

CASE[®]

COUNCIL FOR ADVANCEMENT
AND SUPPORT OF EDUCATION[®]



Media Planning Kit

Circle of Excellence Awards

June 7, 2011

Media Planning Tip Sheet for Circle of Excellence Awards Program

CASE recommends that award winners work directly with their communications offices to announce their Circle of Excellence awards to the media. We offer the following guidelines for those who may not have a dedicated communications person on staff at their institutions.

All editors and producers may not see newsworthiness in your receipt of a Circle of Excellence award, so help them. Think of your award in terms of possible angles of attraction and play up those angles to appropriately targeted editors and producers.

Ask yourself, "What, if any, news, community, features or business angles are there?" For example, a business desk editor may be interested in an angle about how a fundraising initiative appealed in some creative or unusual way to corporations for donations. A features editor may be attracted by the description of a particularly colorful or accomplished individual who marshaled an initiative or produced a publication. A community radio or television show producer may be interested in how your initiative engaged or affected your community in some other way.

Lead your news release with the angle you find and work into the lead that the initiative or publication has recently been recognized internationally. Use your award as an opportunity to attract media attention to a program, person or some other facet of your institution.

Target news desks with news angle: Look for an angle that could be of interest to the general public, not just advancement professionals. Traditionally a test for news is if something or someone changes the status quo. For example, an awarded initiative may significantly tie into a hot topic in education or politics or launch a new approach to a widespread problem.

Target community news desks with community angle: Many media outlets maintain community news desks or departments. The desks cover events and accomplishments of people in a community. Desks may assign reporters and photographers to cover events or the desks may accept copy, photo, video or audio submissions from the public. Contact your media outlets to find out who covers community news and get details about coverage criteria and submission deadlines. These sections often work far ahead of print or air time, so plan ahead; submit your material early.

Target business desks with business or professional development angle: Some media outlets cover higher education institutions and professional accomplishments through their business desks. Think of how your Circle of Excellence-awarded initiative ties into some aspect of business.

Highlight achievements through blogs, LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook. Use these tools to broaden your outreach to key audiences.

Don't forget the internal communications vehicles on your campus. Use your award-winning effort to build pride in your institution and credibility for your office.

Also, some media outlets have specific sections where they run brief announcements of events or accomplishments. If people within the advancement profession are the only ones who would have an interest in your award category, submit an announcement rather than a full release to the appropriate section.

Include an after 5 p.m. contact telephone number on your news release. Please contact Pam Russell, director of communications, at +1-202-478-5680 or at russell@case.org with any questions about this document.

Circle of Excellence Awards Fact Sheet
*Advancement Services, Alumni Relations,
Communications, Fundraising and Marketing*

Purpose

The international Circle of Excellence awards program recognizes outstanding work in communications, marketing, alumni relations, advancement services and fundraising as judged by peer professionals at schools, colleges and universities as well as by professionals from outside education.

Criteria

Winners are selected based on a number of factors, including overall quality, innovation, use of resources and the impact on the institution or its external and internal communities such as alumni, parents, students and faculty and staff. The Circle of Excellence awards program is open to professionals working at member colleges, universities, independent schools and nonprofits around the world.

Judging

CASE assembles expert judging panels made up of professionals in the fields of alumni relations, advancement services, communications and marketing and fundraising. These judgments are "hosted" on various member campuses. One or more panels are convened for each of the 41 categories which cover areas of alumni relations programs, fundraising programs, institutional relations, new media, advancement services, institutional marketing, periodicals and publications and design.

Gold, silver, and bronze awards may be given in each category. Judges have the option of giving no awards, and they may also recognize exceptional entries with a grand gold medal. Judging is completed in the spring with winning institutions being notified in late May. An exhibition of grand gold winners is on display in the awards gallery each July at CASE's Summit for Advancement Leaders. Award winners are also recognized at the CASE-NAIS Independent Schools Conference in January, CASE Europe Annual Conference in August and at a suitable conference at CASE Asia-Pacific. Winners for the current year are posted on the CASE website in mid-June.

Competition

In 2011, CASE received more than 2,500 entries for consideration in 41 categories by 614 member higher education institutions, independent schools and nonprofits from around the world. Judges gave 253 bronze, silver and gold awards. Fifteen institutions received the top prize of a grand gold award.

