

# P R E S S R E L E A S E S



Press releases and media advisories are tremendously important for bringing attention to a particular issue or promoting an event to help drive change on campus. Press releases and media advisories serve different purposes. Press releases tell the media about something so that they can report on it; media advisories are used to get media to attend your event.

## HERE ARE SOME TIPS FOR CRAFTING A RELEASE THAT WILL GENERATE THE MOST MEDIA EXPOSURE POSSIBLE:

- Carefully think through the headline for your press release. Write it as if it is the only thing the recipient will read. In order to capture the attention of the reader, the headline should be short, bold, and slightly larger than the body of your text. Use standard capitalization rules for titles. For the rest of the release, keep your font simple and professional.
- When writing, assume that readers will only be skimming the body of your press release. Because of this, strive to write every paragraph as tightly and concisely as possible. Pull your reader in by putting the most important information first. It's important that the entire release is written with the goal of providing an objective, third-person perspective, even as you emphasize your strongest points.
- When deciding what to include in your release, pretend that you are explaining the event or issue to a friend who doesn't know much about it. Anticipate what questions they may have. Ask friends who are not in your group to read the release so that you can see if you are missing any important details or points of clarification. The most important information to include in the release is the date, time, and location of the event, as well as reasons why the reader should care about the event. Be sure to also include one or more well-placed quotes from prominent officers like your club president explaining why you hosted a particular speaker, or how the news you're sharing affects the reader. If the release or advisory is for a lecture or debate, include details from the speaker's biography to establish their credibility for your audience.
- Before closing, include a short paragraph describing the mission of your organization. If your group has a website, include that as well.
- Finish the release with the contact information for your club president or the appropriate contact person for the event, if applicable.

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## SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

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Salem, Ore., September 15, 2016—On Thursday, September 17—Constitution Day—the student group Justice Students for the Environment (JSE) will head to the courtyard in front of Green Library to protest Justice University's (JU) unconstitutional "free speech zone." The group aims to bring awareness to JU's restrictive speech policies, which limit the First Amendment rights of the school's more than 50,000 students.

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"JU's administrators need to realize that it is unacceptable to confine speech to such a small area of campus," said JSE President John Doe. "On Thursday, we will demonstrate that the campus free speech zone restricts students' First Amendment rights and discourages students from engaging in activism and with the campus community."

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On Thursday at 3 p.m., students will gather in JU's free speech zone with the goal of packing the space. The campus free speech zone is a small patch of turf on a part of campus that receives very little foot traffic. With enough attendees, the space will overflow, demonstrating that it is not possible for all of JU's students to exercise their First Amendment rights at the same time if their free speech rights are confined to the campus free speech zone.

Students attending the event are encouraged to bring signs with quotes and images related to the First Amendment and free speech. The Constitution Day protest is open to all students and campus groups.

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Last spring, JSE met resistance while holding recruitment events on campus outside of the free speech zone. On one occasion, administrators stopped JSE members from passing out flyers while trying to recruit members. At a recent JSE meeting, the club's executive board discussed that JSE may not be the only group facing resistance to their activism and how the restrictive free speech zone affects all

students on campus. At the same meeting, the group decided to initiate an on-campus protest. The group's leaders decided that raising awareness about the detrimental effects of the free speech zone would make it more likely that the free speech zone will be eliminated so that the rights of JU students would be honored.

## SAMPLE MEDIA ADVISOR



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT**