



Working with your Local Media

About Us

Pete Christopher, Lake Agassiz Habitat for Humanity

Beth Dahlman, Senior Vice President, M+R

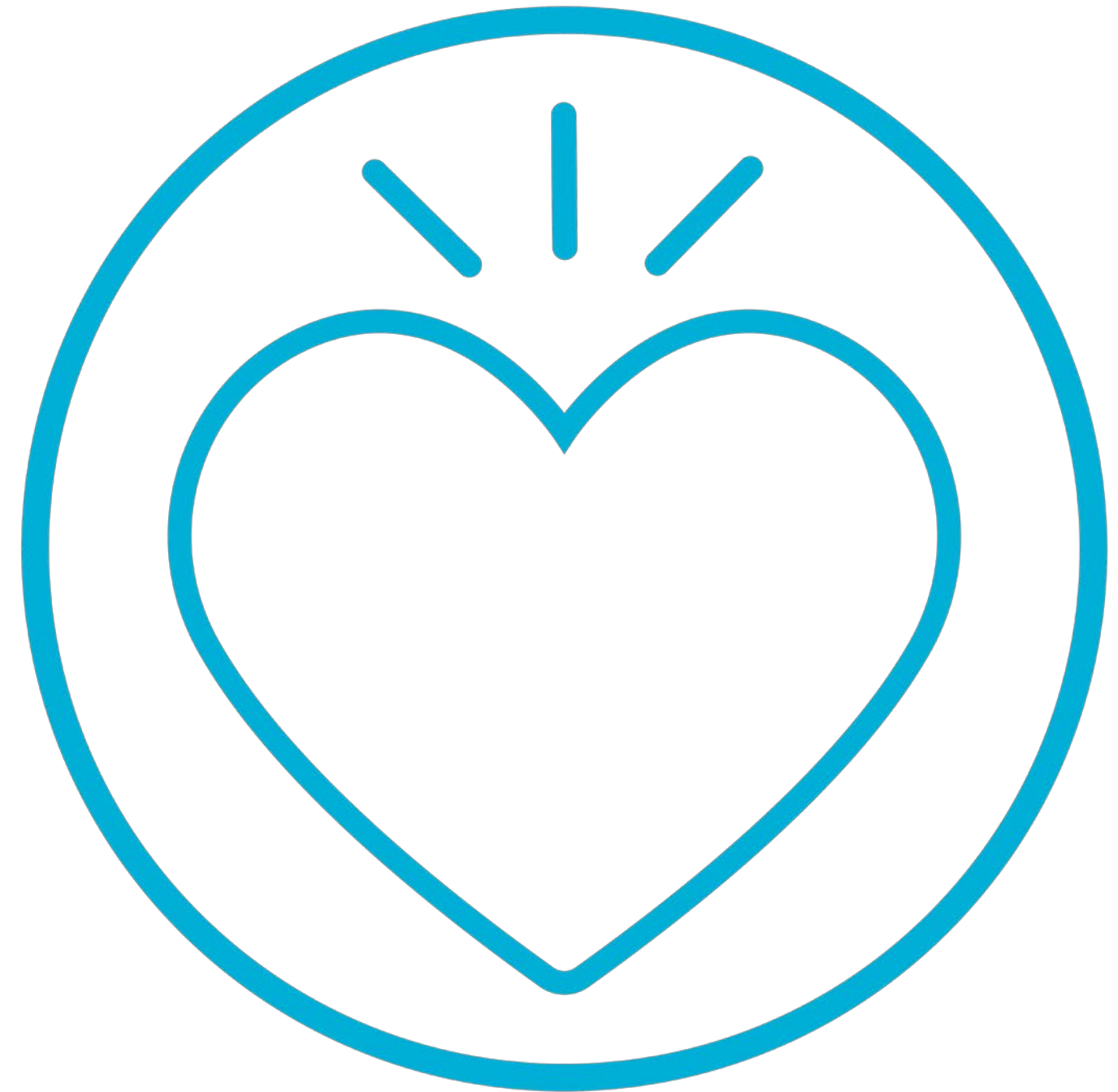


What we're talking about today

- Building press lists
- Press materials, pitching, and reporter relationships
- Maximizing your efforts
- Q&A



