STATE YOUR CASE

KnowHow2GO.org

LUMINA
FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATION

Ad Council

ACE American Council on Education
Leadership and Advocacy

INTRODUCTION

KnowHow2GO Partners: We have reached a turning point. After four years of successful ground and media campaigns, our focus has turned to sustaining the work in the years to come. We have the tools to do so. Now, we must utilize them to convince key audiences of the critical need for KnowHow2GO.

Continuing the momentum of the campaign will require support from funders, policymakers, media and partners. Funders are needed to back the campaign; policymakers to promote legislative outcomes; media to increase awareness; and partners to implement campaign activities.

The good news is that you have been communicating with these audiences throughout your involvement in KnowHow2GO. You know that each has its own assets and expectations. Chances are, you have conducted your outreach accordingly.

The State Your Case Toolkit is intended to be a refresher on interactions with funders, policymakers, media and partners. We break each audience down to address the nuances of communicating to foundations and corporations, federal and state policymakers, traditional and new media, and partners ranging from schools to youth-serving organizations.

Much of the information provided will be familiar. Many of the examples within were inspired by your work or that of your counterparts. Still, we encourage you to study the how-to guides and templates in order to improve your communications moving forward.

The toolkit will also empower you to make important "asks" of key audiences, which will enable you to continue your KnowHow2GOwork. Whether you are asking for funding or legislative support, keep this in mind: It never hurts to ask. The worst an organization or individual can say is "no." Also keep in mind that first impressions are long-lasting, so put your best foot forward in every interaction with funders, policymakers, media and partners.

As you review the State Your Case Toolkit, we encourage you to think about the ways your existing work connects to each of the audiences listed here. Throughout the toolkit, you will see call-outs and sidebars that encourage you to "connect the dots" or "make the connection" between different aspects of your existing work. These call-outs are designed to stimulate your thinking about ways to leverage the work you and your partners are already doing.

As always, we welcome your questions and comments. Contact the Partner Helpline at partnerhelp@knowhow2go.org or 888-716-6382 if you have anything to share.

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FUNDERS

Grants made to organizations working on education issues accounted for 23.3 percent of all giving by foundations in 2009. Within education, the largest portion of funds – 8.8 percent – was directed to organizations working on higher education.[1] Giving among corporations was similar, with 26 percent of funds directed to education, including 13 percent for higher education.[2] This data suggests that the current funding environment is ripe for organizations like yours, which promote college access.

HOW-TO: IDENTIFY KEY AUDIENCE MEMBERS

The funders you will target for outreach include national and local foundations and corporations. We list the steps to identifying members of all four funder categories below.

Before you begin this process, tap your network for any connections they have to funders. Your board of directors, partners, and other professional and personal contacts might volunteer to introduce you to a funder they know. That introduction will ensure your organization is on the funder's radar.

1. **Utilize available resources.**

   Following are some of the best resources for researching foundations and corporations. Spend some quality time on these sites before proceeding with steps 2-4.

   - Foundation Center: The Center's website includes a database of statistics on giving. You can identify the top funders in the country and in your state, including breakdowns by funder type and subject area.

   - Committee Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy: The Membership and Measurement sections of CECP's website can help you identify corporate funders and track trends in corporate giving.

   - Council on Foundations: This website features a searchable map of community foundations and a comprehensive directory with links to member sites.

Connect the Dots
Professional and personal contacts can open up all kinds of doors. For example, it was the American Council on Education's relationship with a reporter that led the Ad Council to them. Jeff Selingo, a reporter for *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, lived across the street from Kate Emmanuel of the Ad Council. When she mentioned their interest in launching an education campaign, Jeff suggested they approach ACE.

Top 10 U.S. Foundations Awarding Grants for Higher Education (Foundation Center, 2009)

1. The Weil Family Foundation
2. Silicon Valley Community Foundation
3. Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
4. The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
5. Bernard Osher Foundation
6. Lumina Foundation for Education
7. Lilly Endowment, Inc.
8. Greater Kansas City Community Foundation
9. The Susan Thompson Buffett Foundation
10. Warren Alpert Foundation

[1] Foundation Center
[2] Committee Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy

2. Do some digging.

Once you have identified potential funders, narrow your list by determining which award grants in the area of education and, more specifically, higher education.

Example: The top two funders in Montana in 2009 were the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation and the O. P. and W. E. Edwards Foundation. A quick visit to the website of the former reveals that it operates scholarship programs. That makes it a strong target for outreach. Alternatively, the latter gives to the arts and the environment.

Connect the Dots
Think about ways to connect your outreach to your current work. For example, can you link the students you work with to the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation's scholarship program?

3. Learn the landscape.

Once you determine that that a funder is a viable target, read more about the organizations and programs it funds. This will help you decide what approach to take and what "ask" to make. Your research may also provide leads for other potential funders.

Example: It is common knowledge that the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is a top funder of education issues. But, did you know that its education program has two main tracks – and that its strategy for post-secondary education is four-pronged? Determine which part of the strategy your organization is helping to advance and frame your inquiry accordingly.

Included within the Gates Foundation's post-secondary strategy is a prominent link to one grantee, Complete College America. Read more about what that organization does and what other funders support its work. Add those funders to your list and repeat step 3.

Connect the Dots
Consider opportunities to work with the organizations you come across in your research. For instance, would Complete College America be a good partner for your organization?

4. Respect communications preferences.

While it is feasible for you to research and directly contact the persons responsible for reviewing inquiries, it is better to follow the funder's directions. The exception to this rule is a situation where you have an existing relationship with someone who works for the funder, or you are introduced by a friend or colleague. This often ends up being a good way in to a foundation or corporation, so be sure to tap your network for connections.

Example: Walmart is among the biggest corporate funders of education issues. The Walmart Foundation website explains the types of grants it provides and then walks prospective grantees through the process of submitting an online letter of inquiry.

HOW-TO: MAKE A GOOD FIRST IMPRESSION

You never get a second chance to make a first impression. In this guide, we offer our best advice for making a good, first impression on funders. We have organized this advice into three scenarios: introduction by e-mail/letter, introduction by application and introduction by phone/in-person meeting.

Introduction by E-mail/Letter
Often, an e-mail or letter of inquiry is your first communication with a funder that you do not have an existing relationship with. Your e-mail or letter should have three parts, unless otherwise specified:

- **Opening:** Introduce your organization and the problem it is working to resolve.
- **Explanation:** Explain why the funder should care about your issue and program.
- **Closing:** Express interest in discussing a potential partnership further.

Opening
Take a critical look at the boilerplate language used to describe your organization and issue. Start by asking yourself these questions:

- Am I using too much jargon?
- Could I be more concise? Use punchier language?
- Does my organization come across as different or unique?
- Is our breadth and depth of experience communicated?
- Do we mention top line accomplishments or successes?
- Is the issue presented as urgent?

Then, consider adding these elements, if they are not currently included in your boilerplate:

- History
- Mission
- Beneficiaries
- Goals
- Programs
- Outcomes/Achievements

Example: Founded in 1918 (history), the American Council on Education (ACE) is the only higher education organization that represents presidents and chancellors of all types of U.S. accredited, degree-granting institutions: community colleges and four-year institutions, private and public universities, and nonprofit and for-profit colleges. ACE represents the interests of more than 1,600 campus executives, as well as 200 leaders of higher education-related associations and organizations. Together, ACE member institutions serve 80 percent of today's college students (beneficiaries).

In its role as the major coordinating body for all the nation's higher education institutions (mission), ACE provides leadership on key higher education issues and influences public policy through advocacy, research, and program initiatives (programs). ACE fosters greater collaboration and new partnerships within and outside the higher education community to help colleges and universities anticipate and address the challenges of the 21st century and contribute to a stronger nation and better world (goals).

Explanation
The explanation will be the most tailored part of your e-mail or letter. It is where you tell the funder why your work is important and why they, among foundations, should support it. Customize this part of the e-mail or letter by:

- Describing how the funder's goals and priorities align with yours;
- Referencing other, related work the funder is supporting; and
- Infusing language used by the funder throughout

Example: Here's the Ford Foundation's description of its work on college access and success. Note the highlighted words; you should include them in your e-mail or letter.

Despite some progress worldwide over the past few decades in making higher education more accessible, disparities persist in student access to and graduation from two- and four-year colleges and universities. These disparities limit the workforce opportunities, democratic participation and life chances of students from poor, marginalized backgrounds.

Closing
Your initial communications with funders should always suggest opportunities for future interaction. Close your e-mail or letter with a request for a phone or in-person meeting. Mention that you will call in a week or two to follow up and answer any questions the funder has.

To ensure the impression you make is memorable, consider including materials as attachments* to your e-mail or letter. Be sure to include only those materials you are most proud of. For example:

- Website and social media links
- Informational and promotional materials
- Multimedia that brings your organization's work to life

*When sending an e-mail to a funder, include links rather than attachments, where possible. The last thing you want to do is send an e-mail that bounces back or clogs the recipient's inbox.

Introduction by Application
While larger funders typically request an e-mail or letter before inviting organizations into the grant application process, smaller funders might ask you to submit an application right away. Here are links to tips for submitting an effective grant application, from a variety of sources:

- Tips for Writing a Strong Grant Application: These practical tips, from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Resources, will help you get started. Disregard information specific to government proposals.

- How to Write Grant Proposals: This resource, from About.com, outlines and explains the key components of an effective grant proposal.

- Eight Grant Proposal Writing Tips: Another resource from About.com, this article contains tips for writing an organized and compelling proposal.

- Grant Proposal Writing Tips: Oftentimes, funders will include tips for writing applications on their websites. This is an example from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Q&A with Tony Macklin, Roy A. Hunt Foundation

Q: What are the elements of a successful grant application?

A: I think a great grant application reflects much of the storytelling and marketing advice the Shark Tank panel discussed. It has at least these three elements:

- A compelling story about the need or opportunity and its immediacy (the human element)
- Information about why the organization has the right answers (the data and methodology)
- Assurance that the money will spent well (good governance and financial health)

A good application also shows awareness of how the organization fits within a range of solutions and awareness of how the organization and its needs match the interests and guidelines of the foundation. If the funder's application format allows it, it opens with a 2-3 paragraph summary that any board member or donor could understand (e.g., jargon-free).

