Tools For Activists:

How To Write A Press Release
Intro:

There's no right way to write a press release or perfect format to put one in. What matters is how easy it is for the media to identify key information in your release at a glance.

Put yourself in a busy reporter's shoes. You're writing two stories or more a day, running to different events, working from your car or a cafe and are constantly on deadline. You only have time to glance at the hundreds of press releases you get each week.

This guide aims to give you the tools to build the kinds of releases that are easy for reporters to read, comprehend, and hopefully turn into news!

*How to Write a Press Release* was put together using edited press releases from Good Kids Mad City (GKMC). GKMC is a movement created by youth from Chicago, DC, and Baltimore. The group builds bridges between young people who face violence in their communities every day and youth who experience shooting events like the one in Parkland, FL. They call for investment in youth employment and mental health services and equitable school funding. Find GKMC on Twitter: @GKMC18 or on Facebook: www.facebook.com/GKMC2018

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How To Write A Basic Press Release:

The simplest way to write a press release or media alert is to use the Who / What / Where / When / Why format.

For any release, it’s key to make it easy see when and where an event is going to take place. This type of release highlights that critical information and helps make sure you don’t leave anything important out.

On the next page is a sample media alert based on one from Good Kids Mad City (GKMC):
MEDIA ALERT - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, March 12, 2018

Contact: Name, Phone Number, Email

Wednesday, March 14th: Baltimore And Chicago Student Collective School Walkouts Against Gun Violence

When: Wednesday, March 14th at 10:00 am until 10:17 am.

Where: 15 Chicago public schools, 10 YCCS Chicago charter schools and five Baltimore Schools. Main campuses to attend: Bogan HS, 3939 W 79th Street Chicago; CCA Academy, 1231 S Pulaski Road, Chicago; Chicago High School for the Arts, 2714 W Augusta Blvd, Chicago.

Who: A new collective of Baltimore and Chicago students who call themselves Good Kids Mad City and use the hashtag #BmoreChi. Over 1,500 students and teachers from schools across Baltimore and Chicago who have lost loved ones to gun violence, including Chicago youth who recently met with Parkland students.

What: Students will walk out from schools across Chicago and Baltimore in solidarity with students from Parkland, and with a call for investment in mental health and youth employment to address root causes of gun violence impacting communities of color.

Why: Students of color from cities that have been impacted by gun violence will be adding their voices to the national call to action to address root causes of gun violence. Emma Gonzalez, a Parkland student survivor who met last week with Chicago youth, acknowledged that “those who face gun violence on a level that we have only just glimpsed from our gated communities have never had their voices heard in their entire lives the way that we have in these few weeks alone.”

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How To Write A Basic Press Release (Continued):

Let’s take a look at how this GKMC release was built.

First, along the top line is group identification information, including the group name, Twitter and Facebook info. This acts like letterhead and lets the media outlet know where the information is coming from.

Next, title your document. You can call it a press release or a media alert, just be sure to put “For immediate release” on there so the news knows they can use the information right away. Then, put the date you’re sending the release, not the date the event is taking place.

You’ll need a contact line and should always have at least one name, phone number and email address. It’s better to have two.

Here comes the headline. This is the most important part of the release and you want it to be as informative as possible. You want to get as much of your Who / What / Where / When / Why information as you can into the headline. In the GKMC sample, you can see they used the When (Wednesday, March 14th), the Where (Baltimore and Chicago), the Who (Student Collectives), the What (School Walkouts) and the Why (Against Gun Violence).

When Paragraph: Put the full date and day of week. Put a start time and an end time if you have one.

Where Paragraph: Write in the full address and cross streets of your event

Who Paragraph: Talk about what types of people will be at the event. Here, it’s students and teachers who are part of a new collective. You can also mention community members, union members, elected officials, candidates, other groups attending or supporting, and people from all walks of life.

What Paragraph: Write a description of what the event will be, in this case a student walkout.

