

Amplify Your Voice!

"I think I would use the word "amplify" to describe what this story did. It helped us to get our story out to the greater Grand Rapids community in new ways, and the feedback in Facebook posts encouraged us."

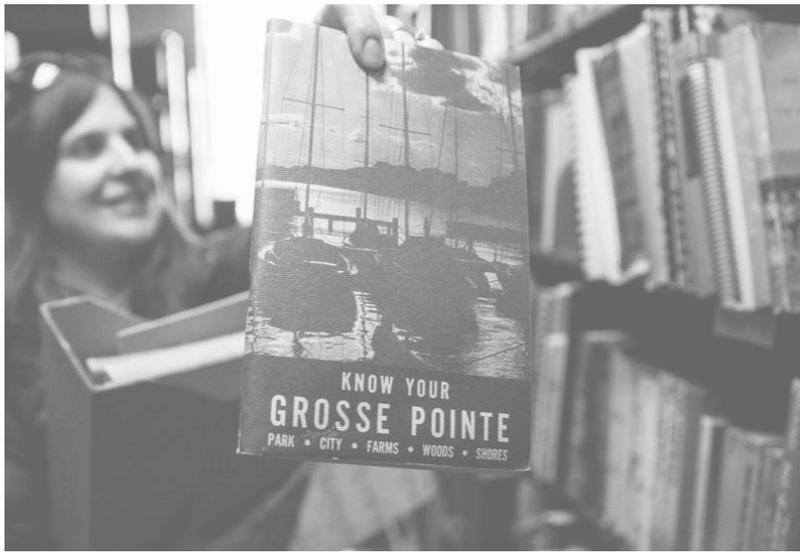
"The story shined a light on our work in a public way that we could not achieve through our own communications channels. This includes reaching new audiences. It also helped document our work through dynamic storytelling, providing capacity support to a smaller nonprofit."

"I received many comments about how this article helped to bring together all of the work of the Healthy Pontiac Coalition in one place. It helped to increase awareness of the breadth of the work the coalition is engaged in and to highlight the partnerships that make this type of community-engaged work possible."

"The students involved in this story, and others by Michigan Nightlight, are doing amazing work in their city and are an inspiration to youth and adults alike. Being able to highlight their work is part of a much larger story about strengthening and re-building Detroit."

A large red square graphic with a white border, containing the text "Amplifying Unheard Voices Through the Media" in white, bold, sans-serif font.

**Amplifying
Unheard
Voices
Through the
Media**



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30 years in nonprofit and for-profit
communications

20 years as a freelance feature
writer and journalist

What we're going to do today

1. Convince you that telling your story is necessary and valuable.
1. Share tips on how to make your media pitches compelling and relevant.
1. Break out into groups to work on your pitches.
1. Regroup, share and answer your questions.

Why it matters

Good work being done deserves to be lifted up

Good food movement in Detroit largely led by women and POC, but that's not always who gets the coverage

Imbalanced coverage perpetuates inequity in resources

The picture can't be displayed.

How can media coverage help
your organization?

Media coverage can help you build capacity to do your job better.

Michigan Nightlight surveys those it covers to see how the coverage from online articles impacted their work. Of those surveyed...

- 73% said it strengthened their brand
- 58% said it grew their social media presence
- 42% said it gained interest from new funders
- 35% said it gained new volunteers
- 19% said it helped them to broker new relationships/partnerships

Coverage has also helped organizations gain new employees, receive donations, gain more program participants and clients, and strengthen funder relationships.



Understanding journalists as a species

Journalists don't work off your organization's promotional plan – they want to tell a great story, not promote your idea or organization

Editors and journalists need to give readers what they want – they might choose a different angle than you'd prefer

Journalists are drowning in information and receive a lot of pitches

Journalists want to hear about how your work impacts real people, how it meets a demand, solves a problem, offers a new way of thinking -- events are not pitches

Journalists are often working on very tight deadlines --return calls and emails promptly

What we liked about this story and the process

FEAST Detroit was impacting the food system in a tangible, positive way, which was the goal of this series

Amit made himself available for an interview before leaving town for 3 weeks, thus not delaying the story

The story was shared widely via social media

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model 

MELINDA CLYNES | WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2018

Food entrepreneurs scale up production at groundbreaking manufacturing facility FEAST Detroit

SHARE      Like 192





What we liked about this story and the process

YWCA linked healthy brain development to a healthy diet and thus got involved with farm to school

Excellent photography (YMCA arranged it so we could photograph children)

