



Toolkit Center UCGH Action Guide

Recruitment
Campaign Strategy

Contacting Politicians
Event Planning

This toolkit is a collection of the “best practices” of the UCGH advocacy and education organizations. It provides a tutorial for students and national coordinators on how to run an effective campaign for global health.

What is Advocacy?

Advocacy and policy change include a range of strategies designed to involve people in influencing decision making at the organizational, local, national, and international levels, usually involving strategic planning, community mobilization, capacity development, coalition building, and the promotion of changing policies and environments. Effective advocacy should create an environment for cumulative change beyond the level of the individual, and should have a community-defined objective.

Terms to Know

- Campaign—A series of actions that are linked together for accomplishing a specific goal within a particular timeframe.
- Goal—what you want and can design an advocacy campaign around. Advocacy goals can be short term, medium term and long term.
- Target—the person who has the power to give you what you want (your goal) and over whom you can influence.
- Tactic—is a demonstration of your power. Tactics, or action, include things like letter writing and meeting with your congressional representative.
- Ask—is what you want, specifically, from your target. Asks might include: signing a particular bill.
- Bill—The main vehicle employed by lawmakers for introducing their proposals (enacting or repealing laws, etc) in government. Bills are given numbers depending on the order in which they are introduced (S.802, S.803, S.804 etc).

- Recess—is a temporary interruption in Congressional business that occurs at the end of each calendar day.
- Appropriation—The provision of funds, through an annual appropriations act or permanent law, for federal agencies to make payments out of the Treasury funds for specified purposes. The federal spending process consists of two steps: authorization and then appropriation.
- Session—The period during which Congress assembles and carries on its regular business.
- Hearing—A meeting of a committee or subcommittee-generally open to the public-to take testimony in order to gather information and opinions on proposed legislation, to conduct an investigation, or review the operation or other aspects of a Federal agency or program.
- Legislative session— is the part of Congress' daily session in which it considers legislative business (bills, resolutions, and actions).
- Markup—The process by which Congressional committees and subcommittees debate, amend, and rewrite proposed legislation.
- Committee—Subsidiary organization of the Congress established for the purposes of considering legislation, conducting hearings and investigations, or carrying out other assignments as instructed by the parent chamber.
- Civil Disobedience—made famous by Gandhi, it is the active refusal to obey certain laws, demands of a government or occupying power without resorting to physical violence. It is one of the primary tactics of nonviolent resistance.
- Lobbying—is virtually any advocacy activity aimed at influencing an elected officials vote and opinion on a specific piece of legislation.
- Legislation—is defined as action by a legislative body including the introduction, amendment, enactment, defeat or repeal of Acts, bills, resolutions, appropriations, and budgets.
- Activism—is intentional action or inaction to bring about social or social and political change. This action can be in support of or in opposition to, on side of an often controversial argument usually involving the government system. In some case, activism has nothing to do with a protest or confrontation: for instance, some religious or vegetarian/vegan activists try to persuade people to change their behavior directly, rather than persuade governments to change laws. Activism is defined as theory, doctrine, or practice of assertive, often militant action, such as mass demonstrations or strikes, used as a means of opposing or supporting a controversial issue, entity, or person. Activist methods are direct, noticeable, public and militant. They are used to call attention to an

issue and often to shame, embarrass and create negative public opinion toward people with decision-making authority. Advocacy, on the other hand, is the process of committing continuous, proactive support to an idea, person, or cause to bring about sustainable, long-term change. Advocacy seeks to bring about immediate changes to ensure a responsive strategy for emerging or potential challenges. Activism and advocacy are two distinct beasts and both are required for the success of the community-based response.

- **Direct Action**—supports non-violent direct action as a catalyst for social change. The fundamental principles of direct action stem from the thinking that instead of having someone else act for you (e.g. a politician), you (individually or as a community) organize and act for yourself. The central feature of "direct action" is empowering people to make a change by their own efforts. "Direct action" is a term that is used fairly loosely to describe a range of political actions that can take on various shapes and forms, from rallies to civil disobedience to legislative action. Direct action has two goals: obstruct another political agent or organization from performing some practice which they object or solve problems that major institutions (businesses, governments, etc) are not addressing.
- **Grassroots Organizing**—creates democracy by engaging ordinary people in its campaigns, it works from the bottom up to make decision and bring about social change. It does this by working with its constituency to determine issues, strategies, tactics, and finding its leadership in the folks it is organizing.