Why Paragraph: Explain the reasoning and politics behind your actions. Here, gun violence is the key “why.”

Finally, end the document with ### or -30- to let the reader know there is no further information.
How To Write A Narrative Press Release:

A narrative release has all the same information as a basic press release plus more to flesh out the story.

In this section we’ll look at another release based on GKMC’s work. Then we’ll go over how to build out a press release using different types of paragraphs. On the next page is the GKMC press release:
PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, November 22, 2018

Contact: Name, Phone Number, Email

Saturday November 24th: Good Kids Mad City Hosting Press Conference And Peace March Against Gun Violence In Chicago

CHICAGO -- Good Kids Mad City (GKMC) will host a press conference and peace march against gun violence on Saturday, November 24th, at 4:00 PM, at 51st Street and King Drive in Chicago, to demand a ceasefire and violence prevention. After the press conference GKMC will march from 51st and King Drive down to 63rd and King Drive where five people were recently shot at a bus stop.

GKMC students will talk about why Chicago teens are demanding a ceasefire from the perpetrators of gun violence. They’re also demanding that the City open an office for violence prevention and fund it from the $1.4 billion dollars given to the Chicago police department each year. On the West side of Chicago, with some of the highest rates of gun violence, Rahm Emanuel wants to spend $95 million dollars on a police academy instead of using the money to develop communities and create jobs for youth.

“Enough is enough, especially in light of weekend violence ending in 21 Chicagoans shot,” says <NAME>, a member of GKMC. “It’s time for the city to get serious about funding violence prevention and supporting youth employment initiatives.”

Good Kids Mad City will be joined by gun violence survivors and families of gun violence victims, in addition to LaTaysia Shaw the Mother of Maurice Granton Jr’s children, 3rd Ward candidate Alexis Willis, 20th Ward candidate Nicole Johnson, 5th Ward candidate Will Calloway, mayoral candidate Amara Enyia, Dorothy Holmes, Mother of Ronald Johnson, Live Free Chicago, the Coalition for a Community Benefits Agreement, NTA parents and students, University of Chicago student groups, and youth from the surrounding neighborhoods.

Good Kids Mad City (GKMC) is a movement created by youth from Chicago, DC, and Baltimore. The group builds bridges between young people who face violence in their communities every day and youth who experience shooting events like the one in Parkland, FL. GKMC wants community revitalization now, which includes investment in schools, youth job development, mental health care, trauma informed schools and community centers that focus on restorative justice.

###
How To Write A Narrative Press Release (Continued):

You can see that a narrative press release contains a lot of the same information as a Who / What / When / Where / Why release, especially at the top. Once again, you’ll start with group identification info, the title of your document (Press release or media alert), “For immediate release” and the date you’re sending the release.

Always, you’ll need a contact line with at least one name, phone number and email address.

Again, this headline works to get in as much of the Who / What / Where / When / Why information as possible. In the GKMC sample, you can see they used the When (Saturday, November 24th), the Who (GKMC), the What (March and Press Conference) and the Why (against gun violence).

The first paragraph of your narrative press release should contain a full, abbreviated version of your Who / What / Where / When / Why information. This paragraph starts with a dateline, in this case CHICAGO, that lets readers know where the release is being sent from.

The second paragraph is a Why paragraph, spelling out what GKMC is demanding and pointing out how much money is spent on policing.

The third paragraph is a Quote paragraph. These can be used and published by the media if they can’t come and cover an event personally.

The fourth paragraph is a Who paragraph, listing all of the people who will be attending the event.

The fifth paragraph we call a Boilerplate; it’s an about us paragraph that should go at the bottom of all of your press releases.

Finally, end the document with ### or -30-

And that’s a press release! Now let’s look at additional types of paragraphs you can use to build your release.
Paragraphs to Add to Your Press Release:

**Visuals Paragraph:** No matter what type of release, the visuals paragraph starts out with the word Visuals and describes what will be seen and heard at an event.

