



## Publicize Your Event!

### Make a Splash with Participants and Press!

#### Media Outreach

Now that you've chosen an event to get involved in during Geography Awareness Week, you need to publicize your event to attract participants and the press. Make a splash about freshwater issues locally to globally.

Reaching the public through the media is the most effective way to let people in your community now about your Geography Awareness Week event. You want media announcements before the event and stories about the event after it has happened.

**Geography Awareness Week is November 14-20, 2010.** In order to make your event a success, you must start planning and publicizing early.

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**WAYS TO GET OUT THE WORD:** Fliers, Facebook groups/statuses, twitter, word of mouth, e-mail blasts, newspaper ads, posters around communities and schools, mailers, newsletters, ads in other organizations' newsletters, reminders in community newsletters, etc.

Before contacting media outlets, identify your target demographic of event participants. Target your media outreach appropriately.

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#### 1. Reaching the media

- Contact your local newspapers to see if they would like to collaborate on the event. Are they able to help get a news story in their paper? Will they published 5 freshwater trivia questions per day in the paper during Geography Awareness Week (Nov. 14-20)? Will they publish freshwater crossword and word searches during Geography Awareness Week? Is the newspaper interested in finding teachers celebrating Geography Awareness Week in their classroom and covering the activities for the paper?

- > Think about what press materials you'll need to generate, reporters to contact, interviews to set up. Ask the local papers what you can do to help facilitate the coverage of Geography Awareness Week.

- > If you are generating the publicity yourself, here are some easy steps to take:
  - Create a media list of the education and local interest/metro reporters and community calendar editors in your area, including reporters for daily and weekly newspapers, magazines, radio stations, television stations, and websites. Your organization may have a media list they will give you.
  - > Include mailing addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses, and fax numbers. Call the news desks at each office to confirm this information.

## **2. Preparing the press materials and spokespeople:**

- > Customize the Geography Awareness Week press release template about your organization and event.
  - > Identify individuals you in your group or organization that will speak with the media who attend the event
  - Give them a copy of all press materials and briefly outline the key points/ messages you'd like them to include in any interviews.

## **Media Outreach and How-tos**

### **3. Send Out Your Customized Press Release**

- > **A week** or 10 days before your event, send your customized version of the press release to the reporters on your media list via email, first-class mail, or fax.
- > **A few days before the event**, call the reporters to see if they are interested in covering the event and if they need any other information.
  - > Sample conversation: "My name is xxxx, from xxx organization. I'm calling about the Geography Awareness Week event at our school on xxx date. It's a very visual event with a xxxx (examples). We hope you're able to cover it.
  - > Keep the call short and to the point, and have all your facts at hand.
- > Send out your press release (fax and/or email) immediately after the event has concluded to media who did not attend.

### **4. Working With Media On Event Day**

- > Set up a media check-in table (with a media sign-in sheet), in a prominent location, with a sign identifying it as "Media."
- > On event day, at least one volunteer should dedicate time to working with the press. They should be at the check-in table to greet reporters, answer questions and help facilitate interviews. Have copies of the customized press release and the event's program available for reporters.
- > Television reporters with film crews will need electrical outlets for their equipment, so have events in locations where these are easily accessible. Press will need the best view of student displays, games, and presentations. Make sure to have seats designated as "Reserved for Press" where appropriate, with easily visible signs.
- > Following the event, check out the "Report Back" section on the Geography Awareness Week website to find out how to report key details of your event to National Geographic.