



Community Impact Day

MEDIA GUIDE



Overview

The purpose behind DAV Community Impact Day is to highlight the needs of veterans in our communities while showing people that it doesn't take a lot of time to make a big difference.

A big part of you highlighting these needs will be garnering attention through different channels. Your social media posts and shares will pay good dividends, but don't miss out on the opportunity to get local media to introduce your department, chapter or unit to the rest of your community.

Local television, radio and newspaper outlets are always looking to cover "good news" stories, and with a little planning and engagement, there's a high probability you can get coverage of your volunteer event for DAV Community Impact Day.

Go deeper

This guide provides talking points and a media pitch template. If you'd like more training resources or have limited experience with talking to the media, check out the [DAV and Auxiliary Publicity Guide](#). It provides detailed information on the media landscape, what good media relations looks like, broad-scope DAV talking points and tips for creating compelling content.



Make a plan

Before reaching out to reporters, make sure you know what they'll be able to report about.

- Know the who, what, where, when and why of your DAV Community Impact Day event.
- Identify at least one or two volunteer participants who would be comfortable talking to reporters. The best people for this are those who can humanize the story by sharing personal feelings and anecdotes in addition to the facts and details of the day.
- Make sure other participants know that media may be present.
- Research potential media contacts. Some helpful questions to ask yourself:
 - Which reporters in my area tend to report on military- or veteran-related issues?

- Is there a journalist who consistently covers community-related stories?
- Do we have a reporter in the area who covers news stories that have a familial, volunteer or civic-minded angle?
- Most media outlets will have a website and a "Contact Us" button where you can engage with local reporters. Consider sending them an email (a suggested pitch template is below) that identifies you as a potential source for a story and invites them out to the event(s) you're doing.

Be flexible. It's hard to predict what news is going to happen on a particular day. Reporters are often reassigned stories based on their editor's priorities and breaking news events. The more media outlets you talk with, the higher your chances are to get one out to your event.

Media pitch template

After you've determined which media outlets and/or specific reporters you'd like to inform about your event, use the template below as a starting point for reaching out to them. Feel free to edit it as needed.

It's a good idea to do a phone follow-up if you don't hear back within a couple of days. However, understand that not every media outlet is going to have the resources or the time to give you. That's OK. Be sure to thank them for their consideration and try again for another event.

SUBJECT: {County, City or Town name} Local Community Participating in Nationwide Community Service Day Benefiting Disabled Veterans, April 6

Hi—

To highlight the needs of veterans in our community and to show that volunteering can make a big difference in someone's life, members of DAV (Disabled American Veterans) Chapter {number} in {location} are joining other chapters from around the nation in DAV Community Impact Day, April 6.

Veterans forever changed by their military service don't often vocalize their need for help, but we want to remind them they're surrounded by a community that cares and wants to make sure they don't go unnoticed.

{Insert a one- to two-sentence description of your volunteer event. For example: Our chapter community service event will be handing out care items and meeting with veterans experiencing homelessness in our town. We're meeting in the Walmart parking lot on Main Street at 9 a.m., April 6.}

Anyone, not just DAV members, can participate by signing up at communityimpactday.org.

We'd be happy to have you come out to our event. We can also arrange interviews or phone conversations with volunteers and DAV representatives who can discuss how they're making a real difference in the lives of veterans.

If you are unable to provide coverage, would you please consider sharing this news with your audience on your website or community events calendar?

Please contact {Name} at {Phone} or {email@domain.com}.

Thanks so much for your time.

Talking points

Talking points are themes and messages that help keep everyone on the same page and focused on the event when talking with the media. Get these out to participants, especially those who are likely to be interviewed, at least a few days before your event.

Remember: This is just a guide. Tailor these talking points as you need to fit your voice and specifics for your area and service project. You and other participants are encouraged to share personal stories related to volunteering, why you choose to volunteer, and any stories that add a human element to the event.

- **Thank you for your service is more than just words; it's action.** Even an hour of your time can make a difference.
- **The effort doesn't need to be grand,** but it should be heartfelt.
- **All skills are valued and needed to make a difference for veterans in our community.** When we combine our efforts, we can do big things together.
- **There's a home for everyone to volunteer at DAV.** You don't have to be a member of DAV or a veteran to volunteer.
- **Time is people's most precious resource.** We are deeply grateful when you spend some of it helping veterans.
- **There are other opportunities for people to volunteer with DAV,** including driving for our Transportation Network. People interested in learning more can go to volunteerforveterans.org.
- **DAV is dedicated to a single purpose:** empowering veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity. We accomplish this by ensuring that veterans and their families can access the full range of benefits available to them, fighting for the interests of America's injured heroes on Capitol Hill, and educating the public about the great sacrifices and needs of veterans transitioning back to civilian life.

DAV contact

If you have any questions or need assistance, please reach out to Brian Buckwalter with the DAV Communications Department at bbuckwalter@dav.org.



KEEPING OUR PROMISE TO
AMERICA'S VETERANS