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STUDENTS BRING KEY ISSUES TO LEGISLATORS DURING 'USF DAY AT THE CAPITOL'

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A USFSP request for \$2.5 million would fund a STEM initiative that aims to boost STEM degree production and increase employment opportunities for STEM graduates. Another request would support programs that aim to ensure that students are graduating in a timely way and are well prepared for jobs that are in high demand in Florida.

Students like Laraine Ruiz were excited to advocate key priorities for the USF System and keep the initiatives at the forefront of state lawmakers' minds as they make critical decisions about higher education during the legislative session.



Students, faculty and staff from USF, USF St. Petersburg and USF Sarasota-Manatee in Tallahassee.

"As someone who previously participated and is involved in Student Government, I know the importance of the experience. The students get to meet with legislators to push for things to improve our campus," said Ruiz, a Business Management junior who serves as the interim president of Student Government at USFSP. "In Tallahassee, we lobby and represent all of the University of South Florida System students and get to have a fun learning experience."

"Students have an experience at the Capitol that allows them to better understand how state government works as well as how to present information to important decision makers," said Patti Helton, regional vice chancellor of Student Affairs, who joined the students in Tallahassee this year.

The cost for students to attend the trip was covered by the USFSP Student Government.

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