Q: What makes a grant application stand out, in your mind? Can you give an example of an application that impressed you?

A: A proposal I just read opened with a three-paragraph story and picture that really grabbed my attention. It was written in a tone that reassures my trustees that the organization knows what it doing, but is also aware of what it has yet to accomplish. And, it made a direct correlation between the level of grant funds and results it could deliver with them.

Q: What is your biggest pet peeve when it comes to grant applications?

A: Less pet peeves, but two common challenges:

- The person who wrote the proposal is so close to the organization (typically the founder or a deeply specialized program manager) that they can't describe the work to other people. We just declined a proposal that we still couldn't understand after we asked for a focused re-write (most foundations won't give you that chance…). It always pays to have a ruthless editor who isn't part of your organization!
- The proposal is written by communications staff based on marketing language and branding guidelines. No offense, but those don't necessarily provide the details needed or instill the confidence needed in a potential funder.

Q: What other advice would you give to grant applicants?

A: Always ask for a phone call or meeting with the funder – you want to accommodate differing learning styles and communications styles on both sides of the transaction.

Never let a funder be taken by surprise by big changes or problems at the organization (you can't hide problems anymore).

After you receive a grant, never forget to continue the relationship-building and deliver on the reporting that's required. It's like working hard to court someone, getting married and then ignoring your spouse for the next year.

Introduction by Phone/In-Person Meeting
If you are lucky, you may have the chance to interact with a funder over the phone or in-person. We discuss the ins and outs of making "asks" in the guide that follows. For the purpose of this guide, we are assuming an informal call or meeting with a funder. This is the type of occasion for which you need a strong "elevator speech."

An elevator speech is a quick, succinct summation of what your organization does. It should take no longer to present than a casual elevator ride. Often overlooked, elevator speeches are very handy in brief yet important interactions. They give your audience a high-level understanding of your work.

Following are *BusinessWeek*'s tips for preparing a winning elevator speech:

- **Know what you are trying to achieve.** The first goal of any meeting is to get a second one. In the short time you have, pique interest and highlight what makes your organization unique.

- **Know your target.** Your pitch is far more likely to be compelling if you know your target and its needs. Talk about the things you know are of most interest to your listener—what your organization can do for their audience.

- **Keep it real.** You don't want to say anything you're not comfortable with. Stick with those messages to which you can really speak well. Don't use slang or industry jargon unless you know your listener is comfortable with it.

- **Be specific.** Concentrate on actual examples of how you're audience-focused or uniquely positioned. Talk about the student you recently went the extra mile for; the problem that looked impossible until your organization got involved.

- **Preparation is key.** Preparation is the key to confidence. Respect your audience enough to prepare well; that includes arming yourself with succinct answers to the toughest questions.

- **Solve a problem.** Your speech can't just be a set of capabilities or a list of services. Focus on the problem you solve for the listener—the solution you are offering to their audience.

- **Let your passion show.** An elevator pitch is not a recitation of facts. If you want to move someone to take action, you have to show them you care.

- **Practice.** Clear speaking reflects clear thinking. Even if your speech is one you use regularly, get feedback from a trusted source on how to improve it.

- **Keep it short.** Under the best circumstances, people have limited attention spans. In the words of Winston Churchill, "Be clear. Be brief. Be seated."

HOW-TO: MAKE COMPELLING ASKS

Picture this: You hear from a funder that they are interested in following up on your letter, application or brief meeting. You schedule either a phone call or a meeting, during which you will be expected to "State Your Case" for funding. Here is our best advice for making a winning pitch, as compiled during the Shark Tank session at the July 2011 KnowHow2GO Learning Community meeting.

> **Winning Pitch**
> KnowHow2GOIllinois won the Shark Tank session referenced above. You can watch the video of their winning pitch at http://vimeo.com/274862

- **Organize your pitch.** Structure your presentation in a 2-1-2 format.
  - Two points to frame the problem
  - One point around the ask
  - Two points on what the result will be if the ask is fulfilled

- **Persuade your audience.** In any pitch, the ultimate goal is persuasion. If you are going to convince someone to do something, you have to make the value proposition very clear.
  - Clarify what is in it for the audience
  - Explain why the ask is urgent now
  - Support your points with relevant facts and statistics; use hard numbers rather than percentages to demonstrate real changes and goals
  - Highlight how your work is different from what has been done before

- **Know your audience.** Always customize your pitch with the audience in mind.
  - Make it valuable to and for them
  - Demonstrate how finely attuned your work is to their priorities

- **Demonstrate credibility.** Highlight your experience and why it is relevant.
  - Highlight the people you work with or the organization you work for
  - Describe a past project that was successful
  - Bring a "living testimonial" to speak to the work you do

- **End strong.** Close by succinctly reiterating your ask, how the funder can play a part and how that action will impact the community.
  - Finally, to help your audience remember what you said, leave materials behind. It is better to do this at the end of the presentation than the beginning. An example of a strong leave-behind is a flash drive containing fact sheet files.

As previously suggested, practice is the key to success for both informal and formal pitches. Show the funder how serious and passionate you are about the opportunity by rehearsing your pitch, incorporating feedback from colleagues, and adapting your pitch in response to funder questions.

Sample Asks

The asks you make of funders will depend largely on your relationship history. For example, the asks you make of a foundation you are just getting to know will be very different from the asks you make of a foundation that has supported your organization in the past.

- Take a call or meeting
- Invite you into the grantmaking process
- Mention your organization in a speech, tweet or blog/website post
- Conduct a site visit
- Attend an upcoming event
- Provide in-kind support
- Sponsor a short-term event or program
- Make a long-term grant

HOW-TO: BUILD A LASTING RELATIONSHIP

Chances are, the funders you are reaching out to are subject to frequent requests for support. It is important that your organization remain firmly in the minds of both current and potential funders between opportunities for outreach. You might consider reaching out to your contacts on the following occasions or for the following reasons:

- Answer any inquiries promptly and thoroughly
- Submit required reports on time and in final form
- Send occasional e-mails about program milestones or successes
- Alert funders to meetings, events or activities they may be interested in attending
- Recognize funders' support through external communications channels
- Cultivate personal relationships with your contacts (e.g., wish them a happy birthday, congratulate them on their wedding or baby)

Remember, funders support many more organizations than yours. Make it your goal – professionally and personally – to become their favorite.

TEMPLATE MATERIALS

E-MAIL PITCH

Dear [Name]:

I am writing on behalf of [organization] to tell you more about the work we are doing to [goal]. As background, we are an [organization type] that [description]. We also lead KnowHow2GO[State], a national college access campaign sponsored by Lumina Foundation, the American Council on Education and the Ad Council.

Our focus, of late, is on a program that [description]. [Program name] is [innovative/unique/etc.] because [explanation]. It is also very much in line with [funder]'s efforts to [goal].

I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to discuss further how our organizations might work together. I can be reached at [phone number] or [e-mail address]. I will plan to follow up by phone later this week to learn more about your priorities for the coming year.

Thanks very much for your consideration,

[Name]
[Title]
[Organization]

PHONE SCRIPT

Hi, [Name]. I am calling on behalf of [organization]. Is now a good time to tell you about our work to [goal]?

Great. In brief, we are an [organization type] that [organization description]. We also lead KnowHow2GO[State], a national college access campaign sponsored by Lumina Foundation, the American Council on Education and the Ad Council.

Our current focus is on a program that [program description]. We thought [program name] might be of special interest to the [funder], because of our shared focus on [focus].

Would you be willing to discuss the potential for our organizations to work together in the near future? If so, what next steps can we take to ensure you have all of the information you need about our [program name] program?

Thanks very much for your time. I will [reiterate next steps]. I look forward to talking with you again soon.

PITCH LETTER

Dear [Name]:

Research shows that young people want to go to college and recognize that postsecondary education is essential to their future. But, despite their high aspirations, many low-income and first-generation students do not believe college is meant for them. They are deterred by obstacles such as affordability and lack of knowledge, preparation, guidance and encouragement.

The gap between students' ambitions and accomplishments is evident in [state]. In order to complete our goal for 60 percent of adults in [state] to achieve a quality postsecondary degree by 2025, we must graduate an additional [number] per year or a total of [number] students[3].

[Organization] is an [organization type] that [organization description]. We have an [X-year history or proven track record] of [accomplishments/successes].

We also lead KnowHow2GO[State], part of the national college access campaign sponsored by Lumina Foundation, the American Council on Education and the Ad Council. Launched in January 2007, KnowHow2GO utilizes communications and partnerships to educate 21st century students and their mentors about the need to prepare for college.

Our focus, of late, is on a program that [description]. [Program name] is [innovative/unique/etc.] because [explanation].

I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to discuss further how our organizations might work together. I can be reached at [phone number] or [e-mail address]. I will plan to follow up by phone later this week to learn more about your priorities for the coming year.

Thanks very much for your consideration,

[Name]
[Title]
[Organization]

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[3] State-specific statistics can be found in the Lumina Foundation report titled "A Stronger Nation through Higher Education."

Meeting Agenda

- Introduction
  - Introduce organization and funder contacts
  - Summarize the meeting agenda

- Background
  - Describe your organization
  - Explain the issue or problem you're working to resolve

- Signature/Priority Program
  - Describe the program, using relevant multimedia and collateral
  - Invite a program beneficiary to give testimony

- Program Support
  - Make your ask for funding
  - Answer questions from funder contacts

- Next Steps
  - Ask the funder what information they need to move forward
  - Schedule a follow-up discussion or meeting

STATE YOUR CASE

POLICY MAKERS

POLICYMAKERS

It is the job of policymakers to respond to constituents and represent them in policy decisions. To ensure your organization's voice is heard, you must give elected officials the opportunity to listen. It is up to you to introduce your organization, communicate your goals and programs, and suggest collaboration on legislation.

