



**national  
healthy marriage  
resource center**

# **NHMRC July Webinar Transcript**

**Getting the Message Out: Working With the Media**

Moderator: Patrick Patterson

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## Getting the Message Out: Working With the Media

**Operator:** Ladies and gentlemen thank you for standing by. Welcome to the National Healthy Marriage Resource Center and July 2008 webinar. During the presentation all participants will be in a listen only mode. If at any time during the conference you need to reach an operator, please press star zero.

As a reminder, this conference is being recorded Wednesday, July 23, 2008. I would like now to turn the conference over to Patrick Patterson, Project Manager for the National Healthy Marriage Resource Center. Please go ahead, sir.

**Patrick Patterson:** Thank you (Shaun). Again, I want to say welcome. If you notice, we are giving a few more minutes. We have new technology this time around so we gave a few more minutes for folks to log on to this webinar. But we want to extend a welcome to you all for joining us for our July webinar. Again, we're excited.

The topic for this webinar is Getting the Message Out: Working with the Media. During the early part of the year/end of last year, we asked you guys about several topics that you wanted to hear about. One of them was again media, and so we've tried to find what we thought were some of the best speakers on this topic to share during this webinar. So we're very excited about that.

As we get started, I want to introduce Michelle Clune, the National Healthy Marriage Resource Center Federal Project Officer to provide welcome greetings. Michelle?

**Michelle Clune:** Thank you Patrick. Welcome to everybody. Just wanted to say I hope this web goes well in that it will provide all grantees and (unintelligible) working in the healthy marriage field some tips and some good practices for not, you know, not only getting your message out but also using it as a recruitment tool so that you have, you know, more people interested in asking questions about your particular program. So with that I will turn it back over to Patrick.

**Patrick Patterson:** Thanks Michelle. Our presenters for today's webinar represent programs that are actually doing a very good job of outreach as well as marketing. So I'll introduce them as a group now and I'll introduce them previous to each presentation. We have Julie Baumgardner from First things First, Nisa Muhammad from Wedded Bliss Foundation, Tonya Waite from Longview Wellness Center, and Joe Fuentes from Media Quest and partner with Longview Wellness Center.

A few housekeeping notes before we get started, for most of you that might take notes. As you're listening to a training or a web or some kind of presentation, this web is being recorded, and so we plan to afterwards post the recording along with a FAQ document that represents the questions that we were answered - able to answer and some that we might not have been able to answer during today's web. But those of those will be posted on the Healthy Marriage Resource Center's Website, which is [www.healthymarriageinfo.org](http://www.healthymarriageinfo.org) seven to

nine business days after this web concludes.

The second point that I'll make is you probably were all aware with the last few announcements about this webinar, we are using webinar technology. We're actually using an upgraded version of that today. And so to give you guys a peek into how to ask questions using this new technology, I'll like to introduce (Stephanie Wofford) to go through a walkthrough on how to ask questions using the webinar technology. (Stephanie)?

**(Stephanie Wofford):** Thank you Patrick. For those of you who are regular visitors to our webinar, you'll notice that the console and the screen has changed quite a bit since we were all together last month. The slide here shows you at the top of your screen you should see word the Q&A. If you click on that, you will get a drop down box where you can type your question in and where you will receive your answer.

If you want to - for everyone who asks a question - we encourage you to ask questions throughout the presentation. You will receive an automated response that thanks you for your question, lets you know that it has been forwarded to the facilitator. Patrick will then facilitate questions after the presentation.

So what this does is frees up your console so that if you choose to ask another question throughout the presentation you may do so. You may also dock your question box if you would like. And I will highlight here. There's a little grab section. If you'd like to click on that, you can drag it over to the side of your screen or onto your screen, and it will make that question and answer pane a stand alone window. Thank you Patrick.

**Patrick Patterson:** Thank you (Stephanie). We're very excited about this web. Of course the technology also. So we'll go through for today's web the objectives -- these are three fold. The first objective for today's webinar we envision by the end of this webinar participants will learn experience based and effective strategy for engaging the media in an effort to promote your healthy marriage program and events. This is kind of a dual purpose here program by itself, but also events that you may have that's related.

The second objective that we have - we envision that by the end of this webinar participants will learn effective methods and strategies for building and fostering relationships with their media. Many programs have done many things, but it's a unique skill, a unique ability to work with the media is what we're trying to get across today during this webinar. And then the very last of our learning objectives for today is to share key components of successful public awareness campaigns.

Our presenters again are (unintelligible) to do that. So without further adieu, we'll get into our first presentation. Our first presenter is Julie Baumgardner. She is President and Executive Director of First Things First, a one of a kind grass roots organization dedicated to strengthening marriages and families in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

She frequently speaks on marriage and family issues, is a scholar as well as an author, to go into many columns throughout the United States. She has written a family column in Chattanooga Times Free Press, and

we are excited to have her present on this webinar. Julie?

**Julie Baumgardner:** Thank you Patrick. I'm excited to be here. And we're going to start just talking about one of the things that I think is near and dear to all of our hearts, and that's relationships. If you're going to have an effective marketing and media campaign, you really need to understand that this is all about building relationships with the media, reporters, producers, and so on.

So I think the first thing that we have to think about is that people that benefits, not just futures. And it is very true for reports as well. I think a lot of times we think about, "Okay we're out to get people into the classroom," but in order to get people into the classroom, there are definitely conduits that make that happen. And reporters are one of those. And marketing research tells us that it takes seven to ten hits to reach somebody. And I think you have to think about how are you marketing your program to reporters, assignment editors, and producers.

Beyond that, I think that you have to go out and establish yourself as an expert. A good public awareness campaign is multi-faceted in its approach. You understand who your target market is and you are intentional and strategic, and you understand that not one size fits all. Somebody may look at billboards, other people look at in the newspaper, other people listen to the radio.

And so you've got to get out there with this strategic plan, and you've got to, number one, estimated yourself as an expert. And then you've got to understand the world of media. There are a lot of reporters out there. They are overworked and underpaid. And if you help them out by giving them good information, giving them creativity, engaging them in your world, and seeking to understand their world -- in other words, being proactive -- it's very helpful to them, and they tend to be very responsive to you.

So when you send out a press release, its - the press release needs to be created. They can't just say, "This is what we're doing." You've got to give some of the research behind it -- maybe a testimonial if people have been in the class before. And then you've got to call them up and follow up on that press release and find out are they interested in a story? Would they like to come and attend one of your classes?

And the other thing too is that sometimes when you establish this relationship with reports, you find that they'll call you and they'll ask you for information about something that has nothing to do with you. And the temptation is to say, "Oh, you know, that's not our deal. Sorry." But if you can say, "Gee that's not our area of expertise, but let me give you some names of some people that I can think of that might be able to help you," that's worth its weight in gold, because you're establishing relationship.

Again, public service announcements -- we do a tremendous amount of marketing and media in our community. And with the public service announcements, going to the different broadcast stations and going to cable has been very important in terms of helping us to reach a lot of different people. Not only are we going to these people, but we are including these people in the different activities that we do.

And we're not just going and saying, you know, it just so happens that we do have money to pay for some of the commercials that we run, but in addition to that, we're asking them to buy into what we're doing. We're asking them to take some ownership and to be willing to give us some freebies along the way. So when you're going out, don't be afraid to ask. I think the power of the asked question is just so important.

This newspaper piece I put in here because Patrick indicated that I write a column. And number one, I would tell you that I never thought of myself as a writer. Number two, our paper didn't have anything when it came to strengthening marriages and families.

And the way that that column got in the paper was us asking the question, "Have you ever thought about doing a column geared towards strengthening marriages and families," and then being willing to write it for free. And that has been a very powerful tool. It gets sent all over the place. And it creates relationship with us and the paper. We're giving them something and it's a win/win for both of us. So again, the power of the asked question.

Thinking about creative ways to reach out to people -- if you think about reporters, most reporters are very young. Many of them have Facebook or MySpace pages, and so if you haven't thought about outside the box ideas like have a Facebook or having a MySpace page, you might want to think about that. We put stuff on these pages and then we send it out.