UCGH Action Guide

Recruitment

Introduction

Strategic Recruitment

One on One Meeting

If we want to rid the world of global health injustices, then we need join together in numbers! This means empowering all students; medical students, undergraduates and graduate students to take action.

People = Power

Recruitment involves identifying student leaders and developing their potential. Here are some general recruitment tips:

- Recruit to events, not meetings
- Recruit to every event you hold
- Get a verbal commitment when you recruit
- Repetition-people need to hear about your event at least seven times
- Follow-up after the initial invitation
- Follow-up within three days after a student comes to an event
- Be creative in your outreach

Strategic Recruitment

Engaging new members involves developing a well thought out plan that goes beyond getting people to show up for an event. Recruit to develop new leaders and forward your advocacy mission. This can be done through strategic recruitment:

- **Targeting**-Develop a strategy for recruiting who you need and want. Identify who is likely to join and who you would like to attract. Try to be as specific as possible. (for example: people living with HIV, medical students, etc.) Then determine how many new people you want to involve and create strategies that might reach out to your different target audiences.

Remember to consider connections and resources that a potential member will bring to your advocacy mission.

- **Personal Ask**- Face to face interaction is more effective than flyers. Personally ask people to attend one of the organization's events or meetings.
- **One on One's** - Have a one on one meeting to discuss how your organization and the student's interests are interconnected. This is really your chance to hear more about the leadership potential of the person.
- **Gradually Train Leaders**- Once you have developed a strong group, start increasing the intensity of your ask so that you are incorporating them more and more in your organization. Remember to involve new people right away. Identify tasks for them at their first meeting.

Depending on the student, this process could take a few weeks or a number of years.

One on One Meeting

One on Ones are directed conversation between you and a student. The purpose is to talk about what motivates their interest, introduce your organization and build a relationship with them.

Always remember the 4C's when doing a one on one:

Connection - Try to find out something that you share in common with the student to make your interaction more personal.

- It is important to let the person talk about their interests and actively listen to find areas where their interests and your issue/group overlap.

Context- Give a brief background/history on the issue and give the context of why he or she should care.

- Talk only about 20% of the time and reinforce how their interests relate to your campaign. Also, don't be too revealing-you want them to be slightly curious and intrigued so that they come the next meeting to find out more.

Commitment - Be direct about what you want from the person (ex. make a flyer, come to a rally etc.)

Communicate- Be clear about what you have agreed upon, what the next steps are going to be, when you are going to see/communicate with him or her next.

- Remember to always follow up via telephone or personal email

Introduction
Cutting the Issue
Setting Goals
Big Resource Picture

Who's in Power
Create Your Message
Tactics
Evaluation

Now that your recruitment is complete, it's time to move into the "nuts and bolts" of creating a campaign strategy.

Steps for Creating a Campaign Strategy

1. Find your Issue
2. Set Goals
3. Assess Resources
4. Targets
5. Messaging
6. Tactics
7. Evaluation

Remember: When designing a campaign, do not move directly to tactics before properly planning a strategy. Without a strategy, the tactics, no matter how bold or attention grabbing, are not likely to win a campaign.

Cutting the Issue

Winnable campaigns all have one similar quality: they all pinpoint a specific issue. This process can be tricky, so first ask yourself this question: "What is the objective of my campaign?" To answer this you have to turn a problem into an issue.

Problem vs. Issue

Problem	Issue
You can not choose	You can always choose
No indefinable solution	Specific solution to a problem
Broad : Global access to HIV/AIDS medicines	Specific: restrictive trade policies

A problem is access to HIV/AIDS medications, but how do you solve that problem? You can't! It's too broad to organize a campaign around. Then ask yourself, what are the issues that are causing the larger access problem? Suddenly you have a wealth of issues to choose from: restrictive trade policy, lack of health care infrastructure to deliver medicines, etc.

Characteristics of Good Issues

- It will improve peoples' lives
- It's something that a large number of people care about
- The organization has the resources in terms of money and people to win this issue
- It will unite people for a common cause
- The issue will engage more students in your organization
- The issue is winnable

Setting Goals

The first step in any campaign is to clearly define and research your objective. Successful campaigns not only win concrete improvements in people's lives, they build a stronger organization and increase student involvement. All campaigns include both advocacy and organization goals.

