



Students for Choice Lobby Day 2012

More than 30 college students from 8 different campuses assembled in Lansing on March 27 for the 2012 Students for Choice Lobby Day to educate their legislators about the issues that affect college women the most. The day began with a press conference held by the Michigan Democratic Women's Caucus, where Representative Marcia Hove-Wright, Senator Rebekah Warren, and our very own campus leader, Marcia LeVigne, spoke about the recent political attacks on women, the significance of access to birth control without co-pays, and the importance of the Prevention First Package.

After receiving a legislative update and lobbying training from John Kesperich, the Director of Political Field Operations from Planned Parenthood Advocates of Michigan, students paired up to meet with mostly anti-choice politicians to explain the important and essential work they do on campus, the negative consequences of anti-choice legislation, and the positive results attributed to passing pro-active and preventive legislation. Students delivered information about proposed legislation that harms women and preventive legislation included in the Prevention First Package to all of the Michigan legislators with whom they were not able to meet.

After their legislative visits, two guest speakers came to talk to the students about the political climate in Michigan. State Representative and House Minority Whip Vicki Barnett spoke to the students about the severity of the attacks on women's health. Rep. Barnett had students on the edge of their seats laughing as she talked about her past, how she deals with anti-choice legislators in the House, and the importance of electing more pro-choice policy makers. The students also heard from the Legis-

lative Director of the Michigan ACLU, Shelli Weisberg, regarding the importance of strong relationships and coalition building in Lansing.

Before departing back to their campuses, the winners of the Students for Choice organizing and activism competition for 2012 were announced after much anticipation. The only school to exceed 1% of their student body was Northern Michigan College, who drove from Traverse City to participate in this year's Lobby Day in addition to being the newest and smallest Students for Choice group in the state! For the most effective organizing tactics, Northern Michigan College came in third place, Michigan State University came in second place, and Central Michigan University came in first place, winning the grand prize of having PPAM assist the group in throwing a large Sextival on their campus! Students left feeling reenergized, already planning what they want to accomplish by next year's Lobby Day. ■



SNAPSHOTS