

Capwiz·XC Case Study: Youth Leadership Initiative (University of Virginia Center for Politics) www.youthleadershipinitiative.org

Empowering young men and women to have a vital role in the democratic process.

Capwiz·XC was an important asset that fostered long-term civic engagement and helped students develop key skills in research, writing, problem solving, and consensus building.

Challenge

Founded in 1998, the University of Virginia Center for Politics developed the Youth Leadership Initiative with the premise that by educating students about government and politics, they could encourage more young men and women to have a role in influencing democracy. The program combines academic excellence with civic participation and community service to assist primary and secondary teachers in creating an engaged classroom environment where students gain first-hand experience about the responsibilities of adult citizens living in a representative democracy. Teachers are also given online access to innovative lesson plans specifically catered to their state's standards.

The Youth Leadership Initiative needed a technology to fuel their goals in encouraging student and teacher participation in the program, but had limited funding. Particularly, they needed a reliable research tool to aid students participating in e-Congress, which was YLI's annual online simulation that allowed middle and high school students to learn about how a bill becomes a law and research, draft, and vote on legislation.

Solution

In 2006, the Youth Leadership Initiative used Capwiz·XC as a comprehensive resource to help students easily contact their elected officials, learn about legislative procedures, and stay informed on bills and votes as they participated in the e-Congress simulation. By learning about legislation and communicating with the sponsors and cosponsors of these bills, students applied that knowledge by creating their own bills for the e-Congress. Capwiz·XC also served as an important tool for teachers to integrate lessons and study guides for the e-Congress classroom curriculum.

Nearly 17,000 students from around the country participated in the 2006 session of e-Congress, as student committees analyzed over 6,700 pieces of original legislation en route to casting over

"If I had to describe Capwiz·XC in one word, it would be integral. Your service is absolutely vital so that our organization can provide teachers and students with the resources to stay informed on local and state policies affecting education."

- Meg Heubeck, Interim Director of Instruction, Youth Leadership Initiative

430,000 votes on the House floor. During this process, which took place over several months, **Capwiz·XC was an important asset that fostered long-term civic engagement and helped students develop key skills in research, writing, problem solving, and consensus building.**

Capwiz·XC continues to provide the Youth Leadership Initiative with a reliable and cost-effective way to increase student and teacher participation and paves the way for future projects.

About Capwiz·XC

Capwiz·XC, Capitol Advantage's award-winning online advocacy solution, helps your organization achieve legislative success by influencing state and federal policymakers, managing online fundraising, getting out the vote, and much more! With roughly 18 million constituent messages delivered to elected officials in 2007, no one is working harder or smarter to help your constituents influence the outcome.

Capitol Advantage is the leading provider of innovative products and services designed to support government relations programs for over 1,500 associations, corporations, media and educational institutions. Capitol Advantage offers a variety of hosted online solutions, including Capwiz·XC and PACbuilder, a PAC management tool. Our company also powers Congress.org, a free public-service web site engaging citizens in democracy.

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