Building Press Lists

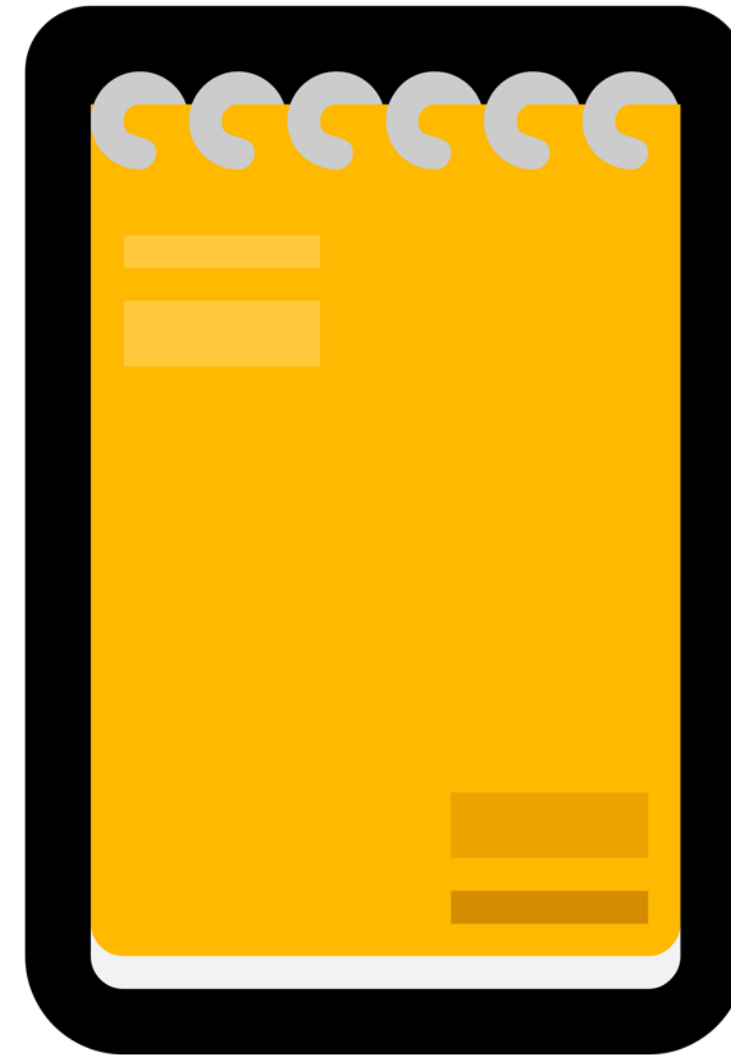




The U.S. has lost 1/3
of its newspapers and
2/3 of its newspaper
journalists since 2005

Building Press Lists: Who

- Editorial boards
- TV, radio, print reporters
 - and producers for TV/radio
- Photographers
- “New” media: influencers, podcasts



Building Press Lists: Where to find them

- Media monitoring
- Social media
- Databases e.g. Muckrack (might not be worth it)