**Example:**
VISUALS: Over 200 young people marching and chanting, holding signs and banners. Youth will drop to the ground and “die-in” at the intersection of 63rd and King Drive.

**Speakers paragraph:** List all of the people who will be speaking at your event along with their group names.

**Endorsers Paragraph:** List all of the groups who have endorsed your event.

**Social Media paragraph:** Tell who to follow at an event and what hashtags will be used.

**Example:**
Follow @GKMC18 on Twitter and the hashtag #BmoreChi for live updates from the march. For more information on the march, see the facebook event page: (insert url)

**Fact paragraph:** Use a fact or figure from a reputable source to highlight your issue. You should include a link to the source.

**Example:**
According to the Chicago Tribune, the number of people shot in Chicago surpassed 1,400 in July, 2018.

**Fundraising Paragraph:** If there is a fundraiser your group is promoting, you can include info about it and hope an outlet will publish it.

**Example:**
GKMC is raising money to pay for the funeral of Delmonte Johnson, a GKMC member who was shot and killed in Chicago in September, 2018. Contribute at www.gofundme.com/goodkidsmadcity

**Photo Embed or Attachment:** You can attach or embed visuals into your document, but be careful not to send large files unless they are requested. For a march or rally, embed the event flyer.
Press Release Tips:

Write your release in the third person, like an impartial news story. For example, instead of saying, “we are having a march,” say, “GKMC is having a march.”

Keep it short! Most people will only read the headline or the first part of your release.

Write for the phone screen with short paragraphs. About half of the releases I send out are opened by journalists on mobile phones.

Send your release first thing in the morning, say at 6:00 am, before the newsroom starts getting hectic.

Don’t just send your release on the day of the event. You should also send it two to three business days in advance. I generally send releases out only once, but some people send them a few days before an event then on the event itself.

Use Twitter to pitch reporters. You can post your press release on Medium.com and send them a link, or just tweet them info about your event. Don’t post personal phone numbers or email addresses online.

You can send press releases from your email inbox, but it’s more than worth it to learn to use Mailchimp. With a free account you can email hundreds of journalists and see data like who opened your release and how many times.

Keep your phone on! If you’re the contact on a release, make sure to answer your phone or call back right away. The news moves fast and if you’re not ready they might go with another story.

Test your release before you send it by looking at it on your phone. Make sure it’s easy to read and not too long.
Why talk to the media?
Media coverage is a powerful vehicle for telling your story and pushing for change. A news article can reach thousands of people, including policy-makers and potential supporters of the Chicago Community Bond Fund. Organizers use press coverage as a component in grassroots campaigns that take down governments, end wars, oust politicians and police, and get people out of jail and prison.

Stay in Control
Plenty of reporters are sympathetic to our cause, but even they have prejudices and blind spots. Even if a reporter works for a progressive outlet, never assume they are on your side.

If you only say the things that are most important to you, that’s what will be reported. You do that by keeping things short. An interview that lasts for five minutes should be your goal. Never let an interview go for more than fifteen minutes, and certainly don’t invite a reporter to spend a day with you. In an interview, once you’ve said everything that’s important to you, tell the reporter that’s all the time you have.

Most journalists come into an interview with an agenda. They already know what angle they want to put on your story and will question you until your answers fit. You fight this with your talking points, by staying on message, and by remembering that you are in charge of the interview and can end it any time.

Talking Points
Think about TV news you’ve seen. When someone is being interviewed, how long do they talk for? Usually less than 15 seconds. The same goes for print reporters. Your twenty-minute interview will turn into two sentences in their article. That’s what talking points are for.

To create them, think of the three most important things you want people to know about the Bond Fund, then come up with a one or two sentence talking point for each.

Next, practice them frequently. They need to pop right out of your mouth, even if you’re in a loud place with cameras and lights pointed at you. If you usually sing in the shower, rehearse your talking points instead. Ahead of an interview, practice in front of the mirror and with a friend. When the cameras are on you, you’ll be so glad you did.

