

Reproductive Justice Reception in Washington D.C.

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They say interning in Washington, D.C. is a networking event that never ends, and it certainly has its perks! I am currently in D.C. as part of the FSI program, interning at UNFPA. On the eve of the one-year anniversary of the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, the Democratic National Committee, in conjunction with the Planned Parenthood Action Fund, NARAL, and Emily's List, hosted a reception for supporters of

reproductive justice. I, alongside 300 other advocates of all ages, identities, and backgrounds, came together to support the important work of these three organizations that have continued to champion sexual and reproductive rights.

The guests of honor, however, were what made the event feel surreal. Former Speaker Nancy Pelosi reflected on the frustrations that motivated her to partner through the last year with female-led nonprofits that advocate for sexual and reproductive health rights. Second Gentleman Doug Emhoff spoke on the role of fathers in the fight for the rights of the daughters of the nation. First Lady Jill Biden retold the stories of several women who had visited the White House and shared their life-saving abortion experiences. Vice President Kamala Harris shared her gratitude for the endorsement of the three sponsoring organizations and reminded audiences what it means to be an advocate. And finally, President Joe Biden reinforced the administration's dedication to the protection of female sexual and reproductive health.

After the presentations, each of the speakers walked off stage towards the crowd, shaking hands, sharing laughs, and exchanging expressions of gratitude. I had the absolute privilege of introducing myself to President Biden. During our brief conversation, I thanked him for his work on behalf of American women, and he encouraged me to keep "fighting the good fight."

Events like this continue to inspire me and others to advocate for justice. Fostering spaces where individuals who come from all walks of life can join together and serve as resources, exchange stories, and maybe even share a laugh with the President, is critical in the creation of the next generation of fierce advocates. Thank you to everyone who made this possible!