

BU leaders hold first-ever reception for Washington, D.C., officials



PHOTOGRAPHS BY BOB STEVENS

CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT:

- *President Robert A. Brown and former US Representative Connie Morella (CAS'54), a Maryland Republican*
- *Erica Hill (COM'98), coanchor of NBC's Weekend Today and an NBC News national correspondent*
- *Courtney Vander Poel (CAS'03) with US Representative Joseph Kennedy III (D-Mass.)*
- *Ivan Busulwa (SPH'12, GSM'12)*

From the Charles to the Potomac, Pitching the University's Case

AMID FEDERAL CUTS to research funding and political science studies, President Robert A. Brown, Provost Jean Morrison, and other Boston University leaders met May 7 with Washington officials and hosted a first-ever reception for alumni working on Capitol Hill and in the federal government.

The University and other academic research institutions tried unsuccessfully to stop the research cuts, part of the automatic federal budget reductions known as the sequester. Different agencies now must phase in their parts of the sequester.

Meanwhile, BU alumni who are serving in Congress and working in government will have a say about future research funding.

"The innovation and enterprises that are created by research in our great uni-

versities is one of the major drivers of our economy," Brown says. "Our goal is to engage members of Congress and key agency staff in conversations about how we might work together to ensure that the nation's future is fully considered and protected in policies now being shaped in Washington. This goal is especially important when budgetary constraints are forcing hard choices in funding priorities."

Last year, BU established the Federal Relations office to raise the University's profile in Washington. "A trip like this gives us the opportunity to thank our legislators for their support for federally funded research and student aid, as well as the opportunity to learn more about pressing national issues that BU researchers, students, and alumni can play a role

in solving," says Jennifer Grodsky, the University's D.C.-based vice president for federal relations.

Brown had a face-to-face meeting with John Holdren, director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy during the trip. Kei Koizumi (UNI'91) works for Holdren as assistant director for federal research and development. Lois Frankel (CAS'70) (D-Fla.) and Massachusetts Congressmen John Tierney, Joseph Kennedy III, and Michael Capuano (Hon.'09), all Democrats, were among the representatives who met with the BU delegation. Morrison also met with Tina Tchen, executive director of the White House Council on Women and Girls.

The University invited major donors, trustees, and overseers to the reception, says Steven Hall, vice presi-

dent for alumni relations. Hall and Scott Nichols, senior vice president for development and alumni relations, attended the Capitol Hill event.

"We want members of Congress and their staffs, as well as members of agencies that are important to BU, to know that BU alumni are playing significant roles in D.C. and in the world," says Hall. University leaders conveyed not just BU's contributions in those arenas, he adds, but also the role that D.C.-area alumni can play "in advancing BU through their access and influence in the nation's capital."

Brown has met before with members of Congress and administration officials in Washington, Grodsky says, but the Capitol Hill reception for BU friends and alumni was a first. **RB**