Advocacy Goals

- **Immediate (6 months):** Raise the issue of the health care worker shortage to all relevant student movements and policymakers. It's important to note this is strategic. It's not awareness for awareness sake; it's the deliberate education of the important parties.
- **Medium (one year):** Introduce and find Congressional co-sponsors for the African Health Workers Investment Act.
- **Long (2+ years):** Achieve \$650 million in U.S. foreign aid spending on improving health care infrastructure in the developing world.

Organizational Goals

- **Immediate (six months):** Recruit 1,000 new subscribers to emails lists while maintaining existing members.
- **Medium (one year):** Strengthen student contacts in cities/regions that can influence important policy makers.
- **Long (2+ years):** Have more than a dozen student groups around the country working on this issue. Develop strategic partnerships with other student organizations.

Goals should be **SMART**

Specific-about the objective you are working to achieve

Measurable-something that you can track

Appropriate-Your goals should be compatible with your mission and vision

Realistic-Goals should reflect your capacity and experience

Time-bound-when you plan to achieve this goal

The Big Resource Picture

This is the time to do both "in house inventory" of your organizational resources and to reach out to others for support. Working with unusual allies can help change the balance of power so that your campaign can succeed!

- What are your organization's strengths and weaknesses?
- How many supporters do you have? How many leaders?
- What capacity do you have to reach out to the media?
- What capacity do you have to produce events?
- What connections do you have?
- Who are your allies and opponents?

Record all of your answers and remember to be realistic and honest with yourself!

Who's in Power

All campaigns are organized around a specific target. Ask the following questions to determine who your targets are.

- Who has the power to give you what you want?
This person is always an individual person or group of people, never a board or committee. It is important to be specific and name your targets.

Ex: Congress needs to increase funding for global spending on health.
Target: Senator Aimslow because he sits on the U.S. Appropriations Committee.
- What power do you have over your target?
Do you have people in his state or does one of your students work at his country club?
It's time to put the puzzle together.
- What influences my target's decision making?
Know the decision making system
Ex: If you are advocating for change at your university, the school President may not have the power to make the change, but the Board of Directors does.
Targeting the President of the university would be a waste of time and resources.

It is important to determine who is on your side, who is not on your side and who is in the persuadable middle. Sometimes the obvious target isn't accessible and it's necessary to work through others to reach them. These people are **indirect targets**.

Create your Message

Campaigns are successful only if they empower students to take action. This means communicating with students with a message they understand.

Know Your Frame

The first step in this process is to look at how a story is told, called its frame. One example of reframing an issue is using the word 'lagoon' instead of 'pond'. While both refer to the same landscape, 'lagoon' invokes the notion of an exciting and exotic paradise and 'pond' creates images of a calm and ordinary pool of water. Thoughtful message selection is important to every campaign.

Reframe for the Audience

The message that moves your students is often not the message that appeals to your targets.

Example: PATHWAY Act lobbying

Student Message: Promote a lobby day by talking about how the abstinence until marriage earmark is ineffective, because over half of all new HIV/AIDS infections occur in married women. Students may also appeal to the importance of negotiating safe sex and gender equity.

Target Message: Rather than talking about infection rates and women's rights when speaking with Congressional Representatives, you would highlight the Institute of Medicine and Government Accountability Office reports that both noted the earmark as ineffective use of PEPFAR funding.

Knowing the mindset of your supporters and opponents is crucial to designing a message.

Get a Hook Phrase

Every campaign needs a "hook phrase" to capture the essence of the campaign. "RX for Survival" is a good example of effective messaging. Every communication you send should include this message.

Be Clear and Specific

Effective communication must also be clear about what you are asking your targets to do. "RX for Survival" is a great slogan but it is not enough. People have no idea how to do that. You must also specify the action you want them to take: "Increase government funding for HIV medications."

Tactics

A campaign is a series of planned actions (tactics) aimed at achieving a particular goal. There are several key categories of tactics that make a successful advocacy campaign:

- **Spokesperson Communication:** one person calls and talks to the foreign relations staff person, one person faxes follow-up information, etc.
- **Mass Communication:** Your campus sends 300 letters; have a call-in day and generate 400 phone calls, etc.
- **Face-to-Face Communication:** a group from your organization meets with your congressional representative when he is the home district office; your group organizes a lobby day with congressional staffers in D.C., etc.
- **Media:** letter to the editor in the paper, get media coverage at an event, etc.
- **Direct Action:** hold a rally, have a city-wide march, etc.