Press Materials, Pitching and Reporter Relationships



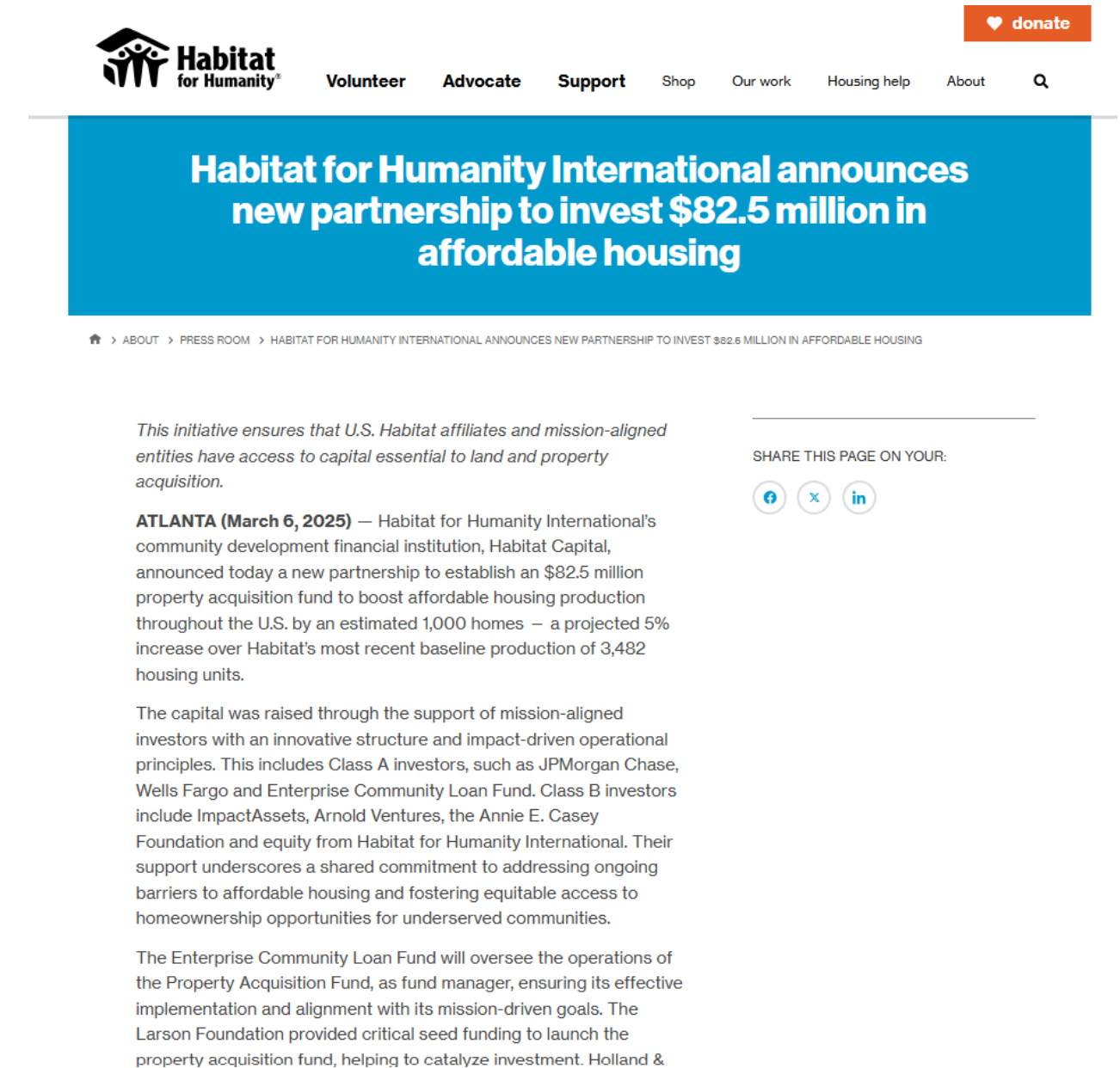
Create an editorial calendar

- “Tentpole” moments across the year
- Facts + stories = compelling content!
 - Strong visuals if pitching photographers, TV, etc.



Events and milestones to highlight

- Home groundbreakings and dedications
- Major donation or grant award
- Community event (annual dinner)
- Introducing new staff and board members
- Fundraising initiative
- Responding to national/HFHI news
 - Can you offer a local story or statistic?



Common types of press materials/outreach

- Pitch
- Press release
- Statement
- Media advisory
- Editorial board memo
- Opinion Editorial (Op-Ed)
- Letter-to the Editor (LTE)



News release structure

- Contact information
- Concise, engaging, non-sensational headline
- Lead with five Ws
- Important details
- Quote(s) from key individuals
- Boilerplate paragraph
- Photo cutlines (if applicable)



News release style

- Refer to HFHI Brand User Guide but remember context
- Use the third-person voice
- Express emotions only with quotes
- Avoid abbreviations, jargon, slang, creative punctuation
- Aim for a 500- to 600-word maximum
- Can the story run without additional reporting?



Day of Pitch:
(Adapt based on feedback from pre-pitching)

Tailor based on past coverage

Hi XX -

Workers in Guatemala's sugarcane industry are at a high risk for labor trafficking, according to a [new report](#) released today by Verité, a non-profit dedicated to addressing modern slavery in global supply chains.

Get right to the point - why are you reaching out?

