

# MJSB Media toolkit!

Welcome to the 2008 MJSB Media Toolkit. The first half is info on how to do outreach, the second half is templates you can fix up and use in your community.

Within this kit you will find:

1. Getting the word out on your campus
  - a. Talking to Student Organizations
  - b. Talking to Faculty and staff
  - c. Using Facebook
2. How to Use the Toolkit
3. Outreach Letter to send community groups, professors, or organizational presidents
4. Sample Letter to the Editor (LTE)
5. Sample Press Release for campus and local papers
6. Sample Pitch Call
7. Sample PSA (Public Service Announcement)
8. Fundraising and Event Ideas
9. MJSB Site Overview
10. Check out [www.mjsb.org](http://www.mjsb.org) to learn more

On the MJSB website [www.mjsb.org](http://www.mjsb.org), you will find:

1. Radio PSA mp3 to download
2. Fliers, Handbills & Badges (to create a link to MJSB from your own website)
3. MTR Brochure

A big thanks to organizers of [www.powershift07.org](http://www.powershift07.org) and the SSC Power Shift Media tool kit as this kit borrows from their ideas a lot! For more information on how to use this kit, contact Holly Garret at --- 864-617-2801 or [media@mjsb.org](mailto:media@mjsb.org)

## Getting the Word Out

One of the main ideas behind Mountain Justice Spring Break is that America's dirty coal secrets have remained hidden too long. Coming to MJSB allows you to see the injustices of coal first hand and then join the fight against them. Like all struggles, they are more fun when more fun people are there.

This toolkit will help you recruit up a group of good folks, raise money, raise some awareness, and raise some eyebrows. Even if folks can't come to MJSB, you can use this as a chance to talk to your community about the impending Clean, Just Energy Revolution.

### **Talk to Student Organizations**

Recruiting from among student organizations allows you to target students based on their interests, recruit from a pool of already active students, and harness the groups' resources to further recruitment and fund your trip (see funding section for more details). Here are some things student groups can do:

- Host an MTR and Lifecycle of Coal Awareness week or day, including showing films, raising money, and hosting speakers and discussion about coal industry abuse.

- Invite their members to MJSB
- Provide funds to their members who attend
- Get the word out to their listserv and Facebook sites, and at their group meetings.

Here's how to do it:

1. Build a list of all student groups on campus. Make sure to identify environmental groups, but be creative and broaden your search to include other groups that have large networks (i.e. the ski club, greek system, religious groups, cultural groups, etc). Include contact info for group presidents (email, phone, office address). Feel free to use the outreach letter or create your own.
2. Follow up with a phone call, or just stop by the next meeting. This is essential. Most people don't respond just to an email.

### **Talk to Faculty, Staff and Administration**

Reaching out to the faculty and staff at your school is crucial due to their access to students and funding mechanisms. Faculty and staff are powerful allies. They have a real stake in students' development and may see MJSB as an exciting opportunity for students. They also help you gain credibility and insight talking about energy injustice on your campus and in your community. Professors and staff can:

- Help you find speakers for discussions/presentations and informational days
- Help you find funding for your trip and raise funds for grass roots struggles
- Give recommendations of students to help you recruit for the conference
- Identify students who want to attend
- Use of class / department listserves (preferably an email written by the faculty member encouraging students to attend)
- Make announcement in their class (aka class rap)

Here's how to do it:

1. Make a big list of professors and staff to go to. This would include the professors you know, of course. But also other prominent professors or staff, especially those from biology, environmental studies, history. It could include the directors of community service programs and any sustainability programs. It would also include the Dean, the Vice Chancellor for student affairs, and even the campus president.
2. Send each person an email.
3. Follow up by phone or in person. Schedule a meeting to make a pitch for help.
4. Be persistent and watch the magic happen!

### **Facebook & Other Social Networking Websites**

1. Create a MJSB 2007 facebook group for your network. Use information and graphics from [www.mjsb.org](http://www.mjsb.org) to stock your group page.
2. Search 'Mountain Justice Spring Break' to find MJSB's official Facebook to catch announcements.
3. Provide on-going updates about the conference to keep the group page fresh and dynamic.
4. Use the MJSB website badge (available on website) to provide a flashy link to the MJSB website from your website or Facebook/Myspace page.
5. Post information about MJSB and links to the website on other groups' pages.
6. Use search function to invite students based on their interests.

