
FEDERAL AFFAIRS

WSU Capitol Series

The inaugural “WSU Capitol Series” took place on October 23, 2019, at the Cannon House Office Building from 10 AM – Noon. WSU hosted this event in conjunction with Rep. Brenda Lawrence – Member of the House Appropriations Committee and its Subcommittee on Oversight & Reform, and co-chair of the Congressional Women’s Caucus, and Rep. Rashida Tlaib – Member of Financial Services and Oversight & Reform Committees. More than 80 persons attended the briefing.

This kickoff event was a congressional briefing entitled “Improving Health Outcomes for Minority Women and Their Children,” and featured Dr. Sonia Hassan, Associate Vice President for the Office of Women’s Health at WSU; Kelle Moley, MD, Chief Scientific Officer and Senior Vice President, March of Dimes; and Nereida Correa, MD, Board Member, National Hispanic Medical Association. WSU’s Federal Affairs Director, James Williams, moderated the discussion for this panel.

The purpose of the series is to highlight research and initiatives taking place at the University. Our goals are 1) to raise the brand of Wayne State University; 2) develop five specific legislative proposals; 3) have those proposals drafted by the two legislative offices for consideration.

The kickoff event highlighted the work of the Office of Women’s Health, and we will seek to have our Office of Women’s Health designated a federal Center of Excellence, and to secure the federal funding that comes with such designation.

Water Research Funding Opportunity – U.S. Army Corp of Engineers

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will seek to add Wayne State University as a line item to the President’s budget, as they are interested in our research in separating heavy metals from water. We will be seeking a funding request of \$6 million annually.

The Federal Affairs team held a conference call with Drs. Matthew Allen (Chemistry) and Timothy Dittrich (Engineering) to discuss this matter. Dr. Allen will draft a one-pager to be submitted to Congress by the end of this month. Director Williams and Ms. Anita Estell (The Estell Group – our federal consultants) are working on the Senate Armed Services Committee and the House Appropriations Committee simultaneously to get this added to the President’s Budget for next year. The Federal Affairs team informed Senator Peters’ and Rep. Lawrence’s offices about our research, and they are very optimistic about the prospect of this research being added to the President’s Budget.

Champions of Science Award Presentation

On October 29, 2019, Wayne State University and the University of Michigan, in partnership with the Science Coalition, hosted a late a late afternoon reception for Congressman Fred Upton to present him with the “Champions of Science” Award. Patrick Lindsey and James Williams attended this event; VP Lindsey gave congratulatory remarks on behalf of the University.

The Science Coalition annually bestows this award to lawmakers that support research funding. WSU and UM nominated Rep. Upton for this award as he was instrumental in ensuring funding for NIH did not further erode, and for his work on passage of the America CURES legislation.

Hill Visits

On October 29, 2019, Patrick Lindsey and James Williams visited the congressional offices of Rep. Brenda Lawrence and Rep. Rashida Tlaib. The purpose of the meetings was to inform the members and their staff on the progress of programs at the University, including the announcement of the Heart of Detroit Promise, our enhanced focus on K-12 programs, and our continued improvement in graduation and retention rates. In addition, Rep. Tlaib expressed great desire to collaborate with the University on several environmental issues she is addressing in her district.

STATE AFFAIRS

State Budget

Governor Gretchen Whitmer issued 147 line item vetoes totaling \$947M in the FY2020 budget sent to her by the legislature. The vetoes included cuts to road and bridge funding (\$375M), ended the Pure Michigan campaign (\$37M), K-12 schools (\$128 M+), and Higher education (\$38 M in higher education tuition grants for independent and private colleges and \$150,000 in student services for students who are pregnant and parenting). The Governor is in the process of negotiating a supplemental budget with Republican legislative leaders.

GOVERNMENT HEALTH AFFAIRS

Graduate Medical Education (GME) Reform – MIDOCs

MIDOCs' first cohort of residents began in July of 2019. We currently have eight residents with four specializing in family medicine and four specializing in psychiatry. The MIDOCs Program is an initiative of the MIDOCs Consortium, a partnership of medical schools between Central Michigan University, Michigan State University, Wayne State University, and Western Michigan University, to increase access to care in high-need, underserved rural and urban communities in Michigan.

We recently received news that Governor Whitmer cut the funding for MIDOCs in her series of line item vetoes. The MIDOCs program was supposed to receive \$3.7M in general funds from the state, which would gross about \$17.5M after the federal match. Fortunately, we have approximately \$3.7M in leftover funds from last year that we can use towards this coming year's cohort of residents. While we will be able to maintain the program, we will recruit fewer residents than we had originally planned for in the Academic Year 2020. We hope that there will be an opportunity for supplemental funding before recruitment efforts are under way for this coming year.

The Michigan Poison Center

The Poison Center made a successful transition to WSU and operations began on August 1. We are happy to report that the state approved \$580,000 in supplemental appropriation funding for FY19, allowing us to make the transition. We are currently planning an official launch event in November. Robert Gordon, the Director of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, has indicated interest in attending the event.

The Michigan Poison Center receives more than 65,000 calls per year related to emergencies (most involving children). Tenet Corporation and DMC hosted the Center for more than 60 years, but it no longer fits into their scope of services plan. This is a significant opportunity for Wayne

State in demonstrating our public health mission and expertise across the entire state. The Poison Center serves all counties in Michigan.

OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY

2019 Civic Festival/Constitution Day

Wayne State's Annual Civic Festival was held on September 17. The Division of Government and Community Affairs partnered with the Center for the Study of Citizenship, Office of Economic Development, and the Dean of Students Office for this year's event. Our increased support of this event helped to grow the festival. For the second year, we incorporated a naturalization ceremony organized by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to kick off the festival where twenty-five individuals were sworn in as new U.S. citizens. U.S. District Judge Mark Goldsmith conducted the ceremony, WSU Provost Keith Whitfield gave welcoming remarks, and Wayne County Executive Warren Evans, delivered the keynote address. This year, we had twelve organizations present with tables, which was a one-hundred percent increase over last year's participation.

WSU Meeting on Community Engagement

Our fall meeting on community engagement was held on September 10. We were joined by guest speaker Andrew Stein, Vice President & Executive Director, City Year Detroit. Andrew explained City Year's national and local impact and shared ways that various schools and colleges can get involved.

Thanksgiving Preview Party

Save the Dates were sent out in early October for the annual WSU Parade Preview Party. This year's event will be held on November 27th and will once again serve to thank our many community partners. Invitations will be sent out on Monday of next week.