I may not have 5000 friends, but I have a bunch of young people who are associated with us who do, including some of these reporters. And so we sent it out to them. And so not only is it giving us information out to these people, but it's also getting all these people to send information to their friends. So it's just another way of thinking about the marketing piece. And if you're not fluent in that, find someone who is.

If you don't have media people on your newsletter list in your database so that they get all your information, that's a very important piece, because a lot of times we'll send out our newsletter and reporters will actually call us way in advance of an event and just say, "Oh I read your newsletter and I saw that ya'll were doing this and such, and can we do a story on that?" So it's a way of again maximum exposure, putting the must out there in just a slightly different ways to these folks.

And the same thing with an e-newsletter. I would say the vast majority of our media get our e-newsletter and they read it. The key to both of these things is you have to be just really careful not to be so text heavy that people don't read what you've put in there.

Again, thinking further about how we engage people in a public awareness campaign. This First Things First television show is actually a partnership between Public Broadcasting System and First Things First here locally. But the really cool piece about this is that your broadcast affiliates -- they have to run so many public service shows within a week.

And so we actually worked with the NBC affiliate to run this on a weekly basis as one of their public service

shows. It's a win for them because they have to have it. It's a win for us because it airs at 6:30 in the morning on Saturday mornings, and you cannot imagine the number of people that are up at that hour. So just again, you may think, "Six thirty am? Nobody's paying attention." But all those people who are used to getting up at 6:30 in the morning, they have their television on and there is your show.

Thinking outside the television box, I think when you normally think about a public awareness campaign, you think about billboards and you think about (carta) buses - bus placards. You think about your broadcast news and cable. But there's a lot of ways to advertise what you're doing by engaging other marketing facets. Video on demand and YouTube is one of those. We actually just filmed a couple of segments. The one with the wedding scene is 60 seconds, the one with the lady in the peach or coral shirt is about 3 seconds, and then the one with me is about 4 minutes. But - I can't remember if I said (Janet's) was - it's 3 minutes.

But these things are all about relationship skills, and so what we've done is we put them on YouTube, we're putting them on their website, we put them on video on demand, and then we can actually send them to people and say, "Hey, check this out." So it's a way to again market, but to a little bit different audience and in a little bit different way.

Clearly FireProof is a faith-based movie, and we can't promote the movie. We can't do that with the grant money, but I put this in here for a very important reason. Sometimes we discount the marketing opportunities that present themselves with something like this. Because people are clamoring around this, there are endless opportunities for us to market our classes to utilize the commercials or PSAs that we have that talk about the importance of marriage and relationship skills, marriage education.

And so when you see something like this in your community man, we ought to be all over it with a plan for sending out PowerPoint slides, for offering our commercials, for asking for opportunities to speak about all the classes, because if you know anything about this movie, you know that it's about marriage. You know that it's about a marriage in trouble, and you know that a lot of people think that if their marriage is in trouble, there's no turning back - - that they can't get it back on track.

And so we can actually get out there and we can be marketing our classes and all of the things that we have to offer folks through this. And I think we just got to be creative and think outside the box.

We have also worked very closely with our billboard company. And just to tell you again about the power of the asked question, we went to our billboard company a number of years ago, because they had a lot of ripped billboards and a lot of old billboards. And I'm talking about the paper poster boards.

And to actually do 20 billboards in our community is around \$12,000 and that's totally impossible on a monthly basis. So we went to them and we said, "You've got a lot of boards that are torn or they are old. And so that's not a good thing for you. We've got a lot of messages that are good messages about strengthening marriages and strengthening families that we would like to get out there, but we can't afford \$12,000 a month. Is there any

way that we could come up with some kind of partnership?”

And they came back to us a week later and said, “We’d be willing to give you 22 boards for \$1000 a month, but you have to come up with the graphics and you have to get them printed.” And I mean that was like major. So just thinking about creative ways to reach out to different people who have access to what you need to be able to get the classes out there.

The same thing with this bus placard. We pay for one month of business placards being up on our busses. We have bus placards that stay up all year long. And, you know, when you think about an economy that’s struggling, a lot of times they have empty space. And it’s not good for them to have empty space. And if they have something that isn’t dated that has information that’s a good message for their community, they’ll often put that back up there, because they don’t want to have the empty space.

So relationship - again it goes back to relationship. But making sure that you have a strong relationship. And when they do something like this, saying thank you. I think a great strategy with the media and with everybody in terms of marketing and engaging them is saying thank you when they do something that is incredibly helpful -- just writing a handwritten thank you note or making a phone call is really good.

We work with our local baseball teams, and we did purchase this placard that goes on the fence. But what we negotiated in the process of having that placard up there, is that throughout every single home game in Chattanooga, three times during that game our commercial advertising all of our classes airs on the jumbotron. And so that is very helpful to us because they have really big crowds at the games.

The next slide is - it has curriculum support on it, but what - oh. Let’s go back up one. It has curriculum support on it, but the reason that I have this in here is because reporters like creative angles. They don’t like ho-hum press releases. And so when you’re doing your press release - I was talking earlier about incorporating research, but make the releases exciting. Invite the reporters to actually come and experience what you’re doing. and seek to - for them - let’s see, I’m going the wrong way. Sorry. Seek to show them that you’ve got some different stories.

Like if you’ve had somebody that’s actually gone through the marriage education or enrichment or they’ve gone through the class for couples in distress and they had a good experience, find out if any of those people would be willing to be interviewed. There are a ton of people, when they have a great experience, who are willing to tell their story.

If Your Clothes Could Talk is actually marketing for connections and it’s just a different way to engage young people. And this got huge press coverage because the reporter for the community news in that area loved the title of If Your Clothes Could Talk. She just went crazy over that. So again, just thinking of things that are a little bit different and out of the ordinary.

We have done date nights with that. we've also - just looking around you and taking advantage of the different things that you have access to that can teach the skills and offer people something different. You know, people have - they struggle so to be in the classroom. This is actually a class that we took down the Ocoee. And that was - that's actually something that we did that was not grant related, but it was just an example. And then the (unintelligible), which is grant related in that it teaches the skills that we're actually teaching in the classroom.

And then the last thing that I have is Movies in the Park. And Movies in the Park is actually an event that we don't pay for through the grant. But my point in this slide is that every single thing you do, whether it's grant paid for or not, should be an opportunity to create awareness to brand your organization, and for people to see you, your organization as the premiere organization in the area that's offering this marriage strengthening, marriage education opportunities.

And that means that you really have to step up your game and pay attention to what's happening around you and figure out, "Okay is there any way for us to fit into that? Is there any angle for us to utilize to actually join in this event or to reach out to people and help them to see that this is an opportunity for us to work together?" And it would be a win/win for everybody. Patrick? I think I'll turn it back over to you.

**Patrick Patterson:** Thank you. Thank you Julie. That was a rich presentation. It was a lot to share I'm sure in the few minutes that you had. There are a few questions that we have. I think we have time for one then I'll turn it to our next presenter. We'll have a general Q&A at the end of this also, so the questions that we can pose to you now we'll pose at the end of this webinar.

But the one question that kind of burning right now is a lot of us in the field know that there are misconceptions about the initiative - the healthy marriage initiative. Describe your approach to educating the media on what it is about and what it's not about, because that could be I think tricky for a lot of us.

**Julie Baumgardner:** You know, we spend a lot of one on one time. And whenever - I mean I get out frequently, as does our marketing person, and we have a conversation with people about what it is and what it isn't. And, you know, the misconception about, "You're forcing people to stay in bad marriages. Oh this is marriage counseling."

**Patrick Patterson:** Right.

**Julie Baumgardner:** "Oh this is a dating service." Consistently we just go down the list and very specifically say, "This is what it is. This is..."

**Patrick Patterson:** Right.

**Julie Baumgardner:** "...what we're doing. Here's the benefits. Here's the research that says this is a good thing. Let's talk about the poverty piece." But it is a never-ending educational opportunity. And at the same

time, it's a marketing opportunity.

So I don't know you're ever done with that, but I think you have to just consistently say what you are and what you are doing. And when they say, "Oh it's this," say "No that's not it. This is it," and be very specific and don't mince words.

