

2001 Revised Edition

WORLD HUNGER YEAR (WHY) ATTACKS THE ROOT CAUSES OF HUNGER AND POVERTY BY PROMOTING EFFECTIVE AND INNOVATIVE COMMUNITY-BASED SOLUTIONS THAT CREATE SELF-RELIANCE, ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND FOOD SECURITY.



THE WHY MEDIA GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

Too busy saving the world to get media attention for your organization? Don't worry. You're not alone in your dilemma. But what you must realize is: taking a little time to get effective media attention will help your organization grow, allowing you to serve more people. The WHY (World Hunger Year) Media Guide is here to show you just how to do that.

The objective of the WHY Media Guide is to help grassroots organizations use the media to get the word out—not only to people who will help them financially but to potential volunteers, even potential clients. It's not easy for anyone to get media attention these days, but there are proven methods for gaining access to the power of television, newspapers, radio and the Internet. Combined with traditional word-of-mouth techniques, the media can be a powerful lever for getting the world off of your shoulders and into the global community's hands.

WHY's media coordinator will help you implement the Media Guide's recommendations. We will provide free consultation on media relations, tailored for your group's individual needs and resources. This includes guidance on developing, executing and evaluating media plans; coordinating press events; preparing letters to the editor and op-eds; pitching story ideas; "jumping" on existing stories; targeting media; and developing good press contacts. We hope to work primarily with grassroots organizations that have little time, budget and personnel to devote to media relations. We will also coordinate joint media efforts among grassroots organizations with similar programs and compatible objectives.

WHAT'S NEWSWORTHY?

Every day, the average media outlet receives hundreds of news releases and requests for coverage. Only about 5% of these receive any coverage. How does your grassroots group make the cut? It's easy – find newsworthy stories about your group and present them to your local media outlets. The question becomes, "What's newsworthy?" If your story passes the following test, then it's likely to catch a reporter's attention.

1. Is it timely?
2. Other than your organization, who will be interested in the story?
3. Is it a first, an only, a foremost or unusual occurrence?
4. Is it true, accurate and confirmable?
5. Does it involve conflict or controversy?
6. Is there a "local angle" that makes your story interesting to a particular media market?

Your stories don't have to meet all of these criteria, but they should meet some. Don't give up if you have a story you believe is important. If one approach doesn't work, try another. But mum's the word if you have a weak news item. Dogging a reporter with a thin story will only undermine your chances the next time around.

The best way to find the right soapbox for your cause is to become an insatiable media consumer. By reading, watching or listening to everything you can get your hands on, you learn what is newsworthy (or what gets covered). Read magazines to determine their themes or styles. Does the publication share the concerns of your organization? What type of audience is it trying to reach? Look for writers' bylines and learn who covers the subjects important to you. Review the TV and radio listings, and watch and listen to broadcasts to see what programs might be good media outlets for your organization. Surf the web for any new e-zines that reflect your ideals.

SPEAKING FOR YOUR GROUP

You're about to call the reporter. Maybe you're responding to a media request or maybe you're pitching a news story. Your finger is poised over those push buttons. But wait! Before you dial that number, keep these things in mind:

1. **Don't make unnecessary phone calls.** Reporters have precious little time, and you don't want to annoy them. Be prepared!
2. **Tell the truth, don't exaggerate.** Credibility is king with reporters. Lose yours and you won't become a regular source of news. Resist the urge to fudge!
3. **Be persistent, but know when to quit.** Don't give up just because one editor turns you down. But if you get a lot of rejections for the same reason, rethink your story's angle. Don't even think of pitching the same story to a second editor unless the first one has turned you down!
4. **Remember—you don't have to jump through hoops.** If your story is really newsworthy, you won't need stunts or gimmicks. Special events or promotions are legitimate ways of attracting media attention, but they're not news.

When talking to the public through the media (interviews, news releases, etc.):

1. **Use plain English.** Be direct, clear and concise.
2. **Assume a fairly intelligent audience.** Patronizing = offensive. But don't assume the public or the media are familiar with your organization or cause.
3. **Build your brand.** Share your credentials and accomplishments. Become an authority in your field, and reporters will flock to you for comments.
4. **Move people to action.** Rather than compelling people with guilt or fear, rile them up! Request actions — even small and symbolic ones, like writing a letter.
5. **Be positive.** Approach each issue with a positive appeal. Make it seem that you are taking the initiative, even if you are on the defensive.

MEDIA PLANNING

In order to create a successful media plan, it's essential to answer the following:

1. **Who** are you trying to reach? Define your target audience. Are you preaching to the choir or trying to spread the gospel to the unconverted?
2. **What** do you want from your campaign? Increased visibility? Changed public opinion? Increased ticket sales? Decide your goal and focus on it.
3. **When** do you want your story to reach your audience? If you're promoting an event, work backwards from the date and plot out every newspaper, TV, Internet, radio, magazine and production deadline that will affect your plan.
4. **Where** do you want your information to appear? Which media will be most effective? Daily newspapers, weekly tabloids, e-zine? Or a combination?
5. **Why** should the media be interested in covering your organization or event? If the answer to that question isn't on the tip of your tongue, you're not ready.
6. **How** much will it cost? Budget your time, extra staff time, cost of postage, printing and travel. Are your goals realistic given your campaign budget?

THE MEDIA LIST

This is the most powerful weapon in your publicity arsenal. Anyone can put one together. Many nonprofit organizations share their media lists (included in this guide are many hunger and poverty media contacts). You should also call other grassroots organizations in your area to see if they have a list of the local media. Sometimes the public affairs office of the local telephone company distributes free lists of media contacts and their phone numbers. Ready-made media lists — hard copy or on disk — may be purchased from a variety of sources (see Resources).

Keep this in mind: your media list will only be an effective tool for dealing with the media if you take the time to make personal contacts. Start by sending an introductory letter to everyone on the list, enclosing a business card and a brochure or information sheet on your organization.



Any printed media list will be quickly out of date. Take the time to correctly identify the proper contacts within each media outlet and update them on a regular basis.

Also, the first time you provide a writer or editor with a news tip, you've established a level of rapport. Use it, and expand on that initial contact. Once in a while, you should send a reporter an interesting piece of news but not related to your organization. This shows a real awareness of the reporter as a person, and they appreciate such gestures.

Another way to establish contact with the media is to watch for articles about your issue. Write to the journalist to let them know your group is concerned about that issue and you're pleased they are covering it. Use the letter as an opportunity to introduce your organization and its mission. Journalists don't get a lot of feedback. Chances are good that if you write a simple letter, a journalist will remember you when you call back with a story idea.

Because each campaign is aimed at a different target group, you will have to select appropriate contacts from your list for every project. Include the following outlets in your list:

1. **Daily and weekly newspapers.** Think reporters and columnists.
2. **Magazines.** Include local, national and special interest magazines.
3. **Wire services.** Wire services put out a daily log of press events and all major media subscribe to at least one service in order to access this information.
4. **Community publications and college papers.**
5. **Specialty newsletters.** Churches, unions, professional groups, etc.
6. **TV and radio stations.** Include the names of news directors, assignment editors, public affairs directors and appropriate producers and reporters.
7. **Internet Zines.** Find e-zines that talk about your subject and approach them with the same respect you give a printed publication. Also, many magazines and newspapers have different content on their web sites. So if you can't get into the printed version, try the online version!

