

Dear DECA Members,

Being in DECA, we have all likely all been asked the question “what is DECA?” or “what does DECA stand for?” I know I have heard it many times before, which is why one of DECA Ontario’s main objectives this year is to have the people of Ontario know and understand what DECA Ontario is and what we do.

Like everything in the DECA Ontario organization, progress starts with our members, so this year our goal is to have members obtain publicity within their communities. This package covers some of the goals and milestones that your chapter should be accomplishing throughout the year to generate community awareness. We have included monthly challenges for individual members to complete using hash tags on social media. These members will be recognized on DECA Ontario’s social media platforms on a regular basis. There are also chapter milestones where chapters must complete various activities. Those chapters that complete each milestone will be recognized at Provincials.

Included in this package are tools and resources for you to reach out to local newspapers and sponsors. In addition, we have included information to aid you in writing press releases, emailing sponsors, and contacting members of the media. We have also included many of our own tips and examples that you can use in your efforts to generate publicity.

Our final goal for you is to get your chapter’s alumni involved. We have included many ways that former DECA members from your school can become one of your most useful resources. Creating alumni profiles and showcasing where your past members are now is another great way to gain publicity for your chapter and also create great networking opportunities between DECA alumni and your chapter’s members.

Be confident and remember to take risks to allow your chapter’s accomplishments to become known in your communities. I can’t wait for all you to show the world the extraordinary things your chapters are doing. Don’t forget to smile for your newspaper pictures!

With DECA love,

  
Emily Fraser  
President  
DECA Ontario



# HOW TO WRITE A NON-PROFIT PRESS RELEASE

Writing a press release is an excellent step towards obtaining publicity and recognition when your chapter does something amazing, helpful or newsworthy. A press release is a written statement sent to the media that lets the public know of new developments regarding an organization. It contains the, who, what, when, where and why of an event. Chapters should write a press release when members qualify for ICDC, host a community event or achieve other noteworthy accomplishments.

Below is a guideline for how to write press releases for non-profit organizations.

## Basic Elements of a Non-Profit Press Release:

- When the release can be distributed. Usually, the release will carry the words “FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE”. This means the press release is ready to be published in the media as soon as the news outlet receives it. This can be put above or below the headline and can be on either side of page
- Headline centred across top of organization’s letterhead or special news release stationery
- Organizational info can go above the headline or below and usually appears on the left side
  - Name of Organization
  - Address
  - Phone Number
  - Website URL
- Contact information can go above or below the headline, and on the right or left side of the page.
  - Name (can be a person’s name or a generic place name such as “Bayview DECA”)
  - Email address of person or department
  - Phone Number (include office phone and cell phone numbers)

## Format:

- Place, day, date (starts the first line of release)
- Body of release
- Boilerplate information about the non-profit organization (reusable background information on DECA Ontario or DECA chapter)
- Repeat contact information and/or offer to provide someone to interview.
- #### (These marks are centered just below the content of the release and signal the end of the release)

# SAMPLE PRESS RELEASES

Shown below are sample press releases that have been written for different situations that chapters will encounter during the DECA season. Chapters should refer to these examples when creating their own releases, as they can be used with only minimal modification.

Here is a template that chapters can use when creating their own press releases. It shows proper formatting and explains the type of information that should be included in different parts of a press release.

[Contact Person]  
[Organization]  
[Phone Number]  
[Email Address]  
[Website URL]

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

[HEADLINE]

[City], [Province], [Date] - The first paragraph. Begin your press release with a two-sentence paragraph that provides a quick overview of the news and why it is important. It should read easily and make your news sound exciting to a general audience.

Next, provide some background information on the program or event. Make sure to write your release in terms that your target audience and the general public will understand.

Your text should explain the purpose of your event and intrigue the reader to find out more, visit your website, or contact you for more information.

The final paragraph should be a brief description of your student organization. Include a summary of other events or happenings and a brief history of the organization. Also include "For more information, contact:" as the last sentence.

### (Indicates Press Release is finished)

John Smith  
Generic High School DECA  
Mobile: (519) 123-4567  
Email: john.smith@email.com  
Website: www.deca.ca

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Generic HS students earn recognition at international business competition**

*Generic City students were amongst 120,000 to compete for international awards and scholarships as emerging leaders and entrepreneurs*

**Generic City, Ontario - May 1, 2015** – Generic High School DECA members earned the organization’s highest honours at DECA’s 69th annual International Career Development Conference in Orlando, Florida on April 25-28, 2015.