**Patrick Patterson:** So you consider it to be a very continual process.

Julie Baumgardner: It's absolutely. And the reason for that is because it's like a revolving door at a lot of these places. The newspaper, the television stations, and even in other places people come and go very quickly. And so people don't understand what we're doing, especially because a lot of the information - the misinformation that's out there.

**Patrick Patterson:** Correct.

**Julie Baumgardner:** And so I think you have to be proactive with this. I think you really have to consistently be out there. You've got to consistently be talking with the reporters, the assignment editors, the producers, the people that can actually make it possible for you to get coverage for your announcement to be placed in the newspaper or on the television or for you to get an interview. You've got to be consistently educating them.

**Patrick Patterson:** Okay. Well we've got a bunch more questions for you but we'll turn over to our next presenter. Thanks again Julie. Our next presenter is Nisa Muhammad. Nisa is Executive Director of the Wedded Bliss Foundation a National Initiative to create healthy relationships, healthy marriage -- healthy marriages, excuse me, and better outcomes for children in the black community.

She is the creator of Black Marriage Day, celebrated every March for more than 200 cities around the country organizing their community to show the benefits of marriage. Wedded Bliss Foundation is Miss Muhammad's vision to bring resources, support, and direction to the black community so happy marriages become the norm rather than the exception. Thank you Nisa. The time is yours.

**Nisa Muhammad:** Thanks Patrick. I'm going to talk about the work that we do with really small organizations, churches, community groups, to organization Black Marriage Day events.

And what we kind of tell them is really give people - give the media something to talk about. And for a lot of the organizations that we work with, sponsoring a Black Marriage Day event is their entrée into the whole marriage movement, into the whole marriage initiatives, because they don't have a federal grant but they have a church ministry or they see that marriage work as part of what they're doing for their community. And so we try to help them organize their work around a Black Marriage Day event. And really attracting the media is a crucial part of this.

Last year we developed a Black Marriage Day kit for cities around the country that were interested in doing a Black Marriage Day event in which anybody can do around the country. And in that kit we provided fact sheets on marriage, because a lot of - they said a lot of these organizations that we work with are starting from scratch -- that they don't know anything or they know very little. They don't have any tools, resources, have very little funds to work with.

So we created a kit that included fact sheets for them, a template for a press release that they could just insert their organization's information in around their event. We created a PSA for them that could be played on CD and as well as on the radio.

We created the tools for them, and the people that we work with created the programs. And they were very happy to say that they were part of a whole national effort to celebrate Black Marriage Day. So we're going to show you some of the things that people did and some of the activities that were involved with them in terms of Black Marriage Day 2008.

(Unintelligible) let me (unintelligible) to the next one. Wait a minute. Okay - oh. Okay we had worldwide participation. I mentioned 200 plus cities. We had 37 states, Africa, Europe, the USA, military bases around the world. We got dozens of proclamations, thousands of couples, and really, really a wide range of media coverage.

And I was just really surprised in terms of getting letters and emails from people in London and Nigeria. You know, "Hey we heard about Black Marriage Day. Can we get involved? We want to do an event as well." People did very, very creative events. And one of the things as Julie said, you know, you have to think out of the box. And people really thought out of the box. And as I always said - I tell them, "Give the media something to talk about. You want coverage, give them something to talk about."

Couple churches had vow renewals, there were Tom Thumb weddings where little children, you know, were the bride and groom. Because one pastor said he wanted the children in his church in his congregation to begin to think about marriage now. Not to wait 'til they were teens, not to wait 'til they were older, but he wanted to plant the seeds in the children's minds right then and there that they were going to grow up and be someone's husband and someone's wife.

We instituted something called Marriage Hall of Fame where couples were inducted into the Marriage Hall of Fame, which was a big hit in many cities around the country. Organizations had banquets, they had conferences, date nights for couples. They had marriage contests for teens, programs and activities that really got teens involved in what they were doing.

These are some of the announcements that people had around the country. Just to show you some of the things that were done, the - in Detroit, you know, people had National Black Marriage Day. We gave them a lot of the graphics that they were able to use to do this event, because as I said, we work with the people who like

have no money or next to no money, and, you know, are really starting from zero in trying to create (unintelligible) and they're very interested in the issue of marriage, they want to do something for their community but they really needed resources to be able to do this. And that's what we provided for them.

Black Marriage Day -- one of the things that was really so, so, so amazing were the photos. We asked people to send us the photos of what happened around the country. And the photos were really, really - I mean just amazing. And so we're going to show you some of the photos of the event.

One of the things we asked couples to do was to renew their vows. And it was a very emotional and meaningful experience for a lot of couples who have been married and had what they thought was a good marriage, and, you know, take this time and opportunity to say, "We are renewing our vows with other black couples around the country who are thinking about marriage and doing the same thing that we're doing," was really meaningful for a lot of organizations.

These are some of our happy couples, all faiths, all religions. And this is one of the articles. This article was on the front Page I think of the (Style) section of the Cleveland Dealer - Cleveland Plain Dealer, which was a big thing for the organization -- the Dasi-Ziyad and Family Institute in Cleveland, which was a big deal for them to have this kind of press coverage around a Black Marriage Day event.

We had AP coverage, and the AP story went around the country. We had stories in major city papers, local TV and radio, internet websites did events, black weekly newspapers, it was in church announcements. This was really our best, and each year gets better and better and really each year really prompts us to think outside the box also in terms of what we can do new and different, and what we can do to really aid and assist organizations around the country to have a successful Black Marriage Day event.

This is some of the media coverage, some of the headlines. This is another article from - this is from the Richmond Free Press. And this is the Associated Press story. And what's kind of interesting about this story -- the woman who was in this picture, (Adea Blackman), was doing a program with some girls at a girls program in Richmond, and she asked the girls, you know, "How many of you want to be a mom?" And, you know, all the girls, you know, raised their hands. And then she asked, of course, the million dollar question -- "How many of you want to be a wife?" Nobody raised their hand.

And so it really just highlighted the need for this work more and more -- that, you know, we have to begin to talk to our young people earlier and earlier about the benefits of marriage and why it's important.

Another happy couple -- and this was in - also the Cleveland Plain Dealer. This is another part - another article. These are some more articles from newspapers, and it just really show that people did some very, very creative ideas and were able to get media attention where they had never gotten it before.

And what was I guess the clue for them is they were able to say they were part of a national effort. They were

part of an organized event and an organized celebration that people were doing all around the country, and they had the tools to be able to get their message out.

Another news article. This is a picture of a proclamation that the group in Los Angeles -- there's a group that's called (Halo Helping) (unintelligible) live optimistically they received from Governor Schwarzenegger's office. And they were very excited. They - this was their sixth Black Marriage Day event and this is the first time that they had received a proclamation from the governor. This is in fact a copy of the proclamation -- helping (unintelligible) live optimistically, signed by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.

This proclamation is from the city of Cleveland. And Cleveland was able to get proclamations from the city council, they got a (unintelligible) proclamation, they got a - I think a proclamation also from their congressional black caucus person. They went way out in Cleveland.

This is the picture of a group in Nebraska. Now you were like, "Nebraska?" Yes in Omaha, Nebraska, where there are very few black people to speak of, the governor of Nebraska is presenting a proclamation to this group for a Black Marriage Day.

This is a proclamation from an organization in Maryland who did not really feeling comfortable having it called Black Marriage Day, but still wanted to be a part of the effort, still wanted to do something. So they called theirs Maryland Marriage Day.

And they asked me, "Well, can we do this?" I was like, "It's fine. You know, you don't have to call it Black Marriage Day. We're interested in you getting the word out. We're interested in you getting your services promoted to your community. If you want to call it Maryland Marriage Day, fine." And that's what they did. They got a proclamation for the county commissioner, the Fredrick County Maryland.

This is another proclamation some place in North Dakota. I'm sorry -- North Dakota -- Durham, North Carolina -- the Mayor proclamation from Durham, North Carolina. This is a proclamation that the mayor of the city of Dallas presented to (Friendship West Baptist). (Unintelligible) he was declaring it Black Marriage Day. Friendship West (unintelligible) had all kind of media. Wonderful, wonderful event.

