

'Earning Media' for Your Club

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Earned Media is just public relations lingo for 'free publicity!' Instead of using paid advertising, you can enact your own plan to 'earn media' that will promote your club, increase membership, and consequently help elect more Republicans to office. Here are some tips:

Create a media contact list. Your list should include local newspapers, television and radio stations, and even local bloggers. Collect both email addresses and phone numbers if possible, and call to ask for the best email address to which you may send media advisories.

Send a Media Advisory prior to club events. Advisories should include the 5 W's: Who, What, When, Where, and Why, along with a contact name, phone number, and email address. These are shorter releases designed to encourage media to attend and cover your event.

Many newspapers will have a reporter who specifically covers the 'education beat,' including your local school district. Track down the education reporter's direct email and phone number, and target them with information on your club Dictionary and Constitution Day Projects. Send a media advisory at least one week prior to your school related event, but also be sure to personally call and encourage them to attend.

Send a Media Release after your event. Media releases are written as an actual story, and many smaller papers will use these *verbatim* if they are well-written. You do not need to be a Pulitzer Prize-winning author, and there are many resources to help you learn how to write releases, some of which may be available in your library. One I recommend is *Writing Effective News Releases: How to Get Free Publicity for Yourself, Your Business, or Your Organization* by Catherine V. McIntyre. (ISBN 978-0-941599-00-9)

Even if you do not send a release, you can always send photos! Make sure you send high-resolution photos, along with an explanation and contact information.

Don't be intimidated by the process, make a plan, and start earning media today!

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