

2018 Michigan Good Food Summit

Breakout Session #3: Amplifying Unheard Voices Through the Media

10:45 am

Speakers: Melinda Clynes, MA, Michigan Nightlight and Freelance Writer/Editor; Amy Kuras, Detroit Food Policy Council; Nina Ignaczak, Metromode and Editorial Director, Issue Media Group

Presentation Goals

- Share tips with audience on compelling storytelling
- Give the audience a chance to collaborate with team/other professionals on crafting a sample story pitch

Presentation Significance

- Many good food movements in Detroit are being led by women and people of color but receive little to no media coverage
- “Imbalanced coverage perpetuates inequity in resources”

Speakers posed question to the audience: How can media coverage help your organization?

Audience responses: Media coverage can....

- raise awareness, can connect quickly
- legitimize [business/company/mission]
- get funders’ attention

PowerPoint answer: “Media coverage can help you build the capacity to do your job better”

Perceptions of Media Coverage

A survey from Michigan Nightlight found that:

- 73% of participants felt that media coverage strengthened their brands
- 58% felt that media coverage grew their social media presence
- 42% felt that media coverage gained the interest of various funders

“Understanding journalists as a species”:

- They (journalists) want to tell a great story, not promote an idea or organization
- They may choose a different angle than what you’d prefer
- Journalists receive a lot of pitches
- They want to hear about how your work impacts real people, how it meets a demand and how it solves a problem

EXAMPLES OF SUCCESSFUL PITCHES

1. FEAST Detroit – appeared in Model D on February 21, 2018
 - Organization didn't delay story by giving ample time to conduct interview
 - Organization's story was widely shared
2. YWCA: linked brain development to healthy diet and involved Farm to School
 - Had excellent Photography
 - Illustrated real changes good food made in the classroom mand with its kitchen staff
 - Included element of multi-level learning
3. Why care about the Farm Bill
 - Provoked readership
 - Excellent sources from wide range of experts
 - Used data points

What's being looked for when receiving a story?

Speakers pose question to the audience: What makes a story?

Audience responses:

- A beginning, middle and end
- Conflict
- Addresses a need

PowerPoint answer: A strong character

Speakers introduced breakout session activity. Audience members begin to work with colleagues or group in teams to create a story using a custom printed worksheet. After 20 minutes, speakers ask the audience members to share their story creations.

Audience responses

- ❖ **Name:** Lexy Bronson from Muskegon Area Career Tech Center
Characters: Students at the Tech Center
Positive Actions: With Farm-to-School, students are choosing fruits or vegetables to create recipes; eating healthy foods by people their own age; making healthy foods to send to various schools
Significance: Unhealthy behaviors and patterns are becoming more prevalent and recipes are helping combat that.
- ❖ **Name:** Jeff Smith from GroundWork in Traverse City
Character: Diane Conners (colleague)
Positive Actions: Created 10 cents a Meal which funds local foods in cafeterias; Went to legislature with idea; Presented model at national conferences
Significance: The program puts money in the pockets of local farmers and stands on a small farm-economic pillar; the program has been supported by both Democrats and Republicans
- ❖ **Name:** Savannah Hall from USDA Service Center

Characters: Urban farmers in Detroit/EarthWorks organization

Positive Actions: Organization helps farmers who need assistance; when farmers are ready to scale up, then the USDA can help

Significance: In Detroit, an access gap exists between farmers and the USDA; Earthworks fills this gap by identifying, addressing and combating challenges for farmers.

How to share your story:

- Tell your story through: blogging, social media, guest blogging, an updated and engaging website
- Use your connections: ask for an introduction
- Find publications and people: with finding journalists to pitch to, research website
 - Example websites
 - Foodtank.com
 - Grist.org
 - Dailyyonder.com
 - Michigannightlight.com
 - Issuemediagroup.com
 - Metrotimes.com/blogs/table-and-bar

Leveraging coverage

- Post a link on website
- Share on social media
- Share with people who are part of your network who can help boost the signal
- E-blast notice of coverage to stakeholders