

# TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL CONGRESSIONAL MEETINGS



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# TOPICS

- **Before You Go**
- **While In Washington**
- **After You Return Home**
- **ATE Funding Status**



# BEFORE YOU GO

- **Arrange meetings with your representative(s) and senators and/or staff members.**
  - Email or call any staff members with whom you have a relationship to schedule a meeting.
  - If you do not have such a contact, call the office's main number and ask which staffer handles higher education issues and get their contact information.



# BEFORE YOU GO

- **Gather pertinent information about the impact of federal programs on your campus.**
  - **All politics is local, and legislators will want to hear how institutions in their districts are affected by federal policies.**
  - **Stories of how federal programs and policies affect particular students are also useful.**

# BEFORE YOU GO

- **Familiarize yourself with your legislator.**
  - This includes knowing his or her personal background, priority issues, the committees they serve on, their general political leanings, etc.
  - Knowing these things will help you craft your message.



# WHILE IN WASHINGTON

- **Be on time, flexible, friendly, and brief.**
- **Meetings with staff can be as productive as seeing the Member personally.**
  - *Flexibility* is important because Members' schedules get rearranged at a moment's notice.
  - While you are undoubtedly important to the office, don't overstay your welcome.
  - Congressional offices are friendly places and are open to meeting with visitors from the state or district they represent.

# WHILE IN WASHINGTON

- **Keep leave-behinds to a minimum.**
  - Keep any printed material concise.
  - Staffers will often ask for electronic copies rather than paper.
  - Always make sure you follow-up with additional material that the member or staffer has asked for.



# WHILE IN WASHINGTON

- **Ask about your Member's priorities.**
  - As with any good relationship, it is important to have give and take.
  - Ask your Member or staff member what the Member's priorities are—doing so presents an excellent opportunity to find out more about his or her interests and agenda.
  - This discussion also may yield opportunities to work together on additional issues.



# WHILE IN WASHINGTON

- **Collect Business Cards.**
  - Ask for business cards of any staff members you talk with for easy reference when writing thank-you letters.
  - Remember to leave behind your business card and college information (especially a one-sheet overview of your college) when you are visiting a Member's office.



# AFTER YOU RETURN HOME

- **Follow up with the Member or staffer you met with.**
  - Send an email thanking them for meeting with you, and include any information that you promised to provide during the meeting.
- **Maintain your relationship.**
  - Periodically send the Member or staffer who you met with information they might find useful.
    - Communications should not only include requests, but also should thank legislators for federal developments that have helped your institution.
  - Invite the Member and his/her staff to your college for a visit and have the media cover the event.

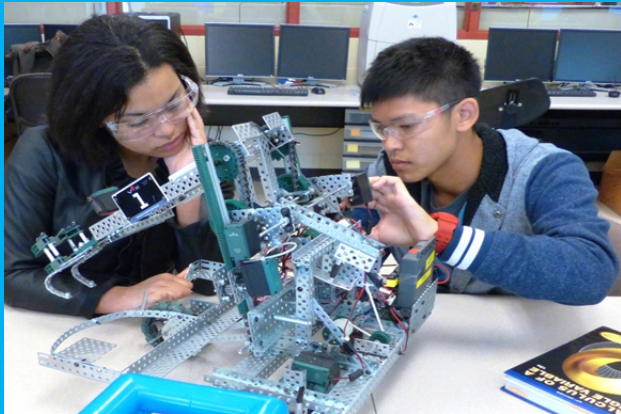
# ADVOCATING FOR ATE

- **Funding**

- NSF funded through Commerce, Justice, Science appropriations bill.
- ATE funding contained within Education and Human Resources Directorate at NSF.
  - ATE not a line item in the bill.
  - ATE funding often directed through report language.
- House: EHR \$880 million; Senate: HER \$862 million.
  - Both House and Senate committee reports contain language saying ATE to be funded at no less than last year's appropriations level.

# ADVOCATING FOR ATE

- Relate how your ATE project/center is impacting your community/state/the country.
  - Emphasize its role in workforce development.
    - Jobs, jobs, jobs.



# KEEP IN TOUCH!

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