



Getting Your News in the News



History & Mission

Founded as the Suncoast Black Communicators, the group became the Tampa Bay area's affiliate of the National Association of Black Journalists in 1990. The TBABJ now represents journalists of color in Pinellas, Hillsborough, Citrus, Hernando, Polk, Manatee and Pasco counties along the Suncoast of Florida.

Purpose: To bring together people of African decent who work in the media, or media-related jobs throughout the Tampa Bay area.

Mission:

The Tampa Bay Association of Black Journalists strives to help ensure diversity in area media and accurate, balanced coverage of communities of color while serving as a resource for both established and aspiring communicators of African decent.

Specific goals include:

- * Bringing together black journalists with those who work in related fields, such as public relations.
- * Awarding scholarships to promising young black students who plan to pursue careers as journalists.
- * Serving as a clearinghouse for employment opportunities within the media.
- * Sponsoring events that encourage quality coverage of communities of color.
- * Sponsoring events encouraging professional development among journalists of color.
- * Taking stands and positions on journalism or media issues or defending its members in related grievances.

Tax-exempt status: The association is a not-for-profit organization exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501 © 3 of the Internal Revenue Code.

Governance: The association's governing body is its 10-member executive board. The president serves as chair. Other members include the chapter's five other officers and heads of action committees, including finance and scholarships.



Executive Board

President: **Lorraine McBride**, Bay News 9

Vice President-Broadcast: **Rod Carter**, WFLA-TV

Vice President-Print: **Robbyn Mitchell-Hopewell**, Tampa Bay Times

Treasurer: **Jenise Morgan**, Florida Courier

Secretary: **Sandra Bentil**, Teacher at John Hopkins Middle School

Parliamentarian: **Octavio Jones**, Tampa Bay Times

Tampa Bay Association of Black Journalists

P.O. Box 172092

Tampa, FL 33672

Email: TampaBayABJ@gmail.com



Accessing the Media: Not an Afterthought

- **Decide what kind of coverage you want**
 - Does your event warrant a press conference?
- **Find a news angle**
 - Make sure your story is newsworthy and important to more than just your members
 - Brainstorm on interesting aspects of your event
- **Determine which news outlets to approach and how to approach them**
 - Identify outlets that focus on the type of stories you want to pitch
 - Learn about the media outlets in your area
- **Contact the appropriate person**
 - Identify the reporter, columnist or editor who is responsible for your type of story
 - If you don't know, ASK!

- **Timing**
 - Not only must you give advance time to news organizations, your event should be timely
 - If you are holding a press conference, **START ON TIME!!!**

- **Preparation**
 - Know what you are talking about
 - Have a knowledgeable and articulate spokesperson (not necessarily the president or chair)
 - Practice for interviews, public appearances, etc

- **Say thanks!**
 - Don't wait until you need something to make contact.
 - Show appreciation for coverage received.

- **Make publicity a standing committee**
 - This committee calls for a lot of work -
 - Expenses should be included in budget



HOW TO WRITE A SUCCESSFUL NEWS RELEASE

1. A news release should be brief, complete and informative.
2. Answer all the: who, what, when, where, why and how of your event.
3. Briefly state why your event is important.
4. Mail the release at least one month before the event.
5. Follow up the news release with a telephone call. For television and radio, all three days before the event to make sure the release has been received. For newspapers, call a week in advance.
6. Include a contact person and phone number on all releases.
7. Be sure to send your release to the proper person.

NEWS RELEASE FORMAT

1. Event.
2. Date the release was sent
3. Name of organization sponsoring event.
4. Date, time and address of the event.
5. Contact person at the event and the person's phone number.
6. Phone number of the location where the event will be taking place (or good cell phone number for contact)
7. Briefly explain the purpose for holding the event and why it is important.
8. Provide the name and number of someone who will answer questions if reporters need to prepare for the story before the event.
9. You may also want to attach a background information sheet on the speakers, your organization and other related subjects.

HOW TO HAVE A SUCCESSFUL NEWS CONFERENCE

1. Start the news conference on time.
2. Members of your organization should be identified by nametags or name cards.
3. Keep the conference brief and to the point.
4. If possible, hold the conference in a large, well-lit room.
5. Allow time for reporters to ask questions after the conference.
6. Make sure your meeting room has plenty of electrical outlets. TV crews need them to set up lights.
7. Keep the number of speakers to a minimum.
8. Try to add the human element to your presentation. For instance, if your organization is protesting a utility rate increase as putting an unfair burden on senior citizens living on a fixed income, try to have a speaker there who can talk from first-hand experience; or, you can provide the media with a list of people who will be available for inter-views on their personal experience.
9. Remember your image is on the line. If your news conference is a disaster the first time, your organization could be thought of as disorganized and

undependable.