In this section of the State Your Case Toolkit, we help you to identify and build productive relationships with policymakers at the federal, state and local levels.

HOW-TO: IDENTIFY KEY AUDIENCE MEMBERS

It is relatively easy to identify policymakers at all levels. The key is to take your search a step further by determining which policymakers are most likely to support your organization. We suggest four steps to doing exactly that below:

1. **Find your policymakers.**

    - U.S. Senators: This page lists U.S. Senators and directs you to their websites.

    - U.S. Congressmen: This resource lists U.S. Congressmen and their websites.

    - State Legislators: This Library of Congress webpage features a clickable map that takes you to the homepage of each state legislature. Most pages direct you to a list of representatives by district.

    - Local Elected Officials: Find information on local officials and governments, including cities, counties and townships.

2. **Check their assignments.**

    When formulating pitches to policymakers, it is important to assess their knowledge of and investment in the issues at hand. The first step toward doing this is to research their committee assignments and caucus memberships.

    Do not be discouraged if your elected officials do not serve on education committees or caucuses. They might still be well-versed in issues related to education, like the economy or children and families. They might also have a personal connection to or passion for your issue.

Keep It Local
Outreach to local elected officials is extremely important. They are the closest to the students you serve. And, many have their sights on other positions. A good relationship with the mayor now might mean a good relationship with the governor in the future.

- Senate Committees: This page lists all Senate committees and links to their websites, which include a list of Members. Check if your Senators are on the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee.

- House Committees: This page lists all House committees and links to their websites, which include a list of Members. Check if your Representatives are on the Education and the Workforce Committee, particularly the Subcommittee on Higher Education.

2011 Committee Membership

Senate Help Committee

- Al Franken (D-MN)
- Barbara A. Mikulski (D-MD)
- Bernard Sanders (I-VT)
- Jeff Bingaman (D-NM)
- Jeff Merkley (D-OR)
- John McCain (R-AZ)
- Johnny Isakson (R-GA)
- Kay R. Hagan (D-NC)
- Lamar Alexander (R-TN)
- Lisa Murkowski (R-AK)
- Mark Kirk (R-IL)
- Michael B. Enzi (R-WY)
- Michael F. Bennet (D-CO)
- Orrin G. Hatch (R-UT)
- Pat Roberts (R-KS)
- Patty Murray (D-WA)
- Rand Paul (R-KY)
- Richard Blumenthal (D-CT)
- Richard Burr (R-NC)
- Robert P. Casey, Jr. (D-PA)
- Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI)
- Tom Harkin (D-IA)

House Education & the Workforce Committee (Subcommittee on Higher Ed)

- David Loebsack (D-IA)
- George Miller (D-CA)
- Glenn Thompson (R-PA)
- Howard P. "Buck" McKeon (R-CA)
- Jason Altmire (D-PA)
- Joe Heck (R-NV)
- John F. Tierney (D-MA)
- John Kline (R-MN)
- Judy Biggert (R-IL)
- Larry Bucshon (R-IN)
- Lou Barletta (R-PA)
- Phil Roe (R-TN)
- Raul Grijalva (D-AZ)
- Richard Hanna (R-NY)
- Robert Andrews (D-NJ)
- Rubén Hinojosa (D-TX)
- Susan Davis (D-CA)
- Thomas E. Petri (R-WI)
- Timothy Bishop (D-NY)
- Todd Russell Platts (R-PA)
- Virginia Foxx (R-NC)

- Congressional Caucuses: There are a variety of caucuses that advocate for your interests. Check if your Members of Congress are on the Community College Caucus, House STEM Education Caucus, and the Senate and House Economic Competitiveness Caucuses, among others.

- State Legislative Committees and Caucuses: Your state government's website should include a list of committees with directories of their members. For example, relevant senate committees in California include Education and the select committee on College and University Admissions and Outreach.

3. **Research their work.**

If your Members of Congress belong to relevant committees, chances are they have sponsored or supported legislation that advances your organization's policy objectives. The best resource for determining what legislation your federal policymakers support is The Library of Congress' THOMAS website. You can select their names from Senate and House drop-down menus and determine what bills they have backed. At the state level, the legislature's website should include a searchable database of bills, which can be organized by introducer.

If your policymakers are not members of education committees or caucuses, they are still likely to have a position on major issues. The best way to learn their positions is to visit their websites. Most federal policymaker sites have a section dedicated to "Issues." You should also skim through the press releases and speeches posted in the "Newsroom."

Example: Sen. Sherrod Brown's issue page on education not only states his position on specific issues – like student aid reform legislation – it also includes links to related press, multimedia and legislation.

4. **Again, respect communications preferences.**

Most federal policymakers prefer that your initial communications be letters or contact form submissions. You can also try the main phone number for their Washington, D.C., and district offices; ask to be directed to a staffer concerned with education policy. State legislatures are more likely to list direct e-mail addresses or phone numbers for their members.

As with funders, personal introductions to policymakers from friends and colleagues are a great way to gain access and favor.

Connect the Dots
Think about the key issues your organization is working on. Search for champions among your state legislators, mayors, council members, school board, superintendents, etc.

HOW-TO: MAKE A GOOD FIRST IMPRESSION

You never get a second chance to make a first impression. In this guide, we offer our best advice for making a good, first impression on policymakers. We have organized this advice into two scenarios: introduction by e-mail/letter and introduction by phone/in-person meeting.

Introduction by E-mail/Letter

Often, an e-mail or letter is your first communication with a policymaker that you do not have an existing relationship with. Your e-mail or letter should have three parts, unless otherwise specified:

- **Opening:** Introduce your organization and the problem it is working to resolve.
- **Explanation:** Explain why the policymaker should care about your issue or program.
- **Closing:** Express interest in discussing a potential alliance further.

Opening

State, upfront, that the policymaker represents your organization and its beneficiaries. Then, take a critical look at the boilerplate language used to describe your organization and issue. Start by asking yourself these questions:

- Am I using too much jargon?
- Could I be more concise? Use punchier language?
- Does my organization come across as different or unique?
- Is our breadth and depth of experience communicated?
- Do we mention top line accomplishments or successes?
- Is the issue presented as urgent?

Consider adding these elements, if they are not currently included in your boilerplate:

- History
- Mission
- Beneficiaries
- Goals
- Programs
- Outcomes/Achievements

Example: The Ad Council is a private, non-profit organization that marshals volunteer talent from the advertising and communications industries, the facilities of the media, and the resources of the business and non-profit communities to deliver critical messages to the American public (mission). The Ad Council produces, distributes and promotes public service campaigns on behalf of non-profit organizations and government agencies (beneficiaries) in issue areas such as improving the quality of life for children, preventive health, education, community well being and strengthening families.

The Ad Council has endeavored to improve the lives of all Americans (goal) since first creating the category of public service advertising in 1942 (history). Ad Council icons and slogans are woven into the very fabric of American culture. From our earliest efforts including "Loose Lips Sink Ships" and Smokey Bear's "Only You Can Prevent Forest Fires," to the iconic “Friends Don’t Let Friends Drive Drunk” and of course, "A Mind is a Terrible Thing to Waste" (programs) – Ad Council PSAs have been raising awareness, inspiring action and saving lives for more than 70 years (outcomes).

Explanation
The explanation will be the most tailored part of your e-mail or letter. It is where you tell the policymaker why your work is important and why he or she should support it. Customize this part of the e-mail or letter by:

- Describing how the policymaker's goals and priorities align with yours;
- Referencing related legislation the policymaker is supporting; and
- Infusing language used by the policymaker throughout (i.e., words found in speeches or press releases on the policymaker's website).

Example: Rep. Dave Reichert (D-WA) summarizes his position on education in the following paragraph. Your communications to him should include the highlighted words.

Congressman Reichert believes that it is imperative for all students – no matter their age, income, or race – to have access to the very best education possible. He supports strengthening our public schools and granting states and districts the flexibility needed to provide every child the quality education they deserve; adequately funding programs for special-needs students; and making college affordable for all students seeking higher education.

Closing
Your initial communications with policymakers should always suggest opportunities for future interaction. Close your e-mail or letter by requesting a phone or in-person meeting. Mention that you will call in a week or two to follow up and answer any questions the policymaker has.

To ensure the impression you make is memorable, consider including materials as attachments* to your e-mail or letter. Be sure to include only those materials you are most proud of. For example:

- Website and social media links
- Informational and promotional materials
- Multimedia that brings your organization's work to life

*When sending an e-mail to a policymaker, include links rather than attachments, where possible. The last thing you want to do is send an e-mail that clogs the recipient's inbox.

Introduction by Phone/In-Person Meeting
If you are lucky, you may have the chance to interact with a policymaker or staff member over the phone or in-person. This is an opportunity, as discussed in the Funders section, for which you will want a strong elevator speech. There are other nuances to communicating by phone or in-person with policymakers and their staff, which we discuss below. For the purpose of this guide, we assume you have been invited to brief a policymaker on your organization or issue.

Meetings with policymakers and their staff can be as short as five minutes. It is important that you come prepared and maintain control over the flow of the meeting. Here are some tips from the Council on Foundations, which it distributes to members in advance of Hill visits:

- **Control the Flow:** Provide brief introductions and then go right into key messages.
- **Provide a Personal Story or Real-life Illustration:** These are more memorable than statistics.
- **Briefly Cite Statistics:** Share current local, regional or state data to support your case.
- **Be Concise and Honest:** Make clear the relevance of the issue and solution to their constituents.
- **It's OK to Say "I Don't Know:"** A policymaker or staffer may ask a question you don't know the answer to. Politely explain that you aren't sure and offer to follow up.
- **Don't Forget the Ask:** This is the most important part of the meeting. See the tiered list of sample asks in the guide below.
- **Be a Resource:** Offer to serve as an expert resource for your policymaker.
- **Exchange Contact Information:** Come equipped with staff business cards.
- **Leave Materials Behind:** Include key contact and organization information.

Connect the Dots
Evaluative data originally collected for funders can be used to make your case with policymakers.