The exploratory study of Guatemala's sugar sector, which included in-depth desk research and interviews with almost 40 workers, identified several indicators that suggest workers are vulnerable to forced labor in the country's 13 mills, including:

Bullets help break up info & make it more digestible

- Deceptive recruitment about the nature of the job, content of work contracts, wages, and housing conditions;
- Coercive recruitment including the confiscation of personal documents and debt bondage;
- Excessive working hours, isolation, and surveillance;
- Threats of violence and force to participate in illicit activities; and
- Widespread reports of chronic renal failure due to lack of breaks, shade, and drinking water.

Make sure you specify (if possible) who you have to offer what they can speak to

Shawn MacDonald, CEO of [Verité](#), is available to discuss the vulnerability to forced labor among Guatemala's sugarcane harvesters and what companies should do to address risks in their supply chains.

The [full report](#) and a [summary report](#) are available online.

Include a link

Let me know if you have any questions or would like to set up a time to talk more about the risks to labor trafficking that impact workers and companies.

Thanks,
XX

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Michelle Blundell** <mblundell@mrss.com>

Date: Fri, Nov 7, 2014 at 8:19 AM

Subject: Meet w/ Lung Association on ozone standard?

To: neela.banerjee@latimes.com

Short, tailored
subject line

Get right to the
point - why are you
reaching out now
and why is it
timely?

Hi Neela - Hope you're well. With the EPA expected to decide on whether or not to propose a change to the current ozone standards by December 1, I wanted to reach out now and see if you'd be interested in grabbing coffee or setting up a phone conversation with experts from the Lung Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics to talk about the much needed update to the ozone standards. This decision comes more than three years after the Administration decided to delay on updating the standard.

Science has long told us that the current ozone standard has not been doing enough to protect the public from the dangers of ozone, one of the most harmful pollutants. This past June, the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee (CASAC), an independent committee of scientists, determined that the standard needed to be tightened and made a recommendation to the EPA and the Administration that the standard be updated to a level between 60 – 70 parts per billion.

Let me know if you're interested in sitting down these groups ahead of the decision to discuss the health benefits of updating the standard – happy to arrange it.

Thanks,
Michelle

Michelle Blundell

[202-478-6176](tel:202-478-6176) (o) | [978-223-0287](tel:978-223-0287) (m)

Keep it
short &
sweet

Why is
this
important
for them
to cover?

