

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Media Relations Made Easy

Auburn University Student Center

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This training guide was originally prepared by members of the Media Relations Special Interest Group (SIG) of ACE. It updates materials that were gathered and originally used for a “Media Relations Made Easy” workshop held in New Orleans in September of 2003. The material that follows has been updated and changed to target marriage educators and community partners for the Alabama Community Healthy Marriage Initiative with the permission of the Media Relations Special Interest Group (SIG) of ACE.

Special thanks and recognition should be granted to the following contributors:

Linda Benedict was a newspaper reporter just long enough to win a feature writing award. Since then, she’s spent most of her career as a writer and editor for university extension and research and is now associate director of LSU AgCenter Communications. She’s also a former ACE president and winner of numerous ACE awards. She teamed with **Chris Sigurdson of Purdue** in gathering information about crisis communication and in preparing the media relations section on entitled “Keeping Crises Contained.”

Beth Forbes is ag news coordinator for Purdue University and a former broadcast journalist. Along with **Faith Peppers**, she shared her expertise on handling controversial issues in the media relations training guide.

Frankie Gould is director of communications and public relations for the LSU AgCenter. She’s also served in a variety of ACE leadership positions and is sought after for her expertise and advice in designing publications, Web sites, communications campaigns and other efforts in Louisiana and across the country. She also played a key role in producing materials for the media relations training guide.

Tom Jirik is communications coordinator for the Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute. He formerly served as an information specialist at North Dakota State University and was a regional director for ACE. He teamed with **Dan Rahn** to prepare the media relations training guide section on writing news articles and columns.

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Terry Meisenbach is the communications and marketing leader for the extension initiative. He previously served as communications director for the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which helped to fund production of the original training notebooks and videos that were provided as part of the original Media Relations Made Easy workshop.

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Faith Peppers is a news editor and team leader of public affairs for the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. A former newspaper reporter, public information officer and marketing specialist, she was the winner of the 2002 ACE Award of Excellence in Media Relations and the 2000 winner of the ACE Pioneer Award for the Southern Region. She has won numerous regional and national awards for writing, editing and marketing and is an often-requested speaker on media and public affairs topics. In addition, she teamed with **Beth Forbes** in preparing the media relations training guide section on controversial issues.

Dan Rahn was the senior news editor in the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences until his retirement in 2007. Winner of ACE Awards of Excellence in Media relations and writing, he is a highly regarded writer, editor and teacher. Rahn helped prepare two of the training guide sections and served with **Vicki Miller** as editor for the materials within this manual.

Chris Sigurdson is a former television reporter, video producer, news photographer, academic middle manager and news writer who, because he has a short attention span, likes controversy and crisis. He has been called a fearmonger and spin doctor and liked it. Sigurdson, who is head of the Agricultural Communications Department in the Purdue School of Agriculture, teamed with **Linda Benedict** on the media relations training guide section concerning “Keeping Crises Contained.”

Bobby Soileau is associate director of the LSU AgCenter’s Agricultural Leadership Development Program. Prior to that, he was a video producer in LSU AgCenter Communications and earlier served as a television producer, photographer and editor of commercials and long-format videos at WBRZ-TV, the ABC affiliate, in Baton Rouge. Soileau edited and worked with others to produce Lights, Camera, Action section of the training material.

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