DEADLINES

If a reporter on deadline requests information, call them back ASAP! But never, ever, call a reporter who is under the wire to get his story done. He'll resent the intrusion. Worse yet, he may hold it against you. For daily newspaper reporters, deadline is usually in the afternoon. For Sunday papers, it's usually Thursdays. When you call, ask a reporter if they are on deadline. If so, tell them you'll call back another time.

SAMPLE MEDIA PLAN

Still unsure about how to put together a media plan? Follow our outline below. With a few modifications, it can be fitted for many occasions that require long-term planning. For events with short lead times or fast breaking news, the time line can be

condensed, but the individual activities would remain basically the same. **Following up is crucial.** Send pictures and a write-up to those who did not attend but expressed interest.

Example: World Hunger Year (WHY) folk concert is taking place on September 1st.

1. *May 15:* Send brief release about the concert to monthly and other long lead-time press as well as select TV talk shows. Most monthlies work at least three months out for editorial features. Major daily newspaper Sunday sections are also locked up early; major features are planned far in advance.
2. *May 30:* Make follow-up phone calls to editors and writers of monthly publications. Call TV and radio stations and ask about possible interviews and talk shows. What types of guests do they book, and how far out do they schedule them. If any of your contacts did not receive your information, send it again. See if they are interested in doing a feature story or calendar listing. Make any necessary updates to your media list.
3. *July 1 - two months out:* Send release to daily and weekly publications, and TV and radio stations announcing concert and suggesting feature ideas.
4. *July 15 - six weeks out:* Make follow-up phone calls to confirm potential features in Sunday sections and appearances on TV or radio talk shows.
5. *August 1 - one month out:* Send invitations to those journalists you would like to have cover the concert. Include an RSVP date, and follow up with a phone call if they don't respond. Send photos to calendar sections of daily, Sunday and weekly newspapers. Write a public service announcement (PSA) and send to public service directors. Follow up with a phone call to confirm receipt.
6. *August 15 - two weeks out:* Interviews on radio and TV, and in print begin to appear. Photos appear in weekly calendar sections prior to event.
7. *August 23 - one week out:* Call TV and newspaper assignment desks. Make the call quick and to the point. Ask if they have received information on your upcoming event. If they have not, resend! Ask about any special arrangements you will need to make for camera crews.
8. *August 31 - the day before:* Call TV assignment desks again. Remind them of event and any special arrangements made.
9. *September 1 - folk concert:* Call the assignment desks of TV stations that have indicated they may cover the event and confirm. Set up a press table with a list of attending media and press kits. Be available to the media for questions.

GETTING THE MEDIA'S ATTENTION

When it comes to catching the media's eye — print, radio, TV or Internet — there are several ways to get the job done: the news release, news conference, media events and pitching a news story.

NEWS RELEASES

Remember how important newsworthiness is? No? Do not pass go. Go directly to page two and read again. You won't get anywhere with your press release if it isn't newsworthy. An assignment editor at a major paper receives hundreds of news releases each day. The more professional and newsworthy your news release, the more likely it will be used.

Writing the News Release:

First things first: identify yourself. The first page of a news release (on your organization's letterhead) should contain your contact information. The contact information should be separate from the body of your release. Organize your news release in the standard news writing style — the inverted pyramid. In this style, the first paragraph is the most important. It should contain most of the basic story information, including who, what, when, where, why and how.

The following paragraphs should contain important background information, with every subsequent paragraph less important than the one preceding it. The concluding paragraph should be a brief summation, with specifics regarding time, place and cost. Focus on one subject, or as few as possible, in any one release. Try to limit releases to one page. If it must be longer, make sure all primary information is on the first page.

Standard News Release format:

1. Should be printed on letterhead stationery
2. At the top of the page, write either "FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:" followed by the date you plan to send it, or "FOR RELEASE ON:" followed by the date.
3. Opposite the date, write "Contact:" followed by your name and phone number. The phone number you want to make available to the public, if any, should go at the end of the release.
4. Below your name and phone number, type the heading in capital letters.

5. Double-space the body of the release and use wide margins. If you must go beyond one page, number each one, and end page with the word "MORE" until the end of the release which should include, "END" or ###.
6. If you have photos available, or if your release is about an event that will provide photo opportunities, be sure to include this information at the bottom of the release.

MEDIA ADVISORIES

These are bare-boned news releases. Events sometimes happen too fast to send an entire release. In these cases, a media advisory is the best option, especially when dealing with wire services, and radio and TV stations on short notice.

If your organization is an authority on a subject and could provide the media with local spokespeople, sending a media advisory is a good way to alert them to your availability for comment on news. Or, if you have too much information for a concise advisory, back it up with a media packet on your organization, and include brief biographies of your spokespeople.

With any luck, spokespeople could become regular sources for reporters. If you do send out this type of advisory, be prepared to make articulate and knowledgeable spokespeople available at a moment's notice.



When you have a fast breaking story a media advisory relates basic information to the media in a succinct form. It is common to fax media advisories to TV and radio stations as requests for coverage or to alert them to a potentially newsworthy and visually exciting event.

NEWS TIPS

Sometimes a fast-breaking story may be happening too quickly for you to send out a news release or advisory. If so, story leads may be passed on to a reporter by phone.

If you have a hot story, the reporter will take the tip and run with it. Remember to be as thorough and accurate as possible. But never pressure a reporter to follow through on a news tip. One casual conversational gambit is: "I thought you'd be interested in something going on at World Hunger Year."

VIDEO PRESS RELEASES

Video releases cost so much money and require so much effort to produce that it isn't a realistic option for most non-profits. To make matters worse, many video press releases won't even be viewed by the outlets to which they are sent.

If you decide to forge ahead with a video news release, make sure to put your best foot forward. Video news releases are pre-produced *broadcast quality* videotapes promoting an event or product. They are submitted to TV stations to attract more interest in the organization or event. If the release is high quality, it may be used by a TV show to illustrate its narration. In addition, some non-profits use these tapes for promotion, fundraising and outreach.

NEWS CONFERENCE

A good news conference is about spectacle. If you want to get the press there, you must have all the right elements in place. This is what makes a good news conference: an important organization sponsoring it, news that has not yet been revealed (unless the conference has been called to respond to a serious allegation or fast-breaking story), a sense of theater, a wide audience and a carefully prepared spokesperson.

Before scheduling a news conference, ask yourself a couple of questions. Are the issues so complex that they cannot be answered via a news release or phone call? Will the attention and visibility you hope to gain be worth the time, energy and money spent setting up the conference?

It's hard enough getting journalists to read your news releases. It's even more difficult getting them to attend a news conference. Once they are at the conference, be prepared to answer difficult questions from a variety of reporters.



