

# Media Outreach Guide

Inviting local reporters to your College Application and Exploration Week events is a great way to recognize the successes of your students and increase awareness of your school's work to promote a college-going culture. Here are some tips for working with the media.

**Send a news release:** Use the news release template in this kit to develop a news story about your school's activities. Send the news release to local media outlets seven to ten days in advance of your event. If your local newspaper or outlet publishes once a week, send the release ten days in advance. If they publish or air stories daily, a week is sufficient.

If you, or someone on staff at your school, have a relationship with a media outlet or a specific reporter, have that person reach out when sending the release. Also try contacting reporters who have covered stories about your school in the past.

When you send the release, make sure you note in the body of your email that media representatives are invited and encouraged to attend! It is also a good idea to copy and paste the release into the body of your email, instead of sending it as an attachment. This will help you avoid spam filters and allow the reporter to scan your news story quickly without having to download and open an attachment.

**Follow up:** A day or so after you've sent your news release, call the media outlet to confirm that they received it and ask if they have any questions. You can ask them if they think they will be able to send someone to cover the event, but avoid pushing for a firm commitment. News rooms are often short staffed, so be understanding of their time constraints.

**Designate a media point-of-contact:** Ask a staff member or volunteer to keep an eye out for any reporters who come to your event. The point-of-contact should greet the reporter, provide him or her with a copy of your news release, offer to arrange interviews and direct reporters to key activities.

**Prepare your staff and students:** Consider in advance staff members, students and family members who might represent your school well in a media interview. Ask their permission to refer reporters to them. Make sure they understand key information about College Application and Exploration Week, including its purpose and that it is part of a statewide campaign. You may also want to provide them with information about why education and training beyond high school is important and the number of students who are participating.

**Send a "thank you:"** After your event, send a thank you note to reporters who provided media coverage. This will help your school maintain a good relationship with media outlets.

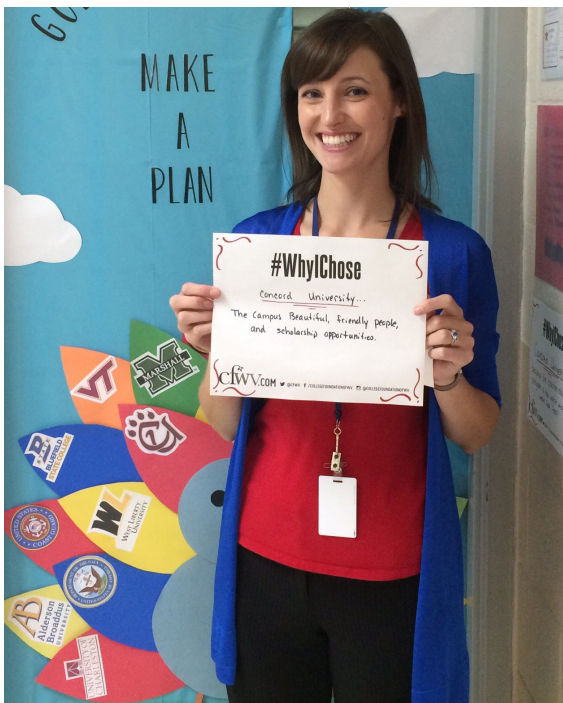
**Share your success:** Send information about (and links to) any media coverage to Emily Hammond at [Emily.Hammond@wvhepc.edu](mailto:Emily.Hammond@wvhepc.edu). We'd love to share your successes on our CFWW websites and social media channels!

# Social Media Outreach - GET SOCIAL!

Social media is an excellent way to recognize your students and share your school's work with the community. You can also use social media to engage students and families and build excitement for your event. Here are a few tips for maximizing your social media efforts:

**Tag it!** Just like an in-person conversation, it's hard to participate if you can't follow what's happening. Hashtags and mentions make it possible to find and follow posts from a wide variety of sources and link together the conversation. For College Application and Exploration Week, the following hashtags can be used:

- ✔ **#WhyIChose:** Students and college graduates across the country are using this hashtag to share why they chose to apply to a particular school or program or why they love their alma mater.
- ✔ **#IApplied:** Students who are submitting college applications are using this hashtag to announce that they've applied. This is a great way for students to announce *where* they've applied, too!
- ✔ **#CollegeBoundWV:** This hashtag can be used universally to express that WV students of all ages are college bound! **Be sure to have students use the #CollegeBoundWV social scrolls included in your toolkit!**
- ✔ **@CFWV:** Students can mention CFWV on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook to share their stories with us. We'll retweet the best ones!



**Encourage students, parents and staff to share:** Here are a few ideas to get folks talking online:

- ✔ Ask students to post pictures wearing their college gear or showing off College Application and Exploration Week decor.
- ✔ Encourage parents to brag a little about their student's successes and future plans and to mention @CFWV.
- ✔ Encourage staff members to use the #WhyIChose hashtag to share why they chose their alma mater or what they loved about their college experience.
- ✔ During the week, remind students and staff to share their photos and status updates surrounding your school's activities using the hashtags above.
- ✔ Use the social media hashtag flyers in this kit to post photos or videos of your students with a message about College Application and Exploration Week.

# CFWV Social Media Channels

- ✓ Facebook: [www.facebook.com/collegeforwv](http://www.facebook.com/collegeforwv)
- ✓ Twitter: [www.twitter.com/cfwv](http://www.twitter.com/cfwv)
- ✓ Instagram: [www.instagram.com/collegeforwv](http://www.instagram.com/collegeforwv)

## West Virginia Public Four-Year Institution Handles

**Bluefield State University**  
@BlfdState

**Concord University**  
@CampusBeautiful

**Fairmont State University**  
@FairmontState

**Glenville State University**  
@gopioneers

**Marshall University**  
@MarshallU

**WVU Potomac State College**  
@PotomacState

**Shepherd University**  
@ShepherdU

**West Liberty University**  
@WestLibertyU

**WV School of Osteopathic Medicine**  
@WVSOM

**West Virginia State University**  
@WVStateU

**West Virginia University**  
@WestVirginiaU

**WVU Tech**  
@WVU\_Tech

## West Virginia Public Two-Year Institution Handles

**Blue Ridge Community & Technical College**  
@BlueRidgeCTC

**BridgeValley Community & Technical College**  
@BridgeValleyWV

**Eastern West Virginia Community & Technical College**  
@EasternWVedu

**Mountwest Community & Technical College**  
@MountwestCTC

**New River Community & Technical College**  
@NewRiverCTC

**Pierpont Community & Technical College**  
@PierpontCTC

**Southern West Virginia Community & Technical College**  
@SWVCTC

**West Virginia Northern Community College**  
@WVNCC

**West Virginia University – Parkersburg**  
@WVUParkersburg