

# Arizona Advocacy Training

Presented by the CocoNuts,  
Team 2486



# Training Outline:

- Introduction
- How does the AZ Legislature Work?
- What is State Level Advocacy?
- Goals of Our Meetings
- Attention Grab
- How to Act in Your Meetings
- Dress Code
- Building Relationships
- Breakout Rooms & Time to Prep with your Team
- Logistics & Questions

# Let's start off by introducing ourselves!

- What's your name?
- What team are you from?
- Where is your team from?

# Nuts about Advocacy!

We've been involved in advocacy since 2014, in one way or another. This past summer, we had three Nuts and a coach attend the National Advocacy Conference hosted by the Student Association for STEM Advocacy (SASA). There in Washington D.C. we advocated for the CHIPS Act which provided funding for afterschool programs like FIRST. We were the only Arizona team at NAC, so we decided it was time to get other AZ FIRST teams involved! We wanted teams who were interested to get a chance to advocate with us.



# How Does the AZ Legislature Work?

- Arizona is divided into 30 legislative districts, each with 2 representatives and 1 senator.
- Legislators must run for election every two years, and are subject to 8 year term limits.
- “Session” is 100 days, although it is typically extended for longer than 100 days.
- Most legislators are on smaller committees (EX: technology, education)
- Committees can draft bills in their area for larger approval in House or Senate
- If a bill passes one chamber, it goes to the other for revision or approval
- If a bill passes both chambers, the governor can sign or veto

# What is State Level Advocacy?

State level: We are in Arizona, so we could advocate to our legislators in the Arizona Capital, or representatives.

Be professional in your approach with them. You most likely live close to your representatives. This enables a chance to continue your advocacy closer to home.

***Hint:** Take the skills you learn to your local policy makers  
(ex: School boards & city councils)*

# Outlines For Your Meetings

- What is FIRST?
  - Progression of Programs FLL to FRC
  - International - over 100 countries
  - How the robot competition works (new game each year, etc)
- A bit about your team
- Why is being in FIRST important to you *personally*?
  - Share stories of inspiration, growth, impact
- Why is it important to Arizona?
  - Scholarship opportunities
  - Workforce development
  - Preparing students for high tech careers (this is big in AZ now)
- How can they help? “The ASK”

# What's the Goal for Your Meetings? “The ASK”

- Official stipends for FIRST Coaches
- Funding for FIRST teams in AZ
- Come to a competition and see how awesome this is!  
(Ex: FRC: State Championship, FTC: Kickoff)
- Come to our build space and learn more about our team and situation.
- Educate about what FIRST is and WHY it's important.
- *We are meeting with FIRST Advocacy team at Championship and may have additional specific legislation to promote.*

# Finding Ways To Catch Their Attention

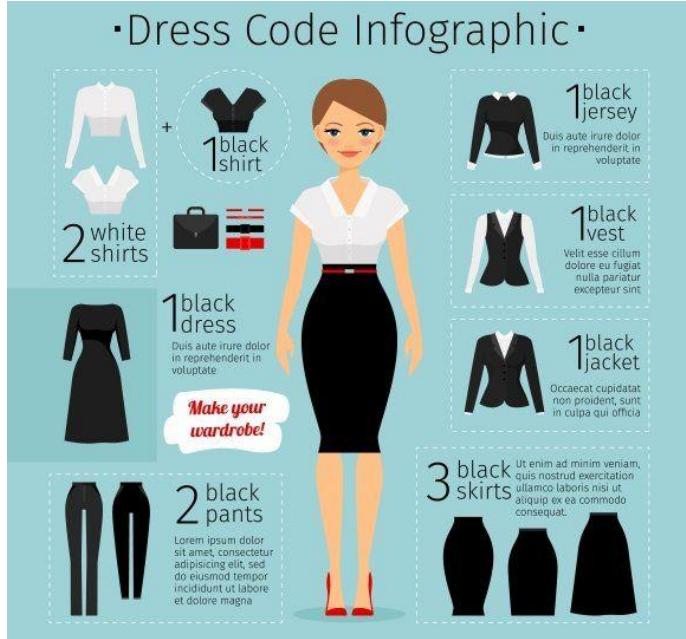
- Most of you are teenagers. Staff and congressmen and women usually expect adults. You are already catching their attention with that.
- Remember, use professional language and sit up straight. This will leave a good impression.
- You are the expert in your field. They most likely do not know what you are talking about, but bring the passion and love for your chosen part on your team?

# How To Act In Your Meetings

- Don't zone out. Stay alert and pay attention to your teammates when they are presenting. This shows you care, and they will notice.
- Have a welcoming expression. Smile!
- Use professional language. (No swearing, and no slang.)
- If you want to take a picture, ask first.
- No partisan politics! This is advocacy. It doesn't matter if you agree with the member or not. You are there to build a relationship.

# Dress Code!

- Nothing revealing
- You can wear traditional cultural clothes
- Professional and modest
- Team colors, pins are great!
- 2 pairs of socks with dress shoes!
- Heels = use with caution. You will be standing a lot!



# Building Relationships

- Consistency is key.
- Persistent but not overbearing.
- Email your representatives, and invite them to events, build spaces, or a volunteering events. They will see what you're doing and have a deeper appreciation for it.
- Do your homework. Gather background information on your member. What is their party and what are their priorities? Frame your WHY to what their views are.
- Be clear and knowledgeable
  - Be professional and show off the skills you have gained through robotics. Talk about how this program has affected you, and how you want them to help change.

