

Viking Lobby Day Publicity, T-Shirts, and Thank You Cards



Proposed Motion: Approve funds not to exceed \$1,300.00 as a one-time grant from the AS Reserves [FXXRES] for the purpose of Viking Lobby Day publicity, t-shirts, and thank you cards.

Sponsor: Kaylee Galloway, VP for Governmental Affairs

Date: October 3, 2013

Background & Context

Every year, the VP for Governmental Affairs, with help from others, plans Viking Lobby Day, which takes place on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in January. Students are bused down to Olympia the day before, where they meet with their lobby groups, learn how to lobby, develop a lobby strategy, learn about the legislature, and tour the capitol campus, among other learning opportunities and experiences. On MLK Day, students attend meetings with legislators or staff, discuss student issues, tell their stories, and hand legislators the ASWWU Legislative Agenda. Historically, Western students were encouraged to wear professional attire. It was at the recommendation of Ben Crowther, 2012-13 Legislative Liaison, to have students instead wear t-shirts that represented Western. Wearing campus themed t-shirts is also the strategy the Washington Student Association uses for their Statewide Lobby Day. It is thought that if students wear t-shirts, then they are presenting themselves more like students and that it would represent a more unified presence. This would also be helpful for individuals who are uncomfortable in professional attire or do not have access to professional attire. Even if it is decided later on that we want to maintain the professional appearance and not wear t-shirts to our lobby meetings, Viking Lobby Day t-shirts still have many benefits including, but not necessary limited to, everyone loves a fun t-shirt, students often get a lot of use out of t-shirts, it gives students something to remember their experience, and it is great publicity for future lobby efforts.

Summary of Proposal

The goal would be to have the t-shirt design general enough that we could use them for any of our lobby efforts including Viking Lobby Day, the Washington Student Association Statewide Lobby Day, and other potential smaller/topic specific lobby trips. In brainstorming and discussing with others, the current idea for the t-shirt design would have the phrase “Vikings Lobby” and the image would be that of the capitol building with Viking horns coming from the top. I would plan to work with the publicity center on this design to see if it would be possible.

Another potential way to improve Viking Lobby Day is through increasing our publicity and outreach efforts. Aside from my goal of reaching 100 students to attend, it is also important that we have a diverse group of students with different interests, perspectives, and life experiences. It is important that students know what Viking Lobby Day is and why it is important for them to attend. In addition to the t-shirts, I am requesting funds for two banners, handbills, and thank you cards. One way of increasing outreach is by having Western Votes and the Legislative Affairs Council table with a computer to have people sign up for lobby day. I would like to have a banner for the table so that students know why the table is there. I would also like to hang a banner somewhere on campus such as on the Viking Union, Wilson Library, or Arntzen Hall. I am also hoping to implement class raps. Since the form is online, I

hope to give people handbills so they have access to lobby day information and the link to the form. I will encourage people to pass the handbill to a friend after they are done to encourage maximum use. Lastly, last year we did not send out thank you letters to legislators after meeting them. For this year, in addition to an email from Carly and myself, I am hoping to have thank you cards to send to legislators. My idea is to put the number of thank you cards as meetings in the group leaders' folder, so that after every meeting, the group can write and sign something in the card. I would hope to have a typed message on the inside to read something like "Thank you so much for taking the time to meet with students from Western Washington University. We appreciate all that you do for students." When we get back to campus, I will have every group leader give me the signed cards and then we can send them to the respective legislators. Thank you cards are really important so that we make sure to let legislators know how appreciative we are and to continue to foster a positive relationship with them.

Overall, I believe that these efforts will help increase the attendance of students at Viking Lobby Day, which will in turn help enhance student representation. Viking Lobby Day is a great opportunity and I want as many students as possible to benefit from the experience. These efforts will also help improve relationships with legislators, which builds the foundation for a healthy lobbying and advocacy environment in the future.

The only possible downside I can think of is if I were to order too much or not enough publicity, t-shirts, or thank you cards. Predicting the needed number of each might be challenging, especially if the order needs to be placed before students submit the Viking Lobby Day form or meetings are scheduled. For example, it would be bad to order too many or not enough t-shirts. I hope to add a section on the Viking Lobby Day sign up form where students can say what size t-shirt they want. This way there is a possibility that I could get a more accurate number before I place the order. If I must place the order before getting an accurate number, I would plan to order around 125 and any additional t-shirts can be used for lobby trips down the road or additional t-shirts can be purchased if needed.

I hope to get started on this project as soon as possible to ensure that everything is available in time for lobby day promotion and lobby day. This would be a one-time request of funds. If efforts are successful, then institutionalization should be considered for next year.

Fiscally

T-shirts: \$1000

- The AS recently purchased 145 t-shirts with a three-color design for just under \$1000.00. This is a conservative estimate for 125 t-shirts, but prices might change depending upon the bid and company that produces the order.

Banners: \$75

- I would hope to purchase one 3' by 8' banner for hanging in a banner space and one 3' by 5' banner for tabling. I looked at the WWU Print and Copy services prices, and it is \$5 per linear foot for banners 3' wide.

Handbills: \$50

- I would plan to have around 500 handbills, which is 125 8.5" by 11" copies. The handbills could easily be black and white or in color. There would be a cost difference. This is a very high estimate; rounded up after basing price on color copies at the WWU Print and Copy services.

Thank you cards: \$100

- I am guessing that we will have around 80-100 meetings. I am guessing price per card will be within the \$.50 - \$1.00 range.

Total NTE: \$1300

Rationale

These efforts were not accounted for in the operational budget, therefore funds are needed. These efforts can help increase student participation in Viking Lobby Day, which in turn helps to increase student representation; a core value in the Associated Students.

Possible Design:

Vikings Lobby



2013-2014

*Shout out to Carly Roberts for helping me brainstorm this design idea!