The templates that we created allowed the people that we worked with to create their own idea for unique event. They got political leaders involved and it gave - as we said, this is organized as a technical edge to help get local media (unintelligible), (because) a lot of these people are not savvy in terms of dealing with the media or dealing with political leaders.

But the kit that we produced gave them the material that they need so that if somebody said, "Well can you send me some information on why marriage is important," they could send in the fact that we created called Why Marriage. You know, if they wanted to know, "Well what's this Black Marriage Day all about," they could send them the fact sheet that says the details about Black Marriage Day.

They African-American Healthy Marriage initiative -- we wanted to thank them for their support. They were very helpful to us. Tada. This is what we're doing for Black Marriage Day in 2009. We have a different theme each year, and I think for 2009 it's First Comes Love: (Unintelligible) to Marriage.

And we're working with organizations to develop events that incorporate youth and what it is that they do, because we've got the adults. We - the adults love it. they're excited, they do events year after year. But we want to have more emphasis on getting young people involved.

So our emphasis for 2009 is Guiding our Youth to Marriage. Black Marriage Day is March 22, 2009. And for more information or to join our email list -- because we send out information about Black Marriage Day, about what's coming up, how to get a kit, all that -- people can log onto [info@blackmarriageday.com](mailto:info@blackmarriageday.com) and send us an email.

And for more information, here's my contact information. And that's me with all the arms, because I'm usually doing a whole bunch of things that don't - I don't have a baby, though. Let me get that clear. So that's it.

**Patrick Patterson:** Well thank you Nisa. That was a wonderful...

**Nisa Muhammad:** Thank you Patrick.

**Patrick Patterson:** ...presentation. There's a lot of things that I can think of in terms of questions. And we've got a few times for a few of those now.

I think one of the first ones is I would consider I think most of us would probably this consider to be large - very large scale event planning. And so what are some of the challenges, particularly what you're doing just on a national scale, that you've encountered, and then how have you addressed those for programs that may be thinking about either doing - joining the Black Marriage Day effort or either doing a similar event in a local community. Challenges and how have you overcome those.

**Nisa Muhammad:** You know, for a lot of people - we work with organizations who do very, very, very big events like Dallas (unintelligible) had a conference that Saturday, and then they had church program. And we work with small organization that just do something that's having a vow renewal at their church.

**Patrick Patterson:** Right.

**Nisa Muhammad:** So we work with the gamut. And the thing is that we kind of provide each organization with the tools they need, and we provide technical assistance. I guess the challenge is really helping people to see that they can actually do it. And this year there's going to be a Hispanic marriage day, because I worked with a woman last year, and I said, "You can do this."

**Patrick Patterson:** Right.

**Nisa Muhammad:** You know, we try to inspire people. People think that, "Oh this is so big," it's more than they can do," but it really can be done and it can be easy and we can help you.

**Patrick Patterson:** Well good. One last question for you and we'll move to our last presentation. The hall of fame -- we had a couple questions come in about the Hall of Fame and what that is. And then do you describe or do you identify the criteria that folks decide locally who goes in that, or how is that whole process done?

**Nisa Muhammad:** Okay, yes. The Marriage Hall of Fame -- yes, we give people who are interested in setting up a hall of fame in their community, all the information they need. We give suggested guidelines, we give suggested applications that people can fill out, we give suggested judges that can, you know, review the applications.

So if anyone is interested in hall of fame information, all they have to do is email us and we can in fact send them last - I mean this year's kit. It's an old kit, but we can send them this year's kit so they can see exactly what was included in it. We can send them an electronic version, and then we can have them on our list so that they can get the information for next year.

**Patrick Patterson:** Super. Super. Two quick points I'll make before we move into our last presentation. A couple questions or comment about will the materials that folks are seeing today -- the presentations be available? Yes. If you received an invitation to this webinar, you should have received a presentation, but shortly after we finish today's web, seven to nine business days in fact, these materials will then be posted on the Healthy Marriage Resource Center's website. So I just want to make that plug real quick before we go on to our last presentation. Wonderful job, Nisa.

**Nisa Muhammad:** Thank you.

**Patrick Patterson:** We got a few more questions for you and we'll take those at the very end of the webinar. Again, thanks.

**Nisa Muhammad:** Okay. I'll be here.

**Patrick Patterson:** Super. Our last presentation is from Tonya Waite and Joe Fuentes. I'll introduce them both. We'll do their presentation and we'll take specific for their presentation and then we'll do our general Q&A session for the close of the webinar.

Tonya Waite is company-director of Vow and Twogether -- T W O gether in Texas. Tonya and Justin Waite also direct the Virginy Rules: Abstinence until Marriage Program in Texas. All programs that they operate use mass media campaigns, which have helped launch enrollment and acceptance of their marriage - message at

all age ethnic, social, and economic groups.

Her coy-presenter, Joe Fuentes, is founder of Media Quest, a full-service media firm since January of 1999. With over 20 years experience in advertising and producing, he's an accredited business guru and award-winning producer. Mr. Fuentes' business endeavors include but are not limited to marketing and advertising campaigns, video production, new media, and website design. We're delighted to have both of them present, and I will turn it to them - over to Tonya and Joe. Thanks.

**Tonya Waite:** Thank you Patrick. We are really excited -- both of us -- about being a part of this presentation today. And Julia mentioned something really important in the beginning, and that's relationships -- relationships with reporters and vendors and editors.

And Joe and I have been asked in this last segment to talk about our relationship between marriage coordinator and producer. And it could be the most important relationship -- well maybe next to your evaluator -- that you could ask for.

And this has been such an exciting ride. We've been working together for nine years, and hiring a media producer we as marriage coordinators need to understand our limitations and that in essence we provide the window and they provide the beautiful curtain that everyone sees.

And some of you may be thinking, "Well how am I really going to use this information?" And we want you to look around in your area to see if it's an option for you to hire a local media producer or maybe someone a few hours away. Or if that's not at all possible, maybe using some of the art work and things that have been created by our program and Julie's program and Nisa's program, and using us - contacting us letting our media producers brand it for you, make it yours so that, you know, we can expand this marriage movement.

And I'm going to turn it over to Joe to go through our PowerPoint. And if we want to look on to the Vow campaign, Joe's the developer with the Vow campaign and the We Vow Now program.

**Joe Fuentes:** One of the benefits of finding the right partner within a community is most of the time that person is going to have connections. Someone mentioned earlier of finding right connections -- political connections -- within the community. That's one of the advantages that comes along with somebody who's heavily involved in the media.

So whether you're - you have marketing personnel on staff or if you're interested in bringing in someone from outside to do some of your design work, it really depends on your budget and your insight capabilities. But anyway, what we put together was how do you find the right company or the right personnel to meet your needs? And so we put together a checklist, and I'm going to start going down the checklist. The first thing you're going to want to look at is the quality of work that they deliver. You know, most media companies, even individuals that do design work, most of them have a website.

And so what I would suggest it go to their website, look at the samples that they have on their website, and make sure that the quality of work meets your standards. That's very important.

Second, the reputation of this individual -- you can again go to the website, check references. Most people have a client's list on their website. And I'm at (unintelligible) you can actually call the clients and ask them how well this individual has worked in the past with you. That is a good way of finding references.

One of the reasons I know that this is important is whether or not it's a good matchup. There are a lot of media companies out there, and personally I have a lot of companies walk in my door and ask me to do certain things that are not what I consider moral to do, like maybe designing the website that is not the right kind of website to design, if you know what I mean.

So anyway, I have guidelines of what kind of work I will do. And when this project came along, I was really excited about it. The next thing is experience -- find out what kind of experience is. And we talked about a questionnaire. And Tonya -- she presented me with a questionnaire when she interviewed several media companies. You want to elaborate on that, Tonya?

**Tonya Waite:** Yes. we looked at the questionnaires that - they had to do with social campaigns, non-profit campaigns. Like Joe said, bad associations. We asked to look at several of the print work and if they had done work with youth programs, foundations or the city.

