



**HACU**

**NATIONAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM**

HISPANIC  
ASSOCIATION  
OF COLLEGES &  
UNIVERSITIES

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# Intern Newsletter

HACU National Internship Program | Spring 2016



## Message from the HNIP Executive Director

Dear Interns,

The HNIP Spring 2016 session came and went, but within that brief period of time, a lot was accomplished. Our interns worked in laboratories, conducted invasive species research and geological surveys, analyzed reams of data on agricultural commodities, assisted EEO staff resolve claims, helped devise strategic workforce plans, and contributed to the development of training resources for veterans. They also met department secretaries and worked alongside senior executive service leaders. For those interns that attended HACU's Capitol Forum, many got first-hand experience advocating for higher education issues affecting their respective institutions. Lastly, during our professional development meetings, our program alumni offered workshops to help interns network more effectively and to prepare them to compete for federal employment opportunities.

This session we welcomed 61 interns. Twenty-eight interned in the DC area and 33 were placed in field sites across the country. The USDA hosted 39 students, some of which are interning on a part-time basis as students complete their academic programs. Within USDA, the Agricultural Research Service hosted 26 of the 39. Other major partners include the Library of Congress and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Our program heard from many interns who were grateful for the internship experience and we also heard from many federal agencies that were thankful for their intern's contribution. Our program is truly fortunate to count on such strong dedication from our program participants and the support of our federal partners.

All signs are pointing to a larger summer session compared to last year. We know that a lot of that is due to the hard work of our interns. We congratulate you on completing the HNIP Spring 2016 Internship Session and wish you the best in your academic and professional endeavors!

*Jonathan Santeliz*  
HNIP Executive Director



# Participating Agencies

Library of Congress - LOC	7
National and International Outreach	7
National Credit Union Administration - NCUA	1
Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation - PBGC	1
U.S. Department of Agriculture - USDA	39
Agricultural Research Service - ARS	26
Farm Service Agency - FSA	1
Food and Nutrition Service - FNS	2
Food Safety and Inspection Service - FSIS	10
U.S. Department of Commerce - DOC	1
U.S. Census Bureau	1
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services - DHHS	7
Centers for Disease Control - CDC	5
Clinical Center - CC	1
National Institutes of Health - NIH	0
Office of Minority Health - OMH	1
U.S. Department of the Interior - DOI	2
Bureau of Land Management - BLM	2
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs - VA	3
Veterans Administration Central Office - VACO	3



# THE BREAK DOWN

of our HNIP Interns

Spring 2016

HACU National Internship Program

# HACU

## NATIONAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

### Demographics

#### Gender



37%

Male

Female

63%



#### Diversity



12%

Black or African American



3%

Asian



17%

White



68%

Hispanic

Age Range: 20-36  
Average Age: 25

# 60 Total Interns: 27 D.C. and 33 Field

Undergraduates: 36  
Graduate: 24

## Grade Level



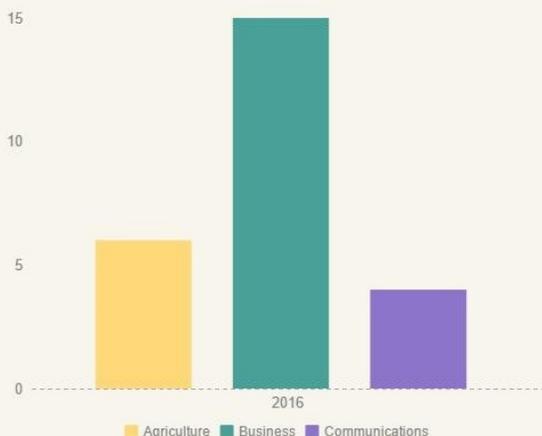
■ Sophomore (11.67%) 
 ■ Junior (18.33%) 
 ■ Senior (30.00%)  
■ Master's (36.67%) 
 ■ PhD (3.33%)

## GPA



Average: 3.51

### Most Common Majors



Pictured above, HACU Alumni Association Board Chair, Albert Cruz, takes some time to present to the Spring 16 cohort on how to get the most out of LinkedIn and shares with student some tips on effective networking.