## How to use the toolkit

### **Letter to the Editor**

Newspapers usually have contact information on the website or in the paper. You can send these in by fax, email, or in person. The purpose of your LTE is to make a strong point about your ideas and to get them published.

Feel free to contact the newspaper after you have given them your LTE and ask them if and when it will be published. Be careful not to go over the specified word limit or they may trim it down. If you don't see your LTE in the next paper, call and ask when it might appear and if they need any more information.

### **Campus Newspaper Press Release**

Your press release is an official document that says what you're all about. If you combine it with a cool picture, or have an event that a reporter can take pictures at, it will up your chances of getting published.

- Write a press release, send it to the news editor, then follow up on the phone and make a pitch for doing a story. Preferably, have a before and after press release.
- Tie it into the national conversation on global warming and current energy discussions.
- Tie it into national and regional days of action like Fossil Fools Day (April 1<sup>st</sup>)
- Submit a great photo of a group event or of MJSB with a good caption.
- Remember most reporters won't open an attachment – include information in your email.

### **Local Paper Press Release**

Energy Justice impacts the local community as well. Global warming and energy use is a hot topic right now, as is the topic of how “young people today just don't care.” Combine the two and use them to promote your local groups events as well as raise awareness about America's dirty energy secrets.

- Newspapers are always looking for interesting local stories about national events
- Think about holding an educational event and/or fundraiser off-campus, perhaps co-host with a local environmental group, social justice group, religious group, etc.
- Use a letter to the editor or article to advertise your campus/community collaboration.

### **Pitching your story**

Newspapers are much more likely to cover a story if you make a pitch, or phone call, to ask if they received your press release. Call your newspaper, or drop by the office.

- It's best to call in the morning, when reporters have fewer deadlines.
- If a reporter calls you with a question, answer it ASAP - they are probably on deadline.
- Offer photos and student interviews.

- Be polite, if they say they can't cover the story this time, find out about deadlines, guidelines, and stories they like to cover for future reference.

### **Public Service Announcements**

Don't be limited by the campus paper – make a Public Service Announcement for the campus radio station or friendly local stations. Use the MJSB PSA mp3 available on [www.mjsb.org](http://www.mjsb.org) or make your own. Instructions are included in this packet.

### **Fliers, Posters, and Handbills**

On the MJSB website ([www.mjsb.org](http://www.mjsb.org)) you will find some pre made Fliers, Posters and Handbills. Some quick tips:

- Print them using old paper – collect old fliers (bright colors are better) and print MJSB fliers and handbills on the back side of them.
- Be sure to add the name of your club, when you meet, and a local contact for someone in your community if people want to go.
- Post fliers/posters early in the semester so people find out as soon as possible.
- Have MJSB handbills on hand at all of your events and tabling. These save paper and give someone something to hold onto.

## Outreach Letter

Dear \_\_\_\_\_, [community group, professor, organizational presidents]

Want to join the fast-growing movement against mountaintop removal coal mining in Appalachia and coal industry abuse across the country? Want to fight global warming? Want to meet other concerned, caring students coming to Appalachia to meet coalfield local residents fighting the destruction on America's oldest mountains? Want to have fun, play music and create art and film to help stop the destruction?

Then come to Mountain Justice Spring Break!

Mountain Justice Spring Break is a week of education and action in the mountains of Appalachia and the rolling hills of Southern Ohio. Standing in solidarity with impacted communities, students will learn about Appalachian culture and how mountain top removal coal mining is destroying it. We will see and hear first hand from the citizens directly affected by different forms of coal industry abuse. Throughout the week, workshops will be held on mountain top removal mining, working with the media, campus and community organizing, and lots more! There will also be service projects and direct actions to spice things up! In addition, plenty of time is left for live music, poetry, hiking and hanging out. MJSB is a great networking place for those old and new to activism to learn new skills, meet good folks, and share their ideas about how to find alternatives to dirty coal. For too long this industry has been killing communities and culture as well as ruining our land and water.

