
FIRST Team 1086 Blue Cheese
Advocacy Efforts

Deep Run High School Robotics
***FIRST* Team 1086 Blue Cheese**



Advocacy and Awareness

- Early efforts included participating in Virginia *FIRST*'s advocacy day at the General Assembly
- After 2 years at NAC, decided to pump up local efforts
 - Strengthened relationships with members to create more awareness of *FIRST*
 - Developed relationships with other key members and departments of VA government
- Presented to Committees
 - Presented information on VA shortage of STEM workers, *FIRST*, STEM and need for funding
 - VA General Assembly Joint Commission on Technology and Science
 - Members of House and Senate
 - Partnered with 2998 to introduce idea of STEM grant fund
 - Commonwealth of Virginia Cyber Security Commission
 - High ranking officials and heads of large cyber companies in VA



Specific Legislation

- 2015 Advocated for bill introduced by Senator Stanley for STEM education grants
 - Made it to Appropriations before being tabled
 - That summer we asked Senator Stanley to work with us and reintroduce the next session
- 2016 Sen Stanley dropped two bills
 - STEM competition team grant program for schools in underserved areas
 - Public-Private partnership fund for STEM education in schools in underserved areas
 - We launched a strong advocacy push including social media, meetings with officials in many departments of the government and engaging other teams to help
- Successful in getting STEM competition grant program bill passed
 - \$300k 2 year pilot program implemented in 2017



Specific Legislation

- 2018 Delegate Kathy Tran introduced a bill to create a permanent grant program
 - Modified to cover all STEAM education
 - We upped our advocacy efforts to include testifying in front of committees where the bill was being heard
 - Made it to appropriations before being tabled
- 2018 also advocated for a bill introduced by Sen Stanley to have robotics recognized by VHSL
 - Made it through the Senate and a couple of House committees before being tabled



Expanded and Future Local Efforts

- 2018 Held first local advocacy information session at FRC tournament we hosted
 - Partnered with FRC 422 and FRC 1418
 - Featured speaker with strong history of successful CS legislation education
 - Also shared information on NAC to recruit additional attendees
- This summer plan to reach out to VHSL directly to have robotics officially recognized as a high school 'sport'
- Continue work with VA Delegates and Senators to introduce partner bills for STEAM grant funding for underserved schools in the 2019 session



Creating partnerships

- Other teams
 - Contact list based on district (politicians change but districts rarely do)
 - Other highly motivated teams- spirit of coopertition
- Non-governmental organizations
 - VHSL
 - Code VA
 - PTA
 - VEA/NEA



Keeping things current

- Key words & phrases that resonate with lawmakers
 - These change over time. “Workforce readiness” is a current favorite
 - Attempt to keep to bi-partisan or neutral wording
- Contact lists
 - Staying on top of who is in office at different levels of government
 - Committee assignments
 - Students/mentors on other teams
 - Memories are both short & long
- Year-round work

