



## **PARTNERING WITH UNIVERSITY MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS TO PROMOTE NORTH PARK THROUGH MEDIA AND PRESS RELEASES**

### **Guidelines and Overview**

Building a relationship with the media by pitching and distributing newsworthy and trending story lines is essential to generating brand awareness and building a connection to North Park University. There are two types of media placement: earned and paid. Earned media is pitching a story and having it covered in the media without having to pay for a media distribution service. Paid media is distributing a press release through a media distribution service in which services are paid. North Park's goal is to have a mix of earned and paid media (guaranteed placement in syndicated media outlets with the possibility of mainstream and smaller media outlets picking up the story).

### **Expectations/Process**

University Marketing & Communications (UMC) seeks to collaborate and partner with North Park faculty and staff on developing story lines, quality content, accuracy of information, and obtaining quotes. UMC will serve as the copywriter, brand ambassador and final editor/approver of the press release.

### **Qualifications for Earned Media**

- Newsworthy topics that promote the North Park brand, distinctives and positive storytelling (i.e. events, thought leadership, such as published work by faculty)
- UMC to pitch to a database of select media outlets and contacts via email and/or social media (i.e. Twitter)
- Editorial calendar of newsworthy and trending story lines that support North Park's brand and core distinctives
- Lead time: 2-4 weeks

### **Qualifications for Paid media**

- Designated number of press releases each year
- Editorial calendar of newsworthy and trending story lines that support North Park's brand, distinctives and positive storytelling
- Must go through the internal UMC approval process (Senior Communications Consultant, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Marketing, and Senior Marketing Manager)
- 400 word maximum for a paid media press release
- Lead time 4-8 weeks



## Qualifying Questions to Develop, Write & Distribute a Press Release

- Who is the target audience?
- Is the press release aligned and consistent with the president's leadership of the university?
- How does this topic tie into North Park's mission, values and distinctives?
- Which North Park distinctive/s stand out?
- How is this topic trending in the media?
- Who is the main contact/thought leader on this topic?
- Please provide a quote to be included in the press release from the main contact/thought leader

## Getting Started: Step-by-Step Process

1. Ensure that your subject/topic meets the qualifying questions to develop, write, and distribute a press release
2. Open a JIRA ticket
3. UMC will assign the JIRA ticket to a UMC team member
4. UMC to determine if this is a paid or earned media press release
5. Timeline will be set in JIRA (2-4 weeks earned media, 4-8 weeks paid media)
6. First draft: for earned media press releases, copy can be initially developed from University faculty/staff or UMC; paid media first draft will be developed by UMC
7. Second draft: University faculty/staff point person to ensure accuracy of information; UMC to ensure press release best practices, brand standards, and consistent messaging
8. Third draft: University faculty/staff point person to approve
9. Final draft: UMC to approve and distribute