During the Interview
Unless you’re on live TV or radio, your interview is recorded and will be cut up at a later date. Since it’s not a live conversation, you can pause for as long as you want, or just stop speaking and start your statement over. You can say one of your talking points when a question is asked, even if your answer doesn’t have anything to do with the question. Keep your statements short and wait for the next question. Avoid the impulse to over-explain or to keep talking to fill a silence.

Once the interview begins and you are being recorded, say your full name and organization on tape: “My name is __________, and I’m a member of the Chicago Community Bond Fund.”

If you aren’t on tape, and a reporter is taking notes by hand, watch their pen. Talk half as fast as you normally would. Ask, “have you got that?” If you’re not careful, you’ll be misquoted.

If a reporter gets aggressive or is trying to get you off track, just answer their questions with talking points.

The Chicago Community Bond Fund would like to thank Beth Patel and Rachael Perrotta for helping to write these pointers.
MEDIA ALERT
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Black Lives Matter Chicago,
Phone, Email

VIGIL FOR RONNIEMAN

When: Wednesday, October 12, 2016 at 6:00pm
Where: 53rd and King drive, where Ronald "Ronnieman" Johnson was killed
What: Vigil for Ronnieman

On this day, October 12th, two years ago, Ronald Johnson, affectionately known as "Ronnieman" was murdered by George Hernandez, a Chicago Police officer, who has so far avoided prosecution.

We are calling for the immediate firing and prosecution of office George Hernandez for the murder of Ronald Johnson.

Activists, family and the community will honor the life and legacy of Ronald Johnson while solidifying our promise to continue to press forward as one community and one family, united for justice for Ronnieman, for his mother Dorothy Holmes, his children, and all who loved him

Event Page: https://www.facebook.com/events/1112828882138671/

About Black Lives Matter Chicago:

Black Lives Matter Chicago is an ideological and political intervention in a world where Black lives are systematically and intentionally targeted for demise. It is an affirmation of Black peoples’ contributions to this society, our humanity, and our resilience in the face of deadly oppression. Our priorities are to amplify our collective knowledge and applied practices toward abolishing anti-Blackness, and to honor the organizing and mobilization put forth by various Chicago based organizations, collectives, projects and individuals within the expansive, intersectional Black Lives Matter network.

###
Chicago Dyke March 2018
June 23, 2018

What: 22nd Annual Chicago Dyke March kicks off Pride celebrations

Where: Little Village. Piotrowski Park, 4247 W. 31st Street, Chicago, IL 60623

When: June 23, 2018, 12:00 p.m.

Who: Chicago Dyke March is organized by and for queer and trans, black and indigenous people of color.

Why:

This year Chicago Dyke March will mobilize in La Villita and will continue to build on what it means for Chicago to be a sanctuary city, especially for queer and trans people of color. Thanks to various community-led efforts and the work of Organized Communities Against Deportations (OCAD), the idea of a true sanctuary city is constantly being reimagined and practiced.

During Dyke March’s second year in La Villita, the collective will uplift the struggles of Palestinians, abroad and locally. This year, it has become more imperative than ever, for our collective to raise awareness about the atrocities being continually committed by Israel and build cross movement coalitions to ensure that our oppressions are not siloed and are in fact intersectional.

Dyke March 2018 will be a space to recognize and celebrate the resistance of oppressed people everywhere, while centering the connections between the Palestinians and those who are undocumented.

Chicago Dyke March is held in Little Village to identify connections between oppressed people in Chicago and around the world with a focus on Palestine, and to create a beautiful celebration of queer and trans lives in a community of color.

Chicago Dyke March is marching in solidarity with queer and trans communities of Palestine and to demand public outcry against Israeli pinkwashing tactics, efforts to appropriate queer liberation and weaponize it against Palestinians in the form of occupation and ethnic cleansing. Our communities, from Little Village to Palestine, are facing police militarization, occupation, surveillance, and border police.