Students/advisors receiving recognition at the international level were:

<u>Name of Student/Advisor</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Place/Honour</u>
John Smith	Professional Sales Event	2nd Place
Jane Doe	Marketing Management	Top 10

During the school year, approximately 120,000 of DECA’s over 200,000 student members take part in the organization’s competitive events program, allowing them to compete for local and regional titles. The competitions are designed to simulate real-life business scenarios and test students’ academic understanding and skills development. The top state and provincial winners put their talents to the test during the program’s final round of competition in Orlando. The DECA International Career Development Conference was the pinnacle of competition where almost 18,000 DECA members vied for international honours. Nearly \$500,000 in scholarships and awards was presented to students for their achievements.

The team of competitors from DECA Ontario achieved incredible success this year and solidified its position as one of the world’s top DECA delegations. Bringing over 600 high school students down to the competition, Ontario shattered records with an unprecedented number of category winners and finalists.

DECA Ontario is Canada’s largest youth business organization, and its membership consists of the Province’s top students and youth leaders. A staggering 96% of the members will be going onto post-secondary education, compared to the national average of 26% (Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 2006). Additionally, many of Canada’s Top 20 Under 20 and Loran Scholars hail from the DECA program.

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Jane Doe  
Generic High School DECA  
Mobile: (519) 123-4567  
Email: john.smith@email.com  
Website: www.deca.ca

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Generic HS DECA students host holiday luncheon to support Generic City Food Bank**

*Generic City students raise over \$1 000 for Food Bank during its most needy season*

**Generic City, Ontario - December 20, 2014** - Generic HS's DECA chapter gave out raffle prizes while serving turkey dinners to raise over \$1000 in support of charity during their annual Festive Luncheon. The event was held at Generic High School on December 14th, 2014.

Over 200 of the school's teachers and students gathered in the Generic HS cafeteria to enjoy a catered meal of turkey and mashed potatoes with each other. Generic's jazz band entertained guests with classical festive music and the school's improv team gave winter themed performances. The event concluded with the announcement of raffle prize winners who were awarded many items, including gift cards, clothing and dessert baskets.

Generic's DECA students worked diligently over the past few months to make this event a success. Students spent November and December canvassing Generic City businesses, marketing the luncheon and selling tickets.

"We believe in giving back and supporting the community, even though doing so often requires hard work" said John Smith, an executive at Generic DECA. "This Festive Luncheon is a great way to bring our school and DECA members closer together, while also helping an important organization at a time of need."

The Generic Food Bank is a major pillar of the city, as 16 percent of the community cannot afford to adequately feed themselves and their families (Stevens, 2014). Many residents are forced to choose between food or a place to live, a choice that often leaves people hungry.

"Nobody should ever have to worry about where their next meal will come from, especially during this time of year. We are incredibly grateful that Generic HS DECA chose to support our cause during the holiday season," said John Smith, Director of the Generic Food Bank.

Generic DECA is a chapter of DECA Ontario, Canada's largest youth business organization. DECA Ontario's membership consists of the Province's top students and youth leaders. Thousands of the organization's members compete in business case study competitions and leadership academies to prepare for careers in finance, marketing, hospitality and entrepreneurship. A staggering 96% of DECA Ontario members will be going onto post-secondary education, compared to the national average of 26% (Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 2006).

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Email: john.smith@email.com  
Website: www.deca.ca

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Local high school students win big at Provincial case study competition**

*Generic City students will compete against the best in the world at international conference*

**Toronto, Ontario – February 12, 2013** – Local students from Generic High School were among over 6,000 students who descended on the Sheraton Centre Toronto for DECA Ontario's 37th Annual Provincial Conference. The students competed in a business case study competition, where they had an opportunity to present their knowledge and ideas to business professionals.

Standouts included Will Chen who placed 1st in his category of Marketing Management, Divya Singh and Jane Doe who placed 3rd in their category of International Business Plan, and Ryan Black who placed in the top 10 in his category of Food Marketing. They, along with four other Generic students, will be representing Ontario at the International Competition in Nashville, Tennessee, which will be attended by almost 18,000 students from nine countries.

Competitors at the Provincial Conference were given case studies that represent real-world business problems in marketing, finance, hospitality, and entrepreneurship. They were then expected to create a solution as well as a presentation within strict time constraints, sometimes as little as ten minutes.

DECA Ontario strives to develop the next generation of Canadian business leaders and offers many programs alongside its competitive events. In addition to competing, attendees of the Provincial Conference had the opportunity to network, land summer jobs and internships, connect with like-minded peers, and meet with recruiters from Canada's top universities. Over 20 different organizations operated booths at the Conference to inform DECA Ontario members of the many opportunities available to them in the business world.

"I am incredibly grateful that I have been able to attend the Provincial Conference for the past 3 years," said John Smith, President of Generic High School DECA. "I have been able to meet so many great people through DECA Ontario, while learning valuable career skills and having fun at the same time. DECA truly is so much more than a business competition."