HOW-TO: MAKE COMPELLING ASKS

Picture this: You hear from a policymaker that he or she is interested in following up on your letter, application or brief meeting. You schedule either a phone call or meeting, during which you will be expected to "State Your Case" for support. Here is our best advice for making a winning pitch, as compiled during the Shark Tank session at the July 2011 KnowHow2GO Learning Community meeting.

- **Organize your pitch.** Structure your presentation in a 2-1-2 format.
  - Two points to frame the problem
  - One point around the ask
  - Two points on what the result will be if the ask is fulfilled

- **Persuade your audience.** In any pitch, the ultimate goal is persuasion. If you are going to convince someone to do something, you have to make the value proposition very clear.
  - Clarify what is in it for the audience
  - Explain why the ask is urgent now
  - Support your points with relevant facts and statistics; use hard numbers rather than percentages to demonstrate real changes and goals
  - Highlight how your work is different from what has been done before

- **Know your audience.** Always customize your pitch with the audience in mind.
  - Make it valuable to and for them
  - Demonstrate how finely attuned your work is to their priorities

- **Demonstrate credibility.** Highlight your experience and why it is relevant.
  - Highlight the people you work with or the organization you work for
  - Describe a past project that was successful
  - Bring a "living testimonial" to speak to the work you do

- **End strong.** Close by succinctly reiterating your ask, how the policymaker can play a part and how that action will impact the community.
  - Finally, to help your audience remember what you said, leave materials behind. It is better to do this at the end of the presentation than the beginning. An example of a strong leave-behind is a flash drive containing fact sheet files.

Pitching Policymakers
Check out this video report on the asks Florida students made of policymakers following ENLACE's Student Policy Conference.

As previously suggested, practice is the key to success for both informal and formal pitches. Show the policymaker how serious and passionate you are about the opportunity by rehearsing your pitch, incorporating feedback from colleagues, and adapting your pitch in response to questions.

Sample Asks

There are a wide range of asks commonly made to policymakers. We list many of those asks below. Please note that it is better to make the more complex asks of policymakers whom you know are invested in the issue or with whom you maintain a good relationship.

- Agree to subsequent meetings or discussions
- Vote for or against legislation
- Sign a pledge
- Mention your organization in a speech, tweet or website/blog post
- Link to your organization’s website
- Attend an upcoming event
- Conduct a site visit
- Participate in meetings with community members
- Write a “Dear Colleague” letter encouraging others to vote for or against legislation
- Co-sign or write an op-ed on your issue
- Sponsor legislation

HOW-TO: PLAN EVENTS THAT HONOR AND ENGAGE POLICYMAKERS

One of the best ways to ensure your spokespersons get more than five minutes with policymakers is to host an event that honors or engages them. Policymakers will be more inclined to attend if they believe that, in doing so, they will receive positive media attention. Refer to the Media section of this toolkit for tips on making that happen.

Following are suggestions for events that will attract policymakers. We include examples inspired by KnowHow2GO partners, wherever possible.

- **Policy Conference:** Many organizations host policy conferences at which business and community leaders or students discuss the state of college access and make recommendations for improvement. Policymakers are often invited to address attendees of such conferences.

  This year, the Ohio College Access Network (OCAN) hosted its first Student Education Policy Institute. Teams of students representing colleges and universities came together to debate issues pertaining to college access. Delegates presented the findings to the state legislature amidst budget discussions.

- **[Organization] Day:** Many organizations plan a one-day event during which its spokespersons meet with several federal or state policymakers. They arrange meetings in advance, recruit and train spokespersons, and develop materials to leave behind.

  On Florida CAN! Day, the Florida College Access Network sent 100 first-generation college students to Tallahassee to tell state policymakers about the barriers they overcame to attend college. The students suggested how to minimize those barriers for future generations.

Connect the Dots
Students can be some of your most important spokespeople. Identify and train them to speak on behalf of your organization.

- **Policy Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner:** It is common for organizations to plan educational events for policymakers and their staffs, during which they make the case for supporting college access.

  OCAN hosts a Partners in College Access and Success Policy Breakfast each year that convenes policymakers, business and community leaders, and higher education institutions. The event is hosted by state legislators; speakers include leaders from partner organizations.

- **Policymaker Awards:** Similar to the event described above, this is a reception at which an organization honors policymakers who have supported their cause throughout the legislative session. Invitees include policymakers and their staffs – including those who are and aren't being honored – business and community leaders, and media.

- **Town Halls:** Organizations sometimes sponsor a series of town halls at which issue experts discuss college access and take questions from community members. The most successful town hall meetings include presentations by policymakers. A particularly committed policymaker might agree to co-sponsor the series.

Securing policymaker participation in events such as these is the first step toward building a lasting relationship, which will ultimately benefit the students you serve.

HOW-TO: BUILD A LASTING RELATIONSHIP

Policymakers are subject to frequent requests for support. It is important that your organization remain firmly in the minds of policymakers between opportunities for outreach. You might consider reaching out to your contacts on the following occasions or for the following reasons:

- Answer any inquiries promptly and thoroughly
- Send occasional e-mails about program milestones or successes
- Alert policymakers to meetings, events or activities they may be interested in attending
- Recognize policymakers' support through external communications channels
- Cultivate personal relationships with your contacts

Remember, policymakers support many more organizations than yours. Make it your goal – professionally and personally – to become their favorite.

TEMPLATE MATERIALS

E-MAIL PITCH

Dear [Name]:

I am writing on behalf of [organization] to tell you more about the work we are doing to [goal]. As background, we are an [organization type] that [description]. We also lead KnowHow2GO[State], a national college access campaign sponsored by Lumina Foundation, the American Council on Education and the Ad Council.

Our focus, of late, is on a program that [description]. [Program name] is [innovative/unique/etc.] because [explanation]. It is also very much in line with your efforts to [goal].

I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to discuss further how we can collaborate on college access and success in [state]. I can be reached at [phone number] or [e-mail address]. I will plan to follow up by phone later this week to learn more about your priorities for the legislative session.

Thanks very much for your consideration,

[Name]
[Title]
[Organization]

PHONE SCRIPT

Hi, [Name]. I am calling on behalf of [organization]. Is now a good time to tell you about our work to [goal]?

Great. In brief, we are an [organization type] that [organization description]. We also lead KnowHow2GO[State], a national college access campaign sponsored by Lumina Foundation, the American Council on Education and the Ad Council.

Our current focus is on a program that [program description]. We thought [program name] might be of special interest to [policymaker], because of our shared focus on [focus].

Would you be willing to discuss the potential to work together in the near future? If so, what next steps can we take to ensure you have all of the information you need about our [program name] program?

Thanks very much for your time. I will [reiterate next steps]. I look forward to talking with you again soon.

PITCH LETTER

Dear [Name]:

Research shows that young people want to go to college and recognize that postsecondary education is essential to their future. But, despite their high aspirations, many low-income and first-generation students do not believe college is meant for them. They are deterred by obstacles such as affordability and lack of knowledge, preparation, guidance and encouragement.

The gap between students' ambitions and accomplishments is evident in [state]. In order to complete our goal for 60 percent of adults in [state] to achieve a quality postsecondary degree by 2025, we must graduate an additional [number] per year or a total of [number] students[4].

[Organization] is an [organization type] that [organization description]. We have an [X-year history or proven track record] of [accomplishments/successes].

We also lead KnowHow2GO[State], part of the national college access campaign sponsored by Lumina Foundation, the American Council on Education and the Ad Council. Launched in January 2007, KnowHow2GO utilizes communications and partnerships to educate 21st century students and their mentors about the need to prepare for college.

Our focus, of late, is on a program that [description]. [Program name] is [innovative/unique/etc.] because [explanation].

I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to discuss further how we might work together. I can be reached at [phone number] or [e-mail address]. I will plan to follow up by phone later this week to learn more about your priorities for the legislative session.

Thanks very much for your consideration,

[Name]
[Title]
[Organization]

[4] State-specific statistics can be found in the Lumina Foundation report titled "A Stronger Nation through Higher Education."

MEETING AGENDA

- Introduction
    - Introduce organization and policymaker contacts
    - Summarize the meeting agenda

- Background
    - Describe your organization
    - Explain the issue or problem you're working to resolve

- Signature/Priority Program
    - Describe the program, using relevant multimedia and collateral
    - Invite a program beneficiary to give testimony

- Program Support
    - Make your ask for support or legislative action
    - Answer questions from policymaker contacts

- Next Steps
    - Ask the policymaker what information they need to move forward
    - Schedule a follow-up discussion or meeting

STATE YOUR CASE

MEDIA

MEDIA

Media are not only an important audience for outreach, but also a channel for communicating to other key audiences. Scheduling briefings with reporters and inviting them to cover your news and events are effective ways to build awareness of the great work you organization does. We detail these suggestions and more in this section of the State Your Case Toolkit.

Connect the Dots
As you develop new programs, keep the media in mind. Are there ways to make your program appeal to them in addition to students? Where possible, build media opportunities into your work.

HOW-TO: IDENTIFY KEY AUDIENCE MEMBERS

Determining which media outlets and reporters are most likely to support your organization requires you to spend time studying each outlet and its website.

The same applies to education influencers on social media. Research who is talking about the issues that matter to your organization – and what their opinions and priorities are – and target your outreach accordingly. Start by taking these four steps:

1. **Search for outlets, influencers and their websites.**

   Traditional media outlets typically list education as a subsection of news. Click on that section, review what education news is being covered and determine which reporters are writing the stories most relevant to your organization.

   To determine the digital influencers covering education in your state, conduct searches of "[insert state] education blog" and "[insert state] education Twitter."

   Example: The education section of the *Des Moines Register*'s website features articles on the governor's education agenda and college enrollment, among other issues.

   Searches for digital influencers in Iowa turned up *Des Moines Register* blog posts, and the Changing Iowa and Iowa Core Curriculum blogs. Popular Twitter handles include @IADeptofEd and @IowaSEA.

2. **Identify relevant reporters.**

   Once you have identified a traditional media target, search his or her name on the publication's website. The body of recent coverage should help you to determine whether he or she should be a priority for outreach. You will need to similarly review posts and tweets by digital influencers to determine their areas of interest.