Together with the communities in Virginia and Ohio, we can fight back and move forward to a clean, just energy future, which includes sustainable solutions such as renewable energy. We have to work together to stop global warming, which is fueled by coal. Mountain Justice Spring Break will be held March 1- 9<sup>th</sup> in Southwestern Virginia at Camp Ahistade and March 22-30<sup>th</sup> near Athens, OH in the Wisteria community. Cost for Mountain Justice Spring Break is extremely modest, and includes all workshops, camping, food and entertainment. To register, or for more information, go to <http://www.mjsb.org/> If you would like to be a campus coordinator, email [info@mjsb.org](mailto:info@mjsb.org) or call Alicia Fahrner at 716-579-5759.

We hope to see you in March!

The MJSB Planning Collective

## Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Our school [OR INSERT SCHOOL NAME HERE] uses energy from coal and students here have the right to clean energy that does not harm the culture and people in Ohio and Appalachia. I believe we also have a moral imperative to stand together in solidarity with these sacrificed communities, and fight together for a clean, just energy future.

The Southern Appalachians are the oldest mountains in America and home to a rich history and culture. The communities and surrounding landscapes are currently being threatened by mountain top removal mining, a process by which mountain tops are exploded off to reach thin coal seams below. In addition, the waste is dumped into adjacent valleys, leaving buried streams and toxic slurry ponds behind. Over 1200 miles of headwater streams have been destroyed for the sake of cheap energy.

Coal is more than mountain top removal mining, however. The entire life cycle of coal hurts communities from its extraction and processing, to its burning and eventual disposal of coal waste. Meigs County in Southern Ohio is facing all of these effects of the coal industry from toxic air and poisoned water to collapsing land and an administration that doesn't care.

Students and youth from across the country are fighting back! We will converge in Ohio and Virginia for the second annual Mountain Justice Spring Break ([www.mjsb.org](http://www.mjsb.org)). Workshops and trainings will provide us with the skills needed to affect change, while hikes, service projects and entertainment will insure this is a spring break not soon forgotten! We will witness mountain top removal, listen to affected communities and develop the skills and tools necessary to fight back against dirty coal which is killing communities and fueling our climate crisis.

Join us this March to effectively seek alternatives to dirty coal!

Help support [YOUR GROUPS NAME] to attend in solidarity! Come to group meetings [GROUP MEETING DAY/TIME] or contact [POINT PERSON].

Sincerely,

[INSERT NAME HERE]

## Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, March XX, 2008

**Local Contact:**

Your info J

Your Info J

**Regional Contact:**

Annie Stroud

(330)569-5081

[stroudal@hiram.edu](mailto:stroudal@hiram.edu)

### **Fighting for Our Future!: Instead of the Beach, Youth Take On Coal Industry Abuse This Spring Break**

*[CITY, STATE, DATE]*-In March 2008 hundreds of students from as far away as Vermont and California will attend Mountain Justice Spring Break. Building off the success of last year's event, there will be two spring breaks, March 1-9th in Southwest Virginia and on March 22-30th in Ohio.

Local organizer [YOUR NAME] from [LOCAL GROUP] is hoping to bring a group of students, "QUOTE ABOUT WHY YOU WOULD WANT STUDENTS THERE." Youth attending will learn about the way communities are impacted by the entire life-cycle of coal, from extraction, to processing, to burning it, and finally the disposal of coal waste. They will stand in solidarity with community movements that are fighting against the destructive effects of mountain top removal and coal in their communities. They will also obtain practical skills for community organizing from local leaders, take field trips to see mountain top removal, coal waste disposal and the effects of coal fired power plants first hand. After learning about the ways that coal hurts people and communities, they will take action to stop it.

This conference aims to create a national conversation about the negative impact of the lifecycle of coal and to take actions in order to create a clean, just energy future and the urgency of global warming. Students will be discussing ways to stop global warming while revitalizing the economy through programs like green jobs.