For most grassroots organizations, news conferences are rarely necessary. Mistakenly, they are held to announce something that should have been handled by holding individual interviews with journalists.

Setting up the Conference:

1. **Decide the agenda and total time the conference will take.** Half an hour is divine. Longer than an hour is disastrous. Schedule your speakers and guests as far in advance as possible.
2. **Decide the date.** The day, date and time of your conference will depend on the schedules of your speakers. You must also consider media deadlines. Best times are Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday at 10 or 11 am.
3. **Select a site.** Find a comfortable and convenient location—a site that is relevant to your story can help you make your point and also provide a good backdrop for photographers and TV cameras. For example, if you are exposing the unavailability of adequate low-income housing, you could stage your conference outside a dilapidated housing project. However, when you plan your conference around a theme, logistics (such as podium, microphone, etc) will be more difficult to coordinate than at a hotel or conference room. Also keep in mind that if you pick a

site closer to reporters, they are more likely to show up. Holding news conferences at City Hall or the State House may help increase attendance because many reporters are already stationed there.

4. **Alert the media.** What good is it to plan the perfect conference if no one knows to show up? Send out your media advisory one week in advance. Deliver a second advisory a few days before the conference, and make sure you notify the wire services. The Associated Press Daybook is a daily listing of events that reporters often use to decide what will be covered that day. You should try to get your event included in this listing.
5. **Follow up.** Call to remind the media and to promote the conference.
6. **Rehearse.** Have all your speakers practiced their material? Ask them to state their most important points in 30 seconds in case they need to deliver additional radio or TV interviews after the conference. Test the speakers with all possible questions.
7. **Visuals.** Prepare some type of visual element for the conference, and let TV stations know what visuals will be available.

News Conference Checklist:

1. Is your room large enough to hold the invited number of journalists (plus extras)?
2. Can the conference site accommodate TV cameras? Are there enough (and powerful enough) electrical outlets and extension cords for cameras and microphones?
3. Should you hire a photographer to take several rolls of black and white shots of the conference and your speakers, which may be delivered to print media outlets that did not send a reporter?
4. Are there light refreshments for the reporters?
5. Is there a press table near the door where you can greet arriving journalists? Do you have enough press kits? Do you have a sign-in list for media with name, organization and phone number?
6. Now, it is immediately after the conference. Have you called invited journalists who did not come and asked if they would like to schedule an interview? Offer to fax them a copy of the conference press kit and remarks. Radio stations are especially receptive to conducting interviews over the phone with speakers.
7. Have you planned to have your office staffed before, during and after the conference? Is there a phone number at the site where you can be reached?

8. Ask yourself every question that could possibly be important. Do your microphones work? Are there enough phones easily accessible to the media? Is there parking? Is there water at the speakers' podium? Are there rest rooms?

NEWS AVAILABILITY

This is a miniature news conference. It is set up to make representatives of your organization "available" to answer the media's questions. Availabilities can be held in conjunction with something as important as the release of a major study or the publication of a book. The goals, schedule and checklist for the availability are the same as for a conference.

To conduct an availability, you invite the media to come and ask questions or interview your spokespeople during a set period or time. Ask the media to "drop by" at their convenience. Sometimes this low-key approach is much more successful than a conference. Informal availabilities are particularly appealing to journalists if they feature a well-known public figure who will only be in town for a few days.

CREATING MEDIA EVENTS

Sometimes you can attract more media attention from a staged event than you can from a "real" event. Staged events must be imaginative to catch media attention. You should follow the advice under "The News Conference" when inviting and preparing for the media. Some possibilities for events include:

- ✓ bringing your message to the neighborhood with volunteers walking door-to-door with lawn signs and literature
- ✓ sponsoring a contest
- ✓ organizing an awards ceremony honoring community or corporate leaders

THE PRESS KIT

Press kits are a collection of background material and related information on your organization or event. In most cases, not every journalist on your media list will need one.

Press kits should be reserved for news conferences and other events where you'll want more detailed information on your organization available and for journalists who request additional information.

Press kits should contain your organization's most recent news release, background information on the organization, biographies of key personnel, photos when appropriate, brochures and copies of articles about your organization.



When sending out news releases, you should mention that background materials are available upon request, but don't send them out unsolicited.

PITCHING STORIES

Most "pitches" — or suggestions for stories — are done by phone. The pitch call can precede a news release, or follow up on a previous release. Journalists are used to receiving phone calls. If you have a valuable news tip, they will listen.

Phone Pitch Tips:

1. **Stay clear of deadline day.** This is another friendly reminder about deadlines. It's different for every outlet, so your media list should always include the deadlines. Morning phone calls are better than late in the afternoon.
2. **Gone in 30 seconds.** Have all the story essentials before you call -- who, what, where, when, how and why. Then, condense your story to a 30-second sound bite.
3. **Who are you?** When you get your contact on the phone, identify yourself, your organization and why you are calling. Ask if they have a few minutes to talk. If they're busy, ask when would be a good time to call back.
4. **Make your pitch.** Be as brief as possible. Ask if they would like more information faxed or sent.
5. **Follow up.** Send a brief note thanking the contact for taking the time to discuss the story with you. Reiterate your pitch and send along any relevant information.

GETTING INTO PRINT MEDIA

Daily papers. Weeklies. Magazines. Specialty publications. There is a world of print media outlets in the community you serve, and it is time to put world domination on your calendar. Your organization has a better chance of getting coverage from the myriad of publications in your area than it does from a radio or TV station.

INTERVIEWS

The interview is the most common method journalists use to gather information for stories. If you have built your group's brand properly, you will be sought by the media for background interviews or comments on certain articles. Reporters are always looking for informative comment on breaking news stories. Your expertise can add credibility to a journalist's story. It can also help identify you as a news source, and since the media feeds on itself, your comments in one publication may lead to requests from others.

You should also suggest that a reporter interview your director (or celebrity connected to your organization). Have prepared reasons why the reporter would be interested in doing an interview.

Interview Tips:

1. **Be positive.** Don't be hostile or evasive. Focus on key points and repeat them.
2. **Be prepared.** You should NEVER assume that the reporter has done their homework, so be ready for anything. Provide the reporter with background information prior to the interview and hope for the best.
3. **Offer good "sound bites."** Reporters love one or two catchy and memorable sentences that sum up your idea.
4. **Get on the same page.** Prior to the interview, ask for the topics to be discussed. Just topics. Asking about specific questions is a no-no.
5. **Strong and silent.** If you don't know the answer to a question, don't make it up. Tell the reporter you'll call him back on that one.
6. **Use anecdotes.** Search your experience for incidents that can be turned into readable copy. Reporters prefer simple human drama to general ideas.

FEATURE STORIES

A feature story on your organization is a real coup. Besides the immediate benefit and visibility it gives, the story can be saved, reprinted and distributed to media, volunteers, Board of Directors and potential funders. The question is: How do you get one when everyone else wants one too?