And they also - at that point we kind of found out that it was really crucial to put together your own media survey, because we were just being bombarded with all of these responsible and their folders and their Arbitron ratings and to really put together a good marketing plan you need to listen to your target audience. And the only way to do that was to ask them directly, "What do you listen to? What do you watch? What styles," and things like this. And your media company can help you put that together.

**Joe Fuentes:** Yes. The last thing that I think would be very important to establish up front is, you know, understanding roles. We've established this right at the be - get go with who's the boss. A lot of creative firms will have - if you know any artists -- if you have any friends who are artists -- they're going to have a small ego.

They're going to do a design and they're going to think that that design is perfect, no matter what you say. They're going to think the design was perfect, they're going to think that you're wrong if you want to change the design in any way.

So you're going to have to establish that right up front, you know, you're the boss and, "We're going to hire you to do work for us. So if you're okay with that, then we'll be fine." So that's something that very important to remember and never let go of.

The next thing we want to talk about is communication. Is your message getting through? And what I mean by

that is are you able to communicate with your marketing person, your design person, someone on your staff who is building things that are going to be on a billboard, or the company hire -- are they getting your message through?

First thing, do you have the ability to understand each other? This is really important. Do you feel like the designer is conscientious to your needs? Are - do they constantly stray off of message? Do they try to create something that's just really too beautiful but doesn't have a message in it? That's very important. Make sure that your - you are in the same mindset with the designer.

Secondly, are they willing to pick up the phone and check on questionable areas? What I do a lot of times is with my staff if they're designing - let's say they're designing a billboard. And they have a thought, you know, "If we took this off of this billboard, it would give more white space, it would look better. What do you think?"

What I always do is I pick up the phone and I call Tonya. I say, "Tonya, this is what we're talking about right here. What's your input?" You want to make sure that your designers are willing to do that and to really give you feedback -- to give you the ability to make sure that your message is being delivered clearly.

Last of all, very importantly -- and I insist on this with all of my creative people -- is make sure that they're taking notes. Whenever there's a meeting going on, you want to make sure that there are notes being taken, because in the development of a campaign what happens is generally you sit down and you do a - maybe a focus group, and everybody's throwing ideas out on the table. And this meeting can last up to an hour.

And so what happens is this idea begins to develop. It begins to evolve. And if someone's not taking clear notes, then what happens is you might remember halfway through the campaign where it stayed. So it's important that you request that notes be taken for every kind of creative meeting that you have.

**Tonya Waite:** And we really appreciate that too -- Joe and his staff coming to committee meetings or events or staff meetings. (Unintelligible) sitting in on staff meetings, they might hear a dilemma that we're having, and it doesn't really spoke in to us, but it's maybe a marketing tool that can actually assist with that dilemma. And so their staff picks up on that, so we really appreciate them coming to a lot of our events.

**Joe Fuentes:** Which takes us to participation. Are they willing to get involved? Do you believe in what we are doing? Early on, like I said, I was excited when Tonya spoke to me about this campaign. It was something that I felt like, you know, this is something that I'll feel proud to embrace.

I'll feel like I'm doing something that's worthwhile with the talents that, you know, God's given me. And so I'm really excited about biting into this kind of a program and running with it, because it's something that I really believe. So we're excited about that. And the next thing is would they enroll in experience first hand? That's, you know, you may not think about it, but it helps a lot for a marketing person or for a designer, for that matter, to get involved in the program itself.

My wife and I joined the program, went through the program, and it was really exciting. My first choice of career was to enter into the ministry, and so when I thought about going through this program, I thought, "Well, you know what? It won't hurt. I probably know it all, you know, I've been trained, I've gone through all the counseling courses and all that stuff."

And so I then found out after going through the course and sitting into - sitting in the classes that it was very good. I thought, "My gosh, these people are - they have some good information here. Very useful information." I started thinking of other people that needed to go through the course. Then it started affecting me and my wife in a positive way. We learned a lot from it. I won't go into all that. You all know how wonderful it is.

But it makes a big difference. If you're going to have a design firm, it would be very effective if they actually go through the process.

Last of all...

**Tonya Waite:** Right. Because we really felt like after that point you could market it from a couples standpoint as well as from a public standpoint.

**Joe Fuentes:** Exactly. Exactly. And we got it at that point. We got it. We understood okay. And so a lot of the approval stages we were able to take care of internally. We knew what was going to work and what was not going to work.

And so when we would send proofs to Tonya to look at, we were able to intercept them before they left our office to - and modify them before they went out, and they were closer to the end objective.

The last thing we're going to talk about is trust. You know, we've been working together since 1999 and have developed a trust. And, you know, who's got your back is what I wrote here. And we believe that it's important to be able to have a very candid form of communication where we can be very honest.

There are no hurt feelings. If we're not on target, then she has the ability to just tell me. And then I can listen and try to find out where the course is -- where's the direction. And so it's very good to have that level of confidence in your design team. Having the same goals is also very important. After they're defined, it's very important to have those same goals.

And everything that we've talked about is only achievable when you meet and you have conversations. We try to meet as often as possible, and we just sit down and sometimes burn hour upon hour, but we go over lots of projects that are going on and are able to resolve a lot of issues in those meetings.

**Tonya Waite:** Yes. We probably meet at least a week or two weeks, and it was last March when we launched the We Vow Now campaign. And up to that point, the six months prior we probably had 100 couples in the program. And since last March we've now enrolled over 900. And so the campaign has probably brought in 60

to 70% of that.

And now we're finally seeing the word of mouth kick in. And I mean that's both of our goals is for the word of mouth to lead the program, you know, forward with the majority of the people. And it's just now starting to do that, so I know it's been a success.

**Joe Fuentes:** And with that we hand it back to Patrick.

**Patrick Patterson:** Thank you Joe. Thank you Tonya.

**Tonya Waite:** Thank you Patrick.

**Patrick Patterson:** Excellent presentation. Lot of experience based you can hear throughout both you guys sharing throughout the time. Got time for a few questions. And I think the first one - actually getting a lot of questions coming in now, so we'll - at the end of these couples questions for you guys we'll just open up for general Q&A.

But it sounds like you guys have a very strong partnership. And one of the questions that comes to mind an also has come in is for a new organization that is funded with marriage money and is looking to find or emulate what you guys have, talk them through where they start. How, is it through the phone book, you know, is it local advertising? Where they start...

**Tonya Waite:** Sure.

**Patrick Patterson:** ...to try to emulate what you guys have?

**Tonya Waite:** Well a really nice way that we started the program was actually through bids. It's just one of our company protocols that we look at least three bids. And so that way when you're interviewing people it - there's no hurt feelings involved, because you have to collect these bids. Everybody's scored against the same, you know, system, and you actually do have a - you make up your own scoring system of what you're looking for.

And so they know from the, you know, beginning that you're going out and you're talking to others and that you're going to find the best match for your message, and that it's not personal at that point. And then it turns into a personal relationship and someone that you can ultimately just, you know, trust with everything that the public sees.

**Julie Baumgardner:** Yes Patrick can I add to that?

**Patrick Patterson:** Sure.

**Julie Baumgardner:** When we were starting out, one of the things that we did was we went to people that we were already in relationships with who worked for some of the bigger companies in town who had relationship with ad firms.

**Joe Fuentes:** Yes.

**Julie Baumgardner:** And we asked them, “Who do you think would be passionate about what we’re doing?”

**Patrick Patterson:** Right.

**Julie Baumgardner:** And, you know, for so many of them, they had long term relationships with these people, and they really steered us to talk with a number of people that they thought might not just, you know, be interested in the business...

**Patrick Patterson:** Right.

**Julie Baumgardner:** ...but really be passionate about what we’re doing.

**Patrick Patterson:** Right. Excellent.

**Julie Baumgardner:** Definitely.

**Patrick Patterson:** Joe, did you have a comment on that?

**Joe Fuentes:** I agree. I think that she hits it right on the nail. The key word is passion. It’s...

**Patrick Patterson:** Yes.

**Joe Fuentes:** ...finding someone who’s passionate about what they do. And once you find someone who is passionate, then they’re going to put a lot more effort into it.

