

Working With The Press

Positive press can add a lot to your program, and who doesn't like seeing their picture in the paper? News outlets love feel good stories about students taking action. The trick is letting the local press know what you are doing and when. To do this you need to send out press releases and media advisories. If you get an interview, make sure to get a copy. It looks great as part of a college or scholarship application.

Media Advisory vs. Press Release

- Media Advisories can be sent before the event happens. Minimum once a week every week, one month before the event.
- Press Releases can be sent the day before, the morning of the event and after the event has happened.

Media Advisory/ Invitation to Cover

Invites media to attend your event

Answers five W's for the media

Based on key messages of release

Bulleted format

Limit to one page

Written in the future tense

Press Release

Tells media what happened

Answers five W's in first paragraph

Key messages woven throughout

Inverted pyramid format

Limit to one or two pages (if possible)

Written in the present tense

Key Details

Use the templates provided. Revising is easier than writing.

Title

- When writing to the media, use a catchy title that positively depicts your story or event.

Content

- What is the event?
- What are they going to see? Will this be a good photo opportunity for them?
- Provide a quote or quotes
- Let them know if spokespeople are going to be available for comments

Contact

- Provide: Name, job title, email, phone #, website

How to Send an Email to the Media

- Your subject line should be catchy and clear with the event date, if appropriate.
- If you are reaching out to multiple media outlets through a single email, send the email using BCC (blind carbon copy)
- Copy and paste the Media Advisory or Press Release in the body of the email
- Attach a PDF of the Media Advisory or Press Release (Otherwise it might reformat on someone else's computer)

When the Media Contacts You

- This is your time to pitch your story!
 - Your story is your message.
- End the conversation with an invitation to attend.

When the press attends your event:

1. Meet them at the office. Make sure there is an escort for them while they are on campus. The escort can help introduce the Press to key leaders and school officials. They can also answer questions about the program and lead them to good photo opportunities.
2. Be friendly and respectful.
3. Dress appropriately; wear your ECO₂school T-shirt.

If you are asked to do a radio interview:

1. Think about the questions an interviewer might ask and prepare answers. It is ok to have a cheat sheet (it's radio - no one can see you).
 - a. Why is climate change an important issue for you?
 - b. How did you get involved with ECO₂school?
 - c. Do you bicycle to school? How often? Why?
2. Don't worry if your answers are not perfect. They will edit the interview. However, don't use slang or swear words and don't chew gum.
3. Ask for the airtime schedule. Most interviews are not done live. Find out when you will be on the radio and let everyone know, including ECO₂school.