   Example: Referring back to the *Des Moines Register* example, the article on college enrollment was written by Jens Maunel Krogstad. Additional searches reveal that Krogstad is the newspaper's higher education reporter and is, therefore, a very strong target.

3. **Determine their unique interests.**

   Every higher education reporter and influencer has specific issues they tend to write about. Take the time to scroll through their most recent articles and posts. Patterns will very quickly emerge.

   Example: Jens Manuel Krogstad covered immigration before taking on the higher education beat. He might have special interest in stories about college access services available to immigrant students.

4. **Find ways to get in touch.**

   Reporters are typically as accessible to the public as policymakers, if not more accessible. It is important to research traditional means of getting in touch – like phone and e-mail – as well as nontraditional means, like Twitter. Reporters are using Twitter with growing frequency to identify stories and sources.

   Try one mode of communications at a time, starting with the one you are most comfortable with. Reporters and influencers tend to be most reachable via social media channels.

   Example: To continue our previous example, an e-mail address for Jens Manuel Krogstad is included with his byline on the *Register*'s website. A quick search of his name plus Twitter revealed that his handle is @jensmanuel.

Connect the Dots
One great way to track the issues reporters are covering is to set Google Alerts for their names. You can also set alerts that track what college access news is earning coverage near you. Set alerts for things like "higher education and Iowa" or "college access and Des Moines."

Media List
As you identify reporters likely to cover your organization, build a media list that tracks contacts and conversations. It is advisable to also make note of reporters' recent articles and tweets, so you can reference them in your communications.

Note: While print publications tend to assign reporters to education beats, broadcast outlets rely on their personnel to be generalists. Reach out to television assignment editors and radio news directors.

Example: We expanded the media list started for Iowa in order to illustrate the types of media you should include in your media list.

Outlet	Name	Title	Phone	E-mail
Associated Press	Scott McFetridge	News Editor	515-243-3281	smcfetridge@ap.org
Courier	Andrew Wind	Education Reporter	515-232-2383	andrew.wind@wcfcourier.com
Des Moines Register	Sheena Dooley	Education Reporter	515-284-8451	sdooley@dmreg.com
Des Moines Register	Jens Manuel Krogstad	Reporter	515-490-8162	jkrogstad@dmreg.com
Education Blog (Des Moines Register)	Staci Hupp	Blogger	515-232-2383	
Extra Credit Blog (Courier)	Emily Christensen	Blogger	319-291-1570	emily.christensen@wcfcourier.com
Iowa City Press-Citizen	Brian Morelli	Higher Education Reporter	319-339-7360 ext 402	bmorelli@press-citizen.com
KCAU-TV	Jamie Lempares	Assignment Editor	712-255-9999 ext 221	jlempares@kcautv.com
KCCI-TV	Tom Torpy	Assignment Manager	515-247-8841	ttorpy@hearst.com
KCRG-TV	Mike Wagner	Managing Editor	319-398-8487	mike.wagner@kcrg.com
KDWI-FM	Jonathan Ahl	News Director	515-725-1700	jahl@iowapublicradio.org
KFXA-TV / KGAN-TV	Rod Jackson	Managing Editor	800-222-5426	news@kfxa.tv / newsreleases@kgan.com
KMEG-TV	Jeffrey Raker	News Director	712-252-5634	jraker@kpth.com
KTIV-TV	Kristie VerMulm	News Content Manager	712-239-4100	kvermulm@ktiv.com
KWWL-TV	Dan Shillinger	News Director	319-291-1240	dschillinger@wjbf.com
Telegraph Herald	Stacey Becker	Education Reporter	563-588-5648	sbecker@wcinet.com
The Gazette	Diane Heldt	Higher Education Staff Writer	319-339-3158	iowacity@gazcomm.com
The Tribune	Kathy Hanson	Education Reporter	515-663-6933	khanson@amestrib.com
WHO-TV	Matt Baker	Assignment Manager	515-242-3585	matt.baker@whotv.com
WOI-TV	Nate Shambaugh	Assignment Manager	515-457-1026 ext 157	nshambaugh@myabc5.com

HOW-TO: CONDUCT EFFECTIVE MEDIA OUTREACH

The following announcements by your organization might be of interest to media:

- New programs or partnerships
- Program milestones
- Events or activities
- Anniversary celebrations
- Changes in leadership
- Responses to current events

Proactive Media Outreach

The steps for conducting proactive media outreach are as follows:

- **Write an e-mail pitch, media advisory and/or press release:** An e-mail pitch is best for announcements that are less timely or significant; a media advisory is used to announce an upcoming event; and a press release provides reporters with the background needed to write a story. See the Templates in this section.

- **Distribute your media materials:** If your news is built around an upcoming event, e-mail a media advisory to your list one week in advance. Send a press release on the day of the event or announcement.

- **Follow up with a phone call to gauge reporters' interest:** Reporters receive several media advisories and press releases each day. To ensure that yours is seen, place a follow-up call. Ask your contact if he or she received your e-mail and offer to briefly explain its contents.

Reactive Media Outreach

Other occasions for outreach might arise in response to local or national coverage of college access:

- **Letter to the Editor:** These are written in response to newspaper or magazine articles. They are less than 150 words in length and must refer to a recently published article. For submission instructions, consult the publication's website. Be sure to sign the letter with your name, your organization's name and your contact information.

- **Op-Ed:** Like letters to the editor, these appear in publications' opinion sections. However, they are not written in response to a published article. They should be crafted when college access becomes a hot issue nationally or locally – and you can offer an informed opinion. Op-eds can run up to 650 words.

HOW-TO: RECRUIT AND TRAIN SPOKESPEOPLE

When your organization has a story to tell, it is important that you be prepared. The first step is to recruit and train spokespeople. These are individuals within your organization – as well as beneficiaries and supporters – who are well-respected, well-spoken and well-versed on the issue of college access.

Following are types of individuals to consider recruiting as spokespersons:

- **Organization Leadership:** Designate at least one person from your organization to take calls from and give interviews to media. Organizational spokespersons typically include the executive director or CEO, and the communications director.

- **Partner Leadership:** Third-party spokespersons can help to build the credibility of your organization. Including leadership from partner organizations in media opportunities is also good practice, if that leader represents an organization you want to work closely with.

- **Business or Community Leaders:** These individuals can also lend credibility. They demonstrate how your organization's impact extends well beyond the students it serves.

- **Students:** Students are your most compelling spokespersons. They are the ones who can speak to the success of your organization and its programs in preparing them for college.

- **Caring Adults:** The adults who care for student participants in your programs can also be effective spokespeople. They include parents and teachers who have experienced the effect of your organization or program on their student.

- **Advocates:** Supporters of your organization, especially policymakers, can help to tie your organization to an issue of local or national importance. Their endorsement can also build support for your organization or issue.

Connect the Dots
Students can be some of your most important spokespeople. Identify and train them to speak on behalf of your organization.

Train these organizations by providing them with the Supporting Materials contained in this toolkit, as well as materials or talking points prepared specifically for the announcement at hand.

Preparing for Conversation with Media
When your proactive media outreach piques a reporters' interest, you should be prepared to fulfill their requests for information and spokespeople. Training spokespeople in advance of interview requests will increase the likelihood that they

will portray your organization in a positive light. Use the following series of tips to train your spokespeople for interviews.

Keys to Success

- Confidence: Be firm, decisive.
- Clarity: Talk in terms most adults will understand.
- Conviction: Put your heart and mind into the interview.
- Control: Say only what you want.

Media-Friendly Talking Points

- Clear: Be brief and use strong language.
- Credible: Derived your information from facts, experiences and common sense.
- Persuasive: Convey emotion or third-party validation.
- Actionable: Make a clear request for an action that is easy and good.

Interview "Dos"

- Make two or three points – and make them often.
- Deliver those points clearly and succinctly.
- Be assertive and positive.
- Put things in context.
- Support your claims with data.
- Connect the facts in your answer to your broader themes.
- Stick to what you know.
- Do your homework.
  - Research the media outlet and reporter.
  - Keep up-to-date on the latest news.
- Practice
  - Know your elevator speech (see Funders section).
  - Have a colleague conduct a mock interview with you.

Interview "Don'ts"

- Don't do an interview until you're ready.
- Don't speak for anyone else.
- Don't pretend that you know an answer if you actually don't.
- Don't speculate.
- Don't let falsehoods stand.
- Don't give too much detail.
- Don't ramble or use jargon.
- Don't be sarcastic/ironic.

HOW-TO: MAKE COMPELLING ASKS

Picture this: You hear from a reporter that he or she is interested in a briefing. You schedule either a phone call or meeting, during which you will be expected to "state your case" for coverage. Here is our best advice for making a winning pitch, as compiled during the Shark Tank session at the July 2011 KnowHow2GO Learning Community meeting.

- **Organize your pitch.** Structure your presentation in a 2-1-2 format.
  - Two points to frame the problem
  - One point around the news
  - Two points on what the result will be if the news is covered

- **Persuade your audience.** In any pitch, the ultimate goal is persuasion. If you are going to convince someone to do something, you have to make the value proposition very clear.
  - Clarify what is in it for the audience
  - Explain why the news is timely now
  - Support your points with relevant facts and statistics; use hard numbers rather than percentages to demonstrate real changes and goals
  - Highlight how your work is different from what has been done before

- **Know your audience.** Always customize your pitch with the audience in mind.
  - Make it valuable to and for them
  - Demonstrate how finely attuned your work is to their beat

- **Demonstrate credibility.** Highlight your experience and why it is relevant.
  - Highlight the people you work with or the organization you work for
  - Describe a past project that was successful
  - Bring a "living testimonial" to speak to the work you do

- **End strong.** Close by succinctly reiterating your news and how it will impact the community.
  - Finally, to help your audience remember what you said, leave materials behind. It is better to do this at the end of the presentation than the beginning. An example of a strong leave-behind is a flash drive containing fact sheet files.