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# FINAL TIPS

Always be sure to review and revise the press release before sending it to a journalist. Don't let small mistakes affect your chances of having the release published. Here are some final tips for chapters to apply to their press releases before sending them out:

- Make your press release short, one page is ideal
- Do not indent new paragraphs, put one line of space in between paragraphs instead
- Include several quotations that sound like they were spoken, rather than written
- Have multiple people review and edit your press release for grammar
- Send photos along with your press release if they are relevant (do not put photos in the actual press release document. Attach them in an email)

# MEDIA CONTACT

Writing a press release is half the battle, chapters must also work to get it published in the media. Once you have finished the press release and reviewed it multiple times, it is ready to be sent to news outlets. Here is a process chapters can follow that will increase their chances of having their release published:

## 1. Identify newspapers that cover news in the same area or city that the chapter is located

- For example, in Guelph there is the Guelph Mercury, Guelph Tribune and Guelph Review, which all cover news in the city. There is also The Wellington Advertiser, which covers news across Wellington County and The KW Record, which reports on events all over Southwestern Ontario. Since all of these publications overlap with Guelph, they are all possible outlets for a Guelph DECA chapter's press release.

## 2. Identify a journalist to contact about publishing the release

- Ideally, chapters should identify a journalist who covers news related to the content of their press release. Look for reporters who write about community events, students or business.

## 3. Connect a chapter executive with a journalist through social media

- An executive from the chapter should attempt to build rapport with the journalist by doing the following:
  - a) Following them on Twitter
  - b) Retweeting one of their articles
  - c) Favouring one of their tweets

## 4. Contact the journalist about publishing the press release

- Send the journalist an email as late as possible at night so that it is at the top of their inbox at work the next morning
- Use the template below to email the journalist

## 5. Follow up

- If the journalist DOES NOT respond within 3 days, send another email as late as possible the next night. The email should start by saying "I'm not sure if you received my previous email, but my name is [name]", but aside from that sentence, the rest of the email can be the same as the one that was originally sent.
- If the journalist responds with NO, reply and thank them for their time. Ask them if they know of anyone else who might be interested in the story.
- If the journalist responds POSITIVELY, reply and give them all the details they request

Subject Line: [Title of Press Release]

Hello/Hi/Good Morning/Good Afternoon,

[Include sentence about how you enjoyed an article written by the journalist].

My name is [name] and I am currently a [grade] student from [school] and a member of DECA Ontario, Canada's largest youth business organization. Recently, [explain news discussed in press release]

This would make a great story to be featured on [news source] because it will appeal to:

- Community members who will be proud to see that students from [community] are doing something exceptional
- Young people who will be delighted that an organization exists to cultivate their leadership potential
- Business leaders and managers who believe in the potential of the Canadian economy, as youth are being developed into leaders at a young age through DECA
- [Feel free to add any other reasons specific to request]

I have attached a press release to this email as well as some additional photos that you are welcome to use. I would love to schedule a call and provide more details on this story. I can be reached at [phone number].

Thank you very much,

[email signature]

# PARTNERSHIP REQUEST EXAMPLES

## EXAMPLE #1

Here is an email template that chapters can use when contacting sponsors for an event.

Good afternoon Mr./Ms. [last name of person being addressed],

My name is [your name] and I am a member of DECA Ontario, Canada's largest youth business organization. DECA is an innovative extra-curricular program for secondary school students that develop emerging leaders in marketing, finance, hospitality and entrepreneurship.

[Explanation of the event being held and why they should sponsor it (be sure to quickly explain why sponsoring the event will benefit the business)]

I have attached a sponsorship package to this email with more details regarding the partnership. If you can please let me know a good time to call, I would love to further discuss how this opportunity can provide value to [company being contacted].

Best regards,

[email signature]

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## EXAMPLE #2

Subject Line: Youth business leaders aligned with [name of potential sponsor]

Hi there,

My name is [name], and I am a Chapter Executive at [name of chapter] a member of Canada's largest youth business organization: DECA Ontario. I am emailing you today regarding a potential opportunity for [sponsor name] to strategically align its brand with our organization.

DECA Ontario is Canada's premier co-curricular business association. Our membership exceeds 11,000 members across the province and we are developing the next generation of Canadian business leaders through enriching conferences and competitions at the regional, provincial, and international levels.

If I could have 10 minutes of your time, I would thoroughly appreciate the opportunity to have a phone conversation about how [sponsor name] can benefit from a partnership with DECA Ontario. If you have any questions at all, please don't hesitate to contact me at any time.

