



Getting News Media Coverage

Getting news media coverage for local OREA events is possible, but it will usually take some advance planning and work.

- 1. Meeting Announcements.** Don't forget to send a brief news release announcement of your OREA meeting to the local news media, with time, place, speaker, other pertinent information, and an open invitation to education retirees. It will let the public and retired educators know that the organization exists and is active, AND it may generate new memberships. It should go to the news media at least one week prior to the event.
- 2. Special Meeting Features.** Most news media will not cover regular OREA meetings, but they might if there is something about the meeting that is newsworthy. It could be a special speaker, a special topic of discussion at the meeting, or presentation of awards. Let the news media know in advance about the event. Don't be too surprised if they don't come, but be prepared. Take your own picture of the speaker visiting informally with members, or presentation of the award, etc. Prepare a news release with information about the meeting and provide it along with the picture to the news media. There is a good chance that it will be used – especially in small-to-mid-sized newspapers.
- 3. Plan a Special Event.** If your OREA group is hosting a bake sale to raise money for a scholarship or sponsoring a trash pick-up for community beautification, let the news media know. PLAN an activity or event with the goal of getting some news media coverage. If the event is unique, memorable, community-centered, or done for a good cause, you are likely to get news media coverage.
- 4. Focus on OREA lobbying.** If local OREA members are going in a group to Oklahoma City to lobby for increased OTR benefits, let the news media know. It may get some media coverage. Be prepared, though, to talk about specifics of the legislation and why it is needed.
- 5. Write Letters to the Editor.** If the local OREA has a message that needs to get out, especially about need for support of legislation that affects education and/or retirement benefits, letters to the editor are a great idea. It is especially important the letters to the editor from retired educators be well written, grammatically correct with no misspellings, and factually accurate.
- 6. Generate Story Ideas.** Are there members of your local OREA organization who have unique accomplishments, hobbies, travels, etc.? All news outlets are always looking for good feature story material and most will welcome your ideas for feature stories. Jot down the basic feature story information about this person in a note and send it to specific news media labeled "Story

Idea.” The story idea may not directly relate to your OREA group, but cite in your note that the person is an OREA member and there is a good chance that if they do a story, it will include that fact.

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