10. Start the news conference on time.

FEATURE/HUMAN INTEREST STORY

This is your chance to help get those good news stories into the media. If you know of someone who is doing something good, don't just pout to yourself and wonder why good news never makes headlines.

Call the media and let us know!

News does not have to be serious or controversial to make the headlines. It can be humorous, unique, or just an unusual way of coping with a normal situation. If you notice a new trend developing in an industry or affecting a group of people, you can turn this information into a news story. If you think a different perspective should be shed on a continuous news item; that can be turned into a news story.

If you want to know why something is the way it is; one question could lead to a good news story.

Also, think about focusing on interesting tidbits about members of your organization or business and highlight their achievements. You will make them feel appreciated and also expand coverage of your organization or business. Remember, pay attention to numbers and be creative. For example, someone may be approaching their 50th year of service, or so many years of employment without missing a day. An employee or member may have just attended the

graduation of child number 10.

Just write or call the media organizations with the information described in the news release format.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Surely you don't want folks to concentrate so much on the visual that they miss your entire message. Here are some tips to adhere to when you know you are about to be photographed:

1. Do not wear white clothing or wild patterns.
2. Do not set up a news conference with a white background or in front of a window.
3. Make sure there is enough room for all major media stations and that there are enough outlets for TV equipment, and a table or podium for microphones.
4. For better TV coverage of banquets or meetings, make provisions for where cameras can set up to get good shots of the speakers.
5. If you are holding a news conference on location, make sure you have something visual to see pertaining to that location.
6. Be creative with still picture opportunities.
7. When taking group photos, with a large group, it is best to have a row of chairs in the front. And, it is better to seat taller subjects (when possible) and let

the shorter subjects stand behind the chairs.

8. Do not chew gum!

WRITING OR PREPARING A PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

1. Research the market, look for television public service announcements and listen to radio public service announcements to see what types are being produced.

2. Establish a good relationship with the public service director. Talk to the director about your organization, the service it provides and the best way to promote it.

3. Know the deadlines. You need to have your produced (finished version) PSA to the station at least a month before you want it to air. If the station is going to produce the PSA for you, you need to make arrangements months before the announcement is to air.

4. The PSA needs to appeal to the masses.

5. No commercialism. You cannot mention ticket prices in a PSA, but you can give out a phone number to call. Public service announcements are only available for organizations that have a tax exempt number. You must be able to prove your tax-exempt status. Remember, there is a difference between PSAs and advertisements. If you call to talk about advertisements, be expected to pay.

7. The PSA must be of the right broadcast length, usually 30, 15 and 10 seconds.
8. The name of the organization should be mentioned twice in the copy if possible. Check to make sure the essential information is there: who, what, when, where and why.
9. Choose your on-camera talent carefully. Select someone who feels at ease on camera. You want to make sure the message will be convincing by the way the talent delivers the lines. Also consider how many other spots the talent is appearing in. No time for egos!
10. If you want to use props, the organization needs to provide any props or costumes. Avoid black or white clothing or fabric with a distracting design.
11. Check to see if the media outlet has a community calendar to add your listing to.



WRITING A PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

PSA notes: The shorter and simpler your public service announcement, the better the chance it will have of being aired on radio and television. The basic idea here is to include only the most pertinent details in the shortest possible form that gets both your message across and provides a means for interested people to get further information. If you are in doubt about a station's policy on public service announcements (and policies do differ), pick up the telephone and call. Most media organizations will gladly explain their policy. By all means: please use **SPELLCHECK!!!**

NET-TIQUETTE

Protect the privacy of the recipients with Bcc. If you're sending a message to a group of people, send it to yourself and blind copy (Bcc) everyone else. You'll protect the privacy of everyone's email address and you'll prevent a Reply to All fiasco (with Bcc, if a person clicks Reply to All, only the originator receives it).

Make your subject line sizzle. Your subject line should read like the headline in a newspaper. The recipient should know precisely what your message is about just by reading the subject line. It should always match the message.

Add a salutation. Always greet the person you're writing with Hi Mary, Dear John, Hello John, etc. Otherwise, your email will come across as an order, especially if you're making a request.

Remind the recipients of who you are. If you've met someone once or it's been awhile since you've reached out to them, remind them of previous encounters.

