

How to get more media coverage for your organization?

- Create a media contact list. This should include local newspapers, radio shows, TV stations, news editors, etc. (Don't forget ethnic media and local free broadcasting television.)
- Email and fax media regularly regarding what your organization is doing. This can be in the form of a traditional press release or just a few paragraphs with key details and a URL for more information. Don't just contact the media when you want them to cover something, keep them updated on what you are doing. This keeps your organization on their radar.
- Email and fax television stations the night before or the morning of something that is happening at your organization that would look great on video and make a nice 20 second piece on the evening news. It could be something relevant to that day's news or it could be something else that's cool and you think is worth getting on the local news.
- What local or national radio shows do you listen to? Find out who is the producer at each of those shows and pitch yourself or someone from your organization to talk on that program about some relevant social issues or something in the news. Let them know what you and your organization are experts in – it could be domestic violence prevention and intervention in Arab/Muslim communities, arts and leadership with immigrant youth, health access and advocacy, etc.
- Email and fax statements in conjunction with international days, national days, etc. – International Women's Day, 9/11 Day of Service, Martin Luther King Day, etc.
- Call reporters who do a story that you think your organization would have been perfect to be interviewed for and let them know you are available in the future.
- Consider writing an editorial or opinion piece in conjunction with some local or national event and how it relates to the work your nonprofit does. (Remember ACO can help you with this. Email Remziya Suleyman at: Remziya@acoyn.org)
- Make sure everyone or at least key people in your organization are prepared to speak about your organization. Do an orientation for paid staff and volunteers. Give them basic talking points about what your organization does, its history and why is the work you do so important to the community. Do follow-up orientations to make sure the messages are up-to-date. If you have the resources to invest, you should send key staff to media trainings. Often times your local community foundation or other non-profit organizations may be providing free trainings, be on the lookout. You can also inquire with ACO staff about potential media trainings in your area or at the national conference.
- BLOGGING is the new wave of online media! Encourage volunteers to blog about their experience with your organization on their online profiles.
- Make sure you are publishing interesting, timely information regularly to your web site, your blog, your Facebook page, your Twitter account, etc.
- Return every call from any press person or blogger within minutes, not hours, days or weeks, and get them the information they need as quickly as possible. If you do, they will be more likely to contact you again and again because you proved your reliability and timeliness.
- Invite the press to your public events, or to observe your organization undertaking activities in support of its mission. You won't get them all the time but you should remain consistent and send them all releases.