What the News Bureau Does
(For Science Faculty and Survey Researchers)

News Releases

WHAT WE DO

We help get the word out about new research findings by writing and distributing news releases. Because we cannot write about every published study, these are our criteria for selecting studies to write about:

- It should be new (about to be published);
- The U. of I. faculty member/Survey researcher must be the principal investigator (PI) or corresponding author on the study;
- It must be in a peer-reviewed science journal;
- It must be new findings (no reviews or letters – these normally are not of interest to journalists);
- It must be likely to appeal to a general audience. (There are some exceptions to this; if something’s very important to the scientific community, we want to know about it!)
- It must be of interest to a national audience.

Ideally, researchers will contact Life Sciences Editor Diana Yates or Physical Sciences Editor Liz Ahlberg as soon as a promising paper is accepted by a journal for publication. On rare occasions, we may be able to accommodate researchers who ask us to write a news release at the last minute (just before or just after online publication), but we cannot always do so.

News Bureau science writers have years of experience writing about science for a general audience and know which subjects are more likely to be picked up by the science media.

OUR PROCESS

Ahlberg or Yates will read the published paper and interview you (the researcher) about the study. The writer will produce a draft of a news release and
send it to you for your review. She will ask you to mark any changes or corrections on the original draft and return it. The news release will not be sent out until you are happy with it.

DISTRIBUTION

Depending on the subject matter of the release and the targeted audience, News Bureau writers will e-mail the final draft of the release to one of several lists. These include journalists in the life sciences and physical sciences primarily, but sometimes also include those in the social sciences, business, the humanities, education and arts.

We post all our releases on the News Bureau website, and most also appear in Inside Illinois. The News Bureau also posts its science releases on EurekAlert!, an online news service of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. More than 6,000 science writers are registered users of this site, and many of them visit the site to look for story ideas.

OTHER INTERACTIONS WITH THE NEWS MEDIA

Sometimes News Bureau science writers will pitch a story about your research to science journalists with or without writing a news release about the study. The writers also respond to requests from reporters for sources on particular stories.

Inside Illinois

NEWS RELEASES
Most releases produced by the News Bureau also appear in Inside Illinois, a free newspaper distributed to all faculty and staff members.

ACHIEVEMENTS
This section of Inside Illinois lists notable awards, major grants and honors bestowed on Illinois faculty.

BOOK CORNER
This feature briefly describes upcoming books from UI faculty or Survey researchers.

A MINUTE WITH™ (Interview format)
Sometimes a scientist has a unique perspective on an issue (such as stem cell research or the development of biofuels) that is currently in the news. These brief interviews are linked to the UI home page and are also e-mailed to journalists in related fields.
Postmarks

This newspaper, published twice a year, goes out to all parents of undergraduate students and focuses on the educational experiences of undergraduates at Illinois.

Media Training, Preparation

Associate Chancellor for Public Affairs Robin Kaler, News Bureau director Jeff Unger and News Bureau science writers can help researchers prepare for professional presentations, interviews or press conferences.

Media & Public Relations

News Bureau writers find experts to respond to media inquiries and respond to requests for information from the public.

Video Production

Our staff videographer produces brief videos to accompany some research stories and MINUTE WITH™ interviews.

Tweeting, Crowing

The News Bureau has Twitter @NewsAtIllinois and Facebook accounts.