These events are sponsored by the Student Environmental Action Coalition (SEAC), the Southern Energy Network, the Energy Justice Network and the Rainforest Action Network. Events will be open to the public. Join a great week of fun, discussion, and action!! For more information about Mountain Justice Spring Break or to register in VA or OH visit [www.mjsb.org](http://www.mjsb.org) or contact Eric Blevins at [info@mjsb.org](mailto:info@mjsb.org) or [YOUR PHONE NUMBER]

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## Sample Media Pitch Call

“Hi, my name is MY NAME and I’m calling from MY CLUB about a press release sent yesterday. Do you have a moment?”

*If not, find out who you should talk to and when.*

My organization MY CLUB sent out a press release yesterday regarding local youth traveling to Ohio and Appalachia for Mountain Justice Spring Break to stand up against environmental injustice. I was calling to make sure that the press release was received ok and to see if you had any questions about the press release.

*If they didn’t get it or don’t know, ask what email you should send it to and re-send it.*

Does that sound like something your paper would like to cover?

*If yes...*Do you have any idea when the story might run? We’d like to get a copy of the story for our records. If you like, I can help get pictures of events or names of students to interview for the story.

*If no...*What sort of stories do you usually cover? Is there a better way to approach this story?

### **Remember**

- Have the press release in front of you; be ready to answer any questions they have about details or the goals of the week.
- Don’t use acronyms. Say Mountain Justice Spring Break, not MJSB.
- Know what you’re talking about. What is coal? Who all is going to this event? What does environmental justice mean?
- Have a local phone number and website ready, as well as the MJSB email and website.
- Have a name of a student, professor, other community member they can interview, with contact info.
- You might also ask who the best reporter is as a contact and if they would be interested in future stories about youth environmental activities in your area.
- Be polite. You will meet again.

## Public Service Announcements – The Power of the Airwaves!

Public Service Announcements (PSAs) are an easy and effective way to get your group's presence known around your school and within your community. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) requires stations to devote a certain amount of time to public and community announcements. Here is a quick how-to on creating and broadcasting a snazzy PSA!

### 1. Contact college and community radio stations.

- Ask for the general manager or production/programming manager. They can give you details about their PSA formats. Some stations have a DJ-read community calendar while others use pre-recorded spots.
- Ask them to work with you to record a PSA in the studio.

### 2. Write the PSA.

- Keep it short and stick to the facts. PSAs are typically 30 seconds to one minute. Focus on the most relevant info and don't include too much date, time and place info that listeners may not retain.
- Avoid over-enthusiasm, superlatives and acronyms that listeners aren't familiar with.
- Be creative! Start with a catchy opening sentence, question, or little known fact.
- Include contact info and say it twice (website, contact person/phone)
- If they are to be read aloud by DJs, use a similar text format to a press release. (see example below)

### Sample Format:

- "PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT" in top middle of page
- Briefly describe your target audience
- List the dates your PSA should begin and end running on air
- List contact person, phone, email
- Typically, PSA are written in all CAPS
- Include length (number of words and seconds to read)
- Write "end" or "####" to signify the end as you would in a press release

### 3. Prepare and practice.

- Get together with your group and write it.
- Read it aloud to make sure it flows well.
- If it is to be recorded, have various people read it and get the group's consensus on who will record it.
- Use background music

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT  
STUDENTS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION  
ADDRESS  
CITY, STATE, ZIP

BEGINNING DATE: FEB 1, 2008 ENDING DATE: MARCH 9, 2008

TARGET AUDIENCE: COLLEGE AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, COMMUNITY ORGANIZERS, TEACHERS, CIVIC GROUPS

CONTACT PERSON: \_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

60 SECONDS, 167 WORDS

OUR APPALACHIAN MOUNTAINS ARE UNDER ATTACK! MOUNTAINTOP REMOVAL MINING IS DEVASTATING COMMUNITIES, POISONING OUR DRINKING WATER AND DESTROYING LANDSCAPES. OVER 1200 MILES OF STREAMS HAVE BEEN BURIED FROM BLASTING THE TOPS OFF OF THESE ANCIENT MOUNTAINS. THE HIGH COST OF COAL CONTINUES WHEN IT IS BURNED, RELEASING TOXIC MERCURY INTO THE WATER AND SMOG FORMING POLLUTANTS TO THE AIR.