Every pitch is different. In each case, pick your target publications depending on the issue. For example, for a food rescue organization, get a list of food editors for major daily papers. Prepare a solid story angle and pitch it via a personal letter to the editor or writer you have identified. Include background information and follow up with a phone call.

Because feature stories are generally “soft” news or human interest stories, they are usually assigned far in advance of other breaking news. Therefore, make your pitch well in advance of when you would like it to run. It is easier to get features in smaller publications, such as community and college papers and specialty or alternative press, than in major dailies. Occasionally, a daily paper will pick up on a story featured in a smaller publication and do its own story with a different angle.



Pitching a feature directly to an editor is usually an uphill battle. It is sometimes more productive to try to get a staff writer for a publication interested in the story, and have him or her pitch it to the editor.

CALENDARS

Every major city has dozens of free calendar and events listings in both the major media outlets, and in the smaller and specialty publications. Calendar listings are a very easy way to get free publicity for your organization or event. To be considered for a listing, send information on your events to the calendar editor.

Making an initial contact with each calendar editor is easy. Drop a note and introduce yourself. Tell them about your upcoming events. Find out their deadlines and stick to them. Also, ask if they accept photographs, and what the requirements are. Follow-up phone calls to some calendar sections will increase your chances of getting in. For others, it may irritate them. Get to know your contacts.

PHOTOGRAPHS

A survey of free calendar sections will tell you that the groups that include interesting photos with their listings often get bigger play and sometimes a special caption. Color photography is becoming more common in major daily papers.

Larger print media will often send their own photographer to cover an event or take photos of an interview subject. For smaller publications and for smaller events, you will need to provide the photos. Whenever you're pitching an event, be sure to note if photos are available or ask if they'll be needed.

Photo tips:

1. **Name that editor.** Send your photos to the correct person — usually the photo editor. Find out their deadlines and submit in time.
2. **Know the specs.** Submit black and white glossy photographs measuring either 5" x 7" or 8" x 10". If the publication accepts color, submit slides or transparencies.
3. **Caption every photo sent.** Include the names and titles of the individuals or items in the photo (left to right), the location, a brief description of the action, pertinent dates if applicable and a contact number for more information. Tape the caption to the back of the photo. Include the photographer's name for photo credit.
4. **Shoot it right.** Newspapers usually always prefer vertical shots to horizontal ones. Magazines and some tabloids are more prone to use specialty or unusually sized prints. Don't submit shots with a hundred people in them, and try to be creative. Candid shots are far more interesting than police line-ups.

COLUMNS

Almost every newspaper and magazine has regular columnists. Read them to familiarize yourself with the topics covered and the writers' styles.

Tips for working with columnists:

1. **Establish rapport.** Write an introductory letter citing a column of theirs you liked. About a month later, write to them about a funny incident or serious opinion you would like mentioned in their column.
2. **Friends and foes.** Know which columnists are rivals from competing papers. Don't double sell columnists on an item. If there is a society columnist you want to place an item with, offer it to them as an exclusive. If they don't use it within a certain number of days, call back and ask if they will be using it.
3. **Timing is everything.** You should learn when columnists regularly appear and how they want to receive information.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR & OP-ED PAGES

The editorial and op-ed pages are a widely ready and vital forum for public debate. These pages provide an excellent venue for grassroots organizations to offer opinions. Also, other media outlets may see your letter or guest editorial and ask you for comment on a story they are doing.

Tips for Letters to the Editor:

1. **Express yourself.** Letters to the editor raise points about issues in the news, give opinions on issues or call attention to the work of your organization.
2. **Keep it short.** Limit your letter to three paragraphs. It may be edited for space but rarely for content.
3. **Be up-to-date & to the point.** Always tie your letter to something current, preferably something the publication has covered. If you are responding to an editorial or article that has appeared in the paper, state that up front. Keep your response short, direct and simple.
4. **Don't procrastinate.** If you read something on Monday that you want to respond to, do it immediately. Don't wait until Friday. And, don't call to see if they're going to print your letter. They won't tell you.
5. **Your info.** Include writer's name, address and daytime telephone number.

Tips for Writing for the Op-Ed page:

Most Op-Ed pages contain a mix of nationally syndicated and local columnists. Op-Ed space is limited and the competition for it is tough. If your issue is timely or controversial, you are more likely to be considered for an op-ed.

1. **Credentials where credentials are due.** When pitching your idea to the op-ed editor, include background materials that confirm your ability to write on the subject for which you are requesting space. Follow up with a phone call.
2. **99 and a half won't do.** Submit the editorial in completed form. Allow a couple of weeks for the editor to respond.
3. **Be brief.** Limit yourself to 800 words. Find out the paper's requirements. (Some papers, such as USA Today, require 400-600 words).
4. **Move the reader to action.** You don't have to be objective. Tell them what you believe and why.

5. **Come out swinging.** A strong lead (your first paragraph) is crucial! Your first few sentences have to capture the reader's attention and clearly state the central theme of your piece. The remainder of the piece should support that thesis. The closing statement should leave the readers thinking.
6. **Keep it real.** Don't get too technical with policy analysis. The most effective columns are by those people who can tie policy to people's lives.
7. **Action, not reaction.** Anticipate things to come rather than just responding to breaking news. Or write the op-ed the SAME DAY you see a tie to headlines. Don't take a few days to edit.

GETTING ON THE WEB

What a tangled world the web is. Content is in constant demand by web editors. While it is very difficult to break into TV or magazines, the World Wide Web can be an oasis of opportunity for the weary media coordinator. But just because web editors are looking for the perfect waves of words to keep their surfers happy, it doesn't mean the same old style of writing will work.

Before sending your stories off to Internet magazines (e-zines), here is a short checklist of items to keep in mind:

- ✓ **Sidebars:** These are handy tools for breaking up lengthy text
- ✓ **Keep it simple:** Should a member of the species *Homo Sapiens* be required to consult a lexicon to decipher the premiere paragraph of your release, you've not adhered to this imperative.
- ✓ **Be current:** The web is a medium of the moment. There is no yesterday or tomorrow – only now – on the web, so always provide the most up-to-date information on your organization.
- ✓ **Repeat key phrases:** Repeat key phrases. Surfers skim text, unless they are really interested in the subject. So if there is a point you want to get across, say it over and over again. Remember, repeat key phrases.
- ✓ **It really is worldwide:** They don't call it the worldwide web for nothing. Surfers all around the globe could see your article, and just because your release plays well in Peoria, that doesn't mean it will play in Tokyo. That said, not everyone in the world knows where Peoria is, so go that extra mile and write, "Peoria, Illinois."
- ✓ **You ought to be in pixels:** Including pictures in your web article is a tricky task. Check with the web editor to be sure of her needs. Also, have your photos available in hard copy and scanned form. Do not send unless asked!