Treat email as a business letter. Email should receive the same treatment as a letter on your company's stationery. If you wouldn't put smiley faces, ivy growing down the side, shorthand as in an instant message, etc., in a letter, then don't do it in email. Proper grammar, capitalizations, and punctuation should be standard.

Be brief but be clear. Spend time crafting a well thought-out email and get to the point quickly. Use bullets if you're making several points so the message can be quickly scanned. Put any deadlines in a bold font near the top and bottom of your message.

Thank people in advance. You can reduce email overload if you simply thank people in advance. Then you won't feel compelled to send a useless one-word thank you email later.

Avoid receiving numerous useless replies. When you send a message to a group, add at the top and bottom of the message whether you need a reply (e.g., NRN for no reply necessary).

Keep the body of the previous email with your answer. Set your email software to include the previous message when you reply. Don't make the

originator have to go back to figure out what they asked you for.

Answer within 48 hours. An email message is not a 9-1-1 call, but it should be answered within a reasonable time. Your company should set this standard.

—Peggy Duncan

Think before you send. Read the message before you reply, giving the sender everything they've requested. If you're in a meeting with your PDA under the table, you're not going to send a good answer. Wait until you're back at your desk and can think more clearly. And don't answer any messages when you're upset.



Newspapers

[Citrus County Chronicle Online](#)

1624 North Meadowcrest Boulevard

Crystal River, FL 34429

Local Phone: 352/563-5655

Email: citrus@infi.net

[Bradenton News](#)

102 Manatee Avenue West

Bradenton, FL 34205

Phone: 941-745-7000

The Florida Sentinel-Bulletin

P.O. Box 3363

Tampa, FL 33601

Local Phone: 813/248-1921

Email: flasentinel@reddesign.com

[Pasco News](#)

P.O. Box 187, 13032 U.S. Hwy. 301

Dade City, FL 33526-0187

Local Phone: 904/567-5639 Fax: 904/567-5640

EMail: Owens@pasconews.com

[Sarasota Herald-Tribune](#)

801 S. Tamiami Trail

Sarasota, FL 34236

Local Phone: 941/957-5145 Fax: 941/957-5276

[The St. Petersburg Times](#)

490 1st Avenue South

St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Phone: 800/33-7505 Fax: 813/893-8371

[The Tampa Tribune](#)

202 South Parker Street

Tampa, FL 33606

Phone: 800/282-5588 Fax: 813/259-7676

Radio Stations

WXTB : 98 Rock" FM, Tampa

Email: 98rock@98rock.com

WKES 101.5 FM, Tampa-St. Petersburg

Email: 76467.1000@compuserve.com

WRBQ: Country Tampa-St. Petersburg

WSJT 94.1 FM, Tampa-St. Petersburg

Email: wsjt@compuserve.com

WTWB 1570 AM, Tampa-St. Petersburg

Email: 74627@com.6

[WTBT](#): Classic Rock 105.5 FM, Tampa-St. Petersburg

WUSF: Public89.7 FM, Tampa-St. Petersburg

Email: wusffm.wusf@usf.edu

WAYJ 88.7 FM, Fort Myers-Naples

Email: wayjradio@aol.com

TV Stations

WCLF-TV Channel 22, Tampa-St. Petersburg

E-Mail: hessie@ix.netcom.com

WFCT-TV Channel 66, Tampa-St. Petersburg

E-Mail: 76322,3362@compuserve.com

[WFLA](#): NBC Channel 8, Tampa-St. Petersburg

E-Mail: news@wfla.com Local Phone: 813/221-5788

[WFTS-TV](#): ABC Channel 28, Tampa-St. Petersburg

E-Mail: newstips@wfts.com

WTMV: WB Channel 32, Tampa-St. Petersburg

E-Mail: wb32@wb32.com

WTOG-TV Channel 44, Tampa-St. Petersburg

E-Mail: news44@aol.com

[WTSP](#): CBS Channel 10, Tampa-St. Petersburg
E-Mail: news@channel10.com
Fax: (813) 577-8436

[WTVT-TV](#): Fox
Channel 13, Tampa-St. Petersburg
E-Mail: 13@wtvt.com Fax: 813-875-8329

WWSB-TV: ABC
Channel 40, Tampa-St. Petersburg (Sarasota),
E-Mail: contact40@aol.com

[WUSF](#): Public, University of South Florida
Channel 16, Tampa, St. Petersburg, Sarasota, Lakeland
E-Mail: sgeiger@wusf01.wusf.usf.edu

**DO NOT FORGET TO SEARCH FOR
EVERYONE’S SOCIAL MEDIA SITES**



