

HOW TO A WRITE PRESS RELEASE & MEDIA ADVISORY

What is a press release and why should I use it?

A press release is a statement that provides information on an organization's milestones or achievements that is issued to newspapers. A media advisory goes out prior to an event you would like the media to cover. These two tools will help your group be noticed by local newspapers and broadcast outlets.

What is included in a press release or media advisory?

Your press release or media advisory should tease the reporter just enough with what you want them to cover but not give so much information away that they no longer need you. Show the recipients why your group is worth highlighting. Keep it short- no longer than a page. Remember to include quotes and always have a spokesperson for your group picket out and ready to answer questions from the media (don't use quotes from or appoint a spokesperson who will be on vacation next week).

Format:

- Between 300-500 words.
- Traditional font, such as Times New Roman.
- Double-spaced.
- 1-1½ inch margins.
- Written in the third person, in an objective tone.
- Do not indent paragraphs.
- Information flows from most important to least important.
- Avoid acronyms.

Paragraphs:

- Make sure you put a lot of thought and detail into the headline, as this is the most important line. It should be catchy, short, and informative.
- The lead paragraph should provide the who, what, when, where, and why of the event. It should sound exciting.
- The following two paragraphs should contain background information and details about the event/achievement. It should explain the purpose and the benefit of the event.

- The final paragraph should describe your group and the services that it provides. It may be helpful to add a brief history of your group. Always include “For more information, contact...”

What do I do once a press release is written?

Once your press release is written, you'll want to begin researching local reporters. Look for reporters who are tasked with writing on organizations like yours (i.e. service organizations). Don't send a press release about your pro-life group to someone who writes for the auto industry.

Finally, it is time to send out your press release! Issue a press release 3-5 days before you want the coverage to appear. When planning an event, send your media advisory at least two weeks in advance. Avoid sending your press release to an editor and try to avoid busy news times like 8am and 5pm. Don't be afraid to follow up by calling them to ask if they have any questions.

To see a sample press release, please see page 3 of this document.

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Pro-Life Group to Host Abortion Debate

ANN ARBOR, MI—Unknown University has a pro-life group tasked with raising awareness about abortion on campus. Their group will be hosting an Abortion Debate between Scott Klusendorf and Nadine Strossen on November 27th. This event will include live questions from the audience and is open to the public.

Mary Jones, founder and President of this pro-life group at Unknown University, says it is important that individuals understand both sides of the abortion debate in order to engage in more productive dialogue and make more informed decisions.

“At Unknown University, many students identify as pro-life or pro-choice without having a firm foundation for their belief.”, said Jones. “We want to make an impact on campus and in the surrounding community by educating students on both sides of this important issue that affects almost all of our lives.”

Scott Klusendorf is a internationally known pro-life apologist and the author of *The Case for Life*. Nadine Strossen is a professor at New York University School of Law and is the former President of the American Civil Liberties Union.

The pro-life group will have free pizza available and the event will be featured on Facebook Live. The event will take place at 7pm in Room 100 of Smith Hall on Unknown University’s campus.