As previously suggested, practice is the key to success for both informal and formal pitches. Show the reporter how serious and passionate you are about the opportunity by rehearsing your pitch, incorporating feedback from colleagues, and adapting your pitch in response to questions.

Sample Asks
The asks you make of reporters will vary based on their level of awareness about your organization and its work. Reserve the more complex asks for reporters who you know or who have covered your organization in the past.

- Mention your organization in articles about college access
- Quote your leadership or beneficiaries in relevant articles
- Agree to an informational meeting
- Attend an event
- Cover an event or announcement
- Publish your op-ed
- Write an article or series on your issue and programs
- Profile your organization, its leadership or its beneficiaries

HOW-TO: BUILD A LASTING RELATIONSHIP

In today's crowded media landscape, it can be difficult to keep your organization top of mind among the reporters you have targeted. You might consider the following:

- Send an occasional e-mail about a program milestone or success
- Cultivate personal relationships with your contacts
- Find creative ways to connect events and observances to your work

Observances and Events by Season

Season	Observances/Events
Fall	Back to school; start your college search; pull your applications together; American Education Week (November)
Winter	Prepare and register for the ACT/SAT; apply for financial aid; College Goal Sunday (February)
Spring	Explore colleges; prepare for and take Advanced Placement tests; high school graduation; National Decision Day (May); National Teacher Day (May)
Summer	Keep up your momentum

TEMPLATE MATERIALS

E-mail Pitch

Dear [Name]:

I thought you might be interested to know that on [day, month and date], [organization] will [announcement]. [Explain why the announcement is timely or newsworthy].

As background, [organization] is an [organization type] that [organization description]. We also lead KnowHow2GO[State], a national college access campaign sponsored by Lumina Foundation, the American Council on Education and the Ad Council.

I would be happy to provide additional information or connect you to one of our spokespeople. You can reach me at [phone number] or [e-mail address]. I will plan to follow up by phone later this week.

Best,

[Name]
[Title]
[Organization]

Phone Script

Hi, [Name]. I am calling on behalf of [organization]. Is now a good time to tell you about [announcement]?

Great. In brief, [talk about the announcement, explaining why it is timely or newsworthy].

Is this something you would be interested in covering? I would be happy to provide additional information or connect you to one of our spokespeople.

I will send a follow-up e-mail with [information requested]. I can also give you my contact information, in case you have any further questions. It is [phone number] and [e-mail address]. Thanks very much for your time.

Media Advisory

MEDIA ADVISORY
Date
Contact

[Organization] Hosts [Event]

What:	On [date], [organization] will host [event]. [Briefly elaborate on the event, contextualize it and explain its intended impact.]
When:	[Date and Time]
Who:	[Spokespersons in Attendance]
Where:	[Address]

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Date
Contact

[Organization] Announces [News]
[News] will [impact]

[City, State] – [Organization] today announced that [news].

[Elaborate on news.]

[Quote spokesperson talking about the news.]

[Contextualize the news and explain its intended impact.]

[Quote another spokesperson talking about the news.]

For more information, visit [URL].

About [Organization]
[Descriptor]

OP-ED

Note: Please feel free to open with the statistics contained in these first few paragraphs; however, please put them – and everything else – into your own words. The entire report referenced below can be found here.

Earning a college degree pays. A recent survey of the general public by Pew Research Center revealed that adults who graduated from college believe they make $20,000 more a year as a result of having a degree. Adults who did not attend college believe they are earning $20,000 a year less as a result.

These estimates are very close to the median gap in annual earnings between a high school and college graduate as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau in 2010: $19,550.

It's no wonder, then, that 94 percent of parents surveyed said they expect their child to attend college. But, even as college enrollments have reached record levels, most young adults in this country still do not attend a four-year college. Research among middle and high school students found that 42 percent were unsure how to achieve their goals. This helps to explain why low-income students and those who are the first in their families to pursue postsecondary education are severely underrepresented on college campuses.

Encouraging and preparing more deserving students to pursue higher education is critical to the future of our community and our country. Last year, in [city/state], for example, [local statistics or accomplishments]. That's why I'm so excited about a program, KnowHow2GO, which teaches students in the 8th through 10th grades to make smart choices today that will help them prepare for college tomorrow. Developed by Lumina Foundation, the American Council on Education and the Ad Council, the KnowHow2GO campaign is designed to be easy to communicate and simple to understand; and its website is a treasure trove of useful tools for both teens and the adults who want to help them succeed.

Although KnowHow2GO is a national program, its effectiveness depends on collaborations with local organizations, such as youth-oriented groups, places of worship, colleges and universities, and businesses. I urge my fellow [sector] leaders in [city/state] to join me in supporting this campaign and helping to build a workforce – and a community – for the future.

BRIEFING AGENDA

- Introduction
  - Introduce organization and media contacts
  - Summarize the meeting agenda

- Background
  - Describe your organization
  - Explain the issue or problem you are working to resolve

- Signature/Priority Program
  - Describe the program, using relevant multimedia and collateral
  - Invite a program beneficiary to give testimony

- Next Steps
  - Ask the reporter what other information you can provide
  - Encourage him or her to use your organization as a source and consider it for coverage

STATE YOUR CASE

PARTNERS

PARTNERS

The success of your organization's college access work will be closely tied to your ability to build a cohesive network of organizations to implement campaign activities. Capitalize on each partner's reach and influence to ensure that as many students as possible benefit from your programs.

HOW-TO: IDENTIFY KEY AUDIENCE MEMBERS

Potential partners for your organization or network can be difficult to pinpoint, given their diversity. Start by honing in on the types of partners you would most like to have. Then, identify potential partners and conduct the research necessary to determine how best to approach them. We recommend following this process:

1. **Prioritize your partners.**

   Assess your current roster of partners to determine any gaps you would like to fill. For example, are your partners mostly college access organizations, and you would like to work with more youth-serving groups? Or, do you want to add more institutions of higher education, high schools and middle schools that can implement your programs? Consider these types of partners for your outreach, ordering them based on your organization's priorities:

   - Businesses
   - Community-based organizations
   - Faith-based organizations
   - Foundations
   - Local education funds
   - Scholarship providers
   - Schools and institutions of higher education
   - State policymakers and agencies
   - TRIO and GEAR UP programs
   - Youth-serving groups

Connect the Dots
Include partners you would like your organization to have in your gap analysis. Start to fill those gaps by convening your current partners to determine who has connections with whom.

2. **Identify top targets.**

   Once you know what types of partners you are most interested in pursuing, do some research to identify top targets in each category. Targets might include organizations with large memberships and good reputations, or organizations that you have existing relationships with.

   Example: If you wanted to form partnerships with faith-based organizations in Connecticut, you might start with the Conference of Churches and Covenant to Care for Children. Both appear very high up in Google search results for "faith-based organizations Connecticut."

3. **Do your homework.**

   Partnerships should be symbiotic. You need to have a good sense of what an organization can offer you and what you can offer an organization before approaching them for partnership. Do some research to determine the programs and issues each organization values. Build your ask around those, if you consider an organization a strong target.

   > **Example:** The Conference of Churches divides its programs into outcomes that make beneficiaries "healthy, wealthy and wise." Your ask should reference and appeal to its "wise" programming.

4. **Find the right contact.**

   Make this effort part of your online research. Start by looking at the organization's "Contact Us" page. You may need to use the general phone number and e-mail address provided. But, before you do, look for a page on the organization's staff; it is usually part of the "About Us" section. Identify relevant staff – whose job descriptions include partnerships or programs – and search for direct contact information. If unavailable, use the general contact information and direct your correspondence to that person.

   Remember, as with funders and policymakers, tap your network first to see if a friend or colleague can introduce you to a potential partner.

   > **Example:** To find the right contact at the Conference of Churches, you would click through "About Us" to "Our Staff." Rev. F. Lydell Brown lll is listed as the Director of Strategic Partnerships; his phone number is provided along with his biography.

HOW-TO: MAKE A GOOD FIRST IMPRESSION

You never get a second chance to make a first impression. In this guide, we offer our best advice for making a good, first impression on potential partners. We have organized this advice into two scenarios: introduction by e-mail/letter and introduction by phone/in-person meeting.

Introduction by E-mail/Letter
Often, an e-mail or letter is your first communication with a potential partner that you do not have an existing relationship with. Your e-mail or letter should have three parts, unless otherwise specified:

- **Opening:** Introduce your organization and the problem it is working to resolve.
- **Explanation:** Explain why the partner should care about your issue and program.
- **Closing:** Express interest in discussing a potential partnership further.

Opening
Take a critical look at the boilerplate language used to describe your organization and issue. Start by asking yourself these questions:

- Am I using too much jargon?
- Could I be more concise? Use punchier language?
- Does my organization come across as different or unique?
- Is our breadth and depth of experience communicated?
- Do we mention top line accomplishments or successes?
- Is the issue presented as urgent?

Then, consider adding these elements, if they are not currently included in your boilerplate:

- History
- Mission
- Beneficiaries
- Goals
- Programs
- Outcomes/Achievements

Example: Powell Tate is a strategic communications firm based in Washington, D.C. While our roots are in public affairs, our capabilities have grown much broader.

Powell Tate was founded 20 years ago by two former White House press secretaries – Democrat Jody Powell and Republican Sheila Tate (history). Today, our staff comes not only from the highest levels of government and politics, but also from corporations, advocacy organizations and media. This diversity of experience enriches the smart and creative thinking we provide to clients (mission/beneficiaries).

A division of Weber Shandwick, Powell Tate is part of a global network of communications professionals. In addition to public affairs, we specialize in corporate reputation, corporate social responsibility, crisis and issues management, creative services, digital communications, events, federal marketing, media relations, social marketing and video (programs). We also offer clients high-quality research and advertising through our in-house units, KRC Research and Sawyer Miller Advertising.

Explanation

The explanation will be the most tailored part of your e-mail or letter. It is where you tell the potential partner why your work is important and why they should support it. Customize this part of the e-mail or letter by:

- Describing how the partner's goals and priorities align with yours;
- Suggesting how you might work together; and
- Infusing language used by the partner throughout.