*Shorter is better.
Brevity is soul of
web wit. Keep your
writing punchy and
straightforward.
Web surfers like
short paragraphs.
They want their
information fast and
accurate.*

MASTERING THE EMAIL PITCH

As a general rule, web editors prefer email pitch letters to the snail mail variety. Email works better with the medium – just like the web, it's instant. And just like you make

your web articles short and pithy, do the same with your email pitch letters. Here are some tips for making the best of your email pitches:

- **No attachments**—The surest way to get a virus on your computer is to open an attachment to an email from a stranger. If you wouldn't open one, don't expect the web editor to do it.
- **Short and sweet**—The editor won't believe you can keep your web article short, if you can't manage a tight pitch. Begin with your reason for writing, i.e. "I'm writing to suggest a story about" Then explain your premise in no more than two sentences, followed by the details of your story idea in one or two paragraphs. Try to keep your email under the 350-word mark.
- **Hitting the links**—Include a link to your web site in your email. It's the simplest way to let a web editor find out more about your organization.
- **Be in style**—When writing for a Rome-based e-zine, write like a Roman. The best way to get on a web editor's good side is to show her just how well you know the e-zine's style. Use that style in your pitch letter, and you're sure to impress.

EMAIL NEWSLETTERS

Many grassroots organizations know the value of a traditional newsletter. It's a great way of keeping in contact with supporters of your cause. Email newsletters serve the same purpose with a few added benefits.

If a surfer happens to come upon your website, offer that person a chance to sign up for your email newsletter. As that old adage goes, out of site, out of mind. Why not give that surfer an easy way to keep up with your progress? Every time the surfer gets your newsletter, it reminds him of your organization and increases your chances for getting a donation or a new volunteer.

Email newsletters also provide you with an opportunity to build your brand more easily than traditional publications. How many times have you gotten an interesting email and instantly forwarded it to 20 of your friends? Now, how many times have you gotten a paper newsletter, copied it and then faxed or mailed it to your friends. See the difference? A good email newsletter can spread like wildfire.

When starting an email newsletter, you'll want to store email addresses in an easy manner. Mailing list software is the best way to make a form through which web surfers can automatically subscribe to your email newsletter. Your website designer should be able to collect email addresses in a simple online database. If your group doesn't have a



Privacy is a key issue on the Internet, and you'd be well advised to assure people that you will keep their information a secret. Make your privacy policy clear!

web site, the mailing list software can still serve you. Majordomo would probably be the best bet in mailing list software for non-profits, considering it's free.

Another good idea is to provide separate email addresses for people to subscribe to and unsubscribe from your email newsletter. Also be sure to include info on how to get off in every mailing list message.

Writing the email newsletter:

- **Be Chatty** – When you write like you talk, not only do people understand you better but they enjoy reading your newsletter more.
- **Focus, focus, focus** – Don't go all over the place with your content. Be consistent. If you regularly write an issue-based email newsletter, don't all of a sudden switch to organizational updates.
- **Request action** – This bears repeating: Give your email newsletter subscribers something to do. People like to feel as though they are aiding your cause. If you would like to get a donation, provide a link to the donation page of your website. If you would like people to write letters in support of an issue or your organization, provide email addresses and even a sample letter.
- **Delegate** – Don't feel as though you have to write all of the content for your organization's email newsletter. Let others in on the fun. And, it adds another voice to your publication.
- **Take your time** – How often are you going to publish your newsletter? That's up to you. Quarterly is a good start. Before you know it, you'll have a weekly publication on your hands.

A great resource for learning more about email newsletters is a book entitled Poor Richard's E-mail Publishing by Chris Pirillo, Peter Kent.

ProfNet

As part of your organization's branding strategy, you do everything within your power to be seen as an authority on your issues. A subsidiary of PR Newswire, ProfNet helps you do just that. It is a cooperative of public relations professionals linked by the Internet to provide journalists and authors convenient access to expert sources.

Your goal should be to get someone from your organization listed as an expert resource for the writers who use ProfNet. The company's broad search option alone delivers about 600 media queries weekly to the screens of its 11,000 members in North America and its 1,000 members in Europe.

To search broadly in the ProfNet system, reporters phone, fax or email their queries to the company. Four times daily in North America and twice daily in Europe, ProfNet sends these queries to its members via an email transmission. If you know of an expert who matches the reporter's criteria, you'll have the information you need to contact the journalist directly by phone, fax or email. ProfNet's fees for this service are based on a sliding scale according to type of institution.

ProfNet's Experts Database gives reporters the ability to research profiles of 4,200 individuals identified by its members as leading experts at their institutions. Reporters search the database about 10,000 times monthly. For each entry, the annual posting fee is \$50 for non-profit organizations, government agencies and academic institutions. This fee covers light editing as may be required by changes in title, contact or similar information. You can find the online form for submitting expert profiles at www.profnet.com/expertform.html, or you can call (800) ProfNet.



ProfNet North American Offices: 100 North Country Road, Suite C, Setauket, NY 11733, Phone 1 800 PROFNET (from US and Canada) or +1 631 941 3736, Fax: +1 631 689 1425.

ProfNet London Offices: PR Newswire Limited, Communications House, 210 Old Street, London EC1V 9UN, Phone +44 (0)20 7454 5276, Fax +44 (0)20 7454 5103.

E-Groups

Electronic groups or discussion boards provide a forum for people to debate the issues. It's a great way for you to gauge just how passionate your audience is about your cause. And if you create a discussion board on your web site, you are once again branding your organization as an authority by providing an electronic clubhouse for your issues. Discussion boards are fairly easy to create, and your web site designer should not have a hard time including one. If your organization is without a web site, then Yahoo! Clubs or similar (and free) discussion board hosts are available. But beware, someone from your organization must be responsible for constantly monitoring the e-group.

GETTING ON THE AIR

Most people still get their news from TV and radio. But trying to get TV news coverage can sometimes feel like mission impossible. Radio isn't much easier. The following suggestions should help you gain access to the broadcast media.

INTERVIEWS, TALK SHOWS & PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Talk shows give your organization the opportunity to cover its issue in greater depth than other formats. Producers are always looking for interesting and controversial subjects who are well versed on what's happening that day. Remember the rules for pitching a potential feature to print media? They also apply here.

Getting on an interview or talk show:

1. **Dial the director.** Call the public affairs director of the production company for the talk show in which you are interested. While you're on the phone, it's also a good idea to get a list of the company's other talk shows.
2. **Be in the know.** Familiarize yourself with the talk shows and subjects they cover. What is the station's target audience? When do the shows air?
3. **Create an angle.** Your organization might deal with a vital issue, but you must find an angle that is timely and new.
4. **Make your pitch.** When chatting up a talk show producer, always sell the sizzle, not the steak. Present a couple of options for a potential interview or feature, explaining why they're newsworthy, original and timely. Present your advocate as outspoken, articulate and thoughtful. Also, earn bonus points by pointing out whom your advocate can be positioned against.
5. **Plot ahead.** Many talk shows book far in advance -- at least 4 -8 weeks, so make your pitch early. For long range planning, tie your issue to a definite date in the future such as a Senate hearing or a planned protest.
6. **Follow up.** A few days after the initial contact, call back and push for a booking date. Be firm. If the producer rejects you, try another angle.