Chicago Dyke March will also focus on and celebrate the resilience the queer and trans community, especially black and indigenous people of color, and Afro-Palestinian and Afro-Latinx people.
MEDIA ALERT -- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Press Conference for Daisy Chavero
When: Friday, April 21 at 12:00 PM
Where: Chicago Bulls College Prep, 2040 W Adams

Media Contact: Name, phone number

9th Grade Student Prohibited from Attending School Because of Hair Highlights

Daisy Chavero attends Chicago Bulls College Prep, a Noble Network Charter School. She has not been allowed to attend class for four days.

Chicago 4/21 -- Daisy Chavero, a 9th grade student at Chicago Bulls College Prep, a high school in the Noble Network of Charter Schools, has been prohibited from attending class for the past four days because administrators object to the color of her hair.

Daisy and her mother, Angie Chavero, will be speaking on this issue in front of the school (2040 W Adams) at 12:00 PM on Friday, April 21.

Daisy has dark brown hair with faint auburn highlights. Vice Principal Kathryn Lilley said that Daisy’s highlights violate school policy. She says that while Daisy is permitted in the school building, she will not be permitted to enter classrooms. She will receive four demerits each day, and be placed in the in school suspension room to work independently for the duration of the school day.

Daisy has a disability which entitles her to an Individual Education Plan, which means that federal law mandates that public school must provide her with special education services. While Daisy is independently working in a suspension room, the school is not providing her the Free and Appropriate Public Education with supports and services to which she is entitled. She has missed four days of school so far because of this conflict.

This is far from the first time a Noble Charter Network school has been cited for punitive disciplinary measures. After finally doing away with a years-long practice of monetary fines for infractions, students are still subject to exacting discipline over technical infractions. This also continues a pattern of denying services to special education students. This often results in these students being pushed out of school mid-year- after the charter school has received money for enrolling a student but before standardized testing has happened.

###
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Name, Phone, Email

December 21, 2017

WASHINGTON, DC—In a tremendous victory for the right to dissent, a Washington, DC jury has found all six defendants in the first “J20” trial not guilty on all charges. The National Lawyers Guild (NLG) welcomes this verdict despite the politically motivated charges that were leveled against them and the 188 other defendants who were “kettled,” experienced abusive police tactics and were arrested en masse during protests against the Presidential Inauguration of Donald Trump on January 20, 2017.

“The jury’s decision represents a resounding victory, as they refused to substantiate the prosecution’s complete lack of evidence and view of political organizing as criminal activity,” said Jude Ortiz, NLG Mass Defense Committee Chair and organizer with Defend J20 Resistance.

Defendants Jennifer Armento, Oliver Harris, Britt Lawson, Michelle “Miel” Macchio, Christina Simmons, and Alexei Wood were acquitted on all eight counts of misdemeanor rioting and conspiracy to riot, and five counts of felony property destruction. That these defendants include two street medics and a journalist maintains that protest infrastructure is not a crime.

The NLG reiterates its call on prosecutors to drop all charges against the remaining 188 defendants, and urges supporters to donate to the J20 Legal Defense Fund at fundrazr.com/j20resistance. See today’s press release issued by Defend J20 Resistance here.

The National Lawyers Guild, whose membership includes lawyers, legal workers, jailhouse lawyers, and law students, was formed in 1937 as the United States’ first racially-integrated bar association to advocate for the protection of constitutional, human and civil rights.

