

## Engaging with Your College/ University Federal/State Government Relations Officers

### Background:

Do you know who is responsible for representing your institution's interests with federal and state policy makers? Many universities have one or more federal relations officers on staff. In some institutions, these individuals also engage with state level policy makers. Some universities contract with external lobbying firms for governmental relations services. In some institutions, the federal relations officers report to the office of the President or other senior administration officials.

Because workforce development and STEM education are major concerns for federal and state policy makers, it is important for directors of PSM programs to make sure their government relations officers are familiar with the PSM and can share information about PSM programs as part of their ongoing work.

Below are suggested steps to help you engage with your university's government relations officials.

### Getting Started:

1. Schedule a 30-minute meeting with the Director of Government Relations or other appropriate individual at your institution for the purpose of providing an overview of the PSM program and its role in preparing a highly skilled STEM workforce.
2. The PSM Fact Sheet, available on the NPSMA website under the Resources section, provides a good overview of what the PSM is, current statistics on the number of programs in the country and citations from national organizations that are supportive of the PSM movement.
3. Provide specific information about the PSM program at your institution including the number of programs, number of students enrolled, number of PSM graduates and information on local businesses and organizations where your PSM students are interning or employed.
4. Any anecdotal or written feedback on PSM students or graduates from employers would also be of interest to your audience.
5. Make sure to provide a folder of information as part of your discussion and as a leave behind. The folder could include several pieces of information available on the NPSMA website including the PSM Fact Sheet (mentioned above), list of PSM programs, PSM flyer for Policymakers and any materials specific to your program(s).
6. Ask how the importance of STEM education and workforce development are being addressed by your government relations office and how the PSM program can contribute to these discussions.

### Follow-up:

1. Send a short note or email after the visit thanking your government relations officer for his/her time.
2. Develop a plan to share some information about the PSM program at least twice a year as a means of staying connected and in touch.