NEVER FEAR! STUDENTS FROM ACROSS THE NATION ARE PREPARED TO FIGHT BACK AGAINST DIRTY COAL. THERE IS HOPE! MOUNTAIN JUSTICE SPRING BREAK IS A FUN FILLED WEEK OF EDUCATION AND RESISTANCE THAT WILL INCLUDE SKILLS WORKSHOPS, MUSIC, HIKING, COMMUNITY SERVICE AND ACTION! STUDENTS WILL LEARN FIRSTHAND FROM AFFECTED COMMUNITIES AND GAIN THE TOOLS THEY NEED TO DEFEAT KING COAL! MOUNTAIN JUSTICE SPRING BREAK: MARCH 1ST THROUGH 9TH IN VIRGINIA AND MARCH 22ND THROUGH 30TH IN OHIO. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW TO GET INVOLVED LOCALLY CONTACT [your club] AT [your clubs meeting time or website/email] OR TO LEARN ABOUT MOUNTAIN JUSTICE SPRING BREAK VISIT [WWW \(DOT\) MJSB \(DOT\) ORG](http://WWW(DOT)MJSB(DOT)ORG) [WWW \(DOT\) MJSB \(DOT\) O-R-G](http://WWW(DOT)MJSB(DOT)O-R-G)

-END-

# Fundraising and fun-raising

## Host an event/fundraiser

A central goal of MJSB is to raise awareness around environmental injustice. Hosting educational events can be a great way to recruit for your group, raise funds for grassroots organizing, and get people excited about being part of a clean, just energy revolution. Hosting parties can be a great way to relax and raise money at the same time.

By holding simple and fun campus events, you can get the attention of a lot of people and sign them up for MJSB that way. Check out the [Campus Climate Challenge Toolkit](#) for great event ideas. At all these events, be sure to:

- Pick a high traffic area, or place where people congregate.
- Have big signs and information about Mountain Justice, Coal Industry Injustice, Global Warming, etc. to hand out.
- Have laptops connected to the internet at the table so students can register right there.
- Have sign up sheets and follow up with people the next day.

### Rad Event Ideas

- Make/sell rad buttons and stickers
- Make a stencil and spray paint or silk screen tote bags and t-shirts
- Show a movie like Kilowatt Ours, Black Diamonds, or Burning the Future.
- Street skits – act out King Coal meeting his match! Have a tug of war between clean energy and dirty energy!
- Have a sled-riding contest
- Get a pile of coal to represent how much your school burns
- Sell crafts
- Silent auction
- Shovel driveways
- Bake sales
- Yard Sales
- Sell jell-o shots
- Kissing booth
- Invite professors to a panel discussion on energy issues
- Book-drive on campus after buy-back period
- Sell hot chocolate during morning classes or after a religious service
- Benefit w/ all types of music for all types of people
- Ask folks in a letter pitch for funds
- Have a book club and read *Coal River* by Michael Shnayerson, *Lost Mountain* by Erik Reece, or *Big Coal* by Jeff Goodell
- Wine Tasting
- Organizing bike races w/ sponsors or regular fee
- Sell stuff on E-Bay
- Throw a party with a tiered ask donation price
- Raffles w/ educational materials
- Ask small business owners to place small donation jar by the register
- Poetry slam
- Masquerade Ball
- Dinner party
- Co-Host an event off-campus

## **MJSB Site Descriptions**

This year we will have two locations:

March 1-9 we will meet at beautiful Camp Ahistade, close to the Mt. Rogers National Recreation area, Grayson Highlands and the Virginia Creeper trail in southwest Virginia, close to the Tennessee line. This area is home to the highest mountains in Virginia, wild ponies, dense forests and spectacular mountain views. Southwest Virginia is also home to mountaintop removal in nearby counties, as well as a huge proposed coal-fired power plant in Wise County.

March 22-30 we will be in the scenic rolling hills of southwest Ohio, near Athens, at a fantastic intentional community called Wisteria. We will meet with local Meigs County residents fighting new proposals for gigantic surface mines and coal-fired power plants, eat healthy food, organize, learn and strategize to stop mountaintop removal and power plants.