## Recent HNIP alumna lands full-time federal employment

Natali Dethomas lived in Peru until nearly eight years ago when she moved to New York. Dethomas completed her bachelor's degree in accounting, with honors, from Lehman College in New York. In the



Natali Dethomas, center, shares advice on perfecting the federal resume with spring interns.

summer of 2015, Dethomas participated in her first HACU internship with the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation. Upon completion of her summer program, the agency request-

ed that Dethomas stay on for another session, so Dethomas stayed on through the fall.

According to Dethomas, her life is segmented into three dreams. First, she would like a job where she can help others. Second, she wants to bring her two little sisters to the US. And third, she hopes to provide everything she has learned for the development of Peru. Dethomas has fulfilled two of those dreams so far. Both her sisters are currently attending school in the US, one in first grade and the other at an English institute. Dethomas's first goal is realized by her new full-time public service position with the PBGC as an auditor!

HNIP congratulates Dethomas for her success and we have no doubt that she is well on her way to accomplishing her third goal. We salute her for being an example of how students can use this program to achieve full-time employment with the federal government.

# Home States



**HNIP interns come from every corner of the nation. Every corner except the Pacific Northwest this session! Come on Oregon and Washington send us those students! It looks like Texas just barely beat Puerto Rico this session offering the program 14 interns! Many of our Texas interns are returning students out of the USDA field office in College Station, TX.**

# Field Locations



**Some of the most exciting work our students do for the federal government agencies they intern for does not happen in Washington, DC, but rather in field offices around the nation. In every session, we have new and exciting opportunities for students to experience not only working with an agency, but also to explore a new part of the country. This session saw students flown everywhere from Atlanta, GA, to Palo Alto, CA.**

# Intelligence Community Launches New Careers Website

The U.S. Intelligence Community (IC) has launched a new website designed to educate job seekers on the wide variety of careers available within the IC. IntelligenceCareers.gov offers comprehensive educational content, videos and interactive tools that help job seekers understand where they fit in the IC. The site is designed to help job seekers understand that the IC offers people of all skills the opportunity to make a real difference.

The IC is a coalition of 17 agencies and organizations that work both independently and collaboratively to gather and analyze intelligence. Some IC agencies may specialize in different types of intelligence, such as signals intelligence, imagery intelligence, or human intelligence while other agencies may take input from various sources and combine it in "all-source" intelligence analytic products.

With competition from the private sector as well as other government agencies for talent in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) getting more intense every year, the site provides STEM students and professionals with a unique look into how their disciplines advance the intelligence mission. Also highlighted are careers in cybersecurity, foreign language, intelligence analysis and related analytical careers. Students and professionals in other fields, such as financial management, contracting and human resources will learn that the IC has challenging and rewarding positions for them as well.

IntelligenceCareers.gov also offers a set of interactive tools to help job seekers understand how their skills can lead to a career in intelligence. The Job Exploration Tool customizes career recommendations by matching education, skills and professional abilities with IC career areas. The Student Programs search page helps students identify internships and other opportunities based on educational level and professional interest.

Information is also included on the application process, security clearances and the many benefits of government service.

While each of the 17 U.S. intelligence agencies is represented on the new site, four agencies currently provide in-depth career information through their own dedicated subsections: Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), National Geospatial-

Intelligence Agency (NGA), National Security Agency (NSA) and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI). Additional agencies will be added in the future, as the federal government pushes for a greater degree of shared resources among government entities.

The site is a shared resource available to each of the 17 U.S. intelligence agencies, a resource that can help attract qualified candidates more effectively.

While the site today is designed to provide consolidated career information, future upgrades will include an integrated application gateway that allows job seekers to search for positions with multiple intelligence agencies through a single search. This integrated application gateway is scheduled to launch in late 2016.

For more information on the new site, visit [www.IntelligenceCareers.gov](http://www.IntelligenceCareers.gov).



### JOB EXPLORATION TOOL

Are you a match?  
Tell us about yourself, and we'll tell you how and where you'll fit.

**START NOW!**

CAREERS

APPLICATION PROCESS

### PARTICIPATING AGENCIES

- Defense Intelligence Agency
- National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency
- National Security Agency

### BENEFITS

Discover how the IC takes good care of you when you take care of the nation.

### WELCOME STUDENTS!

Search opportunities for high school, undergraduate and

The capture seen above was taken from the new site [www.Intelligencecareers.gov](http://www.Intelligencecareers.gov).