**Patrick Patterson:** A second question for you guys -- We Vow Now seems to be the theme or the slogan. How did you know that was it? I mean for folks who are struggling to kind of get a tag for their program, how did you know...

**Tonya Waite:** You want to take that, Joe?

**Patrick Patterson:** ...that this is it?

**Joe Fuentes:** Yes. I would. It was during I believe our second focus group that we had...

**Woman:** (Unintelligible).

**Patrick Patterson:** (Unintelligible).

**Joe Fuentes:** And we had several couples within the focus group...

**Patrick Patterson:** Yes.

**Joe Fuentes:** ...and we were throwing ideas, throwing ideas. And it was almost like a funnel. All these words just kept on throwing, and all of a sudden the word just surfaced -- vow. And then we thought...

**Patrick Patterson:** Yes.

**Joe Fuentes:** ...well okay vow what. And we thought, what (unintelligible) vow. And then we just thought vow by itself.

**Patrick Patterson:** Yes.

**Joe Fuentes:** How powerful is that? And so it really defined the whole organization. And then we added the we vow now part of it later on for the website.

**Patrick Patterson:** Okay. And did you - from that decision that day or that night, did you then go out and test it, or did you say we're going to move forward this?

**Joe Fuentes:** We actually tested it. We did some art work. We actually had our...

**Patrick Patterson:** Yes.

**Joe Fuentes:** ...creative director put together some mock-ups for different styles of how it's going to look on the billboard, how it's going to look on a shirt, how it's going to look on a cap. You know, all those different elements. We presented it afterwards to the focus group again, and the excitement just took off.

**Patrick Patterson:** Wow.

**Woman:** Right.

**Joe Fuentes:** I mean we knew we had it. We know we had - you could see the little icon down at the bottom right corner there.

**Patrick Patterson:** Yes.

**Joe Fuentes:** We tagged it with enriching relationships.

**Patrick Patterson:** Okay.

**Joe Fuentes:** And it worked.

**Tonya Waite:** Because that encompassed engaged couples, living together, married...

**Patrick Patterson:** Dating.

**Tonya Waite:** We wanted something that, you know, had all the target populations involved.

**Patrick Patterson:** (Unintelligible).

**Joe Fuentes:** And we did go the route of trying to figure out, "Okay what - how do we acronym out the word vow." And that was just flat bad, you know.

**Patrick Patterson:** Yes.

**Joe Fuentes:** It was good enough as it is.

**Patrick Patterson:** Super. Well I just want to say thank you both for that presentation. At this point we'll open up for general Q&A. I have about 2 pages - 2 ½ pages of questions, so I'm going to go through the as they are.

There'll be questions that I'll pose directly to one of you or each of you, and then there'll be questions I'll ask that all of you address if you can. And if we do the all questions I'd like for Nisa, then Julie, and then Tonya and Joe to respond.

So I'll start with Nisa on the first question. Since Black Marriage Day is planned so far in advance, how can programs best leverage the media to get the message out early and often?

**Nisa Muhammad:** Well initially I think what they can do to get the message out early and often is that as we send that information, just something out. It's all about, you know, Julie and Tonya have been saying, developing the relationships.

If something happens in your community - like for example - I'm going to use something extreme. You know, there's some kind of murder in the community or whatever.

**Patrick Patterson:** Right.

**Nisa Muhammad:** And, you know, you want to send something to your newspaper, you know, this is a community where there are not strong marriages. You know...

**Patrick Patterson:** Super.

**Nisa Muhammad:** ...coming up next year's Black Marriage Day and we're going to be celebrating marriages in this community. So they tie everything in to marriage some kind of way. That's what I try to do. Anything that happens, I'm going to tie it in and see how marriage fits.

**Patrick Patterson:** How frequent are you - I mean with it being - if we started doing some outreach now. How frequently are you kind of giving folks a reminder and just keeping folks in the loop until you get to March of next year?

**Nisa Muhammad:** In September, which is about nine months out, we're going to start getting people stuff on a regular monthly basis, that they...

**Patrick Patterson:** Okay.

**Nisa Muhammad:** ...can send out. As I said, if anyone is interested in getting this year's kit, we can send that to them. And it has information in it that they can use if they want to start sending people information and say, "Well this is what happened last year" - I mean, "this year."

**Patrick Patterson:** Okay.

**Nisa Muhammad:** And that can start you until we start getting the '09 information out.

**Patrick Patterson:** Okay. Super. Another question. This is for all three of you. This - I'm going to read it directly as it's written. What would you suggest for small markets -- a small market being less than 100,000 people -- rural, agriculture with no local television, and one daily newspaper? What ideas should we pursue?"

I'll re-read the question. "What would you suggest for small markets -- less than 100,000 people -- rural agricultural with no local television and one daily newspaper? What ideas would you pursue?"

**Nisa Muhammad:** Well of course I'm going to say get involved with the Black Marriage Day Event, because you look small to yourself, but when you connect yourself to something much larger, then of course what you're doing takes on a whole another size and life, because it's not just your one little local area, but it's (unintelligible) you're part of a much broader and bigger event that's going on nationwide.

**Patrick Patterson:** Super.

**Julie Baumgardner:** And I would say - I would be going out and I would be looking for every single place where people gather -- churches, restaurants, beauty salons, barber shops, any of the hangouts, community centers. And I'd be developing relationship with them to find out if I could put posters in there, if I could engage them I helping me to...

**Patrick Patterson:** Yes.

**Julie Baumgardner:** ...market to people what they're doing.

And the other thing is I would go to that newspaper and I would figure out how to have relationship with them. Use the letter to the editor, use everything possible to put information out to the people.

**Patrick Patterson:** Very good feedback. Very good feedback. Joe and Tonya?

**Tonya Waite:** (Unintelligible) that's exactly our market -- 75,000 to 100,000 is our two larger markets, and then our other eight counties are very, very rural, and we had to get very creative. And you look at advertising on the top of restaurant tables.

**Woman:** Yes.

**Tonya Waite:** We advertise on the back of little tiny grocery store receipts. And those wives hold on to those grocery store receipts.

**Julie Baumgardner:** That's right.

**Patrick Patterson:** (Unintelligible).

**Tonya Waite:** And it looks, you know, it looks like a coupon on the back. And so - and we've gotten couples in through those little creative means. So you just have to get out there and look around.

**Julie Baumgardner:** And you know something Patrick, sometimes if you develop relationship like with the electric company or the water company...

**Patrick Patterson:** Yes.

**Julie Baumgardner:** ...a lot of times they'll do stuffers in their bills.

**Tonya Waite:** Yes. Yes.

**Patrick Patterson:** That's very creative. Very creative.

**Joe Fuentes:** One other thing that I would add is that a lot more people are getting very involved in web surfing, and so I would say that - join a website campaign, including educational videos...

**Patrick Patterson:** Yes.

**Joe Fuentes:** ...and happenings around the community.

**Patrick Patterson:** Yes.

**Joe Fuentes:** Of course to do that you have to use - a website has to have secondary marketing, so you'd have to use a billboard campaign to drive traffic to your website...

**Woman:** Right, right.

**Joe Fuentes:** ...but then you can have information at all times available.

**Patrick Patterson:** That was - go ahead.

**Nisa Muhammad:** (Unintelligible). Oh was I was going to say one more thing is have a floater at the homecoming parade, whether or not it's the high school homecoming or I don't know if there's going to be a community college in your area, but that's one of the things that we're looking at doing and encouraging people to do. Have a float in the homecoming parade.

All the young people to come out, their parents. Have some of your happy couples on the car waving and, you know, have people passing out fliers about your event and your services. It's a great way - and generally next (to) no cost.

You know, get somebody's car that maybe has a convertible, put some people on it and drive in the parade.

**Patrick Patterson:** Good, good. Lot of options for that particular question. Very good. One of the - I think Joe you touched on it, because I was going to just ask about what kind of virtual presence would folks in that type of neighborhood - would that be an option also, but I think you just answered the question.

**Joe Fuentes:** It's really important, because I'll tell you what, there's a lot of men out there who might know that they're having marital problems.