Your campaign should have a good mix of tactics that:

- Inform your target audiences
- Give supporters opportunities to be involved in a variety of ways
- Hold your elected officials accountable

Remember to consider how much your tactics will cost in terms of time and money. Does your organization have the capacity to do the tactics you've selected?

Sample Tactics

- Organize a Call-In Day
- Organize a Lobby Day
- Phone, Fax or Letter/Email Zap- Flood the offices of Representatives or CEOs with calls and/or faxes. Make sure all calls, faxes and letters/emails are sent at the same time.

- Organize a postcard mail-in
- Organize a teach-in
- Demonstrations- Organize a peaceful picket. Make sure to invite the media!
- Post attention grabbing flyers demanding action around your community
- Hold a vigil
- Petition
- Build a mock graveyard of tombstones (of people who have died from HIV/AIDS) and place it in a prominent location on your campus. Get on-lookers to take some sort of action such as making a call.
- Media Tactics
 - Writing Letters to the Editor section of a newspaper or school paper
 - Blog
 - Post your campaign on your organization's website
 - Podcast
 - Phone in to local talk radio shows and discuss your campaign objectives; organize your campus so that the radio station is flooded with calls about your radio interview

Evaluation

It is important to know that your organization is on track for meeting your goals within an adequate time frame. When a campaign is successful the target will be reacting to the campaign strategy, if there is no response (good or bad) it's best to regroup and reorganize.

Make a Strategy Chart

It is important to think about the impact each tactic will have on your goals. So after you have brainstormed a list of tactics, go back through them placing into a strategy chart.

Goals	Organizational Considerations	Allies and Opponents	Tactics	Indicators of Success
Long Term	Resources required	Primary Target	List tactics based on timeline	Record targets responses
Medium Term	Organizational goal	Secondary Targets		
Short Term	Current Organizational problems			

Remember: It is normal for a campaign to move back and forth along its strategy chart and to revisit old tactics.

UCGH Action Guide
Event Planning

Teach-Ins/Forums Host a Speaker

Plan a Rally Street Theater

Essentials of Event Planning

- Clear Advocacy Demand—all events should join public awareness with action. Use events as a mechanism for furthering your advocacy strategy.
- Invite the Media—make sure you invite the media leading up to an event, especially your local and school newspaper. Also, prepare media packets with educational information on your issue for media personnel.
- The Rule of Halves—indicates the number of people you need to ask to attend an event to have your desired number of attendees show on the day of the event.

General Rule: if you want X amount of people to show day for an event, you need to ask 8 times X. So if you want 10 people to show you need to ask 80 people and call them the night before the event. Trust us it works!

Plan a Rally

Rallies and demonstrations are excellent ways to increase public awareness and empower your members to take action! A well executed rally can change the course of a campaign and increase membership numbers overnight.

Rally Essentials

- Get a city permit to hold the rally
- Stage and AV equipment
- Keynote Speaker
- Recruitment
- Invite the Media

Rally Recruitment Steps

1. Identify Partners

It's important to know your resources. The most important resource for a demonstration is people. Working with other organizational allies to help plan and promote the rally can drastically increase turnout numbers and be the start of an excellent partnership.

2. The Table

Set up tabling times in busy areas of campus starting two weeks before a rally. Have catchy props and colorful displays. Get their name, email and cell number for follow up.

Ex: Hang empty lab coats nearby. At the table, ask people to write their own sentence on a pre-made letter to Congress, tell them about the upcoming rally and ask them to sign up.

It helps to have cookies or candy as a means of grabbing their attention—students *love* free food!

3. Other Publicity

Put posters up about the need for health workers in the university dorms, bathrooms, etc. and ask friendly professors to let you pitch the rally to their classes.

4. Building your Team
Add all of the emails you get to a listserv, send weekly updates about the demonstration planning. Ask people to host sign-making parties and get people involved!

5. Follow-up
Two days before the demonstration, **call** everyone who has signed up and remind them. No means no, maybe means no and yes means maybe. Invite them to meet up at X location and X time (if departure time for the demo is 10am, ask them to meet at 9:30am) to travel together to the rally site.
Call the press and send them a press advisory.