**Reaching out:
Timing is key!**

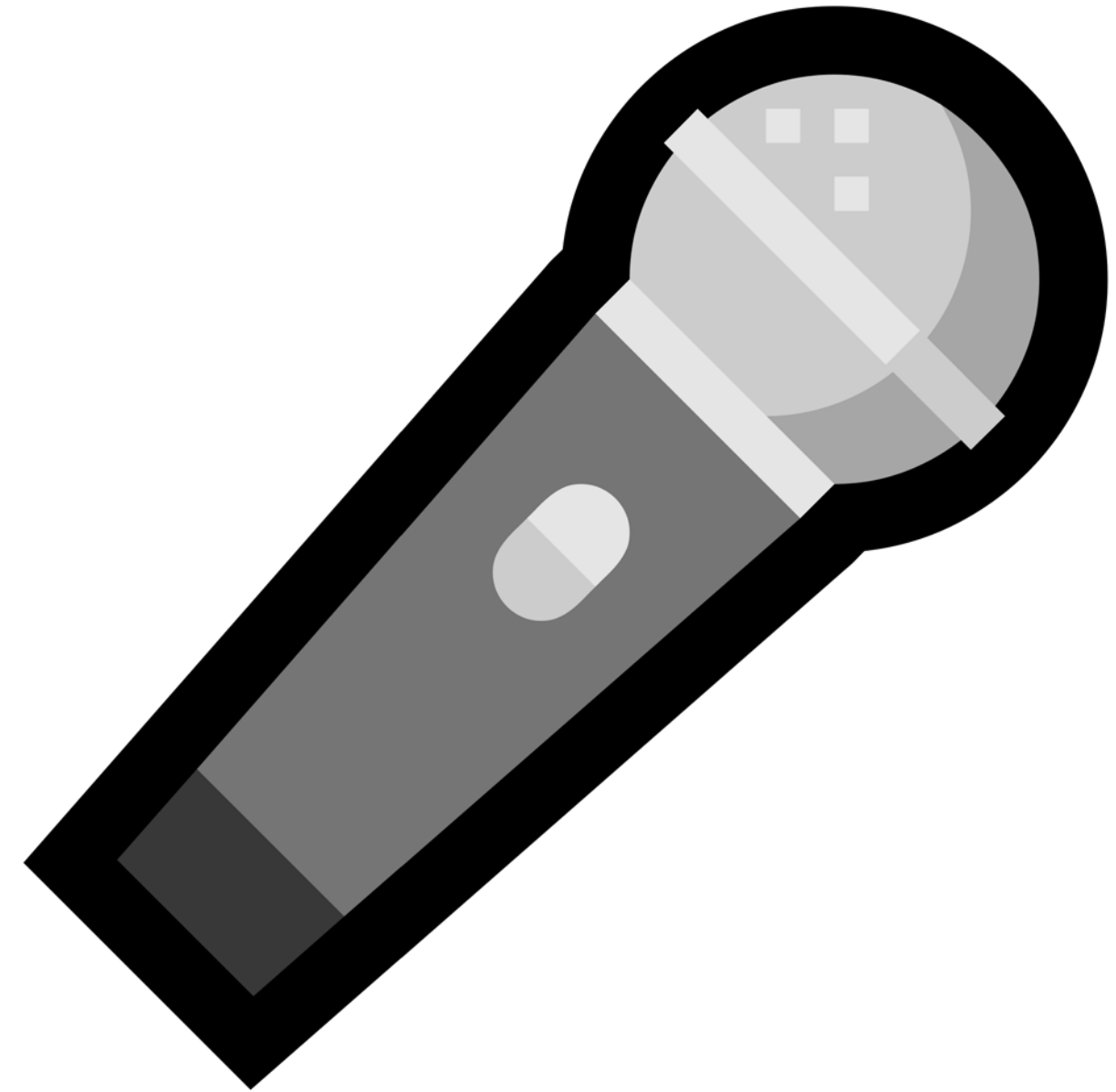


When to send materials

Pre-Pitch 1 week	Media Advisory 1 week (RSVPs within 1-2 days of event)	Press Release Day of or 1 week if under embargo
Op-Ed/Ed Board Memo 1 week, more if significant activity	LTE 24-48 hours	Long Lead Features 3-6 months

How to be pitch perfect!

- Tailor, tailor, tailor
- Get right to the point
- Remember the basics (spelling, etc.)
- Avoid attachments



Follow Up

- Pitching doesn't end at "send"
- Phone calls still work
- Spacing things out
- Get creative: use social media
- If something is published, share on blog, socials