7. **Got attention?** If the producer seems interested, fax a “notice of availability” and any relevant background information on your subject, organization and suggested guests.

8. **Confirmation.** If the producer likes your idea, and has decided to book your spokesperson, you must confirm every aspect of the show, preferably in writing. Here are some questions to ask:

- A. Is the show live or will it be taped?
- B. What time should your guests arrive and how long will they need to be at the station?
- C. What is expected of your guests — will it be a call in show with questions?
- D. When will the show be aired?
- E. Do you need to provide the (TV) station with pre-produced videotape of your organization or guest. If so, which format do they need — VHS (1/2 inch tape) or 3/4 inch professional-style videotape?
- F. Will there be other guests on the show and if so, will they have opposing views to those of your guest? Always be prepared for a debate.
- G. Will the station provide you with a copy of the show on audio or videotape? If so, do you need to purchase the tape?
- H. How much time will you be allotted?

Choosing a spokesperson:

When deciding who should represent your organization, consider the following:

- 1. Is she good at public speaking?
- 2. Does he look professional on camera, or sound relaxed on the air?
- 3. Can she respond comfortably to live questions?
- 4. Is he the “face” or “voice” you want representing your organization?

APPEARING ON TV OR RADIO

1. Be on time – especially for live shows.
2. Don't fiddle or clutch anything. Maintain eye contact with the interviewer.
3. Be as charming as you can when interacting with the host. Be attentive and polite, and maintain control. Sometimes interviews get antagonistic. Don't add to the chaos, but insist on your time to speak and present your views.
4. Don't get trapped into talking about unimportant issues. Stick to your talking points.
5. Don't belittle the audience or interviewer. Phrases like, "What people don't realize is..." can sound patronizing.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE AIRWAVES

Though many radio and television stations have cut back on public affairs programming to reduce operating costs, all stations must meet the FCC requirement to maintain four public access formats. These include: public service announcements, community announcements or events listings, on-air editorials and rebuttals to the editorial policy of the station or to an event in the community, and public affairs shows.

Another possible source of free airtime is public access cable TV, which in the last few years has become more common around the country. While it is an effective way to get your message to the public, you should be aware that the levels of production quality can vary greatly among the stations. Sometimes you might be required to produce your own tape.

If your pitch is appropriate to the requirements of the station's public affairs office, promotes a non-commercial event, is for the public good, and is submitted in the proper manner, you can get on the air easier than you might imagine.

Public Service Announcement:

Public service announcements (PSAs) are generally 10-, 20-, 30-, or sometimes 60-second announcements of an upcoming event or a service provided by a non-profit organization. PSAs are free and all stations allot a certain amount of time for them.

Most grassroots organizations cannot afford to produce their own PSAs. Therefore, they write the PSA copy and submit it to the station to be recorded and broadcast. This is called "live copy."

You may, however, submit pre-produced PSAs—audio or video—for possible airplay. Not all stations accept prerecorded PSAs so confirm what stations do before you invest any time or money. If you submit a prerecorded tape, always send live copy along.

Some public affairs directors will give you feedback on your scripted PSA idea before you begin production. Also, once they're familiar with your organization, many stations will allow you to use their facilities to produce your PSAs. In some cases they may do them for free.

PSA Tips:

1. **Be an early bird.** Submit your copy so that it arrives at the station at least three weeks prior to the date you would like it to air.
2. **Toot your own horn.** PSA directors are inundated with requests, so be aggressive when explaining why your PSA should be aired. Focus on your PSA's importance to the general public. If the station is unfamiliar with your group, include a brief letter or a press kit.
3. **Multiple submissions.** Submit two or three versions of your PSA, timed for 10, 20, 30 and 60 seconds. Submit your copy double spaced, and put your 20- and 30-second spots on the same page. Use a separate page for the 60-second spot.
4. **Say it out loud.** Read your PSAs aloud to time them.
5. **Format properly.** Write "For Immediate Release" at the top of your PSA, followed by the media contact's name and phone number. Below this type "Public Service Announcement," followed by a title line. Also include the time for your PSA.
6. **Keep it simple.** Don't use words that are difficult to pronounce. If using an uncommon word or proper names, include phonetic (fə-nět'k) spellings. Mention your organization's name at least once and end with a contact phone number for the public to call.
7. **Don't be misunderstood.** Be conversational and clear. Use active verbs. PSA style is less formal than news-release style.
8. **Be grateful.** The station is not required to air your PSA. If it is aired, drop a brief note of thanks. A phone call to the public affairs director of key stations may help bring your PSA to the top of the pile.
9. **Picture perfect.** You may submit a graphic illustration to accompany a PSA for television. This is a color slide with your organization's logo prominently displayed. It will appear on screen as a backdrop while your PSA is being read.

Community Calendars:

Like PSAs, community calendar items must be non-commercial. They usually announce a specific event rather than a position, opinion or service.

Send each announcement to the public service director at least four weeks before you want it read. If you've sent a PSA, you don't need to send a calendar announcement; the director will decide what format is appropriate. Always type your announcement, double-spaced, and keep it brief. Make sure you include all information, especially the contact phone number.

Editorial Replies:

The FCC requires radio and TV stations to grant equal time to opposing viewpoints within the community. If a station broadcasts an editorial with which you disagree, request equal time to reply, specifying why you disagree and why you are the best person to respond.

If you plead your case successfully, they will notify you. You will be asked to submit your opinion in writing, to be edited for style and length considerations only.

When submitting a rebuttal, your position doesn't have to be exactly opposite for a station to let you reply. As soon as possible, submit something different on the same issue and follow up with a phone call. (You could say, "Channel 2 was correct in pointing out XYZ, however it failed to address ABC.")

Make sure your reply clearly conveys that you are representing an organization that has considerable support in parts of the station's market.

Free Speech Messages:

You don't have to respond to something already broadcast or covered by the station, but your free speech message (FSM) should reflect your opinion about a newsworthy event. You request free speech messages in the same way you go about obtaining PSAs or editorial replies.

Public service directors are looking for issues that have direct impact on the community and are in the public interest. Controversial issues are appropriate, but FSMs cannot be used to endorse or oppose ballot initiatives or political candidates in upcoming elections.

FSMs are less than one minute long, as opposed to the potentially longer editorial reply, and are usually recorded in the studio. FSMs are usually broadcast during odd hours, while editorial replies air at the same time as the editorial to which you are responding.

NEWSCASTS

Tips for getting screentime

1. **The assignment editors.** If you can't interest the assignment editor in your idea, your battleship is sunk (unless you've already established a relationship with other reporters at the same station). There are different categories of assignment editors; weekday, evening and weekend editors are the usual divisions. Learn their names and how they prefer to be approached.

2. **Alert the station in a timely fashion.** If you're planning an event far in advance, notify the assignment desk. They may put it in their "futures drawer," filed by the date of the event. A few days before the event, send out a media advisory confirming the event. Television thrives on visuals and sound bites. Be sure to note who will be speaking and anything else that will look good on the camera. Also, have copies of key speeches available. The day before (for morning functions) or the day of (for evening) your event, call the assignment desk and ask if you are scheduled for coverage. TV coverage is almost never guaranteed any further ahead than that.