Example: Below is a description of GEAR UP. Note the highlighted phrases; you should include them in your e-mail or letter.

This discretionary grant program is designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. GEAR UP provides six-year grants to states and partnerships to provide services at high-poverty middle and high schools. GEAR UP grantees serve an entire cohort of students beginning no later than the seventh grade and follow the cohort through high school. GEAR UP funds are also used to provide college scholarships to low-income students.

Closing

Your initial communications with potential partners should always suggest opportunities for future interaction. Close your e-mail or letter with a request for a phone or in-person meeting. Mention that you will call in a week or two to follow up and answer any questions the partner has.

To ensure the impression you make is memorable, consider including materials as attachments* to your e-mail or letter. Be sure to include only those materials you are most proud of. For example:

- Website and social media links
- Informational and promotional materials
- Multimedia that brings your organization's work to life

*When sending an e-mail to a partner, include links rather than attachments, where possible. The last thing you want to do is send an e-mail that bounces back or clogs the recipient's inbox.

Introduction by Phone/In-Person Meeting

You might have the chance to interact with a potential partner over the phone or in-person. For this reason, it is important that you prepare and practice an elevator speech, as discussed in the Funders section. Give a brief introduction to your organization and program, and focus the speech on how and why you might work together to have a greater impact.

HOW-TO: MAKE COMPELLING ASKS

Picture this: You hear from a potential partner that they are interested in following up on your e-mail/letter or brief meeting. You schedule either a phone call or meeting, during which you will be expected to “state your case” for partnership. Here is our best advice for making a winning pitch, as compiled during the Shark Tank session at the July 2011 KnowHow2GO Learning Community meeting.

- **Organize your pitch.** Structure your presentation in a 2-1-2 format.
  - Two points to frame the problem
  - One point around the ask
  - Two points on what the result will be if the ask is fulfilled

- **Persuade your audience.** In any pitch, the ultimate goal is persuasion. If you are going to convince someone to do something, you have to make the value proposition very clear.
  - Clarify what is in it for the audience
  - Explain why the ask is urgent now
  - Support your points with relevant facts and statistics; use hard numbers rather than percentages to demonstrate real changes and goals
  - Highlight how your work is different from what has been done before

- **Know your audience.** Always customize your pitch with the audience in mind.
  - Make it valuable to and for them
  - Demonstrate how finely attuned your work is to their priorities

- **Demonstrate credibility.** Highlight your experience and why it is relevant.
  - Highlight the people you work with or the organization you work for
  - Describe a past project that was successful
  - Bring a “living testimonial” to speak to the work you do

- **End strong.** Close by succinctly reiterating your ask, how the partner can play a part and how that action will impact the community.
  - Finally, to help your audience remember what you said, leave materials behind. It is better to do this at the end of the presentation than the beginning. An example of a strong leave-behind is a flash drive containing fact sheet files.

As previously suggested, practice is the key to success for both informal and formal pitches. Show the partner how serious and passionate you are about the opportunity by rehearsing your pitch, incorporating feedback from colleagues and adapting your pitch in response to partner questions.

Sample Asks

When approaching potential partners, it is important to offer multiple levels of involvement. List possible activities ranging from basic to advanced. This is a good first step toward building a partnership that is mutually feasible and beneficial.

Basic

- Display or distribute your organization's materials
- Link to your organization's website
- Share information with members or customers
- Donate advertising space

Advanced

- Join your organization's steering committee or board of directors
- Recruit other partners for your organization
- Provide in-kind support for events and programs
- Co-sign an op-ed with your organization
- Serve as a media spokesperson
- Develop unique programming
- Become a formal member of your network

HOW-TO: DEVELOP UNIQUE PROGRAMMING WITH PARTNERS

As suggested above, developing unique programming is an activity reserved for your most engaged partners. Working together to develop and execute a program is a great way to take a partner relationship to the next level.

Following are two examples of KnowHow2GO programs developed with national partners. We briefly describe each program and then explain what was in it for us – and what was in it for them.

YMCA of the USA
In January 2007, the YMCA of the USA – and its 165 Black & Hispanic Achievers Programs – became the first national outreach partner for KnowHow2GO. Our staff conducted trainings for YMCA program directors and made presentations to students attending four regional Teen Leadership Summits. At the Summits, we encouraged participation in a co-sponsored contest that challenged students to write and produce radio PSAs about the steps to college. We offered the winning team a chance to meet hip-hop artist Fonzworth Bentley, the voice of KnowHow2GO's "Wanna Go" radio PSA. The creative outlet and incentive motivated students to submit high-quality submissions.

- **For Us:** Expanded the audience for KnowHow2GO, engaged students in campaign messages, created new campaign assets, built association with a preeminent youth-serving group

- **For Them:** Furthered their goal to "strengthen communities," engaged students in fun and educational activities, built association with a national campaign and its co-sponsors

Westfield Corporation
In January 2008, KnowHow2GO joined forces with Westfield Corporation. Westfield selected 15 shopping centers to pilot the partnership, based on their proximity to state partners and the demographics of their patrons. They then required each shopping center to display KnowHow2GO PSAs, distribute campaign collateral materials and host at least one event in coordination with local KnowHow2GO partners.

Our partners in Nebraska planned their Westfield event for April 6-7, when the city of Lincoln hosted the State High School Basketball Tournaments and mall traffic topped 49,000. Westfield Gateway set up booths where EducationQuest Foundation staff could answer questions about college prep. A local radio station broadcast interviews with staff and Miss Nebraska Ashley Bauer, who was on-hand for autographs. That same week, our partners in Illinois staffed an exhibit at Westfield Louis Joliet's annual "Prom Preview." Together, the mall and the Illinois Student

Assistant Commission distributed 350 gift bags to students, which included KnowHow2GO materials.

- **For Us:** Expanded the audience for KnowHow2GO, secured placements for public service advertisements (PSAs), reached students where they are, built association with a major brand

- **For Them:** Demonstrated their commitment to their patrons, fulfilled donated advertising requirements, drove mall traffic, built association with a national campaign and its co-sponsors

HOW-TO: BUILD A LASTING RELATIONSHIP

Once partners have signed on and indicated how they will support the campaign, it will be necessary for you to maintain regular contact with each group. This will help you to mobilize your network, as needed. Maintain contact with partners in the following ways:

- Send occasional e-mails about program milestones or successes.
- Alert partners to meetings, events or activities they may be interested in attending.
- Host regular meetings to keep partners abreast of your activities.
- Recognize partners' involvement through external communications channels.
- Cultivate personal relationships with your contacts (e.g., wish them a happy birthday, congratulate them on their wedding or baby).

TEMPLATE MATERIALS

E-MAIL PITCH

Dear [Name]:

I am writing on behalf of [organization] to tell you more about the work we are doing to [goal]. As background, we are an [organization type] that [description]. We also lead KnowHow2GO[State], a national college access campaign sponsored by Lumina Foundation, the American Council on Education and the Ad Council.

Our focus, of late, is on a program that [description]. [Program name] is [innovative/unique/etc.] because [explanation]. It is also very much in line with [partner]'s efforts to [goal].

I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to discuss further how our organizations might work together. I can be reached at [phone number] or [e-mail address]. I will plan to follow up by phone later this week to learn more about your priorities for the coming year.

Thanks very much for your consideration,

[Name]
[Title, Organization]

PHONE SCRIPT

Hi, [Name]. I am calling on behalf of [organization]. Is now a good time to tell you about our work to [goal]?

Great. In brief, we are an [organization type] that [organization description]. We also lead KnowHow2GO[State], a national college access campaign sponsored by Lumina Foundation, the American Council on Education and the Ad Council.

Our current focus is on a program that [program description]. We thought [program name] might be of special interest to the [partner], because of our shared focus on [focus].

Would you be willing to discuss the potential for our organizations to work together in the near future? If so, what next steps can we take to ensure you have all of the information you need about our [program name] program?

Thanks very much for your time. I will [reiterate next steps]. I look forward to talking with you again soon.

PITCH LETTER

Dear [Name]:

Nothing is more important to the future of our country and its workforce than ensuring today's students can pursue higher education. Thankfully, young people in all socio-economic groups have college aspirations. Eight out of 10 expect to attain a bachelor's degree or higher, according to the U.S. Department of Education. But, despite their aspirations, low-income students and those who are the first in their families to pursue higher education are severely underrepresented on college campuses. Studies show these students often lack the guidance they need to prepare for postsecondary education.

In order to turn these students' college dreams into action-oriented goals, Lumina Foundation, the American Council on Education and the Ad Council launched the KnowHow2GO campaign in January 2007. This multiyear, multimedia effort includes two rounds of television, radio and outdoor public service advertisements (PSAs) – and an interactive website, KnowHow2GO.org – that encourage students in grades 8 through 10 to prepare for college using four simple steps. The steps are as follows:

- **Be a pain**. Let everyone know that you're going to college and need their help.
- **Push yourself**. Working a little harder today will make getting into college easier.
- **Find the right fit**. Find out which school best suits your personality and goals.
- **Put your hands on some cash.** If you think you can't afford college, think again. There's lots of financial aid out there.

In [state], the KnowHow2GO campaign is led by [organization]. We are currently interested in developing partnerships with organizations that work directly with our target audience. I am contacting you to determine if your organization would be interested in partnering to ensure that middle and high school students take the necessary steps to prepare for postsecondary education.

There are many ways that your organization could support KnowHow2GO[State], such as:

- Linking to KnowHow2GO.org or KnowHow2GO[State].org website;
- Integrating KnowHow2GO into your programming; or
- Promoting the campaign in your organizational communications.

I hope you will consider the possibility of working with KnowHow2GO[State]. I will follow up with you by phone to discuss the campaign in greater detail.

In the meantime, if you have any questions regarding a partnership with the campaign, please contact me at [phone] or [e-mail].