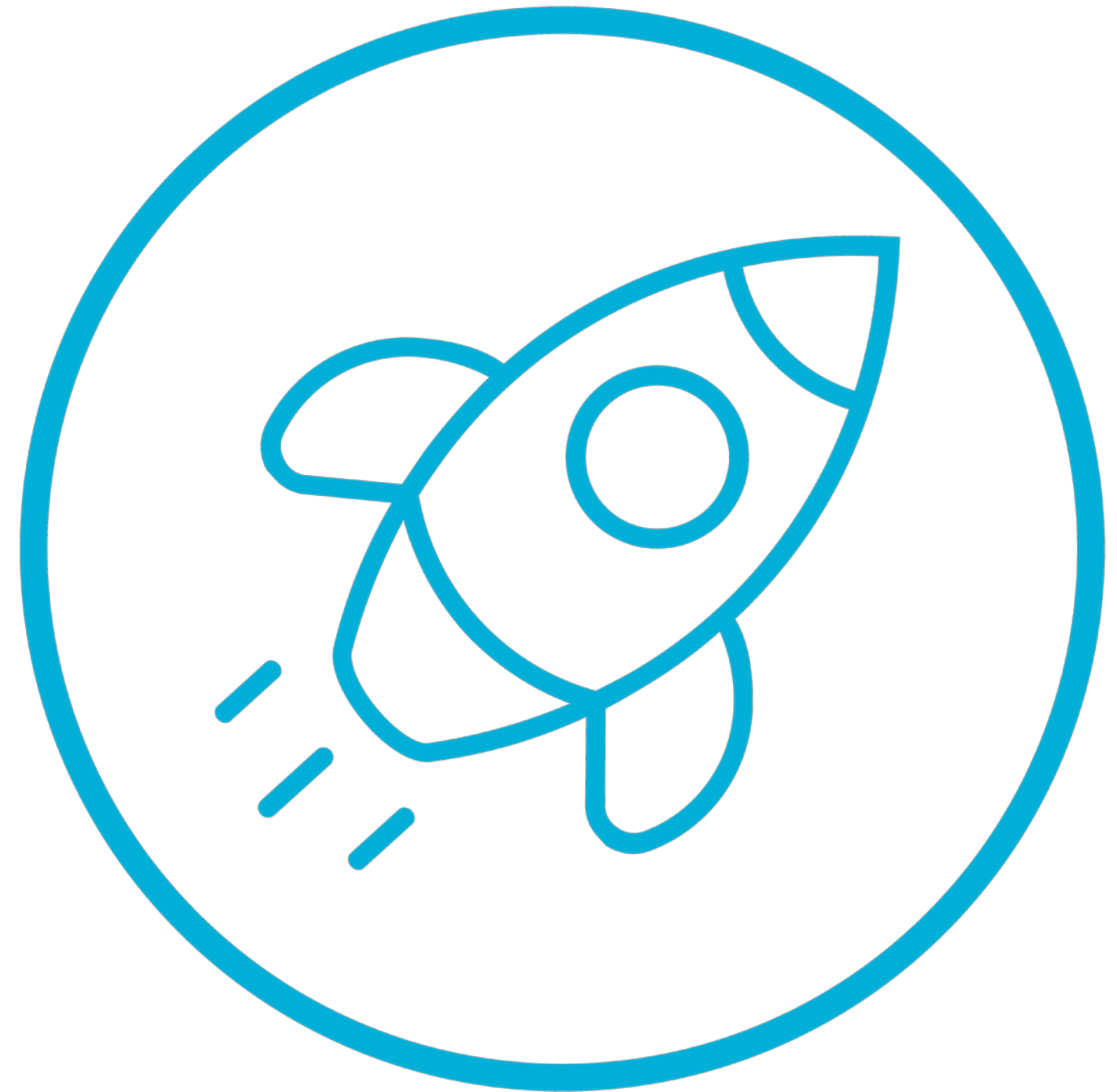


Building Relationships

- Show you follow their stuff
- Be responsive and a resource
- Try to meet in person
- Be friendly, grateful and personable



Maximizing Your Efforts



Build a story bank

- Build in story and image consent wherever you can
 - Volunteers
 - Homeowners
 - Community partners or donors





Refrigerated Truck Campaign

Integrating fundraising and press

History of these campaigns

M+R had helped CFBNJ run several successful campaigns focusing on funding urgent tangible needs for the food bank including a new oven, new refrigeration systems, a forklift and a mobile pantry.



DEADLINE: TOMORROW
GOAL: \$50,000

Dear Beth,

We urgently need your help today to expand and replace our cold storage and refrigeration systems.

We only have until midnight tomorrow to reach our \$50,000 online goal and help make sure our neighbors struggling to make ends meet continue to have the food they need.







Our cold room and refrigerator play a vital role in our food delivery system by allowing us to prepare, store, and deliver nutritious meals to the most vulnerable members of our communities, like seniors and children.

We simply can not reach as many people with the food they need — especially fresh foods and prepared meals — without fully functioning refrigeration systems.

Right now more and more families are turning to CFBNJ as costs continue to rise. It's essential we upgrade our Community Kitchen refrigeration system ASAP to keep up with the need for food here in New Jersey.

[Beth, please make a gift to ensure we can continue to reach New Jerseyans with the food they need.](#)



48 HOURS TO DEADLINE

Dear Beth,

I'm a classically trained chef, and cooking for my neighbors who are facing hunger is the most satisfying job I've ever had. After 40 years in the food business, I know how important it is to have the right equipment.

In just one day in the CFBNJ community kitchen, our industrial oven broils chicken, roasts vegetables, bakes bread, and cooks one of our biggest crowd favorites, meatballs. **But our current oven is old — 10-years-past-its-replacement-date-old, and it's not getting the job done anymore.** A new oven would help us cook more meals for more kids, families, and seniors in our community.

