



Northern Iowa Student Government Senate
External Relations Committee Newsletter

UNI Day at the Capitol

External Relations Newsletter

"Your View Into the State Legislature"

Sponsored by Northern Iowa Student Government

by Speaker Sam Caughron and Senator Trevor Meyers on March 22nd, 2022

UNI Day at the Capitol is the largest lobbying effort to represent the University of Northern Iowa before the Iowa State Legislature. A menagerie of student organizations and university departments; it is an opportunity for students, staff, and faculty alike to meet with their respective state legislatures and discuss the opportunities, academics, extra-curricular, and needs of our university. A wide range of representatives; from UNI Theater students, to the UNI Counseling Center, and Northern Iowa Student Government officials, our representation at the state capitol is dire and necessary to improve our academics, facility, and student programs and organizations.

Packing a bus of about forty students, the NISG Director of Governmental Relations (Zach Zippe) and the UNI Legislative Liaison Team (Parker Daniels, Joe Link, Tanner Richards, Mason Miller, and Grace Bedford) and the NISG Advisor Mike Bobeldyk, with the fearless bus driver Bob, the students traveled from UNI's campus to the capitol grounds dressed their best and ready to impress our state representatives, and the Iowa Governor, Kim Reynolds. Setting stage on the ground floor of the Iowa state capitol rotunda, the many students and faculty set up booths and large displays to show off their programs, services, and academics only found at the University of Northern Iowa. The students, NISG representatives, faculty, and state representatives then enjoyed two hours of circling the rotunda and visiting booths of departments and organizations, meeting constituents, and all in common talking about the great work UNI does in educating Iowans, sending students to jobs directly after graduation, and keeping Iowans in Iowa. Discussing how important it is to adequately fund the university, as well as discussing the dire need of higher education and how it creates well-educated and noble citizens, was a few of the talking points for UNI students meeting their state legislators.

Students, faculty, and staff from UNI not only met with Iowa state legislators, they also had the opportunity to tour our state capitol building, even going above the rotunda (the main floor of the capitol) to the top of the well-known golden dome, to the viewing deck. Alongside the top of the golden dome, the Iowa House of Representatives chamber, and the Iowa state capitol library were also toured by UNI students, faculty, and staff. The pictures taken of these places were not the only sight to see, as at the height of the event Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds arrived to take a large "family photo" of all those in attendance for UNI Day at the Capitol.

Overall, UNI Day at the Capitol was extremely successful after about two years of not holding the event due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. We give our appreciation and thanks to the Iowa State Government, UNI for the opportunity and resources, NISG for assisting with the student involvement and the setting up of transportation, as well as the NISG Legislative Liaison Team and the NISG Director of Governmental Relations. It is an opportunity and experience that should not be missed, so please attend next year in 2023!

For more information, click the link at the bottom of the newsletter.

THIS WEEK'S
TOP STORIES



Cedar Falls City Council - Liaison Updates

by Senator Madison Duong and Senator Sierra Ameen on March 22nd, 2022

The Cedar Falls City Council met on Monday, March 21, 2022. Before their formal meeting they had a work session with UNI. UNI representatives Michael Hager and Andrew Morse came to the council meeting to extend their invitation for collaboration. In this work session they talked about all things UNI that pertains to the city of Cedar Falls; summary to follow.

UNI has 1,500 full time and 1,900 part time employees, and we pay out \$14.4 million every month in payroll. There is an estimated \$72 million dollar local economic contribution, but it wasn't clear as to how this number was derived.

It was good to hear that both graduation and retention rates are up which means UNI is outperforming many other regional comprehensive universities. There was a 1% freshmen increase in 2021 and 5% freshmen increase in 2022 which are both higher than the national decline in both year's percentages. Fundraising is at an all time high of \$39 million 2021 and \$43 million 2022, which directly contribute to the quality of experience right here at UNI.

There are also many projects UNI is working on; Resurfacing the Dome, remodeling Gallagher Bluedorn, renovating Noran Hall, expanding the Industrial Technical Center (ITC). When the dome is completed the outside will not look white, but it will appear tan. Not to

worry, after 6 months the tan will go back to white with sun exposure. Also, the ITC will be renamed the Applied Engineering Building.

Following the presentation there was a Q & A between the council people and the UNI representatives. They discussed the shared services of UNI being the fire department. They also assured that CF police work closely with UNI police to maintain a continuity between on and off campus. Finally, CF staff have a continuous working relationship with university staff and they are in contact every day.

Northern Iowa Student Government Affairs

by Senator Madison Duong and Senator Sierra Ameen on March 22nd, 2022

The University of Iowa Student Governments released a statement of opposition in response to a new Iowa law that prohibits the participation of transgender women in women's sports on their social media. This post was released to the public on March 7, just days after Governor Reynolds signed the bill. In this post, The University of Iowa Student Governments professionally expressed their displeasure by declaring that the bill contradicts the values of Iowa and "hurts the LGBTQ+ community." This was followed by a couple of paragraphs stating their loyalty to the LGBTQ+ community, promising continual advocacy and support from their student governments in regards to future pieces of legislation.

Student representatives from Iowa State University, the University of Northern Iowa, and the University of Iowa plan to meet in the coming weeks to discuss the University of Iowa's Undergraduate Student Government's actions and statement, how the statement was put together, and reactions from constituents, Iowans, and the Iowa state legislature, if any.

NISG/Cedar Valley Trails Earth Day Cleanup

by Anton Benjegerdes Director Of Civic Engagement

NISG will be partnering with Cedar Valley Trails volunteers to help out with their cleanup day scheduled for Saturday April the 23rd. Currently the plan is to start at 8:30 at Pfeiffer Park and go to around lunch but it's not required to stay the entire time.

If you are interested in helping out with this, please fill out the form below so we can have an accurate count of how many volunteers we should expect to have and to receive updates as plans evolve.

The link to the form can be found on the NISG Website.

[NISG Website](#)



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