OTHER MEDIA TIPS

1. Make a calendar for yourself of special days for press action. (For example, on Mother's Day write an op-ed about how many mothers will go hungry that day.)
2. Watch, listen and read media, and apply the principles of other stories to your issue. Look for a bandwagon to jump on.
3. Tie your issue to a political campaign, if possible. Much of the policy news coverage will focus on this. Issues will be explored, experts interviewed and candidates will look for venues (grassroots projects) for campaign stops.

Political media contacts for national print media (partial list):

1. Laura Myers, AP (202) 776-9409
 2. Richard Berke, New York Times (202) 862-0386
 3. Gerald Seib, Wall Street Journal (202) 862-9225
 4. Michael Duffy, Time Magazine (202) 861-4059
 5. Howard Fineman, Newsweek (202) 626-2058
 6. John Dillin, Christian Science Monitor (202) 785-4400
 7. Alan Elsner, Reuters/DC (202) 898-8440
 8. Ken Walsh, U.S. News (202) 955-2502
 9. Dan Balz, Washington Post (202) 334-7452
4. Write to the following network programmers, encouraging their networks to cover poverty and hunger issues:
1. **ABC News** president David Westin, 77 W. 66th Street,
New York, NY 10023
 2. **CBS News** president Andrew Heyward, 51 W. 52nd Street,
New York, NY 10019
 3. **Fox News** president Roger Ailes, 1211 Avenue of the Americas,
New York, NY 10036
 4. **NBC News** president Andrew Lack, 30 Rockefeller Plaza,
New York, NY 10112

KEY REPORTERS AND MEDIA OUTLETS

- **Wall Street Journal**

The “Washington Wire” column is an excellent placement for policy positions. Use economics as the hook for policy positions. If you don’t know anyone at the Wall Street Journal, contact senior national news editor Mary Lu Carnevale at (202) 862-9282.

- **USA Today**

The paper prefers op-eds about budget and pocketbook issues.

Runs 2-3 outside submissions per day (publishes M-F). Op-Ed Editor Glen Nishimura, USA Today, 1000 Wilson Blvd., Arlington, VA 22229; fax (703) 247-3108.

- **Newsweek**

Letters to the Editor: *Newsweek*, 251 West 57th Street, New York, NY 10019 or email (212) 445-4120. Also, consider writing a “My Turn” guest column.

- **Parade Magazine**

Accepts guest columns that offer solutions to problems, i.e. “How Americans Can Get Involved” (include phone numbers and possible action). *Parade* prefers known experts to author the articles. Write “balanced pieces.” Outline a step-by-step solution to a national problem and back it up with research. Make initial contact by mail: Senior Editor Sara Brzowsky, 711 Third Ave., New York, NY 10017.

- **Washington Post**

When submitting op-eds, find an author with excellent academic credentials. Length should be 750-800 words. They’ll call you if accepted and send a rejection letter if not. Send completed op-ed to Editorial Page editor Fred Hiatt, Washington Post 1150 15th St., NW, Washington, DC 20071; (202) 334-7281 or fax (202) 334-5269.

- **Philadelphia Inquirer**

Since this is a regional paper, focus op-ed pieces on issues concerning Philadelphia and surrounding areas. Contact Chris Satullo, Editorial Page Editor, Philadelphia Inquirer, 400 North Broad St., Philadelphia, PA 19130.

- **Boston Globe**

Grassroots organizations with local angles should pitch ideas to Alan Lupo, Boston Globe “Grassroots” column (runs on Sundays), 135 Morrissey Blvd., Boston, MA 02107-2378, phone (617) 929-3034.

- **Chicago Tribune**

Clarence Page's syndicated column runs in about 150 U.S. papers. It focuses on politics, urban affairs, race relations, societal trends, values issues, abortion, women's rights, multicultural issues, educational opportunities, truth, justice and the American way. Your best bet is to convince him that he can do something for your cause. Provide him with stories and examples — not just data. Work quickly: the most effective groups respond quickly to current topics. Send Page a letter at Chicago Tribune, 435 North Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60611, or email him at cpage@tribune.com.

- **Dallas Morning News**

The Viewpoints column in this newspaper is the perfect forum for you to spin your issue as it relates to Texas. Editor Bob Moos would like to have on hand a variety of issue writers on different subjects. Look for a local grassroots organizer to pen the op-ed, and send or fax Bob Moos your completed piece (800 words maximum). Moos will call you if you're selected and send you a postcard if you're not. Dallas Morning News, 508 Young St., Dallas, TX 75265. Fax: (972) 236-0456.

- **CSPAN & CSPAN 2**

"Prime Time Public Affairs" — covers public affairs conferences. Send them information about your conference as early as possible (several months in advance) fax the assignment desk about three weeks before the event, giving purpose, location and speakers. However, whether or not they cover your conference won't be decided until the day before. What gets covered depends on availability of crews, and whether congressional hearings are on. Call back only the day before to confirm coverage. Don't keep calling. "Point Counterpoint" — 15 minute debate on specific issues. Advocates from non-profits are invited. Contact Ellen Schweiger, Assignment Manager, C-Span, 400 N. Capitol St., NW, Suite 650, Washington, D.C. 20001. Phone (202) 626-7965 and fax (202) 737-6226. Email: events@c-span.org

*** Keep in mind that the media often has a transitory staff. It doesn't hurt to double-check a contact before sending out that letter.**

MEDIA RESOURCES

PRESS LISTS:

Before buying an expensive press directory, check with the library to see if it would be more economical to photocopy the few pages you may need. Also, other non-profit organizations in your area may be willing to share their media lists. Check with World Hunger Year to see if we can provide you with the lists you need.

If you decide to buy a directory, the following are the best:

- **News Media Yellow Book**

New editions of this 1200-page book are published quarterly, with four editions per subscription. With automatic renewal subscriptions, the first order is \$309, and each additional subscription is \$217. With annual subscriptions, the first order is \$325, and each additional subscription is \$228.

- **Gebbie Press All-In-One Directory**

H&M Publishers, Box 311, Rhinebeck, NY 12572, (914) 876-2081. Covers all daily and weekly newspapers, radio and TV, trade publications, business papers, magazines, and farm publications. \$105 prepaid, \$115 plus shipping & handling if billed. (Includes address, fax and phone, but not contact people).

- **Bacon's Media Directories**

Newspapers, Magazines, TV, Radio, Internet, Media Calendar (800) 621-0561. \$970 for combination set, which includes all of the above-mentioned directories.