# # #
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -- February 16, 2018

Press Contacts:
Name, email, phone
Name, email, phone

FRIDAY, FEB. 16: UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO STUDENT ORGANIZERS TO HOLD FIRST NO BANNON TEACH-IN

CHICAGO – On Friday, February 16, University of Chicago student organizers will hold the first of three free, public No Bannon teach-ins opposing an announced university speaking event with former White House chief strategist Steve Bannon. Titled “No Bannon: More Than Freedom of Speech - University of Chicago Teach-In,” this event will be held from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the First Unitarian Church of Chicago, Hull Chapel, 5650 S. Woodlawn Ave., Chicago, IL 60637. View Facebook Event Page: facebook.com/events/300276420496321

University of Chicago doctoral student Arianna Gass and community organizer Kofi Ademola will moderate a panel discussion covering freedom of speech, student safety and other concerns about allowing controversial speakers on campus. Panelists affiliated with the University of Chicago will include graduate student and community activist Cosette Hampton; Professor Anton Ford; and staff member Samantha Eyler-Driscoll, who resigned from the editorial board of the ProMarket blog rather than promote the event.

DePaul University alumni and community activists Jireh L. Drake and Ed Ward will share their experience organizing in opposition to a Milo Yiannopoulos event on that campus. Professor Luigi Zingales of the Booth School of Business invited Bannon to speak at the university. Gass explained, “The organizers of this event desire a format for a rich discussion of Zingales’ invitation to Bannon, specifically focusing on Zingales’ peculiar commitment to the free speech framing of the Bannon discussion, and the university administration’s often performative commitments to not only freedom of speech, but also to diversity on campus and engagement with the surrounding Hyde Park and Woodlawn neighborhoods.”

Additional teach-ins will be held Friday, February 23 and Monday, February 26. University of Chicago student organizers and community activists have been protesting the Bannon event since it was announced last month. The university has not publicized when the Bannon event will take place.

###
#NoCopAcademy | nocopacademy.com

Contact: Name, phone, email

**#NoCopAcademy coalition disrupts Budget Committee meeting, demands sale of city assets fund Black youth not a new cop academy.**

Young people from across Chicago refuse to allow Budget Committee meeting to approve funds for a police facility, expect to be thrown out while demanding City Council invest in Black youth.

**WHEN:** Tuesday May 22th, 10:00 AM  
**WHERE:** City Hall 2nd Floor | Council Chambers | 121 N. LaSalle, Chicago  
**VISUALS:** 20+ coalition members | matching shirts | signs | expected dramatic removal from City Council chambers by CPD & security

CHICAGO 5/21 -- On Tuesday the Committee on Budget and Government Operations will discuss a proposal from Mayor Emanuel to appropriate funds from the sale of city assets for the construction of the controversial cop academy. Despite months of heated debate across the city, this funding proposal vote comes just one day before the Fraternal Order of Police descends on City Hall in “protest.”

“This vote in the Budget Committee is a slap in the face to young Black people and West Garfield Park residents who have been clear in their opposition to the new police facility,” says Benji Hart, an organizer with #NoCopAcademy. “Mayor Emanuel is trying to appease a police department that has evaded meaningful accountability for decades, and it is literally writing a check to fund continued police violence at the expense of Black youth who will continue to suffer from this City’s neglect and CPD’s violence.”

Today’s action during the Budget Committee takes place on the backs of months of organizing against the Cop Academy, most recently culminating in a youth-led occupation of Chicago City Hall for over 6 hours during CPS Spring Break. Further, a recent survey conducted by volunteers with Black Lives Matter Chicago interviewed over 500 residents of the 37th ward, finding that the overwhelming majority were opposed to the Cop Academy plan, and want to see that $95 million invested in their community in different ways.

Rahm Emanuel’s plan to spend $95 million on a new, 32-acre police academy this year in Chicago’s West Garfield Park neighborhood, has drawn criticism from communities across Chicago, including celebrities like Chance the Rapper. The #NoCopAcademy campaign in Chicago is led by young Black people from Assata’s Daughters & Simeon Young Activists Club, and is supported by over 70 community organizations across the city and country. For more information and updates on the #NoCopAcademy campaign, visit https://nocopacademy.com

###
#NoCopAcademy | nocopacademy.com

PRESS RELEASE: For Immediate Release

Contact: Name, phone, email

#NoCopAcademy youth stage die-in at City Hall, call out Mayor’s role in perpetuating death & devastation on South & West sides.