Kind regards,

[Your Name]

# GETTING ALUMNI INVOLVED

## Benefits of Using Alumni

Alumni are previous DECA members and are a great resource that chapters should take advantage of. Some ways that your chapter can involve alumni in training are:

- Proofreading written proposals
- Judging oral presentations
- Speaking to members about their experiences
- Mentoring a specific category based on their expertise
- Leveraging their personal networks, which can help in getting warm introductions

## Alumni Profiles

Alumni Profiles are a great way to educate not only your community but also your current members about past students who were involved in your DECA chapter. Providing your members with information about what past members are doing now helps your members to better understand where DECA can lead them, and the different careers and programs they can pursue after high school. If you are able to provide contact information (if the alumni agrees) it can also be a great tool for your members to network with past members and ask questions. Including alumni contact information may also lead to the opportunity of having alumni help train your members. Another great thing that alumni profiles allow your chapter to benefit from is if you post these profiles on your chapter's social media it can show the community where DECA members go after their high school careers. Using past members and utilizing their networks can benefit your chapter tremendously when it comes to publicity. Below we have provided an example of an alumni profile. You can use this as a template to create your own!

# ALUMNI PROFILE

**Name:** Jerry Zhang

**Occupation:** Analyst, CIBC World Markets

**Age:** 19



**DECA Involvement:**

Jerry served as a Provincial officer for two years. He was the Branding and Communication Officers for the 2012-2013 year, and then served as President of DECA Ontario for the 2013-2014 year.

**Education:**

Jerry is currently a second year student at University of Waterloo studying Systems Design Engineering.

**Where he is now and what he wants to say to give back:**

“DECA Ontario was one of the biggest parts of my high school life. I had no clue what to expect going into grade 9, but it turned out to be one of the best decisions I’ve ever made. I am happy to help anyone who is looking to do anything entrepreneurial or who wants to work in financial services. On the school side, for those that are interested in University of Waterloo, feel free to drop me a line.”

# MONTHLY MEMBER CHALLENGES

Monthly member challenges are challenges that we are hoping all of you will complete on your social media accounts. Below are the challenges and hash tags for each month. Complete as many challenges as you can and post pictures on your social media using the hash tag and tagging DECA Ontario in your post. Students who complete all of the monthly challenges will be mentioned on DECA Ontario social media accounts and their pictures will be shared on our accounts. All submissions are due on the last day of the month.

## September - #Fall4DECA

- Post a 30 second video explaining what DECA is
- Write DECA in a creative way (social media campaign)
- Share an alumni profile of one of your past DECA members

## October - #DECAfeast #DECALantern

- Post your campaign (posters)
- Post a Creative/professional chapter photo
- Share your Halloween themed community outreach event (Halloween for Hunger)
- Post a picture of your chapter's training sessions or your own training session

## November - #DECARemembers

- Make a DECA Remembrance Day wreath with your chapter or give back to the Canadian army
- Post a selfie with at least 2 provincial officers
- Post a photo doing the DECA diamond at regionals

## December - #DECAHolidays #DECAGivesBack

- Volunteer for a community cause (high demand at Christmas time - food bank, Salvation Army, caroling etc.), and share your story
- Write a press release for your local newspaper about regionals and your chapter's accomplishments
- Post your DECA gives back story about what you did during the holidays to give back to your local community

## January - #DECANewYear

- Post 3 DECA New Year's resolutions
- Share 3 unique training tips from your chapter leading up to Provincials

## February - #DECAlove #DECAProvincials #DECACcompliments

- For those qualifying for ICDC, get a press release showcasing your achievements
- Post a DECA Compliment to someone you admire in DECA using #DECACcompliments
- Use #DECAProvincials to tweet out your Provincials photos

## March - #SpringintoDECA

- Post a photo of you doing the DECA diamond at your spring break destination
- Do one community outreach project over spring break, and share your story
- Reach out to a club at school and put your business skills to the test by helping them with their business related activities, and tell us about it
- Post a picture of your DECA training

## April - #OntarioRocksICDC

- Share how you are going to rock ICDC
- Post your ICDC pictures

## May/June - #WeAreOntario

- Tell us about your final year-end DECA celebration

# CHAPTER CHALLENGES

Chapter Challenges are a tool that can be used to help your chapter keep on track when it comes to getting publicity this year. As a chapter you should be working your way up through the different tiers of the triangle.

Your first thing to accomplish should be improving your training by getting community members involved. This can be done by getting alumni to come in and help train, or having professionals from the business world mentor members.

The next level of the chapter challenge is to generate at least one form of publicity. In this package we have provided you with many different ways to gain publicity for your chapter in your local community. For this level you can do a variety of things such as a newspaper article, a radio interview, or maybe even get an interview on a local TV news station.

Finally, the top tier is to run a community service event with your chapter. This allows your members to gain skills in organizing an event and also provides the ability to align yourselves with your community by giving back. Running community service events is a great way to gain exposure for your chapter for the charitable work you are doing, and it is also a great opportunity to network! To see ideas for community service events your chapter can run, and a listing of charities you can support, check out our Community Service Agenda. Chapters that are able to complete all levels of the chapter challenge will be eligible to apply for an award that will be recognized at Provincials. All submissions are due on the last day of the month.

