



### ***Let's Drive Out Hunger*** **Media Outreach Tips**

Reaching out to the media is a great way to get publicity for your agency and the *Let's Drive Out Hunger* program – and it's free! It's also a great way to heighten awareness in your community about hunger issues and to encourage others to take action.

The main purpose of reaching out is to let reporters know about your donation and the program itself and to gauge whether they would be interested in writing a story about your participation. We've outlined four basic steps for media outreach:

#### **Step One:**

Customize the *Let's Drive Out Hunger* agent press release by filling out all of the sections highlighted in yellow. These include: your agency name, agency location and the specifics on your donation. It also includes selecting someone from your agency to whom the agent quote should be attributed. The template press release includes a sample quote which you can leave as-is, or customize based on your donation and the messages that are most important to your agency and community. You'll also want to add your contact information at the bottom of the release so that reporters know whom to call for more details. Finally, you'll need to add an agency boilerplate – a short, descriptive paragraph that lets the reader know a bit about your agency. Here's an example:

*About HIG - Hadley Insurit Group*

*The Hadley Insurit Group is made up of Insurit Agency, Inc., the Hadley Insurance Agency and Cote Insurance Agency. President Paul C. Burke is a Certified Risk Manager (CRM), a Certified Insurance Counselor (CIC), and a Licensed Insurance Advisor. The Hadley Insurit Group is conveniently located in downtown Fall River and has served the South Coast since 1912.*

#### **Step Two:**

Think about what media outlets (newspaper, radio, TV or online sources) are in your area and who may be interested in hearing about your donation and the *Let's Drive Out Hunger* program in general. Is there a local daily or weekly newspaper? A local cable access station that covers community events? All of these outlets are good targets for outreach. Make a list of those outlets that would likely cover the news.

#### **Step Three:**

Begin your outreach by sending the customized press release to each media outlet. Contact information can usually be found on the media outlet's website. Appropriate contacts for newspapers include the editor, managing editor and specific reporters such as a news reporter or the city desk/community reporter. Some publications also give you the option to "submit your news" online to editors for consideration. If this is the case, there is typically an online form for you to complete. For broadcast (TV and radio) media, assignment editors and reporters are the best contacts. Most outlets prefer that press releases be sent via e-mail or fax.

When sending your release via email, it's a good idea to write a short note to go along with it, to try to catch the reporter/editor's attention. If you're calling directly, you can use similar talking points to let the reporter know why you're calling. Here's an example:

*Hi {insert name},*

*I thought you might be interested in writing a short article about our agency's recent donation to the local food cupboard. As part of Arbella's 'Let's Drive Out Hunger' program, now in its fifth year, we recently donated \$500.00 to the Neighborhood Food Pantry.*

*As you know, hunger is a serious problem here in our community and across Massachusetts, made even worse by the current economic conditions. We're committed to helping our neighbors and hope this donation might inspire other local businesses to pitch in and help stock the shelves at food pantries across the state.*

*I've attached a press release with the details on our donation and the 'Let's Drive Out Hunger' program, as well as a photo of our recent check presentation. I'd love to discuss the story more with you – feel free to give me a call anytime.*

*Many thanks,  
{Insert name/contact info/agency name here}*

If you'd like a large presentation check for use in a presentation to the recipient of your donation, please email Beverly Tangvik at Arbella ([charitable.foundation@arbella.com](mailto:charitable.foundation@arbella.com)) with your agency name, donation amount, and the organization to which it should be made payable. Arbella will then be happy to provide you with a large ceremonial check for your presentation.

When you present the check, it's a good idea to take a high-resolution photo and send it along with your press release. You'll need to include a photo caption that describes everyone in the photo from left to right, along with a short description, date of when the photo was taken, and photo credit. Here's an example:

*(Left to Right) John Smith and Jane Jones of Smith-Jones Insurance present a check for \$500.00 to the Neighborhood Food Pantry on December 15, 2010, as part of the Arbella Insurance Foundation's 'Let's Drive Out Hunger' program. (photo by Bill Jones)*

#### **Step Four:**

Follow up with each media outlet. Make calls to the person you originally contacted to inquire whether they might be interested in writing about your agency's donation to the program.