STEM+C Hill Visits
September 17-20, 2019

Communicating with Congress
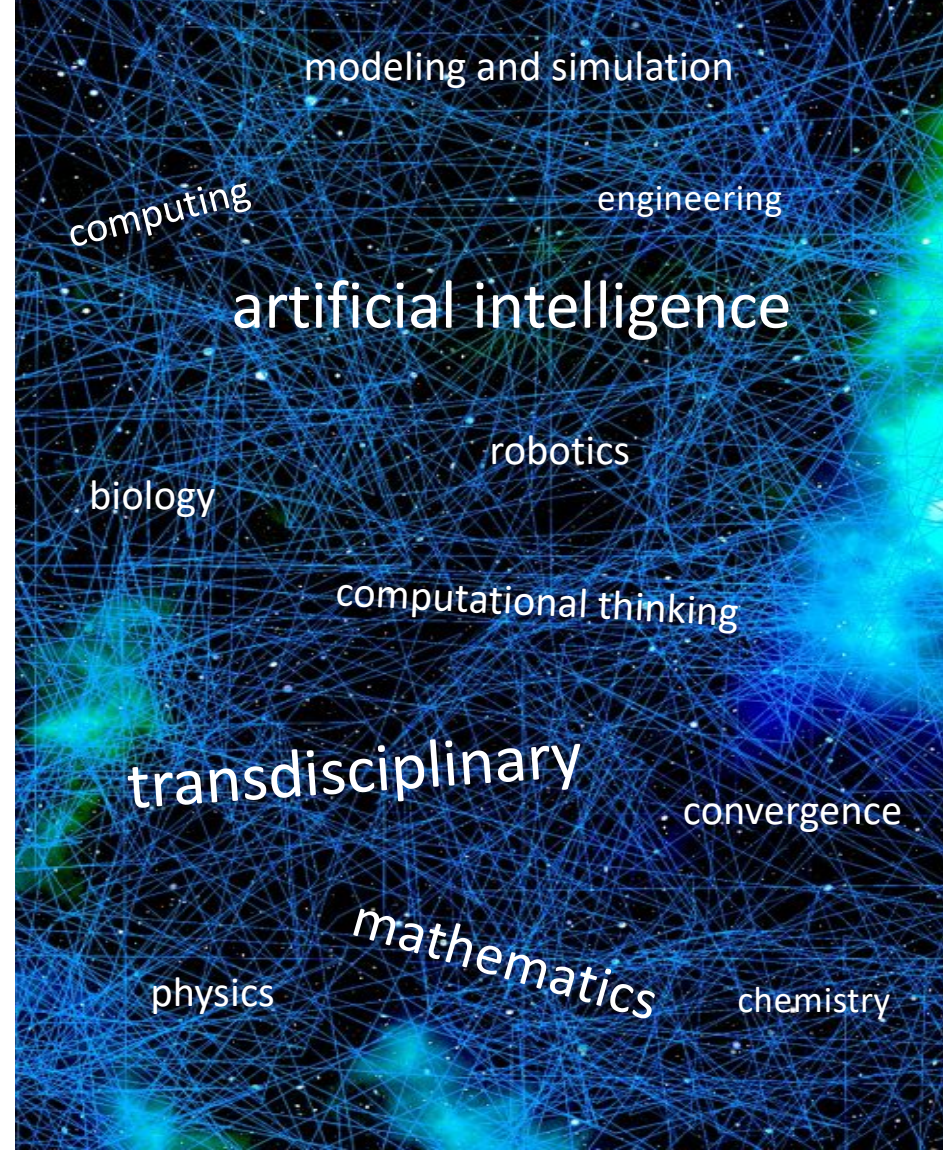
Thursday, August 22, 2019

WELCOME!

AGENDA

- Introductions/Background

- Who are the policy makers?

- Information sharing vs lobbying

- Preparing for your Hill visit

- Next Steps

- Questions

Our Affiliation with NSF

Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.

Who are the policy makers?

- While Members make the final decisions and do the voting, the Congressional staff are, in many cases, more important
  - They advise the Members and they influence the Members' decisions
  - Mile wide, inch-deep understanding of many issues – they are responsible for large legislative portfolios
- Many Congressional staffers are young (average age bracket—20's)
- Average time on Hill is probably 3-4 years
- Most have no background in science-related or education-related issues (not counting political science of course…!!)

Why it's important to communicate with them…

- They Don't Know!
  - Hear mostly from Research & Related Activities (R&RA) arm of NSF and not much from the Education (EHR) arm
- Tight fiscal environment - Must fight for every dollar
  - If you don't, someone else will
- Crucial to inform Members (their staff) that sit on relevant committees of jurisdiction
  - House Science Committee/Senate Commerce Committee (authorize programs—policy focused)
  - House & Senate Commerce/Justice/Science Appropriations Subcommittees (check writers)

What do they care about and how do you reach them?