# If You Get Nothing Else Out Of This...

*Take this away.*

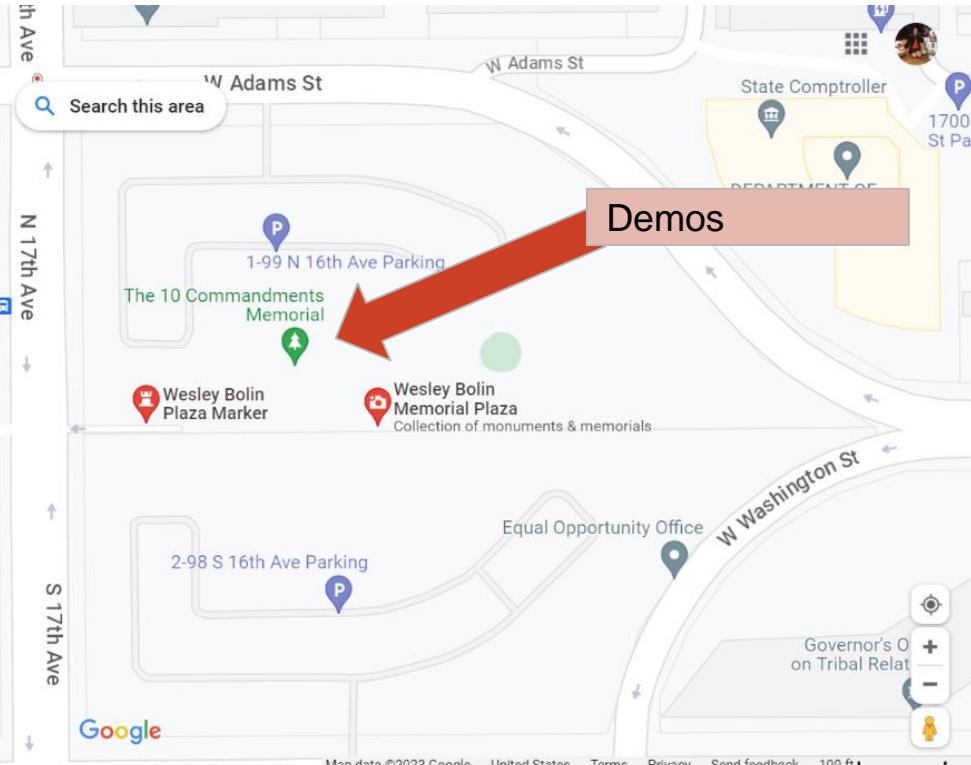
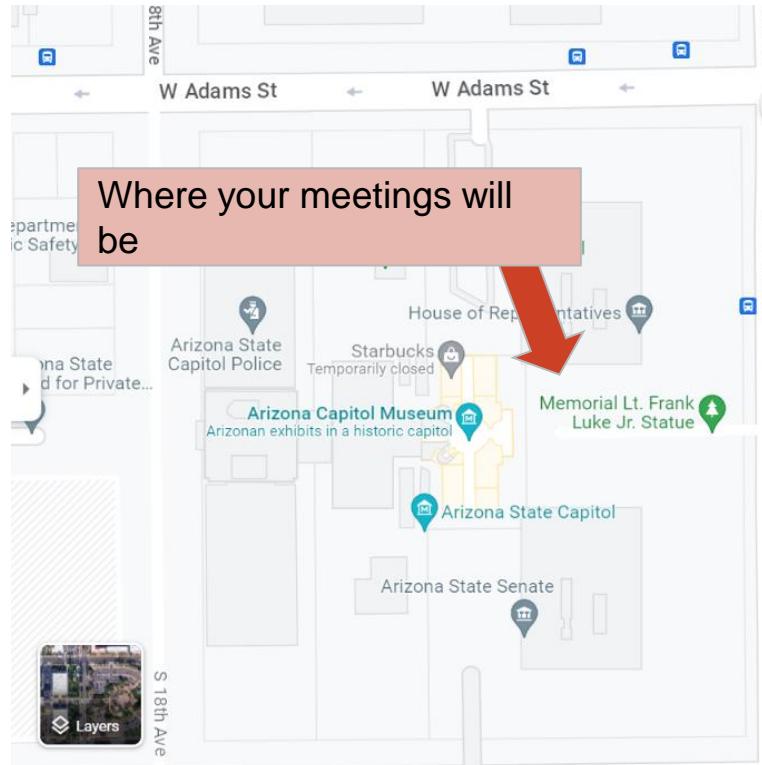
Build relationships with  
your elected officials, and  
their staff.

## Breakout Rooms & Planning Time

- Prep your meetings
- Follow up with any legislators you haven't heard from yet (phone or email).
- We are here to help! Let us know if you want to run your presentation by us.

# A Few Logistics:

- AZ FIRST Day at the Capitol: May 1st
  - Set up starts at 9 AM
  - Demo 10 AM to 1 PM
  - Cleanup done by 1:30 PM
  - Meetings anytime between 9AM and 3PM
  - Wesley Bolin Plaza for Demos
- Packing List
  - Robot, controllers, batteries
  - Power strip & extension cord
  - Shade & weights to hold it down (no stakes)
  - Water, snacks (we will buy pizza for lunch)
  - Folding table and chairs
  - Tiles or carpet if your robot has tender “feet” (we’ll be on concrete)
  - Business cards & a 1-page flyer about your team
- HOMEWORK
  - Finalize meetings with your members before May 1st
  - *ASK for a tour of the House/Senate Chamber from your member or staff!*
  - Promote our AZ FIRST Robotics Day on Social Media



# Any Questions?

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