## Intern Learning Advocacy

Jacqueline Gomez, Sul Ross State University — MBA

## USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service

Washington, DC

All my life I have felt a calling to help excel the Hispanic community to new heights and being a part of the Capitol Hill Forum showed me what it was like to be on the front lines of change. This was a great opportunity to experience how policy is influenced and it showed me that one person really can make a difference.

We were briefed on procedures and protocol to be as effective as possible in advocating for Hispanic Serving Institution priorities. The topics that were presented were: Title V appropriations funding, the Higher Education Act reauthorization, teacher preparation regulations, National Science Foundation funding for HSIs and Agriculture appropriations. I found that the most important piece of advice when going on the Hill was to expect the unexpected.

Even with the research I had done in anticipation of the forum and the briefings that I attended, I was so nervous to visit Capitol Hill and speak to the Representatives of the House and Senate. This was a surreal experience for me. I received my undergraduate degree at Texas State University in San Marcos, TX, and I am currently working on my M.B.A. at Sul Ross State University in Alpine, TX. I was lucky enough to be with a group of experienced advocates from different universities around Texas that were willing to show me the ropes. My group from Texas was extremely knowledgeable and I was able to learn a great deal from them. I watched how they interacted with the members of Congress and I followed their example.

Our first appointment was with John Cornyn – Senator from Texas. He has a larger than life presence and I was very nervous, but I decided that I would not let my nerves get the best of me so I stood tall, shook his hand, listened attentively, and spoke with great care. I was the third person to introduce myself and advocate for the HSI priorities. Since I have a different set of experiences than the rest of the group, I decided to talk about my experience with the HSI's I have attended as a student and worked for as an employee. I gave examples of how the funds are used to improve student success at the university and why HSI

funding is so important to the students and the institution.

We also had the honor of meeting with congressmen Filemon Vega, Ruben Hinojosa, Lamar Smith, Joaquin Castro as well as Senator Ted Cruz' staff. The congressmen, representatives, and their staff were extremely busy, but they took the time to speak with us. Every appointment was very similar in substance, but what really changed were my advocacy skills and abilities. With every appointment, I felt myself improve and become more confident in my advocacy skills. Some of our appointments were in the conference room, some appointments were held in their offices, and some were held in the hall. Every person that we spoke to had a different personality but they were all receptive to what we had to say regardless of political parties. After the day was over, my group was even invited to view a Mariachi performance on Capitol Hill by congressman Filemon Vega's office. It was so great being invited to view the performance and the Mariachi's from Texas were amazing.

I made a positive difference in this world by advocating for HSI's and I am confident that the topics that we addressed will be thoughtfully considered by the representatives and members of Congress when it comes time to voting on certain bills. The Capitol Hill Forum has truly restored my faith in the political system and given me an inside-look as to how one person really can influence policy and make a positive impact on the world.



Jacqueline Gomez, center, snaps a photo with her fellow Spring '16 HNIP interns as they spend a day out exploring the city. This is Jaqueline's first internship session with the HACU National Internship Program, but not her last! Jacqueline will remain in DC for Summer '16.

**Getting to know the BLM**

Mariela Castaneda, International Development at The University of Arizona

**Bureau of Land Management**

Washington, DC

The Bureau of Land Management's Director's Office has been busy per usual and additionally eventful. As occasionally happens when things get busy around the office, one of my meetings with the Director's advisors and communications team was rescheduled; so, I am looking forward to that meeting taking place in the future. In this meeting, we will take a look at a current template used for scheduling, and identify how a different approach might represent information in a clearer or more useful manner.

Additionally, during these weeks I was able to attend a meeting at the M Street building, where my fellow HACU intern usually works; this was intended to give me a

sense of how the directorate in charge of Energy Minerals and Realty Management operates. The meeting was a check-in between leaders of that team. During this same visit to the other BLM building (by shuttle service), I had the opportunity to meet and speak to many of the employees that are based out of that office, many of whom are on detail from state and field offices; this gave me some great background and helped make connections to the work I encounter in the Director's Hallway.

At one of the Chief of Staff meetings, I presented a mock-up of a few designs I had created for a series of national monument signs that would decorate the walls of the Director's conference room. I set up a voting station for team members to vote on their preferred room layout. This week also contained a rollover of my duties in updating and maintaining the BLM events list in order to increase meeting effectiveness and efficiency. My role will come to a close once a preferred format is chosen by the Director for use into the future. At this point, the duty of updating and maintaining the events list will return to the public affairs officer.