High school youth of color from across Chicago walk out of City Council meeting and silently die-in with tombstones that uplift the closed schools, shuttered clinics & people killed by police with impunity under Rahm Emanuel.

WHEN: Wednesday March 28th, 11:00 AM
WHERE: City Hall, 2nd Floor, 121 N. LaSalle, Chicago
VISUALS: Dozens of teenagers, 95 tombstones with names & dates, banners

This spring break, high school and middle school students from the south and west sides of the city are participating in a #NoCopAcademy week of action to demand investment in their communities, and a commitment from City Council to stop the construction of a new $95 million dollar training facility for CPD before a vote to approve the company selected design & build the facility comes across their desks later this spring.

“"I see a big discrepancy between what Rahm is planning for our neighborhoods and our communities’ demands... We are not backing down,” says Whitney Young High School senior Marcos Hernandez.

Today’s die-in builds off of a youth-led Flashmob downtown on Monday, and the announcement of a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit against the Mayor’s Office for refusing to release e-mails which would demonstrate the planning for the cop academy began long before the Department of Justice report on Chicago Police violence was released. Rahm Emanuel has frequently pointed to the DOJ report as the justification for the new massive expense and expansion of CPD, aka “the false advertisement of trying to bring justice and resolve for what happened to Laquan with this cop academy,” says Mariah Roberts of Simeon Young Activists.

Rahm Emanuels’ plan to spend $95 million on a new, 32-acre police academy this year in Chicago’s West Garfield Park neighborhood, has drawn criticism from communities across Chicago, including celebrities like Chance the Rapper. The #NoCopAcademy campaign in Chicago is led by young Black people from Assata’s Daughters & Simeon Young Activists Club, and is supported by over 65 community organizations across the city and country. For more information and updates on the #NoCopAcademy campaign, visit https://nocopacademy.com.

# # #
THURSDAY 1/18: SURVIVOR OF ABUSE BY CHICAGO POLICE OFFICER TO SPEAK AT POLICE BOARD MEETING AS PART OF #POLICE TOO AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

CHICAGO 1/18 -- On Thursday, January 18, 2018, at 7:30pm, at the Chicago Police Board Meeting, Trina Kimberly Townsend, or Eclipse as she is known to friends, will speak about her abuse by a Chicago Police officer when she was between 14 and 18 years of age. The meeting location is 3510 S. Michigan Ave.

At the same meeting, a new awareness campaign from Women’s All Points Bulletin, #PoliceToo, will be announced. The campaign’s goal is to show that rape by police officers, like so many other power holders, is both endemic and invisible. Women’s All Points Bulletin authored Invisible Betrayal Police Rapists in America: Criminal Offenders, presented to the UN Convention Against Torture in 2014. The campaign will use the hashtags #PoliceToo and #Cops2.

“Immunized by our criminal justice system, police move with impunity, capable of arresting and discrediting their victims, preying on women, young girls, and children," says Crista Noel with Women’s All Points Bulletin.

“Daniel Ken Holtzclaw, convicted serial rapist and poster boy, used the intimidation of his badge, uniform and gun as he raped, stalked, fondled and exposed himself to at least eight Black women. He is not an exception and neither is his targeting of Black women.” continues Noel.

In the absence of justice from the system, Women’s All Points Bulletin is working to eradicate the problem of police rape and sexual harassment themselves.

The group is asking all survivors of police rape, abuse and harassment to come forward and tell their stories to the Chicago Police Board, COPA, and Superintendent Eddie Johnson at the Chicago Police Board meetings throughout 2018.

Women’s All Points Bulletin says their long-time goal remains the same. They demand a declaration that police rape, and the rape of all women, especially Black women and women of color, be designated as torture.