TV'S DECISION-MAKERS

WCBS-Channel 2	Bud Carey, General Manager	524 W. 57 th St., New York, NY 10019	(212) 975-4321
WNBC-Channel 4	Bill Bolster, General Manager	30 Rockefeller Plaza New York, NY 10019	(212) 664-4444
WNYW-Channel 5	Hillary Hendler, Vice President	205 E. 67 th St. New York, NY 10021	(212) 425-5555
WABC-Channel 7	Walter C. Liss, President	7 Lincoln Square New York, NY 10023	(212) 456-7777
WWOR-Channel 9	Robert Quedeem, General Manager	9 Broadcast Plaza Secaucus, NJ 07094	(201) 343-0009
WPIX-Channel 11	Michael Eigner, Executive VP	11 WPIX Plaza New York, NY 10017	(212) 949-1100
WNET-Channel 13	William Baker, President	356 W. 58 th St., New York, NY 10019	(212) 560-2000
NJN-Channels 23, 50, 52, 58	Bill Jobes, General Manager	CN 777 Trenton, NJ 08625	(609) 777-5000
WXTV-Channel 41 Univision	Cristina Schwarz, VP & General Manager	24 Meadowland Pkwy. Secaucus, NJ 07094	(201) 348-4141

SAMPLE MEDIA ADVISORY



For Immediate Release

Contact: Lisa Ann Batitto, 212-629-8850, ext. 122

****MEDIA ALERT****

New York, November 9, 2000— Life can be tough for any teenager, but even more so for the 20,000 to 40,000 at-risk youth in New York City. Many of them are homeless after emerging from the foster care system without any real skills for living while others have run away from abusive situation. The question for New York is: How can we make a difference in these lives? K-Rock 92.3 FM listeners can tune in this Sunday morning, 7 -8 a.m., to find the answer.

K-Rock Magazine host Bob Salter invited World Hunger Year executive director and co-founder Bill Ayers, Ian Marvy and Michael Hurwitz of Added Value, Georgia Boothe of Covenant House, and Del Daniels of The National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship to discuss the issues facing the city's at-risk youth as well as methods for addressing those issues.

DATE: Sunday, Nov. 12th

TIME: 7 AM

WHERE: K-Rock 92.3 FM

WHY is a 25-year veteran in the fight against hunger and poverty in the United States and around the world. The not-for-profit advances long-term solutions to hunger and poverty by supporting community-based organizations that empower individuals and build self-reliance.

Added Value is a youth development, micro-enterprise program centered on market farming in community gardens. Teens involved in the Added Value project, currently based in the South Brooklyn neighborhood of Red Hook, run every aspect of their gardening business, preparing themselves for the business world.

Covenant House, arguably the largest youth services organization in the city, also helps at-risk youth develop skills for living. Last year, Covenant House in New York saw 9,000 at-risk youth total, with 5,000 of those young people coming to the group through its crisis center. In addition to food, shelter, clothing and crisis care, Covenant House provides a variety of services to homeless youth including health care, education, vocational preparation, drug abuse treatment and prevention programs, legal services,

recreation, mother/child programs, transitional living programs, street outreach and aftercare.

The National Foundation for Teaching Entrepreneurship's long-term vision is to provide every low-income or at-risk young person with knowledge and skills to pursue economic self-sufficiency. NFTE, founded in 1987 and based in New York City, is an international nonprofit organization that introduces low-income and at-risk young people to the world of business and entrepreneurship by teaching them how to develop and operate their own legitimate small businesses.

**

WHY is a nonprofit organization co-founded by the late singer-songwriter Harry Chapin, and radio talk show host and present Executive Director Bill Ayres in 1975. WHY attacks the root causes of hunger and poverty by promoting effective and innovative community-based solutions that create self-reliance, economic justice and food.

#



PSA

For immediate release
November 2000

Contact: Lisa Ann Batitto
or Sue Leventhal
(212) 629-8850

Your Donation Can Help the Hungry

READING TIME: 10 seconds

Hunger is increasing in the New York area and the food banks are empty. You can help by making a donation of canned food or money to your local food pantry or soup kitchen through your church or temple.

READING TIME: 30 seconds

Did you know one in five American children live in poverty?

Did you know 44 million Americans do not have health insurance?

Did you know that 34 million Americans live below the poverty line?

Did you know that 31 million Americans face hunger?

For 26 years, World Hunger Year has been finding innovative solutions to hunger and poverty.

To find out how you can be part of the solution, call 1-800-5-HUNGRY.

At World Hunger Year, we help people help themselves.



SAMPLE PITCH LETTER

Prestigious Publication
1001 Broadway
New York, NY 00012

Dear Ms./Mrs./Mr. Editor:

(Never address the editor by first name unless you are acquainted. If the name is not gender specific, write out the full name, ie. Dear Pat Smith. If you aren't sure of the editor's name, call the office and ask the receptionist.)

Paragraph 1:

Open your letter with a quick hook that gets right to the meat of your article or story. Make it catchy, but clear - the editor needs to know immediately if your work will even fit their market.

Paragraph 2:

Give a more detailed outline of the piece. Tell who your sources are and where you'll get your information.

Paragraph 3:

Tell the editor about your organization.

Sincerely,

Media Coordinator

P.S. *Postscripts are often read even when the full letter is not. If you have some information that will help sell your work to the editor, but it didn't fit in above, add it here.*

PRESS RELEASE



World Hunger Year

...Innovative Solutions to Hunger and Poverty

World Hunger Year
505 Eighth Ave., Suite 2100
New York, NY 10018
Phone: 212-629-8850
Fax: 212-465-9274
Email: media@worldhungeryear.org
Web: www.worldhungeryear.org

For Immediate Release
Contact: Pia Wilson, ext. 122

Justice for All in South Brooklyn

The Fifth Avenue Committee Wins WHY Self-Reliance Award

New York, NY— At The Fifth Avenue Committee, organization and education are key tools for shaping a vibrant, diverse community. Using those tools, the group has been advancing social and economic justice in South Brooklyn for more than two decades. The Fifth Avenue Committee is one of eight grassroots organizations honored with the 2000 Harry Chapin Self-Reliance Award, administered by World Hunger Year with funding from the Harry Chapin Foundation. For the past 14 years, WHY has distributed cash grants to groups judged outstanding for their innovative and creative approaches to fighting domestic hunger and poverty by empowering people and building self-reliance. The awards honor those whose organizations go beyond charity to help people improve their own lives and the communities in which they live.

“We feel we have an innovative combination of development work, services and organizing,” said development coordinator Glenn Rubenstein. “We organize people to seek improved housing and economic policies. We organize workfare workers so they can access real jobs and training. In the buildings we own and manage, we organize folks to take control of buildings.”

The grant from WHY will support The Fifth Avenue Committee’s Economic Empowerment Program, a readiness, training and placement assistance effort. The group plans to increase the programs education and training components. “We will better integrate the program with the enterprise work that we do,” said Rubenstein, adding that there will be more cross-referrals between the Economic Empowerment Program and the group’s FirstSource Staffing business.

“Our efforts keep us very based in the community, even as we grow,” said Rubenstein.

WHY is a nonprofit organization co-founded by the late singer-songwriter Harry Chapin, and radio talk show host and present Executive Director Bill Ayres in 1975. WHY attacks the root causes of hunger and poverty by promoting effective and innovative community-based solutions that create self-reliance, economic justice and food security.

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