**Patrick Patterson:** Yes.

**Joe Fuentes:** They won't go ask anybody but they'll log on.

**Patrick Patterson:** Yes.

**Joe Fuentes:** They'll look and see what options are available in the privacy of their own room.

**Patrick Patterson:** Yes. It's funny, I was just laughing because you said they might know. They might not. You know how that is.

**Joe Fuentes:** They know.

**Patrick Patterson:** The couple other questions that I had - this one here's for Julie. How would you advise a new program trying to identify -- and this is kind of technical, so you can answer the best way you can -- budget around media, whether that be allocating staff, resources. I mean percentage wise, or how would you advise a program that's trying to figure out what's the best way to budget for this effort?

**Julie Baumgardner:** Well first off, I'd like around and see what resources you might have, because there might be people in your community -- maybe a stay at home mom, or somebody that's in a college program -- that needs to do an internship and may be willing to work with your for free for little to no cost. Excuse me.

When we first started out, our entire media budget consisted of about \$10,000...

**Patrick Patterson:** Yes.

**Julie Baumgardner:** ...and we fought to get someone straight out of college. We actually have an in-house graphic designer. But for the most of our existence, that has been someone directly out of college. And it's been a very interesting journey to do that.

I think you have to get in this mindset. I mean I'm a counselor by training, so I feel people's pain when they go, "I'm not wired like that." And I would just say to you there's - there are a lot of things that you can do by building the relationships that you have, with people who's like a Joe who's in your community.

And the way you find those people is just start asking a lot of questions about who's out there that likes what we're doing that might be willing to help us as a start-up. We don't have a lot of money, but we have this passion.

And you'd be amazed at the number of people who will step up and help you, so...

**Patrick Patterson:** Yes.

**Julie Baumgardner:** ...you don't have to have a huge budget. And especially what Tonya was just saying about (you don't know how many) the materials that we've developed with grant money. That's available to you

for free, and you don't have...

**Patrick Patterson:** Right.

**Julie Baumgardner:** ...to put it on the air. You could put it...

**Tonya Waite:** Right.

**Julie Baumgardner:** ...and posters and on the web and in PowerPoint in churches before Sunday morning service or on Wednesday. So there's lots of ways to skin that cat without having tons of money.

**Patrick Patterson:** Sure. (Unintelligible) anybody else have a reaction to that? Tonya, Joe, or Nisa?

**Tonya Waite:** I agree. Look at the National Healthy Marriage Resource Site with all of our...

Julie Baumgardner: Yes. Yes.

**Tonya Waite:** ...(unintelligible) that's available. Go to our individual site. We'll help you in any way we can.

**Patrick Patterson:** Super.

**Nisa Muhammad:** I would also say if people could get the DVD from Smart Marriages where Julie did a whole luncheon presentation on things that are available around the country that a lot of the grantees have produced, and a lot of wonderful things that are out there.

**Patrick Patterson:** This might be a great opportunity also -- it's a commercial break -- for grantees that are on the line, the health marriage grantee community of practice that we talked about the last couple of times we were all together, (Isabella) (unintelligible) and on that is a media library that kind of compiles and catalogs all of the media that we receive from grantees across the country.

So it's a great resource for you guys, if you're looking for ideas and just want to see what you produce on a different site.

**Tonya Waite:** (Unintelligible) (good).

**Patrick Patterson:** Say that again?

**Tonya Waite:** I said use that. Don't take that for granted. There's so...

**Patrick Patterson:** Oh yes.

**Tonya Waite:** ...much good material.

**Patrick Patterson:** It's rich. It's rich. It's rich.

**Tonya Waite:** Yes.

**Patrick Patterson:** I would advise anybody who has time, once you hang up or before the end of the week take a look at it, because it's something that we're very proud of. But also (see it as) the critical resource for programs looking for other ideas. So that's just a small commercial there. That was 30 seconds, wasn't it Julie?

**Julie Baumgardner:** Perfect.

**Patrick Patterson:** Good. Tonya and Joe, is there an optimal time to approach the media for advertising? And if so, when is that time?

**Joe Fuentes:** That's Tonya's expertise.

**Tonya Waite:** Meeting with the managers and editors, I mean I did that in the beginning before I even called around to try to get a hold of the reps. I sit down with all the editors and the managers and told them what I wanted. And then they assign a specific rep that they knew and trusted and believed in the project.

**Patrick Patterson:** Yes.

**Tonya Waite:** And then I also approached them with match agreements. Every one of our pay dollars has to be matched with basically, you know, a free dollar. And so if they won't sign that contract with me, then we just don't do business together.

**Patrick Patterson:** Okay.

**Tonya Waite:** And so an optimum time I wouldn't do it during any heavy political season.

No, but a lot of times, you know, your grants and when you get the funding is when you have to go, you know, go after those different stations and rep. But really do a media survey with your target audience first before you ever approach, you know, the different media vendors -- ABC, CBS, NBC, Fox or any of them. Go to your target audience first.

**Patrick Patterson:** Super. Super. Julie, question for you. Have you been able to get - this came directly in a couple times. Have you been able to get any media to attend your classes, and was there a difference afterwards if you have been able to?

**Julie Baumgardner:** Yes. And it was just amazing. I mean, you know, they liked us but then they came and went through a class.

**Patrick Patterson:** Right.

**Julie Baumgardner:** And they are some of our best marketers. So absolutely. And I just really encourage people to try and do that.

**Patrick Patterson:** Okay.

**Tonya Waite:** Now we've just enrolled a CBS reporter and her husband last Thursday, and I'm really excited.

**Julie Baumgardner:** We, you know, as a result of interviews and stuff, we've got a lot of people -- a lot of people -- from the television and radio stations and the newspapers who've ended up coming through our pre-marital education classes.

**Patrick Patterson:** That's good.

**Julie Baumgardner:** So...

**Patrick Patterson:** That's good. It also speaks to the point that you want to have something for them to see when they get there.

**Julie Baumgardner:** Yes.

**Patrick Patterson:** Because that's very important, particularly when you think about the audience that these folks have at their fingertips or at their pens.

**Julie Baumgardner:** Yes.

**Patrick Patterson:** Very important point. Nisa?

**Nisa Muhammad:** Yes.

**Patrick Patterson:** What has been the response of men to Black Marriage Day? What has been the response of men to Black Marriage Day? I mean this kind of goes along the notion of it's harder to reach a lot of guys with these programs. What's been their response to Black Marriage Day?

**Nisa Muhammad:** We've had a great response from men to Black Marriage Day. And I think part of it is because we tend to - we try to incorporate a lot of men in the planning and the programming, and people who are

organizing events around the country.

In California the - where they got the proclamation from the governor...

**Patrick Patterson:** Right.

**Nisa Muhammad:** ...who was a man who organized that event, in Dallas at (Friendship West Baptist Church), there's a man who was organizing that event.

**Patrick Patterson:** Okay.

**Nisa Muhammad:** And a great response. I mean people are waiting for this kind of information to come. They know the value of marriage, they need to be reminded...

**Patrick Patterson:** Okay.

**Nisa Muhammad:** ...of the value of marriage. And they respond well.

**Patrick Patterson:** Oh super. Super. Have you had any responses differently or have you done anything creative at all Julie, Tonya, or Joe, to do outreach for men? I think this goes along with the assumption that you have to outreach differently to men and women with some of these programs. What's been the response and what kind of considerations have you made to make sure you reach that audience?

**Julie Baumgardner:** Our class on home improvements was definitely - improving your home from the inside out and working with Ace Hardware was absolutely geared towards men. And we've done other piece where we've incorporated sports clinics and things that's been geared towards the men so that we're not talking about coming and sitting in a classroom. We're actually going to where men like to go. And we've had good response to that.

**Patrick Patterson:** Super.

**Joe Fuentes:** We have a pretty interesting program called About Face. You want to mention that? It's really...

**Tonya Waite:** Sure.

**Joe Fuentes:** ...pretty cool, because it's a guy - it's his - we actually marketed him. And he's a retired sergeant major. Tough looking guy. And his - we call him - actually we call him Sergeant (Patrick), right?

