Get More Involved in WACAC and Advocate for Students

Session D
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What we plan to cover.

• What exactly is GRAC and why do we have it?
• What is going on in California right now?
• What is happening in Nevada?
• Is GRAC even fun or cool?
• What can I get out of it?
• Personal story from a current member
• Sign up to learn more! Get a free hug!
What exactly is GRAC and what do we do?

• Federal and State legislative priorities and goals
• Determine positions on bills and proposals
• Meet with elected officials
• Keep WACAC members appraised of what’s going on
• Cover issues on higher education, counseling, and student access
• Plan yearly legislative conference
• Lobby and work with legislators
At the polling booth.

I asked a bunch of WACAC members this question: How many meetings have you had with a State or Federal legislator in the last 5 years?
What is going on in California?

- First, Colusa Brown. Stop. She is adorable. (Governor Jerry Brown’s dog.)

- Second, the budget.
  - The budget needs to be in and balanced by 6/15. Governor has until 6/30 to approve.
  - New law to post bills 72 hours before any vote makes this deadline super tough.
What is going on in California?

• Proposition 98!
  • More money for the CSU system
  • Protection and funding for the middle class scholarship
  • $1M toward common course numbering (for CC and CSU/UC)
  • $2.8M for hunger-free campus grants
  • Money for CC completion grant
  • $4.5M for mental health support on CC campuses
  • $10M in one-time money/grant for refugee student support
    • Some members of the legislature are pushing back on this specifically
What is going on in California?

• Assembly Bill (AB) 699: Educational Equity – immigration status
  • Would add immigration status to protected group of classifications (eg: sexuality, gender, ethnicity, etc.).
  • Requires colleges to investigate reports of discrimination based on this new category, as well as prohibiting and discrimination based on immigration status.
  • WACAC is taking a stance to support this bill.
• Sponsor: Assemblymember Patrick O’Donnell (Democrat)
• Status: Passed in Assembly; to Senate for approval
What is going on in California?

- Senate Bill (SB) 12: Foster Youth: postsecondary education: financial aid assistance
  - Requires Student Aid Commission to work with Dept. of Social Services to develop automated system to verify status as foster youth.
  - Aid in processing financial aid apps for foster youth.
  - Sponsor: Senator Jim Beall (Democrat)
  - Status: In Assembly under review
And now, Colusa Brown doing important stuff.
What is going on in California?

- Senate Bill (SB) 326: Middle Class Scholarship Program
  - Currently: transfer of $117M from general fund (EVERY year) to Student Aid Commission to support this program.
  - CHANGE: This money would be marked SPECIFICALLY for this scholarship only (can’t be used by Aid Commission for anything else.)
  - Sponsor: Senator Janet Nguyen (Republican)
  - Status: It moved through Assembly and Senate and is in appropriations (budgeting).
What is happening in Nevada?

• NACAC as well as State and Regional Associations are welcoming, provide mentorship and keep you challenged.

• Spend as little or as much time as you are able - lots of options!

• We need YOU - our challenges continue and both new perspectives as well as seasoned professional experience is needed.

• Get Involved!
What is happening in D.C.?

- President Trump is cutting funding on education. Boo!
- Largest proposed cut in discretionary funding for education.
PRESIDENT TRUMP’S FY 2018 BUDGET MAKES LARGEST EDUCATION CUT

Requested change in Dept. of Education discretionary funding vs. prior year, in billions

Does not include FY 2010 request versus FY 2009, which included $97 billion in Recovery Act funds, or FY 2011 request that requested all Pell grant resources as mandatory spending.

Source: Department of Education FY 2018 request and budget history tables.
Is GRAC even fun or cool?

• Short answer: Yes.
• Big picture
  • We lobby in Sacramento
  • We lobby in D.C.
  • We get to help write bills that affect our jobs and students!
• But I’m not a “lobbyist!”
  • Great! Me either! But we can still share stories and encourage change!
  • WACAC actually employs a lobbyist to help us!
• Cool stuff from 2017
  • Delaine Eastin: working on counseling requirements/wishes
What can I get out of joining GRAC?

• Friends
• Knowledge

• A great experience at our conference in February – meet awesome people!
• And (finally) Priscilla Vivio has some thoughts for you (as a first-timer).
Meet a member!

Priscilla Poulson Vivio, Sonoma County, California
Independent College Admissions Consultant, On My Way Consulting, Berkeley, California
Adult Education Project Assistant, College of Marin, Novato, California

Volunteer and Advocate:
• Mentor of First Generation College-Bound Students, 10,000 Degrees, Sonoma County, California
• Vice-Chair and Women's Commissioner, Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women, Sonoma County, California
• President, Montgomery High School Site Council and Education Foundation, Santa Rosa, California
• Assorted Parent Board Positions, Sonoma Country Day School, Santa Rosa, California
Want to learn more?

- If you are in Nevada, email Kris at Kristine.Shay@unlv.edu
- If you are in California, email Breanne at WacacGrac@wacac.org
- Or go here to sign up: https://www.wacac.org/committees/government-relations/

If you want a copy of this presentation and more info about these bills, please email WacacGrac@wacac.org
Aaaaand, remember to register to vote!