[Right now, we're raising funds to replace our very old industrial oven for the CFBNJ kitchen. Will you pitch in to help us reach our \\$53,000 goal so we can get more meals to our neighbors?](#)

Your generous support helps make CFBNJ's work possible every day, so I know helping to get food to your neighbors is important to you, too.

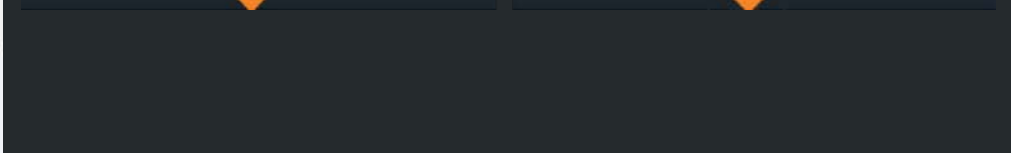
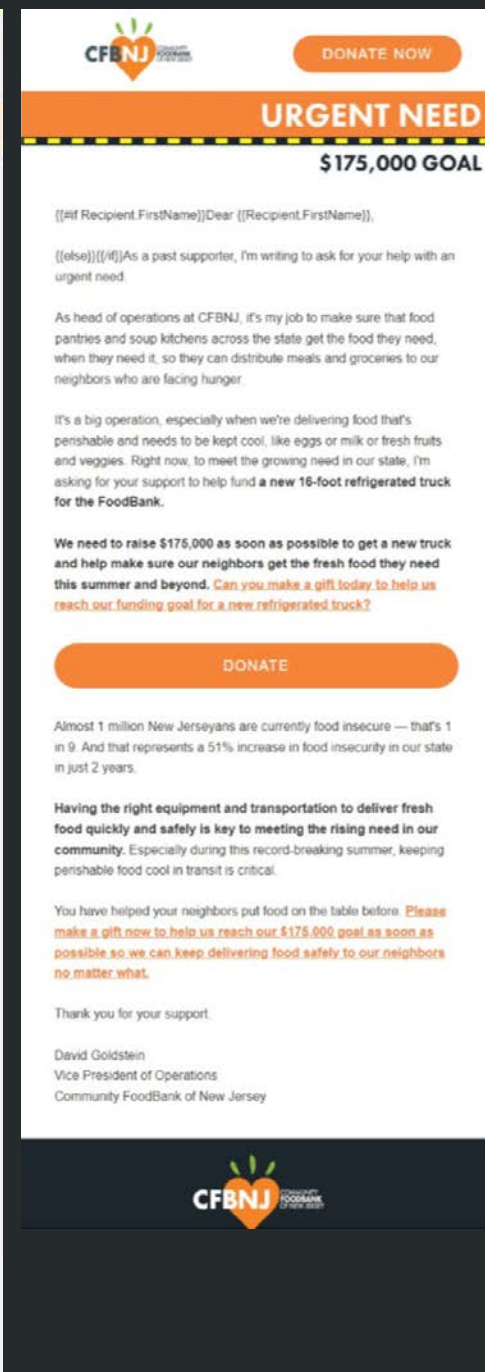
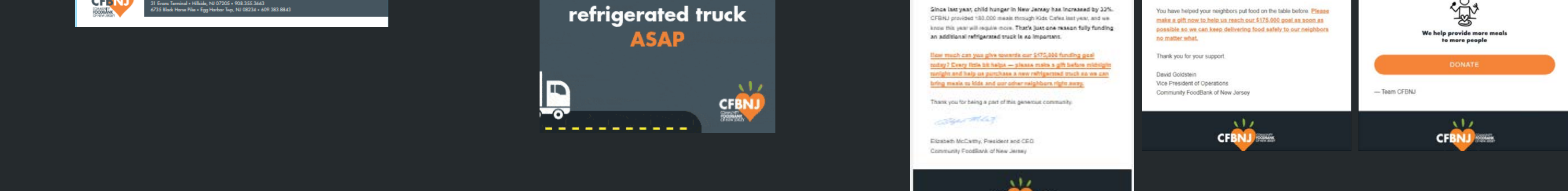
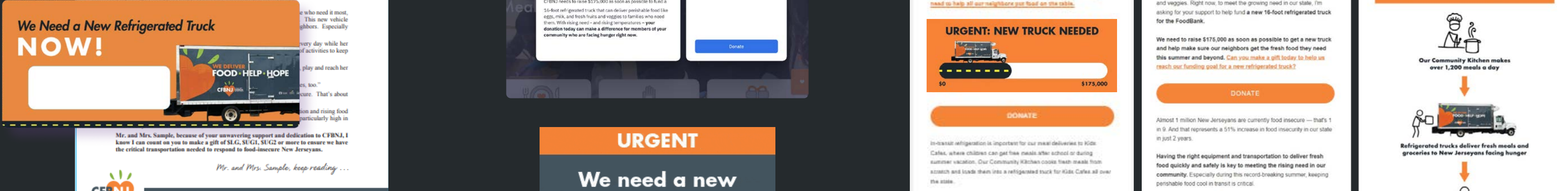
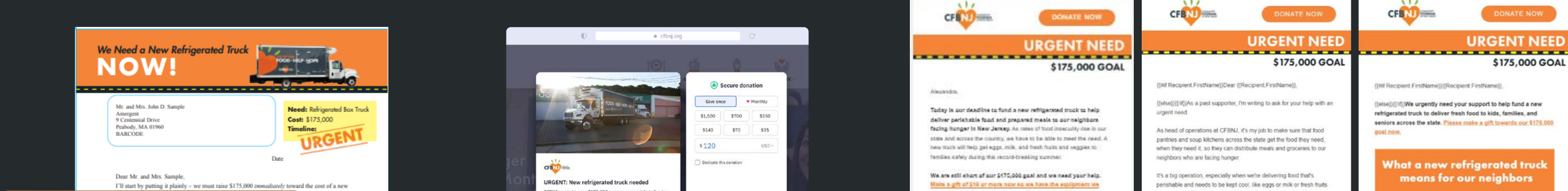
As Director of the Community Kitchen at CFBNJ, you can usually find me in our commercial kitchen, working with our team to make *thousands* of comforting meals from scratch each and every day for New Jersey kids, seniors, and families.

