

The Future of the U.S. Weather Prediction Enterprise

Strategies for Success -- Lessons from the
Astronomy, Oceanography, and Biomedical
Communities

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Core Principles for Successful Advocacy

- ◆ Clear and compelling case made in a jargon-less, easy to understand manner;
- ◆ Community or coalition must collectively make a case that reflects the nat'l security and economic interests of the Nation, the state, the district, the region, etc.;
- ◆ The case and its message must be conveyed continually and the "ask" must be rational and doable;
- ◆ Community or coalition must be broad based – profit and non-profit sector collaboration;
- ◆ Minimize the appearance of self interest

Core Target Audiences

- ◆ The White House
- ◆ OMB and OSTP
- ◆ The Federal Agencies
- ◆ Science Policy Makers – in and out of government
- ◆ Congressional leadership
- ◆ Relevant Congressional Committees
- ◆ Relevant print and electronic media

Take Home Message – How Do You Want To Be Remembered?

- ◆ “We just talked for 60 minutes. They have no clue about how the Congress (or the White House) works. And I still don’t know what they want – or why.”
- ◆ “I get it. This is an important issue for us - it affects people we care about. We need to be out front on this issue.”

Advocacy Efforts by Different Communities

- ◆ Astronomy – known for setting priorities via its NAS decadal survey;
- ◆ Oceans – most recently the Watkins Commission on Ocean Policy;
- ◆ Doubling of the NIH budget – late 90's;
- ◆ High performance computing in the late 80's;
- ◆ Info Tech and Nano in the 90's
- ◆ Climate change research in the 90's

Astronomy – High Marks for Setting Priorities within the Field

- ◆ Decadal Survey – community exercise to set priorities among competing astronomical projects – undertaken every 10 years;
- ◆ Results are taken seriously by federal decision makers;
- ◆ Congress sees it as a critical roadmap to guide decisions;
- ◆ Priority setting exercise gives astronomy community credibility with the agencies and Congress;
- ◆ Decadal Survey can help to unite the relevant community;
- ◆ Decadal Survey has become the “gold standard” for astronomy community’s advocacy

Oceans Community – High Marks for Outreach and Visibility

- ◆ Congress calls for a commission to develop recommendations for a comprehensive nat'l ocean policy.
- ◆ Commission – visible, broad membership, focus on many different issues – much more than research, targeted a broad audience of policy makers
- ◆ Extensive outreach to many different policy communities
- ◆ Not much priority setting within research recommendations
- ◆ Provided estimated costs for many recommendations
- ◆ Interest and support for implementing the commission's recommendations found in the Executive and Legislative Branches

Biomedical Research Community – High Marks for Visibility and Unity

- ◆ Simple Message: double the NIH budget in late 1990's
- ◆ Patient advocacy groups, academic and other research groups coalesce around a single central message
- ◆ Congressional champions identified
- ◆ Extensive and organized outreach to Members of Congress both in Washington and at home
- ◆ Made the message personal
- ◆ Outcomes and results that resonate with those concerned about public health and well being

Common Threads for Successful Advocacy

- ◆ A single central message that can be understood and appreciated by federal decision makers and an informed, influential public;
- ◆ Champions cultivated and maintained – in the Administration and the Congress – in positions of influence and authority;
- ◆ Organized, continuous, and visible outreach communication effort to educate and develop the next generation of champions;
- ◆ Tie to central or newly developing theme of the current Administration – “innovation and competitiveness”?
- ◆ Timing, Timing, and Timing