6. Day before the Rally
Have a sign and prop making party. Call the press again and send another press release. Make press packets full of information and supporting documents on your issue.

7. Day of the Rally
Call all of the yeses and maybes. Set up a sign-in table at the meeting point and pass out all appropriate signs and props. Make more signs while people gather. Teach everyone the rally chant. During the demonstration, hand out press packets and have speakers available to talk with press.

Host a Speaker

Boost attendance at events by hosting a speaker. This page explains how to identify and get speakers to your events.

Speaker Check List

- Invite the speaker months in advance-share information about your organization
- Secure an event location
- Develop an event agenda
- Create recruitment strategy
- Meet the speaker when they arrive-assign a group member to “host”
- Sign in sheet
- Thank you card
- Follow up with attendees

Planning Timetable

Weeks before the Event	Day of the Event	After the Event
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin planning two to four months before the event • Be clear about what you want the speaker to discuss • Clarify if and when the speaker expects to be paid • Develop an agenda for the event 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a sign-in sheet at the event, as a way to get new members • Meet the speaker when they arrive • Spend time with the speaker to go over the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send a thank you card • Reach out to new people who signed in at the event

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan for a question/answer period at the end • Assign someone to act as the “host” to the speaker • Communicate regularly with the speaker • Recruit people to attend the event 	<p>event agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep time during the speech and help the speaker know when time is up 	
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Teach-Ins and Forums

A **teach-in** is session composed of lectures and discussion around a specific topic.

A **forum** is a public meeting or assembly for open discussion that usually consists of a panel of experts. Sometimes forums are held in a roundtable format and other times they resemble a town hall meeting. The structure is up to you.

Both are good ways to educate the general public about global health injustices.

Preparing for a Teach-In/Forum

- Find a location-keeping in mind you may need AV equipment
- Decide who is facilitating and speaking at the event
- Define your issues and develop interactive ways to convey the information
- Make them as interactive as possible
- Contact UCGH for informational and interactive materials
- Create information packets for participants
- Bring a sign-in sheet
- Develop recruitment strategy

Program for a Teach-In

- Start with an informative talk introducing your organization and the issue
- Design a small group activity
- Question/Answer time
- Discuss steps for action
- End with an Action-have students call a representative or write a letter before they leave

Program for a Forum

- Determine a subject for the speakers to address
- Set a time limit for each speaker
- Decide who will be facilitating the event
- Create the speaker order
- Question/Answer time
- End with an Action

Street Theater

Street theater is a public performance that draws attention to your issue. Student Global AIDS Campaign is notorious for their street theater. They organize HIV/AIDS “die ins” by having students symbolically lie on the ground every couple minutes to illustrate the number of people

that die each year from the disease. These skits help to visualize the devastating effects of HIV/AIDS to the general public.

Tips for Street Theater

- Find a location-sidewalks, parks, classrooms, and the street are all excellent examples
- Create costumes and props
- Practice your skit ahead of time
- Pass out information leaflets during the performance
- Designate people to answer questions to observers
- Act out the short skit several times
- Secure location and appropriate permission and permits if necessary
- Ask observers to make a specific action-sign a petition

UCGH Action Guide

Contacting Politicians

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Get a Meeting
Bird-dogging

Call-In Days
Write a Letter

Contacting government officials, whether it is the U.S. Congress or the Prime Minister of England, is an important way to influence public policy. In the United States, students have significant power over Congressional members because we vote. We elect them and they work for us. All you have to do is make sure your voice is heard.

Ways to Contact Politicians

- Attend a town hall meeting
- Write a letter
- Organize a Call-In Day
- Bird-dogging
- Plan a lobby day in D.C. or your representative's home office

Get A Meeting

Meeting with a politician or their staff person is one of the best ways of conveying your message. Often when you meet with a politician, it is the first time that they have heard of your issue. So make sure you know your facts and clearly articulated arguments that appeal to the politician.

