July 9, 2020

TECHNOLOGY & COMMUNICATIONS WEBINAR

All about Press Releases
Host

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Today’s presentation

What is a press release?

Why to use press releases

When to issue a press release

How to write a press release

How to send a press release

What to do after sending
Polls

Gauging your League’s experience with press releases
What is a press release?

A press release is an official statement delivered to members of the news media for the purpose of providing information, an official statement, or making an announcement.

- Be on the record about a certain topic
- Inform the public
What is a press release?

Press release vs. press statement

• Press release: story format with quotes
  • Objective text with opinion in quotes

• Press statement: long quote format
  • All opinion
Press release

League Files Lawsuit to Correct Error–Prone Ballot Verification Process in New York

7/8/2020

Read a copy of the complaint here.

NEW YORK CITY & WASHINGTON – Today, the League of Women Voters of the United States and the League of Women Voters of New York State joined an individual plaintiff in a federal lawsuit to ensure absentee voters have the opportunity to cure their ballots for the remaining 2020 election cycle.

“For the past two election cycles, New York’s ballot rejection rate has been among the highest in the country,” said Laura Bierman, executive director for the League of Women Voters of New York State. “Voters need the opportunity to ensure their vote is counted and their voice is heard. We want to make sure that when a ballot is challenged, the voter is notified and has sufficient time to correct the error.”
Press statement

LWV Celebrates the Advancement for D.C. Statehood

6/26/2020

WASHINGTON – The League of Women Voters CEO Virginia Kase issued the following statement following the U.S. House of Representatives passage of H.R. 51, the Washington DC Admission Act:

“Today the residents of the District of Columbia are one step closer to an equal voice in our government. The House passage of this bill is the first step to providing the more than 700,000 residents of Washington, D.C. the Congressional representation they deserve. The taxpayers of the district deserve the same rights as everyone living in all 50 states. Washingtonians deserve full voting representation in the U.S. Congress and the end of Congressional interference in the district’s government.

“D.C. statehood is not a partisan issue but a civil rights issue which cannot be separated from the fight for racial justice. As D.C. is a jurisdiction with a majority population of Black and Brown people, continued efforts to block full representation is discrimination against the people who live, work, and pay taxes in the District. For decades, Congress has refused to vote on statehood, based on racist accusations that D.C. cannot govern itself. It is long past time that we dispel with these racist and discriminatory excuses and deliver justice to the residents of our nation’s capital.”
Why to use press releases

Visibility for your League

Take credit for your work!

Tell voters what they need to know
When to issue a press release

• When your League does something newsworthy
  • Filing litigation/decision on litigation
  • Issuing a report
  • Launching a campaign
• When it’s important to publish a press statement
  • Voting-related bill moving through legislature
  • Impactful event in your area
• Draft ahead of time!
  • Pick a press contact
  • Pick quote attributions
• Think about making a media plan/calendar
How to write a press release

Templates on LMS!
Find in Talking Points & Templates:
https://www.lwv.org/league-management/communications/talking-points-templates
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
www.lwv.org
May 14, 2020

J’Donnell to Deliver League of Women Voters Convention Keynote Address

Proud to announce CBS Evening News anchor and managing editor, Norah O’Donnell, will deliver the keynote address for Women Power the Vote for 100 years, the 54th biennial League of Women Voters Convention, which will be held June 25-27, 2020.

“This year, the League of Women Voters is celebrating 100 years of women powering the vote, and we couldn’t be more thrilled to hear from a woman leader who has made such incredible strides in the news industry,” said Chris Carson, president of the board of directors of the League of Women Voters. “Our organization’s mission of empowering voters and defending democracy depends on trusted, accurate journalism, and we are honored to be joined by a journalist who is equally dedicated to fostering an informed electorate with her reporting.”
Anatomy of a press release

HEADLINE: LEAGUE NAME, A FEW ACTION WORDS

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SUBHEADLINE: MORE IMPORTANT CONTEXT IF NEEDED
Anatomy of a press release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
www.lwv.org
May 14, 2020

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OPENING PARAGRAPH: CITY, WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY

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FIRST QUOTE: MOST PROMINENT, CATCHY, PITHY, MORE WHY

TIP: BOLD SPEAKER NAME
Anatomy of a press release

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MORE CONTEXT: FURTHER DETAILS
ABOUT THE FIRST PARAGRAPH

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Read our press release statement online HERE.

Find us online: Facebook | Twitter | Instagram

The League of Women Voters envisions a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge and the confidence to participate. We believe in the power of women to create a more perfect democracy.
Anatomy of a press release

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“Taking our convention digital this year means more of our tens of thousands of members across the country will hear from Norah O’Donnell as we commemorate not only our organization's centennial, but 100 years since the passage of the 19th Amendment,” said Virginia Kase, CEO of the League of Women Voters. “It is only fitting that we honor our suffragist founders by standing with a powerful woman whose journalistic integrity is vitally holding our leaders accountable and informing the public.”

SECOND QUOTE: OPTIONAL, COULD EXPLORE SECOND ANGLE

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**LINKS: OPTIONAL LINK TO PRESS RELEASE ON YOUR WEBSITE, LINKS TO SOCIAL MEDIA**
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BOILERPLATE: ORGANIZATIONAL SUMMARY

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How to send a press release

• Paste into email body
  • Do not send as attachment
• Subject line: headline
• Compile a press list
• Blast to entire press list
  • Use email marketing service if you use one
• PROOF IT!
• Make reply email go to one person’s inbox
What to do after sending

- Contact person
  - Check inbox for replies
  - Vet press inquiries
  - Coordinate/schedule interviews
- Designated interviewee
  - Take time to prep
  - Read our tips for media interviews on LMS
- Post it on your website
- Post on social media
  - Link to website
  - Add a graphic!
QUESTIONS?
August webinar

Thursday, August 13 at 4:30pm ET

Updates on Working Virtually