Contacting the Media

- Put together a list of local media contacts with email addresses and telephone numbers
- Send all contacts a News Advisory a few days ahead of your event:
    - include details of the event (location, time, etc.) and a "hook," something that will entice them to attend
    - do not give them all the information otherwise they have no reason to come
- Send out a News Release on the day of the event (see the sample below)
- Phone all media contacts on the day of the event to remind them to attend
    - emphasise the visuals of the event so they will want to come to get photos or video, e.g. Torchbearer dressed as homeless person running plunger Torch down the Main Street

2010 POVERTY OLYMPICS TORCH RELAY
TO SHINE THE SPOTLIGHT ON POVERTY IN [NAME OF TOWN]

On [date], the 2010 Poverty Olympics Torch Relay will precede the "official" Olympic torch relay to highlight the issues of poverty and homelessness in [name of town] and the inequality perpetuated by this major corporate event. [Name of organization] is sponsoring the 2010 Poverty Olympics Torch Relay in [name of town], where the poverty rate was ___% in 2005 (the most recent data available).

[Insert quote about local poverty, more about the work of the sponsoring organization, and details about the location of the torch relay].

The 2010 Poverty Olympics Torch Relay will be staged in a number of communities around BC in January and February to emphasize that people all over the province are struggling with poverty.

Concluding the province-wide journey, the final leg of the Torch Relay will end at the third annual Poverty Olympics in Vancouver on February 7, 2010.

The Poverty Olympics is an annual event held in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. It involves skits loosely based on Olympic events and features its own Poverty Anthem and official mascots. The purpose of the Poverty Olympics is to advocate for poverty reduction in BC, an aim captured in the slogan *End Poverty: It's Not a Game*.

Poverty and homelessness are not inevitable. Government can take action to reduce poverty in BC. [Name of sponsoring organization] and the Poverty Olympics urge the following:

- Increase welfare rates by 50%, and index welfare to inflation, so rates go up when the cost of living does.
- Get rid of arbitrary barriers that stop people from getting welfare when they need it.
- Stop clawing back money from welfare recipients when they get child support payments or earn small amounts from part-time work.
- Build 2,000 new units of non-market housing per year, in addition to assisted living (for low-income seniors and people with disabilities or mental illnesses) and emergency shelters.
- Increase the minimum wage to $10 per hour, and index it to inflation — this would mean a single person working full time could earn a little more than the poverty line.

Find out more about the Poverty Olympics and the torch relay at www.povertyolympics.ca.

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For further information or to arrange an interview, please contact: