**Press coverage Opportunities for chapters that win CLA Awards**

Vice Presidents, Chapter Presidents and Chapter Counselors at CLA Award-Winning Chapters

Congratulations on your chapter’s successes and winning your award at this year’s Carlson Leadership Academy!

While you have earned great recognition from us already, I encourage you to seek local press coverage to acknowledge your chapter’s accomplishment. Receiving this award may be just the opportunity you need to gain positive exposure for the great things SigEp chapters achieve.

Try pitching your story to some of the local news outlets near your school.  They would be receptive to a phone call or an email as long as you are prepared and have done some work to make your story interesting.  You will need to draft a news release with some personal information about your experience, your chapter and what you did to earn the award.

Some tips on writing a news release:

* Think of the news release as an article you are writing for publication. Your first paragraph should briefly include: who, what, where, when and why. You will fill in the details later in the release.
* Localize the story to explain how your chapter stood out.
* Avoid excessive use of adjectives and jargon – just keep it simple.
* Provide relevant quotes from your chapter and volunteer leaders.
* Remember, provide the most important information first. Small details later.
* Keep the release to one page, double spaced. INCLUDE CONTACT INFORMATION IN THE RELEASE.

Your chapter president and/or vice president of communications should have a list of media outlets in your school’s city, including contact information from the main daily newspaper. Select a few to target, like the main local paper, the lifestyle weekly and a few TV stations. Some tips for contacting the media:

* Identify specific reporters at your campus and local newspaper to e-mail. Contact the local news, education or feature editor.
* Follow up with a phone call to the reporter, but understand they are very busy, so don’t bombard them.
* Be prepared to answer questions, such as:
  1. Why were you chosen?
  2. What did you do to prepare?
  3. How has your chapter improved?
  4. What will you do to continue winning?
  5. What was it like to win the award?

Please let me know if you reach out to any media contacts and if you get any positive responses. If they decide to run your story, let me know so that we may track it.

If you have questions or need further guidance, feel free to contact me at gaylynn.carpenter@sigep.net.