###
MEDIA ALERT - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - [July 24, 2018]

**Media Contact:** Name, Slutwalk organizer, phone number

**Eighth Annual Slutwalk Chicago to Take Place on Saturday, July 28, 2018**

Chicago, Illinois - Demonstration to support survivors of sexual assault, protest rape culture and police violence, [Slutwalk Chicago 2018](#), takes place for its 8th consecutive year. This year’s Slutwalk Chicago gathering will take place at Water Tower (800 N. Michigan Ave) on Saturday, July 28, 2018 at noon.

Slutwalk Chicago 2018 aims in large part to support Lee Dewey, a participant at last year’s Slutwalk Chicago. Chicago Police arrested Lee Dewey at the Chicago Slutwalk 2017 march, which was the first time there were any arrests in the history of Slutwalk Chicago. Lee, who is non-binary and uses they/them pronouns, is being falsely accused of biting a police officer and facing felony charges. These false charges are based on transphobia and HIV stigma. More background is available on Lee Dewey’s [legal defense fundrazr page](#).

Slutwalk Chicago 2018 will be having speakers at the first part of the gathering at 12 noon. The second portion of the day will feature a speak-out where participants can share their story and be with other survivors and supporters. We ask that press do not cover the speak-out portion of our day as the stories are personal.

Slutwalk Chicago stands for:

- We stand with all survivors of sexual violence!
- We decry victim-blaming, ableism, body-shaming, slut-shaming, whorephobia, queerphobia, transphobia, racism, classism, misogyny, body shaming, fatphobia, and general hatefulness.
- We stand with all survivors of police and state violence!
- We stand with Lee Dewey! We stand with Alisha Walker!
- We stand with sex workers and all workers who have to struggle against abuse, discrimination, sexual harassment or violence on the job. We also condemn the recent anti-loitering ordinance passed by Chicago’s alderpeople which targets sex working people and those perceived as sex working people by police.
- We want freedom from police targeting and harassment.

We demand that Cook County State’s Attorney Kim Foxx dismiss all charges against Lee Dewey immediately.

This event is endorsed by Support Ho(se) Chi, The Sex Workers Outreach Project- Chicago chapter, Chicago Area LGBTQ+ Liberation Network, and Community Cave.

**Follow the hashtags:** #SlutWalkChi #SlutWalkChi2018 #SurvivedAndPunished
Activists to Bring Anger, Calls for Justice to Rahm Emanuel's Door

Chicago, IL - Activists demanding justice for Harith Augustus and all those who have been tortured and murdered by police will demonstrate outside the home of Mayor Rahm Emanuel at 4228 North Hermitage Ave. on Thursday, July 19, 2018 at 9:30 am. Activists demand that Emanuel end militarized policing in communities of color and remove provisions and policies that have allowed officers to get away with assault, torture, and murder with no accountability.

“We are being hunted down in our communities like dogs, for sport,” says Hesna Bokoum, Organizer with SOUL, “There is no reason Harith Augustus should be dead. Police cannot kill us first and ask questions later.”

“Rahm Emanuel must answer for the execution of Harith Augustus by members of his Chicago Police Department. The mayor has just returned from being out of the country, where he was pursuing trade deals for corporations. “ says Robert Peters, the Political Director of Reclaim Chicago. “The mayor has long been more interested in corporate profits and the priorities of his campaign donors than the wellbeing of Black Chicagoans and the health of our neighborhoods. We’ve had enough of teachable moments. It’s time for action. We’re here to demand that Emanuel make the massive investments in Black and Brown communities that Black-led organizations have long sought.”

Learn more on Facebook and follow the #HarithAugustus and #NeverForget on Twitter.

This direct action is sponsored by SOUL (Southsiders Organized for Unity and Liberation), People’s Action, and The People’s Lobby, with the support of Black Lives Matter, Black Roots Alliance, Chicago Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, Equity & Transformation, Reclaim Chicago, and Vocal Chicago.

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