



## **Advocacy: NACE Leadership Meets With Key Individuals, Organizations in Washington, D.C.**

With more focused attention on policy issues of concern for colleges and employers, NACE leaders and staff have been meeting with legislators and association leaders over the past several months.

Most recently, on October 30, 2013, NACE Executive Director Marilyn Mackes and Strategic Research Director Ed Koc traveled to Washington, D.C., and met with leadership of three associations, members of three White House councils and offices, two members of Congress, and two staff members of the Pennsylvania delegation to initiate high-level dialogue about issues critical to our profession and explore partnerships with government agencies and other key associations.

The NACE contingent met separately with U.S. Representatives Charlie Dent and Chaka Fattah, and with legislative staff for U.S. Senators Robert Casey, Jr. and Pat Toomey to discuss:

- The Higher Education Act.
- STEM education and employment.
- Student outcomes and first-destination surveys.
- Trends and projections in higher education and the employment of college graduates.

The legislators were particularly interested in NACE's data about college hiring, and the association's work on and insight into the first-destination survey issue. For example, Senator Toomey's legislative counsel noted the Senator's interest in higher education costs, accreditation, and outcomes data to help students and families make informed decisions about investing in higher education. In addition, Senator Casey's legislative assistant discussed the senator's desire to find ways to incentivize the employment of college graduates.

All parties agreed to subsequent meetings to deepen the dialogue around these and other issues. Senator Casey's staff also suggested a meeting between NACE and members of the Senate HELP (Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions) Committee to discuss the possibility of NACE sharing its insight, analysis, and suggestions during a hearing.

First-destination surveys were also a prominent topic during a meeting with members of the White House's Domestic Policy Council, Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), and Office of Public Engagement.

Mackes and Koc heard about efforts and outreach in the design of the college reporting system and the plans for it to gauge outcomes in access, affordability, and completion. Mackes and Koc described a first-destination module that captures data by discipline and includes associate degree programs. Koc said the module's operational guidelines would be ready by the end of January 2014.

The senior policy adviser from the OSTP also pointed out that the office is particularly focused on STEM careers and on how faculty, administrators, and employers can connect with students in these disciplines before they "jump out."

Mackes and Koc also met separately with the American Society for Engineering Education, the Council on Graduate Schools, and the American Council on Education to, among other things, share data, data collection methodology, and association best practices.