

BEST PRACTICES FOR PUBLICIZING YOUR OREGON CHAUTAUQUA

Hosting an Oregon Chautauqua is a wonderful way for your organization to serve supporters, reach new audiences, and provide meaningful programs that might not otherwise be available to your community. A clear public relations plan is *essential* for developing an audience of at least twenty-five adults for your Oregon Chautauqua program.

OCH provides publicity materials to help you get started with your publicity efforts. However, we will now provide all program materials in PDF format. If you prefer hard copies, please request them from Annie Dubinsky, Development and Program Coordinator, at adubinsky@oregonhum.org or (503) 241-0543 ext. 116. (***Please note: scholar photographs will only be available in digital format.***)

OCH will provide the following materials:

- A sample publicity flyer to use as reference
- A press release for your program, to be completed and reproduced on your organization's letterhead
- The scholar's profile to accompany the press release and to use in your introductory remarks at the program
- A JPEG image of the Oregon Chautauqua scholar (separate file)
- The OCH logo to use in all printed and published materials (separate file)

§ Newspaper articles, calendar listings, and broadcast public service announcements

The general rule of thumb is that print and broadcast media should receive press releases ***at least two weeks prior*** to the date that you want the material to run. Lead-time will differ if you're working with a monthly or weekly paper. Remember to include local college and high school newspapers on your mailing list to reach young adults in your community. Newspaper articles, calendar listings, and public service announcements often directly quote from your press releases, so proofread public relations materials with care and make sure the time and date, location, and contact information are accurately and clearly stated.

Contact your local media to find out who should receive press materials since it's most effective to address them to a specific person. Find out if they prefer to receive hard copies or e-mail, and if they will accept attachments to e-mails or whether you must include the press release in the body of your correspondence. Several days after you send the press release, you should confirm that the individual received your materials and ask whether you may answer any questions. Remember that Oregon Chautauqua scholars are happy to give phone interviews for a feature piece. Media contacts are welcome to call OCH Development and Program Coordinator Annie Dubinsky at (503) 241-0543 to learn more about Oregon Chautauqua and OCH programs.

§ Posters and flyers

Libraries, city hall, recreation centers, churches, grocery stores, community centers, schools, and coffee shops often have bulletin boards where you can place flyers or posters about your Oregon Chautauqua program. Most places require that a manager review and date materials before they're posted.

An effective flyer will include the following elements: the day, date, and time of the program; the location of the event (building name and address); the title of the program and name of the scholar; a photo or other visual image; your group's name and logo; OCH's logo; and "This program is made possible by the generous support of the Oregon Council for the Humanities, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Oregon Cultural Trust." A sample flyer is included in this PDF information packet.

§ Advertisements

Some newspapers donate advertising for community events, and others charge lower advertising rates for nonprofit organizations; ask about the policy at your local newspapers. Their production department may be able to help you design an ad. The best time to run your ad is the week before your program.

§ Websites and listservs

The web is a powerful tool for getting the word out about your upcoming Oregon Chautauqua. In addition to your own website, ask your city and county government, local library, schools, civic and special interest groups, and Chamber of Commerce to post information about your program on their websites. Similarly, don't forget to send notices to topic-based listservs (e.g., the Oregon Heritage Commission has a listserv that addresses opportunities of interest to museums and historical societies).

§ Other outreach ideas

- A personal invitation or call is the best way to let special contacts and friends know about your program.
- Ask if local civic, religious, and social groups will announce your upcoming program at their meetings or services and in their newsletters.
- Local nonprofit organizations may be willing to include information about an upcoming program in their newsletters.
- Find out if your town has a reader board that's available for community groups.
- Ask your local library and historical society to make a display around the topic of your program or create a small take-away bookmark about the event.
- Remember to acknowledge the support of these local organizations at your program. Don't forget to enclose copies of your public relations efforts with your sponsor evaluation form.