

GirlTrek media policy

Girl Trek is the largest health movement for Black women and girls in the country. GirlTrek is 100,000k strong and growing every day. By 2018, our goal is to have 1 million Black women and girls walking in the direction of their healthiest, most-fulfilled lives. The news media is frequently interested in covering and learning more about the personal stories about the people who walk with GirlTrek. We know telling the GirlTrek story is how we spread the movement. However, as we grow it is even more important that we speak with one voice.

The GirlTrek media policy exists to ensure that all information communicated to news media is up-to-date, comprehensive and accurate while ensuring that the GirlTrek story is told in a positive, affirming light. This policy applies to all employees of GirlTrek, board members and volunteers and covers all external news media including broadcast, electronic and print.

General Procedures for Dealing with the Media:

Members of GirlTrek are free to respond to requests from the media regarding their personal stories and areas of expertise. In such cases, the appropriate National Communications Department should be notified as soon as possible to inform of the contact. Such notification can be particularly important if follow-up inquiries are made to ensure a coordinated, consistent GirlTrek response. Media inquiries should be referred to the National Communications Department if they involve issues of national significance and/or are of a controversial or sensitive nature.

Guidelines for communicating with the media when the issue is non-controversial and limited to the GirlTrek volunteer's area of expertise:

- Obtain the name of the person calling, the media organization and, if available, the anticipated time of release of information in print or broadcast. This information should be included when the notification is made to the National Communications Department.
- The best approach with the media is to be prompt, helpful and honest. All contacts from the media should be returned as soon as possible, in deference to reporters' deadlines.
- Make sure you understand each question from the media before answering. If you cannot answer the question, or are uncomfortable providing a response, take the reporter's number and advise him/her that someone who can provide the information will contact him/her as soon as possible. Then follow-up by contacting the National Communications Department.
- Do not offer speculations or gossip. Do not answer a reporter's question with "no comment." Do not be condescending or underestimate the reporter's intelligence, but make sure the reporter understands your responses. Provide your phone number and/or e-mail address for follow-up questions as well as that of the National Communications Department.

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- Remember that in responding to the media, you can be seen as representing and speaking for GirlTrek. Personal opinions should be clearly and carefully identified as such.
- Any media inquiries regarding the GirlTrek cofounders or staff should be referred to the National Communications Department.

Guidelines for Seeking Media Coverage:

Since positive media solicitation is an integral element of sharing the GirlTrek story, any ideas for articles or pieces that would positively portray GirlTrek or its work should also be directed to the National Communications Department. In a similar manner, the National Communications Department should be notified about negative occurrences that are likely to rise to the level of a news story.

In circumstances in which you believe you have a positive news story to share with the public, contact the National Communications Department to help you prepare your media pitch.

- Do not call a reporter directly without first consulting the National Communications Department.
- The National Communications Department will work with you to gather information and determine if and how the news media should be contacted. Similar measures used by editors and reporters will be considered to determine if your story is newsworthy.

Remember:

Please remember to contact the National Communications Department if and when you have been approached by the media. The National Communications can help you prepare your response and prepare for a strong media experience. It is always beneficial to prepare in advance in order to provide accurate and relevant information.

Be courteous and friendly around the media, but also remember that no matter how congenial or affirming the reporter, photographer or camera crew are, everything you say and do may be observed and reported by the media representative.

The National Communications Director can be reached at jewel@girltrek.org.