



FIRST THINGS FIRST

Ready for School. Set for Life.

External Affairs Update

Communications

Earned Media

There were at least **30 stories** about FTF and/or its grantees in media statewide since our last report. In addition, there were five columns submitted by the CEO to the *Arizona Republic* that ran in 6-12 Community sections each. Column topics included the impact of language on early literacy; the importance of play for young kids' learning; regional council member recruitment; the meaning behind FTF's name; and, the role of proper nutrition in healthy development.

Social Media

Our social media presence continues to grow. We have 2,251 fans on Facebook, up by more than 130 since January, and 223 people following First Things First on Twitter (up by 45 since January's report).

Paid Advertising

Production continues on the new creative for our Spring/Summer 2012 and FY 2013 paid advertising flights. The creative concept uses computer-generated imagery to reinforce the message that 90% of a child's brain develops before they enter kindergarten. The first paid advertising flight with this creative concept will launch around the end of April/early May. The campaign includes a heavy focus on online and social media to encourage individuals throughout Arizona to get informed; get involved; get 'em ready!

Community Outreach

Champions

As we build and drive awareness/support from the general public and target audiences, outreach staff have recruited almost 7,000 statewide champions who are ready to take action to fulfill our commitment to Arizona's kids. In recent months, there has been a steady increase of about 300 new supporters each month. To date, there are also 599 trained speakers who understand and can deliver messaging about early childhood development and FTF.

Target Audiences

Last quarter, the focus on women's groups yielded 87 more women's groups who are informed or engaged about the importance of school readiness. The spring focus is on faith-based organizations and institutions. In addition to targeted outreach, staff is in the midst of the busy season for large-scale community events that build awareness and are collaborating with many local organizations across the state. Community Outreach staff are also actively assisting with regional council member recruitment to attract local influencers to these leadership positions.

Government Affairs

State Legislature

First Things First has been meeting with legislators regarding concerns over the potential impact of SCR 1031/HCR2005. Both pieces of legislation attempt to create sunset provisions for ballot measures dealing with public funds. Both bills also seek to apply this sunset provision retroactively. Applying a sunset clause retroactively would have the effect of sending FTF back the ballot in 2014 and every 6-8 years thereafter. As of this report, SCR 1031 was held in committee – a parliamentary mechanism that ostensibly “kills” the bill. HCR 2005 is sitting in Senate Rules – and we anticipate that it will sit there for a little bit longer until Leadership decides which ballot measures it ultimately wants to send to voters. It is possible that the bill will die in Rules, or that it will get the green light from Leadership and move to the full Senate. FTF is continuing to meet with Legislators to share our concerns on the impact of this legislation.

Native American Caucus

On February 1, the CEO, VP of External Affairs Sam Leyvas, and Senior Director of Tribal Affairs Beverly Russell attended the Native American Caucus of the Legislature. Rhian provided a detailed informational presentation on FTF’s partnership with Arizona Tribes and work across the state. Rhian was joined by Pricilla Foote, Chair of the Gila River Indian Community RPC. Pricilla offered a council perspective on the impact of First Things First in tribal communities. There were approximately 12 legislators in attendance and other stakeholders who regularly attend the Caucus meetings.

Outreach to Mayors

FTF is coordinating meetings with mayors from Phoenix, Tucson, Mesa, and Flagstaff. These mayors recently agreed to come together to create the Mayors' Futures Forum on Education to discuss city-level priorities around education.

Tribal Affairs

See full report under separate cover.

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