



NARFE Community Relations Guide

Decades ago, many membership and civic organizations thought that the best approach to community relations was to focus on the act of donating, rather than being recognized and receiving credit. While noble, this perspective is outdated and limits NARFE's chapters' ability to expand awareness of who Feds are and why they matter.

Since then, NARFE chapters have spent years developing relationships in their local communities through a number of engaging events. From walks or cruises benefitting the Alzheimer's Association to book drives at the local library to silent auctions, NARFE's chapters understand the importance of being active at the local level.

More than just communicating with other local organizations or having a presence in one's town, community relations is also about maximizing the value of that presence. When conducted effectively, community relations can be mutually beneficial, providing value to causes supported by NARFE chapters as well as NARFE chapters.

Whatever the type of activity, community relations efforts should strive to achieve two outcomes:

- Serve as an opportunity to represent NARFE and the larger federal community
- Make a difference in a cause related to NARFE's mission

So, what can chapters do to maximize community relations efforts? First things first, get to know your local media.

BUILD A CONNECTION WITH LOCAL MEDIA

Reaching the right person at the right news outlet is a critical step to expanding awareness and visibility of NARFE and your chapter. Familiarize yourself with an editor or reporter at local newspapers who covers federal benefits-related issues. Identify producers, program directors of local news/talk radio stations. More details and steps to media outreach are covered in NARFE's Public Relations Toolkit.





GAIN ATTENTION/RECOGNITION

Extend the process of community relations by gaining attention or recognition. Below are a few examples of how chapters can capitalize on what they are already doing to expand visibility of NARFE.

Example I: Raising money to donate to local animal shelter.

Rather than simply place a check in the mail, hand-deliver the donation and take a photo with a representative from the organization. Then, submit that photo with a simple caption to the local newspaper's community section. Also, see if the receiving organization would publish the donation in its newsletter or on its website.

Example II: Participating in a run/walk to raise funds for Alzheimer's disease or veterans' health.

Rather than simply attend the event, order NARFE-themed t-shirts or create a banner/signage so that NARFE participants stand out from the crowd. Feel free to approach and introduce yourself to any reporters who might be present to cover the event. Journalists are always looking for depth and breadth in their stories as well as diverse local resources they can turn to for background information or interview.

Other examples of how chapters can be active in the local community

- Speak at high school or college government classes.
- Attend community career fairs to showcase the value of being a federal employee.
- Make a presentation about NARFE to other local civic organizations. This will build relationships within the community and could even lead to strategic partnerships being developed.

A reminder about NARFE dues

Remember, dues money cannot be used for anything unrelated to NARFE's mission.

NARFE Mission statement:

- To support legislation and regulations beneficial to federal civilian employees and annuitants and potential annuitants under any federal civilian retirement system and to oppose those detrimental to their interests.
- To promote the general welfare of federal civilian employees and annuitants and potential annuitants, to advise and assist them with respect to their rights under retirement, health and other employee and retiree benefits laws and regulations, and to represent their interests before appropriate authorities.
- To cooperate with other organizations and associations in furtherance of these general objectives.



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