Our industrial oven is a workhorse. If we're in the kitchen, it's probably on. It doesn't need to be flashy — just to get the job done. We're far past that with our current oven.

I hope you'll join before the deadline to help our kitchen churn out even more healthy, nutritious meals for our neighbors. [Please make a donation to help fund our new industrial oven for the CFBNJ community kitchen now.](#)

Thank you,

Paul Kapner, Certified Executive Chef
Director of Community Kitchen
Community FoodBank of New Jersey





The food bank put out organic social promotions including a TikTok video from David Goldstein, CFBNJ's Vice President of Operations, who signed one of the email appeals.

TOP STORY EDITOR'S PICK

Community FoodBank of New Jersey seeking 16-foot box truck to help meet food needs

Vincent Supalla Jul 22, 2024 40 0

AP UN food agency says humanitarian situation in West Bank is deteriorating

Watch on YouTube

Excluding violence, arrests and movement restrictions across the West Bank are increasingly impacting the lives of hundreds of thousands, the World Food Programme said #unhcr #unrelief

Facebook Twitter Email Print Instagram RSS

EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP — With the demand for food across New Jersey greater than ever, the Community FoodBank of New Jersey is asking for donations to help pay for a new, \$175,000 box truck for use across the state.

The food bank serves 15 of the 21 counties in New Jersey. Its Southern Branch on the Black Horse Pike serves Atlantic, Cape May and Cumberland counties.

The new, 16-foot truck the organization is seeking includes refrigeration and a lift gate to help expedite deliveries. Nicole Williams-Meltzer, spokesperson for the food bank, said there is a need for the truck as more food is being distributed than ever before.

"During our 2023 fiscal year, our average monthly food distribution was close to 9 million pounds," Williams-Meltzer said. "Pre-pandemic, the first nine months of our 2020 fiscal year before the pandemic happened, it (food distribution) was more like 6 million pounds monthly."

The fundraising campaign lead to earned local media.



Questions?



801 dī !Y08-0u4d!!

2025 Habitat for Humanity Midwest Regional Conference



Contact us

Pete Christopher

pete@lakeagassizhabitat.org

Beth Dahlman

bdahlman@mrss.com

Tania Stewart

tstewart@mrss.com



801 dī !!Y08 - 0ū4d!!

2025 Habitat for Humanity Midwest Regional Conference



M+R Benchmarks 2025

