

Potential UMEC Advocacy Campaign for the Gentry Springs Preserve Project

The following document is intended to showcase a generalized description of advocacy-related activities that the UMEC would engage in on behalf of the Gentry Springs Preserve project. The specific goal of this campaign would be to engage and mobilize campus and community decision-makers and stakeholder groups to show unified community support for a project intended to primarily benefit the public trust, the UM Gentry Springs Preserve.

Campaign Specifics:

UMEC officers Bridget Benson, Andrea Willard, Brandy Holt, Luna Shedrick, Mary Jane Smith, and Aaron Traywick would present the specific end goal of the campaign (Full administrative approval of the Preserve project) to all UMEC members. The student group would be given a basic but essential image of the institutional decision-making process at the University of Montevallo, as well as how and why different populations within the institutional process must be “organized” towards the common goal (establishment of the Preserve) in order for the end goal to be achieved.

From here, UMEC officers would divide members into teams headed by each officer, with small group brainstorming sessions being conducted to ascertain the precise role that each individual member can play in achieving the goal. The campaign in its entirety will be divided into five specific phases, and specific UMEC member involvement and commitments in each of these phases will be set up from the beginning.

1. Peer-to-Peer Stakeholder Growth

Activity: UMEC members would be tasked with engaging fellow students about the project. Members would raise awareness about the project by conducting a “class wrap”, requesting from their professors the opportunity to describe the positive benefits of the project in any of their academic courses. The specific wording of the class wraps would be developed and practiced before implementation in collaborative small-group settings, with maximum creativity given to members for the best end results.

Note: This same approach (developing/practicing the activity as a team, with creative freedom given for personal achievement of the goal of the activity) will be emphasized throughout all subsequent activities.

Each member would also be responsible for collecting a minimum of 50 signatures in support of the project via paper petition.

2. Group Stakeholder Growth

Activity: Each team would select one campus and one community group of their choosing to present the Gentry Springs Presentation to. Each team would present a sample letter of support written by UMEC officers, and the goal of each team presentation would be to gain a signature of organizational acceptance from the members of the group in question. Several sample letters have already been crafted in advance to appeal to local/regional environmental, non-profit, religious, public/private, educational, and student organizations, with more forthcoming where needed.

3. First-Tier Decision-Maker Stakeholder Growth

Activity: Teams would select three campus and community decision-makers to have a 30-minute informational meeting with in relation to the Preserve project. Teams would communicate the advantages of the project using the positive selling points listed on the “Preserve Project Description” document, and would have a goal of exploring with the decision-makers how they might be able to uniquely lend their support to the project.

UMEC members would primarily be meeting with members of their SGA, UM Professors, and local business owners during this phase, with specific “asks” uniquely crafted specifically for each individual entity.

4. Second-Tier Decision-Maker Stakeholder Growth

Activity: In this activity, teams would do the same as the previous activity, but would be meeting with two higher-level decision-makers within their overall community. Examples would include members of the Montevallo City Council or other elected City Boards, members of the UM Faculty Senate, and members of the Space Utilization Committee.

UMEC officers would craft a specific framework/messaging points document to use in their individual teams for this phase, to ensure that all student teams are adequately prepared and communicating the same points to decision-makers during these very important meetings.

5. Third Tier Decision-Maker Stakeholder Growth

Activity: In this activity, UMEC officers will meet with the most crucial decision-makers in relation to the Preserve project. Examples would include the Director of Physical Plant, Vice Presidents of Business/Academic/Student Affairs, UM President, UM BOT members, etc. Other UMEC members who have demonstrated exceptional ability in their participation throughout the campaign will also be included in these meetings.

Due to the length of time required to set-up meetings with these very busy decision-makers, this phase of the campaign will run concurrent with all other phases.