Responding to Media Requests

Media requests have increased recently in response to COVID-19. These requests may draw upon expertise from faculty and staff who have not had much experience in working with the press. If you receive a media inquiry, please reach out to M. Yvonne Taylor so she can help. She also may reach out to you to see if you are available to respond to a reporter.

Many people feel uneasy about speaking with a reporter because they fear being misrepresented or misconstrued. It’s fine to ask a reporter what their questions will be so that you can prepare. For print media, you can also write your responses in an email, which gives you more control over your quotes. Though it is not customary to be given a draft of a story before it goes to print, it doesn’t hurt to ask.

Below are a few tips to keep in mind when talking with the press.

- Take time to gather your thoughts.
- Decide on a few key points you’d like to convey, and have factual and anecdotal examples ready to share.
- Anticipate difficult questions, and instead of saying “no comment,” explain why you can’t or won’t answer the question.
- Give short, jargon-free answers to help reporters who tend to use short quotes and sound bites.
- Remember that nothing is “off the record.” Anything you say could end up in the news.
- Please remember to mention your college affiliation.

Our office would also like to share the story when it comes out and promote you and our college’s expertise, so please let us know when it is published.