

PASSHE students, presidents, alumni, trustees visit Capitol for Advocacy Days



Led by students from each of the 14 universities, teams that also included presidents, alumni and trustees spent two days at the Capitol this week meeting with legislators as part of the ongoing effort to generate support for the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education. The visits were the culmination of several months of planning that included campus visits by Office of the Chancellor staff to help prepare participants for the advocacy sessions.



The teams met both in large groups and with individual legislators during the two days of visits. They focused on several key themes, including quality and affordability, PASSHE long-term cost-control efforts and the important role PASSHE plays in the economic vitality of the Commonwealth – with 90 percent of its students being Pennsylvania residents and 83 percent of graduates remaining here after earning their degrees.

The advocacy visits came on the heels of Chancellor John Cavanaugh's appearances before the House and Senate Appropriations Committees to discuss PASSHE's 2011-12 appropriations request and to answer questions about the possible impact of the governor's proposed budget. The chancellor was joined at the Senate hearing by Millersville University President Francine McNairy and Shippensburg University President Bill Ruud, and at the House hearing by Bloomsburg University President David Soltz and Clarion University President Karen Whitney.

Senators and representatives from both parties were very supportive of PASSHE and its mission during the budget hearings.



Even with the words of encouragement, much work remains to be done. This is an ongoing process, and one that undoubtedly will have many chapters before it is complete.

As the process continues, PASSHE remains committed to doing everything possible to ensure that the funding it receives will permit the State System universities to thrive in order to ensure students have continued access to a quality, affordable education.