern Board Member, Ana Manzano

Greetings fellow interns,

Is there any better time of year to live in Washington, D.C. than spring? D.C. is the festival capital of America, and we have obtained a true insider's perspective to the presidential inauguration ceremony, countless of festivals, and cultural activities, sporting events, great nightlife and now to top it off, the cherry blossom season!

I hope you have obtained not only great professional and academic experience, but also a great personally enriching experience. Our involvement with the HACU National Internship Program has opened our eyes to a wide variety of people from different ethnic backgrounds, nationalities, religions, and economic levels.

With our diverse talent, HNIP interns represent the nation's emerging leaders across the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. On our journeys to accomplish our individual professional pursuits, we must work through any mistakes and setbacks in order to become well-informed and socially engaged individuals. Do not be afraid to expose yourself to new opportunities that suit your personality, or academic and professional interests. Take the time to make invaluable professional and personal connections, but do not forget to give back to the communities that have made your individual achievements possible.

As your time as a HACU intern comes to an end, I urge you to remain actively engaged with the Spring 2013 cohort of interns and with the HACU Alumni Association. Set an example, encourage others to participate in HNIP, explore new surroundings and seek opportunities for professional development.

When you reflect on your spring 2013, I hope you look back on an experience that has been gratifying and rewarding!

Best wishes on your future endeavors,

Ana Manzano



**Stay Involved! Volunteer as an
HNIP Alumni Ambassador in YOUR Community**

Did you know many students first learn about HNIP from an alum? Now you can help spread the word to prospective interns by serving as an HNIP Alumni Ambassador on your campus, in your student organization, or within any of your personal networks.

Sign up today to represent HNIP in your community! E-mail our team at hnip@hacu.net with the subject line "HNIP Alumni Ambassador." We will send you a tool kit with resources that will help you get started!

