

### **Get State Legislators to Recognize the Importance of CSEdWeek**

*During CSEdWeek 2010, Wisconsin computer science advocates got a proclamation from the governor supportive of Computer Science Education Week for the second year in a row.*

**Who:** Computer Science Teachers Association members in Wisconsin leveraged their relationships with educators, in the community and in Madison, Wisconsin.

**What:** A Wisconsin computer science teacher had the idea of getting the Governor to sign a proclamation recognizing the importance of Computer Science Education Week. As a first step, he reached out to his colleagues to see who might be able to help. After posting a note on his computer science educator listserv, he got a suggestion from a colleague about a state legislator who might be helpful. Then the introductions and meetings started. First with the legislator, who facilitated introductions in the governor's office. His guidance and support was invaluable. Then, working with staff in the governor's office, the computer science advocate used the sample proclamation, available in the Event Planning Toolkit (<http://www.csedweek.org/site/page/event-planning-toolkit>) as a guide, to suit the staff's concerns and accurately represent the state's interest in the issue.

**The resulting proclamation was signed by the governor** and shared with the state's Computer Science and Information Technology teacher network. The Wisconsin Mathematics Council posted it prominently in their bi-monthly newsletter, which reaches 2200 members. Teachers made copies and posted the document in their classrooms and elsewhere.

Similar proclamations have been signed by governors, mayors and approved by the US House of Representatives. These efforts are important and educate elected officials and others about the issues that are undermining strong K-12 computer science education.

**Why:** The effort, driven by a small group of motivated computer science teachers, brought statewide attention to computer science, computer science teachers and the need for strong computer science education. It also educated a number of state representatives—and the governor—about the issues around strong K-12 computer science education and it established relationships between educators and legislators. The effort also conveyed an official acknowledgement of the importance of computer science and the teaching of the discipline.

Computing is a key driver of economic growth and societal change. Many of the most exciting and best paying jobs in the STEM fields right now require knowledge of computer science but far too few students have the opportunity to explore the field or take engaging and rigorous computer science courses. Ensuring access to quality K-12 computer science education is crucial to America's competitiveness in the 21st Century.

To learn more and pledge to be a part of CSEd Week visit, [www.csedweek.org](http://www.csedweek.org).