Furthermore, during this time I made a trip home to Phoenix. With the support from my supervisor here in Washington, I was able to visit the BLM AZ state office and had an excellent experience there. I met with Ray Suazo, the State Director and the Associate State Director, Deborah Rawhouser, who were both very helpful and gracious with their time. I sat in on a weekly meeting in which the offices across the state check in with the state office, much like what happens in the Washington Office. After that, I joined each of the departments for an overview of their operations. It was truly a rewarding and valuable learning experience. Upon my return to the DC office, I was tasked with assisting in the responsiveness review of a congressional document request, which is ongoing and a priority of my time until complete. Specifically, my job is to identify documents in a Google Doc repository that pertain to a particular issue for which Congress is requesting information.



**Mariela Castaneda (left) stands with The U.S. Department of Interior Secretary Sally M. Jewell. Castaneda interns in the Directors Office at the Bureau of Land Management in DC.**

**Zika Response**

Lia Menaker, MPH at University of Colorado Denver

**Centers for Disease Control & Prevention**

Atlanta, GA

Zika response has continued to be at the forefront of my internship. However, I have been temporarily helping with the Plans Team, as I have an MPH and they are frantically in the process of whipping out many CDC Zika Response Action Plans. I have been given the title of "Research Assistant" and have also helped with plan input. First, we sat down with subject matter experts (SMEs) from every category in the plan to consolidate information to include in the guidelines. I assisted in researching systems, acronyms, and general notes from SME talks and confirming and/or researching related questions. Then, the other two team members wrote up the plan, and I edited it for format, grammar, ease of language, and ensured it made sense from a tactical, public

health standpoint. We have been in a process of going back and forth with edits, SME feedback, and restructuring to meet the needs of the CDC's Deputy IM for Zika Response. She has written a plan for U.S. states and territories at risk, and we are ensuring both plans align. The plan was first written for Puerto Rico and will be shared with PR for their feedback. Then, we will transform it to align to all U.S. States and Territories.

The work with the Plans Team has been very rewarding and exciting, as I have been actively participating in the plan input and have been treated as a respected, contributory team member. I have been given tasks in which I try not to ask too many questions; instead I ask the bare mini-

*Continued from page 8*

mum to jump into it and complete to the best of my knowledge. It has been challenging, but has taught me a lot. I have been able to learn what the meat of a plan looks like when responding to an outbreak, the type of jurisdictional subject areas that need attention, the resources and planning that is involved on the ground locally, how CDC supports the jurisdictions in guidance and resources, the type of language used when communicating plans to public health workers/officials on the ground, and how one plan may be broken down in a couple ways (e.g. a guidebook versus an organized matrix of activities/coordination involved). I have been able to see, and take part of, the process in getting all of these plans together quickly and efficiently, using the coordinated communication across the division that is so vital to the whole operation.



**CENTERS FOR DISEASE  
CONTROL AND PREVENTION**

## Alumni Spotlight



**Manuel A. Avendano, Management and Policy Analyst, USAID**  
Manuel is a 2013 HNIP Alum who is currently a Management and Policy Analyst at the U.S. Agency for International Development. He is the president of USAID-Hispanic Employee Council of Foreign Affairs Agencies (HECFAA). In his free time, Manuel likes to give back to his community. He is passionate about academic and professional advancement for motivated and talented individuals with a focus on student veterans and minorities. Manuel is a proud Florida State University alumnus.

Ever since I immigrated to Florida from Colombia, at age 16, I've wanted to serve my country in the military, attend Florida State University and live in Washington, D.C. Right after high school I joined the U.S. Air Force and served honorably for four years. At the end of my enlistment and after living in three different states, I decided it was time to go back home to pursue my education. In 2013, while finishing my masters degree in public administration, I applied for the fall of 2013 HACU National Internship Program, and was selected for an internship opportunity with the U.S. Agency

for International Development (USAID).