Story illustrates real changes good food made in the classroom and with its kitchen staff – multi-level learning

SECOND WAVE
Southwest Michigan

KATHY JENNINGS | THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2018

YWCA helps children eat better so they learn better

SHARE       Like 0



Nina Smith and children in the YWCA Children's Center eat an apple for a snack. Photo by Susan Andress

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What we liked about this story and the process

It answers the question of the headline, provoking people to read it

Real-life examples of the impact of the Farm Bill

Expert sources that discuss SNAP benefits from a variety of angles

BRIAN ALLNUTT | MONDAY, AUGUST 28, 2017

Why Detroiters should care about cuts to the Farm Bill

SHARE       Like 56



Doug Coombe

What's your story??

- Who is the main character? What's the human story element? Is it your story? The story of a client? Customer? Founder or family member?
- What are you doing that's remarkable? Compelling? How does it connect to a larger trend or issue in your community or beyond?
- Why should people care about your story? (more later on media outlets)

Break out session

The Elements of a Successful
Story Pitch



Who is/are the compelling character/s in your story?	What are they doing? <i>What is the story or action?</i>	How does it connect to a larger issue/ topic/trend? <i>Any data or statistics behind the human stories?</i>	Why should people care? <i>Put yourself in the mindset of someone w/out a vested interest. Is it timely? Why?</i>
<p>EXAMPLE: Amit Makhecha starts FEAST Detroit with two other food producers in the old Garden Fresh hummus production facility in Inkster. The facility is huge so they're using the extra space to help small food entrepreneurs scale up.</p> <p>Amit knows first hand the importance of keeping things local: One of his line products was being co-packed in the Traverse City area, but distributed out of the Detroit area.</p>	<p>EXAMPLE: Filling a gap in the local food ecosystem by providing a venue for small-scale food entrepreneurs to scale-up using a shared manufacturing space.</p> <p>Revitalizing an unused production facility in a struggling community.</p> <p>Creating jobs and employing local residents.</p>	<p>EXAMPLE: Often times food entrepreneurs hit a dead end with their processing options. They may go from a home-based operation, to a shared or rented kitchen. But when they're ready to step it up to the next level, contract manufacturers typically have large minimum orders that are too big for a smaller operation. FEAST fills the gap.</p> <p>Only facility of its kind in the country.</p>	<p>EXAMPLE: At a time when the local food scene is booming, FEAST Detroit provides start-ups with the opportunity to grow their businesses and remain Michigan-based. It's good for local business and the economy.</p> <p>A local manufacturer with small-batch production making products more efficiently should result in more affordable, quality local products, positively impacting the whole supply chain</p>

Share what you learned



How to share your pitch

⇒ Be telling your story – blogging, social media, guest blogging, updated and engaging website may capture a journalist's attention.

⇒ Use your connections -- if you "know someone who knows someone" ask for an introduction; make connections via LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram.

⇒ Find the right publications and people --know the audience publications reach and how your story fits.

Finding publications and people

Who's covering the good food
movement

foodtank.com

grist.org

dailyyonder.com

civileats.com

metrotimes.com/blogs/table-and-bar

michigannightlight.com

issuemediagroup.com



ABOUT

Civil Eats is a daily news source for critical thought about the American food system. We publish stories that shift the conversation around sustainable agriculture in an effort to build economically and socially just communities.

Founded in January 2009, Civil Eats is a community resource of over 100 contributors who are active participants in the evolving food landscape from Capitol Hill to Main Street.

Civil Eats was named the James Beard Foundation's 2014 Publication of the Year.

Want to write for Civil Eats? Read our [contributor FAQ](#).

Our Editorial Team



Naomi Starkman

Naomi Starkman is the founder and the editor-in-chief of Civil Eats. She was a 2015-16 John S. Knight Journalism Fellow at Stanford. Naomi co-founded the Food & Environment Reporting Network (FERN) and has worked as a media consultant to *Consumer Reports*, *Newsweek*, *The New Yorker*, *Vanity Fair*, *GQ*, and *WIRED* magazines. After graduating from law school, she served as the Deputy Executive Director of the City of San Francisco's Ethics Commission. Naomi is an avid organic gardener, having worked on several farms.

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TODAY

TOMORROW

THIS WEEKEND

1 [Dannu Stampe Sneaker Series: Emory](#)

Leveraging your Coverage

- Post a link on your website
- Share on social media
- Share with people who are part of your network who can help you boost the signal
- Share with the people quoted and ask them to share with their networks
- E-blast notice of coverage to your stakeholders/supporters

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