Icebreaker

Share in the chat:

• Name
• Organization
• Location
• Who is your dream dinner guest?
Check in to become an Agent of Change

• MENTOR is launching a new grassroots advocacy program this spring
  – Advocates get points for taking action
• To check in and earn points, in your web browser, go to mentoring.org/advocacy or use the link in the chat
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National Mentoring Month Video
Abbie Evans (she/her)

Caden Fabbi (he/him)

MENTOR National’s Government Relations Team - 2024
Capitol Hill Day Overview
What to Expect – Before Next Week

• Participants should be receiving weekly communications from their state captain (MENTOR Affiliate rep or MENTOR Government Relations team member)
  – Check Capitol Hill Day webpage for additional updates (https://www.mentoring.org/capitol-hill-day/)
  – Advocates are encouraged to organize a virtual networking session with other advocates from your state

• MENTOR is scheduling all Congressional appointments
  – Instructions to access personal appointment schedule will be sent via email from Advocacy Associates in the days prior to the event
What to Expect – In-Person Training, Jan. 23\textsuperscript{rd}

- This training is for all Hill Day participants and is required for participation in the event.
- The training will help prepare all participants to hold successful Congressional meetings on Wednesday.
- Participants will be seated with other advocates from their state.
- The agenda will include workshops on message development and legislative asks, meeting practice, networking/planning with other advocates in your meetings, and a little inspiration from young people.
- Snacks will be provided.
- It will be fun. 😊
Capitol Hill Day Agenda

- **8:00 AM** First buses depart outside the hotel
- **10 AM** Capitol Hill Day kick-off
- **11AM – 4PM** Scheduled Congressional Meetings
- **4-6 PM** Welcome Reception
Security on Capitol Hill

• Visible police presence
• Similar to airport security (and restrictions)
  – Pass through metal detector
  – Wand may be used
  – Bags scanned and searched
• Delays possible!
Additional Logistics

• A chartered bus will take you to Capitol Hill from the Westin
• Light breakfast will be provided at the Capitol Hill Day Kick-off
• You will have to get yourself back after your meetings (rideshare and public transportation are accessible, easy options)
• MENTOR will provide a Capitol Hill Day t-shirt – wear comfortable shoes and business-y clothing!
Capitol Hill Day 2024

• 385 advocates from 42 states!
• Sectors represented:
  – Nationally and regionally affiliated mentoring organizations
  – Faith-based programs
  – Educators and other school staff (K-12, higher ed)
  – Researchers
  – Law enforcement
  – Corporate and foundation partners
  – Programs serving targeted youth populations (Indigenous youth, foster youth, etc.)
  – Juvenile justice advocates and professionals
  – Youth sports programs
Why We Advocate
What words come to mind when you hear “advocacy?”

Respond at Menti.com, enter the code 3539 9533
What is Advocacy?

- Advocacy is an activity by an individual or group that aims to influence decisions within political, economic, and social institutions.
- Advocating happens on different levels. You can advocate in schools, public settings, and even from your home.
- People can advocate for other people (individuals or groups), animals, natural resources, businesses...anything they care about!

*Advocacy is how we enact social change.*
Direct constituent interactions have more influence than other advocacy strategies.

![Image showing a bar chart illustrating the influence of different advocacy strategies on congressional decisions. The chart indicates that in-person issue visits and contact with constituents' reps have the highest influence (94%), followed by individualized email messages (92%) and individualized postal letters (88%). Other strategies such as comments during telephone town halls, phone calls, letters, and visits from lobbyists have varying degrees of influence, with visits from lobbyists having the lowest influence (56%).](chart)

Source: Congressional Management Foundation 2015 survey of congressional staff, including Chiefs of Staff, Communications Directors, Legislative Directors, and Legislative Assistants.
What you’re doing next week will make a difference.
Organizations and Movements that do Grassroots Advocacy well
Grassroots Advocacy

- Grassroots advocacy happens when people use strategic tactics to educate and persuade decisionmakers on the issues they care about
- The work can be done by organizations, campaigns, and concerned citizens

Grassroots advocacy is what you’re doing on Capitol Hill Day!
How Does Grassroots Advocacy Influence Institutions?

• It is the duty of elected officials to listen to their constituents and address their concerns
  – Powerful motivators: reelection, recognition, and influence
• Effective grassroots advocacy can wield as much influence as the biggest corporation
Nuts & Bolts of a Congressional Meeting
Goals for successful meetings

1. Strengthen or establish relationships
2. Educate Members of Congress and staff
3. Ask for and determine their level of support for key policies and issues
Before your meetings…

- Do your research!
- Look over relevant documents and talking points
- Make a plan with your teammates
- Check in to your meeting early, if possible
During your meetings…

• Introduce yourselves
• Don’t shy away from chit chat but be mindful of time
• Make your pitch and tell your story
• Carefully listen to how the staff/legislator responds; take notes
• Get a commitment when possible
• Promise to follow up with your contact information and materials
• Allow time for questions (both directions)

Don’t forget to take a photo!

#MentoringSummit
After your meetings…

• Send a thank you note to the Member or staff via the app
  – Personalize it!
  – At least one per team

• Post on social media

• Follow up immediately after meeting with any promised information
  – Again 2-3 weeks after that to check in on commitments

and, most importantly…
Feedback – it’s really important!

• We require at least one feedback survey form from each Congressional meeting
• Be as detailed as possible!
• Please use the feedback form provided in the app – you can find it in the same place where your meeting information is stored
• Provide useful feedback:
  – “Meeting went well” is less helpful than “Staffer expressed interest in…”
App Schedules and Logistics Overview
Q+A with Congressional Staff
Preparing for the Big Day
Using what you Learned Today for Success on Capitol Hill Day

• Review asks
  • Youth Mentoring Grant, Foster Youth Mentoring Act, Youth Workforce Readiness Act Mentoring to Succeed Act, Transition to Success Mentoring Act, National Mentoring Month Resolution, Youth Mentoring Caucus
  • We’ll cover these in depth at the in-person training – don’t freak out about not knowing bill specifics!

• Prepare program information to share with congressional offices
  • Number of youth served, outcomes, focus of work, goals and deliverables, etc.
Preparing for Capitol Hill Day

• Keep your eye our for an e-mail from Advocacy Associates to log in to the app and access your schedule
  – Summit app is DIFFERENT than the Capitol Hill Day web-based app
• Consider organizing a virtual networking session with other advocates from your state
Q&A!