As an Air Force veteran, I was very fortunate to be the recipient of a Veterans' Recruitment Appointment (VRA) internship with USAID. Although this opportunity was an actual federal appointment, it was a temporary cooperative agreement with USAID and HACU, which could not exceed 15 weeks. Since day one, I knew that HACU had provided me with a one in a lifetime opportunity to work for a federal agency, and now it was up to me to make the best of my internship experience. I made a personal commitment that by the end of my internship I would have a clear path towards becoming a full time federal employee, and nothing, not even the thought of enduring a 5 month winter season in D.C., was going to even make me consider moving back to sunny and comfy South Florida,

I decided that in order to accomplish this ambitious, but achievable goal, I needed to leverage my education and professional experience to become an indispensable employee at USAID and an effective and proactive networker. I took advantage of all the resources HACU had to offer, including professional development workshops

and networking events with alumni, and I made it known to everyone I met that I was here to stay and ensured that my work ethic, integrity, attitude and professionalism effectively reflected my intentions. After my internship ended in January of 2014, I had no clear path towards becoming a federal employee yet, but I did not give up nor did I lose hope. I continued networking and I even spent two weeks sleeping in my HACU friend's couch, which made me realize that we're all a big HACU family. Finally, all the hard work paid off when I was offered a second HACU/USAID internship as a Junior Policy Analyst, which resulted in a permanent federal appoint-

*Alumni Spotlight... Continued from 9:*

ment offer in the summer of 2014.

My current job at USAID as a Management and Program Analyst has been the most rewarding experience of my professional career thus far. I've had the unique opportunity to coordinate and manage an agency corporate program in West Africa, analyze operational policy, and serve as a policy analyst liaison with the White House's Office of Management and Budget in agency rulemaking activities. There is nothing more satisfying than knowing that what I do on a daily basis impacts the lives of millions of people around the world.

It is important to point out that if it wasn't for the guidance and support of the HACU National Internship Program staff, my mentors, and people who believed in me, I would not be where I am right now. I've always believed in the power of mentorship. From my professional experience in the military, higher education, and the federal government,

I've learned that all successful people have one thing in common: mentors who have taken interest in guiding their career path. I strongly believe we all have a responsibility to promote diversity and inclusion in the federal government and private sector by mentoring and developing the next generation of federal employees.

Today, I challenge all HACU alumni to be positive role models and mentors for current HACU interns who want to serve our country with pride and honor in the federal government. I encourage all interns to network, find a mentor, recognize and take advantage of all the opportunities that you have as HACU interns living and working in our nation's capital. Always remember that the only limitation of where you want to end up in life is yourself.

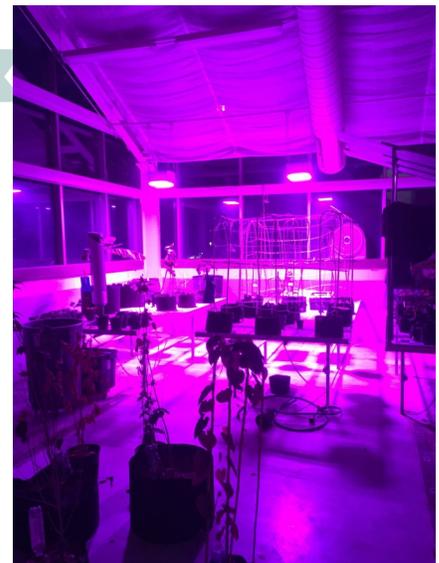
## Out and About with HNIP!



It is not the prettiest the Capital building has ever been, but its how the spring '16 DC interns will remember it. The capital restoration project has been underway for almost 2 years and is set to complete by the next presidential inauguration.



Spring 16' at the annual Cherry Blossom Festival. Two of our students are pictured here at the Tidal Basin.



Our interns in Ft. Lauderdale work on invasive plant research for the USDA.

# Out and About with HNIP!



USDA ARS Intern Carolina Gonzalez shares a photo of Texas A&M at sunset. College Station is host to 14 of our field interns.



Safety First! Intern Scott Goldstein masks up before engaging in some of the hands on experience HNIP field assignments are known for!



The Spring '16 interns kicked off their internship experience with a trip to the world famous National Air and Space Museum for a guided tour and visit to the Einstein Planetarium.



What HNIP session would be complete without a trip to the FBI Headquarters? This session the students were lucky enough to hear about career opportunities from FBI Agents and an Executive Assistant Director of the FBI!



The Spring '16 students take advantage of all that the DMV has to offer by getting together to explore the beautiful Shenandoah Valley trails.