

Global Warming: Always Hot, Now Sticky, Too!



A Gore has delivered his presentation on global warming to literally hundreds of audiences, and his talk has been preserved on film in *An Inconvenient Truth*, which will be released on DVD later this month. In September, Gore and his colleagues at The Climate Project (www.theclimateproject.org) began training 1,000 volunteers who will deliver an updated (and somewhat abbreviated) version of the presentation in their own communities—a grassroots outreach that could eventually touch as many as one million people.

But this effort (which I have joined to help volunteers be better presenters) raises a question that faces many public interest campaigns. If someone attends a talk, gets religion, and starts taking steps to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, *how would anyone else know about it?* Actions such as lowering a thermostat or replacing light bulbs with compact fluorescents aren't visible to the outside world. So how do you create visibility and inspire others to follow suit?

The Lance Armstrong Foundation answered a similar question with its LIVESTRONG wristband, which makes the wearer's concern about cancer visible. Figuring that the world doesn't need yet another rubber wristband (or lapel ribbon for that matter), The Climate Project sought a new way for people to display their support. Since just about everyone

carries a mobile phone (with empty space on the back), I suggested creating a sticker that would convey our message while also acknowledging the place it was being carried. Cause Communications (my partner in *Why Bad Presentations Happen to Good Causes*) executed the design, and our "Answer the Call" sticker (pictured here) is the result.



The presenters we are training have already begun handing out stickers to their audiences. And every time these people pull out their cell phones, they will have a reminder of the message they heard and the actions they must take. (Plus, they'll be flashing our message to anyone nearby.) Which is not a bad way to make any public interest message stick. ■

Free-range thinking™ is a monthly newsletter for public interest groups, foundations, and progressive businesses that want to reach more people more effectively. For a free subscription, send your request to: andy@agoodmanonline.com or call 323.464.3956. Back issues are available on the web at www.agoodmanonline.com.

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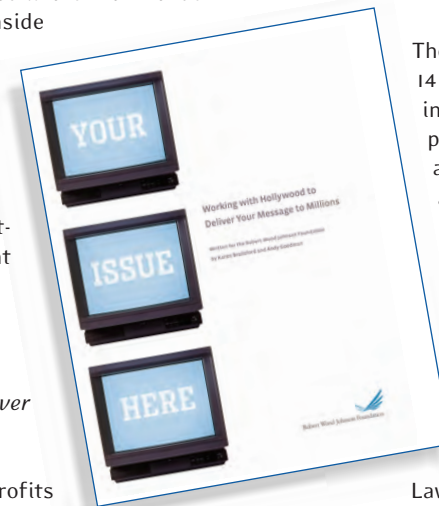
Going Hollywood for the Cause

Seeking an outside-the-box way to promote your issue?
Try putting your message *inside* the box.

Have you ever seen a particular cause or nonprofit mentioned on a prime time television program and wondered, "How did that happen?" If you wrote it off to luck or some kind of inside connection that your group will never enjoy, you may be missing an opportunity to have your own message illuminated by such a bright spotlight.

Your Issue Here: Working with Hollywood to Deliver Your Message to Millions is a new resource for nonprofits that can help you spread your message at virtually no cost. The report, which was underwritten by the Robert Wood Johnson

Foundation, was created to help nonprofits connect with Hollywood in ways that will make television writers and producers more inclined to weave your messages into their work.



The free booklet offers 14 guidelines based on interviews with nonprofits that have already achieved success in this arena (American Heart Association, Children Now, Population Communications International, et al.) as well as with the creative professionals who made it happen on the air (Neal Baer of *Law & Order SVU*,

Lawrence O'Donnell of *The West Wing*, Tom Shelly of *Survivor*, et. al.). Inside this month: an excerpt from the report and information on how to request your complimentary copy.

► *The following is an excerpt from Your Issue Here: Working with Hollywood to Deliver Your Message to Millions, written for the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation by Karen Brailsford and Andy Goodman. To request a free copy of this new report, visit www.rwjf.org/publications.*

For nonprofits that do not have the resources (human or otherwise) to launch a comprehensive entertainment outreach program, groups like the Entertainment Industries Council (EIC) and Hollywood, Health & Society (HH&S) can become invaluable allies.

Formed in 1983, EIC works to bring together writers and advocates from health and social issue organizations. Hollywood insiders, including network and studio executives, and writer/directors such as the Oscar-winning writer and director of *Crash*, Paul Haggis, sit on its board. For writers and producers, the organization provides experts on everything from addiction to depression to firearm safety and human trafficking through its First Draft hotline. For nonprofits wanting to reach out to these writers, EIC maps out a carefully executed strategy.

When the Organ Transplant Network (OTN) grew increasingly outraged over television depictions of organ transplants – in one episode of the medical drama *Chicago Hope*, a transplanted organ fell to the

floor – the organization turned to EIC. To help offset the damage caused by the episode (OTN feared that already low organ donations would decline even further), EIC implemented several proven strategies:

- EIC produced entertainment industry-friendly literature.
- It constructed an informational website.
- It held meetings with transplant surgeons and top writers from current medical shows.
- The organization networked with producers to place OTN's poster onset.
- Mobilizes nonprofits to coordinate outreach to news media
- Enlists nonprofits to provide individuals who have had experience with a personal health issue to appear on their panels
- Provides up-to-the-minute research for writers
- Holds industry briefings on various issues, from bioterrorism to health insurance to genetics. The group works closely with the Writers Guild of America (West).



HOLLYWOOD, HEALTH & SOCIETY

When you consider that the poster was featured for nearly 60 seconds and that comparable advertising time was worth close to half a million dollars, “there’s some value there.” says Marie Gallo Dyak, EIC’s executive vice-president.

Hollywood, Health & Society (HH&S), a partnership between the venerable Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Institutes for Health (NIH), the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and the Norman Lear Center at USC’s Annenberg School, also acts as a liaison between writers and nonprofits. HH&S meets regularly with nonprofits wanting to leverage the research center’s relationships in Hollywood and offers the following services:

HH&S is effective, explains director Vicki Beck, because it has access to thousands of medical experts around the world – and because its members understand the pressures of being a Hollywood scribe. In the past year alone, HH&S responded to 243 requests for health information from writers. “There are many challenges in trying to work with writers, the first one being that they don’t have a lot of time,” says Beck. “It also requires a sustained effort. You have to be in touch with them all the time. They might call you one week about cancer and the next week, they’re calling you on bird flu and the next week, it’s about some sexually-transmitted disease,” she adds.

HH&S frequently takes the lead in identifying hot topics in the medical community. In February of 2005, the group convened a briefing and panel discussion on the Breast Cancer Gene (BRCA) at the Writers Guild. Testing positive for a BRCA gene mutation, along with a family history of breast cancer,

increases a woman’s lifetime chance of developing breast and/or ovarian cancer, from 13 percent to between 36 to 85 percent. HH&S brought in an expert from NCI and Selma Schimmel, a California woman with the gene HH&S had identified, to speak to the writers. As a result, writers from both *ER* and *Grey’s Anatomy* developed storylines about BRCA, which aired in October and November of last year, respectively. ■

Resources To Get Started

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Hollywood, Health & Society

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