

# Securing Media Coverage for Actions:

## Some Important Things to Remember

### 1. **Relationships!**

As with organizing in general, the key to successful media work is building strong relationships – with reporters, with editors, with secretaries, with...

### 2. **Media List**

Develop a list of media contacts, including names of editors and reporters, phone #'s (main #, newsroom, direct lines for specific people), fax #'s (often multiple faxes within the same organization – learn which one works best), e-mail and snail mail addresses. Keep notes of key information: regular business hours, crew shift times, deadlines for filing stories, what time they make assignments for the day, etc. Give special attention to the “AP Daybook”.

### 3. **Think Pictures**

When designing your action, think like an artist: “What will make a good photo op?” Then be ready to describe the scene to an editor to entice her/him to send someone to cover it.

### 4. **Media Release**

Find a good writer within your organization. Consult guidelines/tutorials for how to write good releases. Fax copies to editors, photo editors, and specific reporters – usually 2 to 3 days before the action. You may want to send a “media announcement” – a sort of “hold-the-date” release with just the basic facts – a week before a major action.

### 5. **Follow-up Phone Calls!**

Next to building relationships, this is the most critical step in the whole process – and it is time-consuming! Start making calls 24 to 48 hours before the action, and be prepared to fax the release again if someone hasn't seen it. Consider making another round of calls on the morning of the action – for TV, this is an absolute necessity. You need to call the TV station's Assignment Editor between 8:30 and 9:30 a.m. to confirm your release is in the folder of events they will discuss during the morning's assignment meeting (usually starts around 9:30). Remember: PERSISTENCE!

### 6. **Press Packets**

Agenda and list of speakers (with affiliations), a copy of the release, additional facts about the issue/action, background info on the organization, copies of speakers' statements.

### 7. **More Follow-up Calls**

Check in with reporters who came: see if they have any questions. Call those who didn't show up: see if you can send them something of your own. Thank them after publication.

### 8. **Don't Cry Wolf**

Don't promise something you can't deliver; it will be twice as hard to get them next time.

### 9. **Recognize Bad Luck**

You can't compete with a natural disaster, the Governor's surprise resignation, etc.