- Plan in advance-politicians are busy people
- Know the politicians schedule
 - Tip: Members of Congress are usually in their home districts during holidays and Congressional recesses, and often on Mondays and Fridays. You can find the congressional schedule by looking at the House or Senate website at www.house.gov or www.senate.gov or by calling the Member of Congress' office.
- Fax a copy of the meeting request
- Schedule Meeting-ask to speak with the politician or his/her staff member that works on your issue.
 - Tip: After the meeting has been scheduled, forward any background materials to the Member of Congress' office with a cover letter restating the time and purpose of the meeting.
- Contact UCGH for background information
- Prepare your group-Be clear on who will speak about which issues. Send background information to everyone attending and give time for people to review the information.

It is more common for constituents to meet with staff members than the elected representative. Do not be disappointed if you are meeting with a staffer instead of a lawmaker; staff members are much more powerful and influential than you may realize. Your voice will be heard. Constituent meetings are reported. Your lawmaker may not be able to attend the meeting, but she or he will hear about it.

At the Meeting

- Be prompt and patient. It is not uncommon for a politician to be late
- Always bring a packet of information to give to the politician or staff person
- Remember to think about the issue from the politicians perspective
- Show the link between what your issue and how many people support you
- Always ask for a commitment- Will you co-sponsor this legislation?

- Be prepared to answer questions. If you do not know the answer, tell them you will follow up.
- Write a thank you letter and include any follow up information

Setting up the appointment: When calling your lawmaker's office, ask to speak to the staffer or aide who handles your issue. Most lawmakers have an army of staff who tackle specific issues. At the district level, one staffer may handle many issues.

It is more common for constituents to meet with aides than the elected representative.

Many lawmakers travel to their home districts over the weekend and breaks specifically to meet with their constituents. When setting up the appointment, let the staff know what issue or bill you want to discuss. This way, your lawmaker can prepare, which will make your meeting more productive.

Let staffers know who will be in attendance. Before you go to the meeting, decide what your group will say and who will cover what points.

When meeting with your lawmaker or his/her aide, you want to educate them about your issue. Bring information for their review. Also bring a copy of opposing views and research on your issue. Keep in mind that they may not know anything about your issue.

As with letter writing – be specific. Explain what you want your lawmaker to do and why.

- Be yourself and be honest. These offices want to hear from you. You are expected to be a constituent not a professional lobbyist.
- Be concise. Be prepared to succinctly make your case for these two pieces of legislation. You don't need to tell them everything about these bills. Your meetings will likely last 10-15 minutes. In some cases, you may only have five minutes to make your point.
- Be specific. Explain what you want your lawmaker to do and why. Relate the issue to your personal situation and the impact it has on your community.
- Be patient. Staffers or elected officials may have deadlines or interruptions. You may need to make your point or points quickly.
- Be prepared. Lawmakers and their staff follow several pieces of legislation simultaneously. The person or persons you are meeting with may not know about these particular issues and bills. Be prepared to briefly describe the bills and why they are so important. State what the legislation will do, and give specifics about its impact on you, your community and the rest of the lawmakers' constituents.
- Be prepared to answer questions. Don't worry if you are asked a question that you don't know the answer to. Tell them that you will find out and get back to them.

- Get information from them. Where does your lawmaker stand on this issue? Don't let them wiggle out of something. Don't be put off by smoke screens and long-winded answers. If you are dissatisfied, ask for specific answers. Take notes.

Consider meeting with your lawmaker even if you have differing views. Sometimes meetings with constituents can lessen a lawmaker's opposition.

Keep in mind that lawmakers need to be thanked – especially if they stick their necks out on a controversial vote. You could thank them by writing them a letter or writing a letter to the editor of your newspaper.

Follow-up with your legislators and be persistent. Write thank you letters and monitor your lawmaker's positions on the bills. For instance, if they still have not co-sponsored these bills in month, find out why.

Call-In Days

Organizing a call in day is a great way to contact your politician and inform the general public. You can call on your own or sit in a popular spot on campus (with cookie and candy incentives) and ask others to join in with you. Be creative in your approach to others.

Students at Harvard University held a free concert and required concert goers to make a call before they could enter. Their effort generated over 400 calls in less than two hours!

Know the Numbers

- Congressional switchboard: 202-224-3121. The operator will connect you to the appropriate office.
- White House: 202-456-1111. It is likely that you will be asked to leave a message with a secretary.

