

MEDIA OUTREACH GUIDE



Writing a Press Release to Promote Fairfield County's Giving Day

NONPROFIT NAME Prepares for Fairfield County's Giving Day

XXX, CT – **NONPROFIT NAME** is preparing to launch its **Fairfield County's Giving Day** online giving campaign on Feb. 23 — providing community members with a fast and easy way to support its work [summarize mission here.](#)

Proceeds from the 24-hour day of giving will support its [specific program with details here.](#)

Powered by the **Fairfield County's Community Foundation** and Champion Sponsor **Bank of America**, Fairfield County's Giving Day harnesses the collective giving power of local individuals, businesses and organizations to support nonprofits throughout Fairfield County.

"Fairfield County's Giving Day is a wonderful opportunity for us to raise awareness about and funds for our important work," said **NONPROFIT NAME SPOKESPERSON ID**. "It offers a simple and effective way for our supporters to support a cause they care about, while allowing us to keep our focus on our mission."

Fairfield County's Giving Day has raised more than \$13.75 million for nonprofits in Fairfield County since 2014 through the contributions of thousands of donors who come together each year to support local causes. In 2022, more than 400 Fairfield County nonprofits raised nearly \$2.2 million through contributions by nearly 13,000 individuals and families.

Last year, **NONPROFIT NAME** raised [include last year's fundraising results if relevant here.](#)

"Giving Day helps local nonprofits build their fundraising capacity and makes philanthropy accessible to everyone in Fairfield County," the Community Foundation's President and CEO Mendi Blue Paca said. "It's a great way to engage your family and teach your children the value and importance of giving — and proves that we all have the power to make a difference in our community."

To support **XYZ Charity** on **Fairfield County's Giving Day** donors can give directly through online Giving Day portal during a 24 hour period beginning at 12:00 a.m. on Feb.23 and continuing up until 11:59 p.m. Donors can visit: [Insert FCGives.org/Giving Link here](#) to make their contributions.

This provides an opportunity for you to quickly add some context regarding your organization's work. For instance, if for a humane society, you could conclude the sentence: *...to support its work helping dogs and cats find their forever homes.*

If your Giving Day fundraising is targeted at a specific initiative or program, provide some high-level details here naming the program and summarizing its goal and who it benefits in the community.

Writing an Op-ed to Promote Fairfield County's Giving Day

Op-eds provide a unique opportunity for you to share some key aspects of your organization's story while also promoting Fairfield County's Giving Day on Thursday, Feb. 23

To that end, we're offering some guidance on how to successfully get an op-ed placed in a local publication.

5 Steps to Op-ed Success

1.

Identify target publications:

When considering where to send your op-ed you want to focus on publications that serve the most people you are trying to reach.

Traditional newspapers, such as The Connecticut Post, The Hour, and Stamford Advocate are often the most obvious choice. But also consider weekly newspapers and hyperlocal online sites like Patch and Hamlet Hub, which may have a readership that would be interested in what you have to say.

2.

Review op-ed guidelines:

Most publications have specific guidelines for op-eds that include details regarding word count, an email address for submissions, and policies regarding op-eds. Exactly where these guidelines are posted can range considerably from publication to publication. If you cannot locate them, reach out the editorial page editor via email or phone call.

3.

Write and submit your op-ed:

It's usually a good idea to include a note to the editor briefly summarizing your op-ed and letting them know you are available to answer any questions or provide a photo if needed. (See below for a roadmap for writing an effective op-ed)

4.

Follow up after a few days:

If you don't hear anything back, it's a good idea to send a follow-up email to confirm your op-ed was received and ask if it is under consideration. Newspapers are short staffed these days so sometimes submissions can slip through the cracks.

5.

Create and execute post-publication promotion plan:

Getting an op-ed published isn't the end of the story. Once it is published, there are a range of ways you can share and promote it to amplify its reach and impact.

Among the possibilities: sharing via social media, sending a link of op-ed to supporters; and including in your nonprofit's newsletters and publications.

And if your op-ed doesn't get published, you can still use it in your own channels to engage your supporters and network.

A Roadmap for Writing a Successful Op-ed

Op-eds can be one of the most effective ways to get your message out. Often, a media outlet will publish a well-written op-ed with no or few changes, providing you the opportunity to make your case in your own words.

Here is some guidance for developing an op-ed that's ready to hit the press.

1. Your opener

The power of op-eds exists in their ability to give readers a unique perspective and to raise awareness about issues, challenges or opportunities that they may know little or nothing about.

With that in mind, approach your op-ed by asking yourself the question:

What about our organization, our work, or those we serve would be valuable to share with the public?

For instance, most people know that local humane societies exist to help dogs, cats and other orphaned animals. What they likely don't know are some specific challenges facing animal-welfare organizations — challenges they could help you address through financial donations.

Opening your op-ed with this type of detail can quickly engage the reader, raise awareness and create an emotional connection. And it provides you an opportunity to introduce the importance of donating to your organization on Fairfield County's Giving Day.

2. Providing key context

The next section of your op-ed offers the opportunity to provide more context for the reader.

In the humane society example, you may want to provide a deeper explanation of what has led to the increased food prices and shortages, and some specific examples of how your staff — and supporters -- are dealing with the challenge. Look to share some concrete details here. Highlighting something such as... *At one point, members of our team were taking turns scouring local stores for discounted dog and cat food to assure our animals had enough to eat* offers a impactful detail that people can relate to — and empathize with.

From there, you can transition to some broader information about your organization and work — providing a brief overview of your history and relevant details such as how many animals are adopted from your facility each year and how your dedicated volunteers are essential to your work.

3. Closing strong

Finally, you want to close your op-ed with a call to action for readers.

In this instance, your hope is that you have inspired them to support your organization on Giving Day.

Note that you have a great team of staffers and volunteers. However, to meet the need of abandoned and abused animals in the community they can't do it alone.

Emphasize the key benefits of Giving Day — how the online platform makes it fast and easy for donors to give, while allowing you and your team to focus on your mission.

Tell your readers that by donating to your organization on Giving Day, people in the community can make a real and immediate difference — helping to make sure the animals have ample and nutritious food and that your organization has the financial resources necessary to continue helping as many animals as possible well into the future.

Close the op-ed providing specific details on how people can contribute to your organization on Feb. 23.

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