**Tonya Waite:** Yes. Mr...

**Joe Fuentes:** We did the whole campaign with him, and he has that really true approachable look that men would feel comfortable with. You know, he's the macho dude.

And...

**Patrick Patterson:** Right.

**Joe Fuentes:** ...basically we did a little video with him where he's talking them through the process. What's - he's basically saying, "Here's what's going to happen. We're going to sit down one on one and we're going to just," you know, "talk this thing through."

**Patrick Patterson:** Right.

**Joe Fuentes:** You know, it's just really cool because it lowers the defenses that men have, and it basically gives them a contact - an eye to eye person that they're going to be dealing with. So it was very effective I believe.

**Patrick Patterson:** Super.

**Tonya Waite:** Yes. I agree.

**Patrick Patterson:** I've got time for a few more questions. Oh but go ahead, Tonya.

**Tonya Waite:** I'm sorry?

**Patrick Patterson:** Go ahead. I'm sorry.

**Tonya Waite:** No I just - we were real conscious from the beginning not to make any of our billboards or printed material too feminine, because in this you can think, you know, definitely from a female point of view because you think those are going to be the main ones, you know, calling in. But we were actually pleasantly surprised in the beginning of all of the husbands and the male partners that were calling in from the program. And I think because we were conscious with our marketing.

**Patrick Patterson:** Super. This is a question for all three of you guys. What kind of cultural considerations have you made as you think about your outreach and your media efforts? What kind of cultural considerations, thinking about the difference and the diversity of folks that you might be targeting in your community? How do you address that?

**Nisa Muhammad:** I think for us it's definitely all about a cultural look and a cultural diversity.

But even within that, we'd look at various incomes, we look at programs that fit various education backgrounds. And I think that has to be a sensitivity in whatever we do, that the culture - the diversity has to really be there.

**Julie Baumgardner:** I agree. And we actually have an African-American newspaper here and so we work very closely with them. We have Hispanic radio who - they have a very large Hispanic population between Chattanooga and (Delton). And so we do radio and then we also teach several of our classes in Spanish.

**Patrick Patterson:** Oh super. So...

**Julie Baumgardner:** Yes.

**Joe Fuentes:** So - and we launched three parallel campaigns -- one designated to different types of people. So exactly the same way.

**Tonya Waite:** And that's been successful. I mean purposely planning, like what Joe said, the three parallel campaigns, because when we look at our 900 couples and the backgrounds, the race and ethnicities, we have about 360 that have been Hispanic couples...

**Joe Fuentes:** Yes.

**Tonya Waite:** ...Spanish speaking, and a little over 290 that were African-American couples, and then the rest were caucasian or mixed backgrounds. And so we really pay attention and look at who's enrolling in our numbers constantly to find out if we can adjust the campaign at all.

**Patrick Patterson:** That is exciting to hear. I think the last question -- and this I kind of a general question that's come in many different forms -- where do you get your biggest bang? This is for all three of you guys. What mode of outreach do you get your biggest return on?

**Nisa Muhammad:** A satisfied customer I think.

**Woman:** Yes, definitely.

**Nisa Muhammad:** Right. You know, couples that have - couples or organizations that have done Black Marriage Day events who have gone through the process of trying to do all of that, who then tell other organizations and other groups...

**Patrick Patterson:** Yes.

**Nisa Muhammad:** ...how to do it. The - we get calls off the hook or emails in response to that -- people who

are satisfied with your services...

**Patrick Patterson:** Right.

**Nisa Muhammad:** ...you know, couples who have been to the classes who can say, "This worked for us," you know, "reduced our conflict," whatever. Satisfied customers are your biggest bang.

**Patrick Patterson:** Okay.

**Julie Baumgardner:** I mean a - just to elaborate on that a little bit, because I think just say amen to that a (blue) million times.

**Nisa Muhammad:** Yes.

**Julie Baumgardner:** Probably one of the most important things that we ought to consider in terms of a marketing campaign is your facilitator. If you have really good facilitators and people come and they have a really good experience...

**Patrick Patterson:** Right.

**Julie Baumgardner:** ...they are your absolute best marketing tool.

**Patrick Patterson:** Okay.

**Julie Baumgardner:** If they don't have a great experience and the facilitator isn't very good, they're your worst marketing nightmare. So I think that's really important.

**Tonya Waite:** Yes. And we - on our enrollment forms we also ask each couple, you know, how they found out about the program, who referred them, et cetera. And ditto to everything, but you have to look at what is in your community and who is giving you biggest buy-in.

Like Julie said, her busses or billboards - she had got a big buy-in on billboards. We happen to have a big buy-in on movie theaters, and so we get, you know, almost 13 cents - every time a theater screen pops up, it's around 13 or 14 cents. And so that's been our biggest buy-in and our biggest seller for couples coming in to our program is the theater.

**Patrick Patterson:** Well thank you each. I mean it sounds like as much as we designed outreach efforts through professional networks, we should probably spend as much time or even more time with our personal contacts, with our (unintelligible).

**Nisa Muhammad:** (Unintelligible).

**Patrick Patterson:** That is of great value. With that, we'll close the Q&A portion of this webinar.

We'll now begin to close out.

There are a few reindeers that I want to share with you guys, particularly as it relates to next month. I also want to walk us through our web poll to get your feedback and your thoughts on today's webinar. Before I do that, though, I'd like to extend thanks to each of our presenters -- Miss Julie Baumgardner, Miss Nisa Muhammad, Miss Tonya Waite, and Mr. Joe Fuentes. You would just (allow them). Thank you again for wonderful presentations.

As we get ready to close, we'll pull up a few slides to take your feedback on today's webinar. We have four questions. These answers will provide us a chance to hear what you thought went well today, but also what might we do differently in the future. And so we'll take these questions, but also at the close of this I'll ask you if you send any emails to me or my attention, once we finish up, just kind of suggest other things beyond these questions. We like to receive those as well.

So the first question -- I better understand effective strategies for working with the media. I better understand effective strategies for working with the media.

The polls are open. You can vote. Once you vote, you can change it until the actual screen changes. So you can change it as many times while this is still up. Once it's changed, you can't vote any more of course. Okay (Shaun).

The second question -- I am more informed of the methods for marketing marriage programs and publicizing the message of healthy marriage. I am more informed of the methods for marketing marriage programs and publicizing the message of healthy marriage. Again, same set of options for you to vote.

Third question -- I am more familiar with the key components to include in healthy marriage public awareness campaigns. I am more familiar with the key components to include in healthy marriage public awareness campaigns.

And the fourth question -- I will be able to apply the knowledge presented today to my program. I will be able to apply the knowledge presented today to my program.

Once again, if you have other comments or suggested topics or input regarding today's webinar or future webinars, you can feel free to email me -- Patrick Patterson -- at [info@healthymarriageinfo.org](mailto:info@healthymarriageinfo.org). I'll repeat the web address - the email address -- [info@healthymarriageinfo.org](mailto:info@healthymarriageinfo.org) to provide any other kind of other feedbacks -- you think today went well or things that we might do differently in the future.

A few reminders -- for new and current information we're always trying to update our website. Please go to [www.healthymarriageinfo.org](http://www.healthymarriageinfo.org). That is the National Healthy Marriage Resource Center's website. Again we've tried to make it a useful resource for you guys.

As you hear of things, if you see things that are not on our website you think should be there, please feel free to suggest those to us also. But for new and current information on healthy marriage research and information, please go to [www.healthymarriageinfo.org](http://www.healthymarriageinfo.org).

Next month during the month of August -- August 11-13 -- many of you that are (OFA) federal healthy marriage grantees will be in Washington, DC for the annual conference. We will not have a webinar next month due to the fact that many of you will be there, but also the Resource Center's involvement in the conference. So there will not be an August 2008 webinar from the Resource Center. Just want to make sure you guys were aware of that.

The last point that I'll make is that recording of today's webinar, along with the FAQ document, will be posted on our website seven to nine business days after this webinar.

So again, I just want to thank you all. I again want to thank our presenters for an excellent job, and I bid you a good afternoon. Thanks.

**Operator:** Ladies and gentlemen that does conclude our conference for today. We thank you for your participation and ask that you please disconnect your lines.

END