NEWSLETTER ARTICLE

KnowHow2GO Comes to [Community]

In order to continue guiding local kids on the path to higher education, [organization] recently joined the national KnowHow2GO campaign. The campaign, which launched in January 2007, is sponsored by Lumina Foundation, the American Council on Education and the Ad Council. Its goal is to prepare low-income and first-generation students to fulfill their college dreams.

U.S. Department of Education studies show that eight out of 10 students expect to earn a bachelor's degree or higher, but few students understand the steps it takes to be fully prepared to go to college. This helps to explain why low-income students are badly underrepresented on college campuses. In response, KnowHow2GO took the extensive to-do list for planning for college and created four simple steps that students can follow with the help of adult mentors. The four steps are:

- **Be a pain**. Let everyone know that you're going to college and need their help.
- **Push yourself**. Working a little harder today will make getting into college easier.
- **Find the right fit**. Find out which school best suits your personality and goals.
- **Put your hands on some cash.** If you think you can't afford college, think again. There's lots of financial aid out there.

The KnowHow2GO campaign includes national public service advertising. You can see the new advertising and learn more about the campaign at KnowHow2GO.org. On the local level, [organization] is working with local youth to [local activities].

Meeting Agenda

- Introduction
  - Introduce organization and partner contacts
  - Summarize the meeting agenda

- Background
  - Describe your organization
  - Explain the issue or problem you are working to resolve

- Signature/Priority Program
  - Describe the program, using relevant multimedia and collateral
  - Invite a program beneficiary to give testimony

- Program Support
  - Make your ask for partnership
  - Answer questions from partner contacts

- Next Steps
  - Ask the partner what information they need to move forward
  - Schedule a follow-up discussion or meeting

Memorandum of Understanding

Note: This template is modeled after the Memorandum of Understanding derived by SoCal CAN for its members. Some information may not be directly relevant to your organization or network.

As a member of [network], ________________________ [organization] understands that we have a responsibility to contribute to the pursuit of its goals. We believe in the purpose and the mission of [network], and we will act responsibly and prudently as members of the network.

As a member of [network], we will:

1. Embrace and uphold [network]'s mission and values to the community.
2. Participate in [meetings/events].
3. Serve on at least one committee.
4. Advertise [network] events and recruit students, parents and staff when asked to do so.
5. Attend at least 70 percent of the professional development programs and trainings offered by [network].
6. Act in the best interests of the organization, and excuse ourselves from discussions and votes where we have a conflict of interest.

7. Stay informed about what is going on in the organization. We will ask questions and request information. We will participate in and take responsibility for making decisions on issues, policies and other network matters.
8. Work in good faith with [network] members, staff and committee members as partners towards achievement of our goals.
9. If at any time the duties as a member of [network] become a challenge, we will immediately discuss them with the steering committee chair, and together we will discuss a plan of action.
10. If we do not fulfill the responsibilities after a 12-month period and neglect to contact the steering committee chair about our status, the steering committee reserves the right to revoke our membership.

In turn, [network] will be responsible to ____________________ [organization] in several ways:

1. We will receive, without request, an annual report of organizational activities and fundraising efforts.
2. We will receive a monthly e-newsletter and invitation to join the online community. [Network] will include announcements we would like to share with the network in the e-newsletter.
3. [Network] staff will respond within one week to any questions we may have as members of the network.
4. If [network] does not fulfill the commitments to member organizations, we can call on the steering committee chair and director to discuss these responsibilities.

Organizational Vision Statement for the Organization (Why we are involved with [network]):
____
____

Signed:

____
Member Organization (Executive Director) Date

____
Chair, [Network] Steering Committee Date

____
Director, [Network] Date

SUPPORTING MATERIALS

KEY MESSAGES

KnowHow2GO is a national effort designed by Lumina Foundation, the American Council on Education and the Ad Council. It is supported by a range of on-the-ground partners across the country. This on-the-ground network is what makes KnowHow2GO a unique initiative.
KnowHow2GO inspires students to seek help and information. The ultimate success of this campaign occurs at the local level, when motivated students become engaged with helpful organizations and caring adults. To help students connect with local resources, KnowHow2GO.org refers students to local and state organizations that can provide additional information and hands-on assistance.

The KnowHow2GO campaign encourages low-income students and those who will be the first in their family to attend college to prepare for college in a way that is both fun and educational.
In order to capture the attention of today's increasingly tech-savvy teens, a college access campaign must be entertaining, informative and as personalized as possible. KnowHow2GO's clever multimedia PSAs and interactive website have proven effective in reaching young people and educating them about the steps they need to take to prepare for college.

KnowHow2GO is designed to empower young people to take action in making their college dreams a reality.
Nine out of 10 young people have college aspirations, regardless of their income level. Still, low-income students and those who will be the first in their family to attend college are severely underrepresented on college campuses. Low-income and first-generation students are less likely to understand the steps they need to take to get to college and the overall complexity of the college preparation process. They often have difficulty getting answers to their questions about college. Unfortunately, some young people are even given the discouraging message that they aren't "college material." KnowHow2GO speaks to students in a practical way that makes it easy for them to get the help they need.

KnowHow2GO breaks the college preparation process into four simple steps that young people can easily understand and implement: 1) Be a pain 2) Push yourself 3) Find the right fit and 4) Get your hands on some cash.
Our campaign is designed to speak to young people in their own language and through communications channels they trust. The four steps provide a road map that young people and caring adults can use to chart a course to college.

The KnowHow2GO campaign is primarily targeted at students, but they can't easily achieve their college dreams alone. Step One is critical– it tells young people to seek the guidance and support of parents and adult role models.

Parents, guardians and caring adult mentors are more apt than students to understand what it takes to prepare for college—from signing up for the right classes to exploring interests. Our campaign tells students that they can take the first step toward higher education by asking a parent or adult role model for support. There is a ground network of local organizations in place across the nation to help ensure that students get the help they need.

ABOUT KNOWHOW2GO FACT SHEET

Young people across all socio-economic groups share similar college aspirations. In fact, nine out of 10 expect to attain a bachelor's degree or higher. But, despite their aspirations, low-income students and those who are the first in their families to pursue higher education are severely underrepresented on college campuses. Studies show these students often lack the guidance they need to prepare for postsecondary education.

To turn these students' college dreams into reality, Lumina Foundation, the American Council on Education and the Ad Council launched the KnowHow2GO campaign in January 2007. This multiyear, multimedia effort has included three rounds of television, radio and outdoor public service advertisements (PSAs) and an interactive website, KnowHow2GO.org, which inspire students in grades 8 through 10 to prepare for college using four simple steps:

1. **Be a pain**. Let everyone know that you're going to college and need their help.
2. **Push yourself**. Working a little harder today will make getting into college even easier.
3. **Find the right fit**. Find out what kind of school is the best match for you and your goals.
4. **Get your hands on some cash**. If you think you can't afford college, think again. There's lots of financial aid out there.

To ensure that students and adult mentors who connect with the powerful messages of the PSA campaign can easily find real-time, on-the-ground assistance, KnowHow2GO has built and continues to support a strong grassroots network of partners. To date, **15 state coalitions** and more than **30 national partners** have signed onto the campaign.

CAMPAIGN MILESTONES FACT SHEET

Since its launch in January 2007, KnowHow2GO has been extremely successful in reaching young people with its messages.

- **National Partners:** At the national level, we have forged partnerships with nonprofits and government agencies that offer expertise, credibility and access to young people in both English and Spanish. To expand outreach to young people, we enlisted the YMCA of the USA and local affiliates of the Boys & Girls Clubs of America. We also formed a partnership with Westfield Corporation, which involved linking pilot shopping centers to local KnowHow2GO partners.

- **State Partners**: At the state level, we have equipped 15 states – California, Connecticut, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Michigan, Montana, Nebraska, Ohio, Tennessee, Washington and Wisconsin – with the tools and training needed to launch successful local campaigns. These states recruited local partners, planned their own KnowHow2GO events and worked with us to create branded materials.

- **Donated Media:** The campaign's success to date can also be measured in terms of donated media support and visits to KnowHow2GO.org. Since January 2007, KnowHow2GO earned more than $185 million in donated media. KnowHow2GO.org has received more than 1.75 million visits and 5.5 million page views. Impressively, more than half of those visitors arrived through direct traffic, suggesting familiarity with the KnowHow2GO brand.

WHY KOWHOW2GO FACT SHEET

KnowHow2GO is an extraordinary national public service campaign that is transforming the way low-income students and those who are the first in their family to pursue postsecondary education prepare for college. Students are putting into action KnowHow2GO's four recommended steps to make their college dreams a reality. By working with KnowHow2GO, you will have an opportunity to be part of a prominent national campaign and will have a chance to help young people prepare for college. Partnership with KnowHow2GO provides a number of tangible benefits, including:

- **Association** with a national public service campaign and KnowHow2GO's highly respected sponsors – Lumina Foundation, the American Council on Education and the Ad Council. By partnering with KnowHow2GO and its sponsors, you can increase awareness about your company or organization and generate positive recognition for your commitment to helping America's youth attend college.

- **Access** to national and state networks of partners that are working to help teens turn their college dreams into reality. Since launching in January 2007, KnowHow2GO has signed on more than 30 national partners, including youth organizations like the YMCA of the USA, and 15 state coalitions to promote its messages in California, Connecticut, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Michigan, Montana, Nebraska, Ohio, Tennessee, Washington and Wisconsin.

- **Connection** to America's teens – a highly sought-after, young and energetic market that can be hard to reach. By hosting KnowHow2GO events or participating in college promotion activities, you will have an opportunity to directly demonstrate your commitment to college access for young people.

- **Recognition** by the media, policymakers, community groups, faith-based institutions and multicultural organizations for your involvement in the campaign. KnowHow2GO has a national presence and has received support from a diverse group of stakeholders including the YMCA of the USA, the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, the National College Advising Corps, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute and the United Negro College Fund. As a KnowHow2GO partner, your commitment to young people and to college access issues will be recognized by these audiences.

- **Indirect advertising** for your company or organization through your support of the campaign and America's young people. KnowHow2GO will include information about your organization in our communications. We also will feature you as a partner on the KnowHow2GO.org website.