



PR with Principles

December 2005

Welcome to the SPIN Project's e-newsletter, our monthly compendium of news, notes, and ideas.

In this issue:

- SPIN Project Launches Communications Capacity Building Initiative for Media Reform and Justice Sectors
- 2006 SPIN Project Editorial Calendar: Big Events, Red Letter Days and More Hooks Than You Can Shake a Stick At
- The True Spin Conference: February 2-3, 2006, Denver, CO

SPIN Project Launches Communications Capacity Building Initiative for Media Reform and Justice Sectors

The SPIN Project has received a \$250,000, two-year grant from the Ford Foundation's Knowledge, Creativity & Freedom Program to help develop the strategic communications capacity of key non-profit organizations working to enhance the transparency and accountability of communications and information policymaking in the United States.

“It is our sincere hope that this suite of capacity building services will expand the media reform and media justice community's ability to shape public opinion and inform media policy in America's communities,” said Holly Minch, SPIN Project Director.

SPIN Project's goals for the strategic communications initiative include:

- Strengthening the communications skills of media reform and media justice advocates, community organizers and researchers;
- Strengthening the communications infrastructure and strategic capacity among organizations working to improve electronic media policy in the public interest;
- Improving the framing, messages and communications strategies employed by advocates, researchers and organizers within the media reform and media justice communities.

If you are interested in nominating yourself or others for the project's consulting board, or if you are interested in nominating yourself or others for communications capacity building support, please contact the SPIN Project at info@spinproject.org

2006 SPIN Project Editorial Calendar: Big Events, Red Letter Days and More Hooks Than You Can Shake a Stick At

An Editorial Calendar is one of the basics of creating an effective Communications Plan. Now is the time to start thinking about your communications efforts for 2006. Below you'll find a list of events, holidays and other dates you can use as hooks for your pitches to reporters in the first quarter of the new year. We'll be publishing the full calendar on our website early in the new year.

January 1 – New Years Day- ask your local or state decision-makers to make a New Years Resolution to “stamp out hunger” or provide quality education for all, etc.

January 4- Congress Convenes – Place an op ed in your local paper calling your Congressman and Senators to vote the values of fairness and equality.

January 9- Alito confirmation hearings begin

January 16 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – an opportunity to promote civil rights and racial justice

January 18- Senate convenes

January 22 Anniversary of Roe Vs. Wade – opportunity to talk about the importance of choice and other reproductive justice issues.

January 29- Chinese New Year

February -- TV sweeps, new coverage tends to be more sensational, consumer driven

February – Black History Month

February 6 Superbowl Sunday

February 15- Deadline for joint congressional bipartisan committee looking into governmental failures in responding to Katrina.

February 10-26 Winter Olympics in Turin, Italy

February 14 Valentines Day – A great opportunity to build positive relations

with elected officials and community leaders. Send a Valentine – privately or publicly in the media – to “Leaders we Love” who have championed our issues.

February 20 President’s Day

February 25-28 National Governors Association Winter Meeting. Washington DC

March- Women’s History Month, March Madness (NCAA Basketball playoffs)

March 5- The Oscars –This can be a great time to invent your own awards for members or leaders: “Best Volunteer in a Supporting Role” “Best Leading Fundraiser” etc.

March 8- International Women’s Day

March 19- Third anniversary of the beginning of the war in Iraq- use this as a hook to talk about what the war has meant to your community and your issue, i.e. misplaced priorities, militarization vs. education etc.

March 31 – Cesar Chavez Day (official in California, recognized in many communities). This is an important day to recognize farm laborers and – more broadly – immigrant rights. “Honor the hand that harvests your crop” -- Dolores Huerta, co-founder (with Chavez) of the United Farm Workers.

The True Spin Conference: February 2-3, 2006, Denver, CO

Looking for a great conference where you can build your media relations skills, meet communications and activism gurus, and connect with like-minded progressive communicators?

The True Spin Conference -- a national conference on media relations for progressives sponsored by our friends at Cause Communications will take place. February 2 - 3, 2006 in Denver, Colorado.

Keynote speakers:

** Ben Cohen, Co-Founder of Ben & Jerry's and Founder of TrueMajority.com

** Kathy Bonk, Executive Director of Communications Consortium Media Center and Co-Author of "Strategic Communications for Nonprofits"

** Marty Kearns, Executive Director of GMT and opinion leader on Network Centric Advocacy

** Lisa Witter, Vice President of Fenton Communications

Other presenters include our own Holly Minch, Director of The SPIN Project; Lisa Lange, President of Communications at PETA; and Andrew Boyd of Billionaires for Bush. In addition to these great presenters, there will be 20 workshops and panels to visit. For more details on the conference, a full agenda, and information on how to attend, visit www.truespinconference.com.

That's it for this issue of the SPIN Project's e-newsletter. Please feel free to forward any of this information to anyone you think might be interested—we'd greatly appreciate it.

Thanks, and Happy Holidays,

The SPIN Project Staff

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