Tips for calling

- Clearly state your name and affiliation; indicate that you are a constituent, appropriate.
- Explain briefly why you are calling. Refer to a recent article in the local paper or other relevant event, for example it's something you learned about in class
- Add a personal story about why you care
- Have a specific demand-“Please ask Senator X to co-sponsor S.805”
- Be sure to thank the staffer for their time
- Contact UCGH for sample call-in sheets and other relevant information

Write a Letter

Writing letters is a great way of communicating with politicians. Emailing letters is an option, but many politicians place priority on individually written letters.

Writing Tips

- Clearly state the purpose in the first sentence.
- State who you are and where you are from.
- Give background information on the issue and tell your personal interest by drawing on past experiences.
- Restate your purpose for writing in specific, concrete terms.
- Thank the politician and offer to find further information.
- Keep it brief. While you should make all the relevant key points, try to keep the letter short.

Sample Letter

The Honorable (elected official)

(Address)

(Address cont.)

Dear (Senator/Congressman/President),

I am writing to ask for your action to help assure that the global promise of providing universal access to AIDS treatment by 2010 can be achieved. Among the many barriers to reaching this goal is the shortage of health care workers in Africa, which has reached crisis proportion during the HIV and AIDS pandemic.

The good news is that the United States can help. Senators Durbin and DeWine introduced the African Health Capacity Investment Act of 2006 (S. 3775) in August. This bill begins to tackle some of the world's most pressing needs to recruit, train, and support health care workers in Africa, but it is only a start. The U.S. needs to invest \$650 million next year, and I'm asking for your help to support the existing bill and make this a reality.

Today, over 40 million people are living with HIV and AIDS around the world, the vast majority of whom lack treatment or care. In the last year the U.S. has helped lead the world by setting the target of universal access to treatment by 2010. I believe deeply in this goal, but I am sad to report that we will never reach it without more health workers.

In sub-Saharan Africa, just over 1% of the world's health care workers struggle to combat 25% of the global burden of disease. Health experts estimate Africa needs 1 million more health care workers.

This shortage is directly caused by large-scale immigration of foreign health care workers to the United States and economic policies that impede the construction of effective health systems in the developing world.

Not only is universal access to treatment threatened, but all of the U.S. goals in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief are under threat.

Thank you for your support on these very important issues.

Sincerely,

(name)

Bird-dogging

Bird-dogging is the name given for the tactic of attending public appearances and asking questions about global health issues. This direct interaction between students and politicians rarely happens, but it can have a big impact.

1. Get an Event
 - You can learn about upcoming public events by getting on party and candidate email lists, joining listservs of campus democrats and republicans, and calling campaign headquarters for notice of public events.
 - Ask about the time, place, entry fee/tickets, and most importantly if there is a question/answer period.
2. Get a Group
 - Gather five or six people with polite questions. You will be surprised how questions can completely alter the topic of a question/answer period and win new commitments from politicians.
3. Get a Plan
 - It is very important to make a plan in advance with your group.
 - Write your questions in advance-create a list of three well prepared questions.
 - Practice: Especially, if you are chanting or shouting questions it is very important to make sure you are heard.
 - Handshakes: Place members of your group around the edge of the stage and get toward the front of the crowd. It is important to hold onto the politicians hand and then ask your question.
4. Get Good Seats
 - Arrive Early
 - Get as close to the action as possible. Depending on the size of your group split into smaller groups of 5 or 6 and place yourselves on both sides of the event stage. Groups sitting together will not be called on more than once.
 - Make eye contact with the politicians during their speech and applaud, this makes it more likely that you will get called on during the question/answer time.
5. Get your hand up FAST
 - This is the real art of bird dogging, you have to be quick to the draw when they open for questions. Make sure your hand is first, fastest, and highest in the air and your chances of getting selected will increase.
6. Good Questions
 - The goal of the questioning is to make them give a yes or no answer. Make the politician feel like meeting your demand is the best answer.

- A good question is about 15 to 20 seconds long and is constructed like a small narrative: problem, personal interest, solution and demand accompanied by a specific close ended “yes” or “no” answer.

Example: “Senator (name), there are 40 million people living with HIV worldwide. When I visited Kenya with my school, I was struck by how U.S. AIDS programs are struggling because of the lack of trained health professionals to meet the challenge of the epidemic. As you know Senator, experts estimate that at least \$650 million is needed over five years to adequately address the health care worker shortage necessary to combat HIV/AIDS in Africa. Will you lead the fight for \$650 million in the coming fiscal year?”