

Capitol Hill kids

While many children were taking exams and saying goodbye to classmates for summer, seven Children's Hospital Boston families from across New England traveled to Washington, D.C. Their mission: To ensure that children and families like theirs will always have access to the health care and pediatric specialists they need. Children's Office of Child Advocacy (OCA) set up meetings for families with their Senators and Representatives as part of the National Association of Children's Hospitals (NACH) Family Advocacy Day, a conference held in the nation's capitol on June 13 and 14.

Four thumbs up

It's "4 thumbs up" for Family Advocacy Day from (left to right) Children's President and CEO James Mandell, MD, Andrew Ostlund, Rep. Ed Markey (D-MA) and Zach Friedland.

Zach, 16, of West Kingstown, RI, bravely addressed more than 40 attendees during the New England Congressional breakfast hosted by Children's Hospital Boston and Connecticut Children's Medical Center, and sponsored by Rep. Michael Capuano (D-MA) and Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-MA).

Zach held everyone's attention, speaking eloquently about his congenital heart disease and reasoning that he might not be here without the expertise of pediatric cardi-

ologists and access to the most advanced pediatric cardiac technology.

"Families are the most powerful advocates for their children—and each of them has an incredible desire to make things better for all children in similar circumstances," said Mandell. "As the largest provider of care to children in New England, we thought we were in a unique position to facilitate these kinds of conversations."



Monica Jennings, 12, of Weymouth, Mass., met with Rep. John Tierney (D-MA) and took a private tour of the Capitol with one of his staff members.

Capitol tour



Ethan meets Senator Collins

Ethan Carlson, 12, of New Castle, ME, met with Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME).



Senator Kennedy, Andrew, Splash and Sunny

Andrew Ostlund, 11, of Mount Vernon, NH, spent time with Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-MA) and his Portuguese water dogs, Splash and Sunny. Andrew also met with Rep. Charles Bass (R-NH).

Family Advocacy Day highlights

Timmy Stevens, 14, of Tewksbury, Mass., lit the room with a smile when Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-MA) signed a copy of his book, *My Senator and Me*.

NACH and OCA helped families prepare for their meetings so even if only a few minutes of busy Congressional schedules were available, they were ready to engage their delegates with an important message.

Families told federal leaders personal stories about the incredible care and support they've received at Children's, while James Mandell, MD, president and CEO of Children's, and staff from OCA, including Laurie Camissa, Esq., Josh Greenberg, Lisa Manix and Christine Locke, explained how continued funding for Medicaid and the federal Children's Hospitals Graduate Medical Education program is vital to the hospital, these families and future families.



The Paquettes with Senator Sununu

Bryant Paquette (seated), 17, of New Boston, NH, met with Sen. John Sununu (R-NH).



James Bostic (right), 6, of Reading, Mass., smiled with his mom, and sister at a NACH hosted lunch. They also met with Rep. John Tierney (D-MA) and took a private Capitol tour with staff from his office.

The Bostic Family