- They care about the impact that issues/policies have in their state/district
- All about re-election and perception/image back in state/district
- Explain to them the impact the issue has nationally, BUT emphasize impact locally
  - What does the program mean to Member's state/district
- Explain in concise, simple and non-technical terms:
  - The success of program
  - The impact without the program

Congressional Committees

Make policy

- House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology
- Senate Commerce, Science, and Transportation Committee
- House Education & Labor Committee
- Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee

Appropriate funds

- House Appropriations:
  - Commerce, Justice, Science Subcommittee
  - Labor, HHS, Education Subcommittee
- Senate Appropriations:
  - Commerce, Justice, Science Subcommittee
  - Labor, HHS, Education Subcommittee

Congressional Committees:

US SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, & TRANSPORTATION:
https://www.commerce.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/committeemembers

US SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS:
https://www.appropriations.senate.gov/about/members

SENATE COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE AND RELATED AGENCIES:
https://www.appropriations.senate.gov/SUBCOMMITTEES/COMMERCE-JUSTICE-SCIENCE-AND-RELATED-AGENCIES

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS:
https://appropriations.house.gov/about/membership

HOUSE COMMERCE, JUSTICE, SCIENCE AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE:
https://appropriations.house.gov/subcommittees/commerce-justice-science-and-related-agencies-116th-congress

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE & TECHNOLOGY:
https://science.house.gov/about/membership?1

Information Sharing vs. Lobbying

NO "ASK" – NO LOBBYING

- **Lobbying** is the act of **attempting to influence decisions** made by officials in a government, most often legislators or members of regulatory agencies. (Wikipedia)

- **Lobbying** is the practice of **trying to persuade legislators to propose, pass, or defeat legislation or to change existing laws.** A lobbyist may work for a group, organization, or industry, and presents information on legislative proposals to support his or her clients' interests. (www.senate.gov/reference/.../**Lobbying**_vrd.htm)

Lobbying 🚫 vs. Educating ✓

- Do not ask for NSF funding

- Do not ask for specific legislation

- Educate them about your project

- Share the great things you are doing!

- Answer questions they ask

Scheduling Meetings

- **Who to contact?**
  - Constituents – email through Congressional website (www.congress.gov)
  - Call the office
  - Staff lookup - http://capwiz.com/fconl/home/

- **When to contact?**
  - Start now!

- **How to follow up?**
  - Email in 5-7 days
  - Call the office

Preparing for meetings

- ***Research the legislator***
  - District, committees, priorities and bills on website
- ***Info to share***
  - Involvement of their constituents
  - Benefits of program
  - Use of federal funding and programs
- ***Bring something to take pictures***
- ***Events to invite them to attend***

Preparing for meetings – *Keep in Mind*

- May not meet the legislator

- Staff are young, but smart and influential

- Be adaptable – meeting may start late, end early, happen in the hallway

- Have fun!

Key Dates

Task	Key Dates
Identify your Senators/Representatives	This week
Schedule Appointments	By September 6
Research your legislators relevant committees	Before September 13
Identify your state team	ASAP

2015 Nuggets

Every year I attended an ITEST PI summit I joined other PIs up on Capitol Hill and learned how easy and extremely valuable it is to communicate with my representatives. They are eager and hungry for information about how federal programs are providing resources and high quality programming for students in their home states.

I was lucky enough to get the opportunity to sit with Senator Snowe for two hours during one meeting, and I realized how interested she really was in what I was doing. After building up the confidence and understanding what to expect when meeting with my representatives and I began to routinely schedule meetings with my delegation whenever I would make a trip down to DC. I have found this piece of my work to be extremely valuable for both dissemination and relationship building for future projects and research.

• Ruth Kermish-Allen – Project: Collaborative Research: WeatherBlur

State Visits/Teams

- AL – Cindy Stenger
- CA – Colin Dixon, Shuchi Grover
- CT – Elizabeth Radday
- GA – Tim Foutz
- IL – Connor Bain
- IN – Weiling Li
- LA – Daryl Pfeif

- MA – Yihong Cheng
- NC – Robert Gotwals
- NJ – Michelle Zhu
- NY – Heather Sherwood
- RI – Sara Sweetman
- TX – Yuanlin Zhang
- UT – Jessica Shumway, Jody Clarke-Midura

Links

- **Legislative Visits Folder:**

Go.edc.org/folder

Legislative Visits Tracking Spreadsheet:

Go.edc.org/tracking

Find your legislator:

House http://www.house.gov/representatives/find/

Senate https://www.senate.gov/senators/contact/

Legislative Visits Participant Folder

Go.edc.org/folder

Name ↓	Owner	Last modified
Put Reports Here	Melody Hachey	Aug 1, 2019 Melody Ha·
Put Photos Here	Melody Hachey	Aug 1, 2019 Melody Ha·
Packet Materials	Melody Hachey	Aug 1, 2019 Melody Ha·
2019 Tracking Spreadsheet	Melody Hachey	3:34 PM me

Appointment Tracking Spreadsheet

Go.edc.org/tracking

State	Name of Legislator I want to visit	Lead contact making the appointment	Addtional people going on visit: Add your name if you want to join in on this appointment	Date appointment request was sent	Appointment request was sent to

Appointment Confirmed (Yes/No)	Who did you make the appointment with?	Who are you meeting with?	Time of appointment	Address and Room # of appointment	Notes

Questions?

Thank you!