Awards on the Web

Award winners from the current year's competition are available online starting in early June. Judges' reports submitted by the judging panels can be viewed starting in late September. And late in the year CASE also makes available to all members the abstracts submitted by the winners. This information from past competitions can be viewed online by going to www.case.org and typing "circle" into the CASE Code box.

History

Made up of several of CASE's long-time recognition programs, the Circle of Excellence awards program, in its present configuration, was introduced in 1994. Each year, it has grown in prestige and is now one of CASE's most popular and respected awards programs.

About CASE

The Council for Advancement and Support of Education is one of the largest international associations of education institutions, serving more than 3,400 universities, colleges, schools and related organizations in 68 countries. CASE is the leading resource for professional development, information and standards in the fields of education fundraising, communications, marketing and alumni relations.

Sample News Release In-house Publications

For Immediate Release
(Date)

Contact: (Give name and
telephone number)

Top Honors Go to (your institution) for Innovative (winning category)

Washington, D.C. — The Council for Advancement and Support of Education has named _____ a _____ award winner of its 2010 Circle of Excellence awards program. _____ was recognized for its _____.

A panel of experts selected the institution's entry in the ____ category from among ____ entries.

This year, 614 institutions from around the world submitted more than 2,500 entries in the Circle of Excellence awards program.

Gold, silver and bronze awards may be given in 41 categories. Judges have the option of giving no awards, and they may also recognize exceptional entries with a grand gold award.

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(Insert your institution's boilerplate.)

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Sample News Release

News Desk

Note: Target news desk only if awarded initiative impacts general public.

For Immediate Release
(Date)

Contact: (Give day
and evening contact
numbers)

Initiative that Raised Money for New Lab at Community College Receives International Recognition

WASHINGTON, D.C.—An initiative at (your institution), which (insert a phrase that summarizes significance of the award to the general public), recently received international recognition.

The Council for Advancement and Support of Education, headquartered in Washington, D.C., with members around the world, recently named ____ a _____ award winner of its 2011 Circle of Excellence awards program. _____ was recognized for its _____.

(Provide a quote from institution official about how the initiative will impact the public.)

A panel of experts selected the institution's entry in the ____ category from among ____ entries.

This year, 614 institutions from across the United States, Canada and abroad submitted more than 2,500 entries in the Circle of Excellence awards program.

The top award presented is a grand gold followed by gold, silver and bronze awards.

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(Insert your institution's boilerplate.)

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Sample News Release

Business Desk

Note: Target business desk only if awarded initiative impacts business.

For Immediate Release

(Date)

Contact:

(Include day and evening
telephone numbers)

School Initiative Appeals to Corporate Donors in a New Way

WASHINGTON, D.C.—An initiative at (give name of your institution), which (insert a phrase that summarizes the uniqueness of your approach), has received international recognition.

The Council for Advancement and Support of Education, headquartered in Washington, D.C., with members around the world, recognized the (name initiative or publication) for its (insert more about uniqueness of approach)

(Name your initiative) won the _____ award for the initiative's _____.

A panel of experts selected the institution's entry in the ___ category from among ___ entries.

"The winners of these CASE awards are truly demonstrating best practices and linking their work to institutional goals," says _____. "Every tactic—whether it involves organizing an event, reaching out to an alumni club, approaching a donor, developing a software program or creating a website—is tied to the achievement of a larger goal. In short, our winner(s) are being strategic."

This year, 614 institutions from around the world submitted 2,500 entries in the Circle of Excellence awards program.

Gold, silver, and bronze awards may be given in each category or subcategory. Judges have the option of giving no awards, and they may also recognize exceptional entries with a grand gold award.

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(Insert your institution's boilerplate.)

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Sample Community or Business Announcement

For Immediate Release

(Give date)

Contact:

(Give day and evening telephone number with name)

Please run the following announcement in your (name the business or community section in which you want the announcement to appear) section.

The (give name of initiative or publication awarded) at (give name of your institution) recently received international recognition.

The Council for Advancement and Support of Education, headquartered in Washington, D.C., with members around the world, awarded the Circle of Excellence Award in (name category) to (give name of your institution)

The initiative (give a summary of initiative/publication highlights).

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(Insert your institution's boilerplate.)

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