

Communications Plan

HSI Citizens Academy

OVERVIEW:

The HSI Citizens Academy offers members of the community an exclusive inside look at HSI. The training program which will provide selected community members with a unique opportunity to learn about HSI criminal investigations, enforcement operations and personnel. Each week, participants will be introduced to a new facet of HSI; to include financial, narcotic, cyber, human smuggling/trafficking, fraud and child pornography investigations. Participants will be led through a series of real-world experiences and investigative activities like those activities of actual HSI special agents.

CAMPAIGN GOALS:

- Increase public awareness about HSI and its mission, activities, programs, and its people.
- Share the positive accomplishments of HSI with the community so they are better able to understand HSI's goal to enhance public safety and national security.
- Foster trust and strengthen the relationship between HSI and the community it serves.

TARGET AUDIENCES:

- Media
- Hill
- Academic leaders
- Business/community leaders
- Prosecutors and local and state law enforcement
- Local citizens
- Non-governmental organizations

TALKING POINTS:

- The HSI Citizens Academy highlights the more than 400 federal laws enforced by HSI special agents, including child exploitation, money laundering, human trafficking and more.
- The HSI Citizens Academy provides an opportunity for community members to participate in classroom instruction and practical, real-world exercises, like those which agents experience in training.
- Interested community members must apply and undergo a limited background check before ultimately being selected to participate in the academy. Space is limited for this rare opportunity to learn alongside federal agents.

GROUND RULES:

- (b)(7)(E)
- Academy participants should sign a photo release, so the agency can use images in promotional materials (Attachment 3). [We can also have participants complete a Waiver of Liability and Hold Harmless Agreement.]
- The PAO should review rules for social media use and media outreach with participants prior to the first academy class to ensure sensitive information isn't posted online or included in media stories.
- PAO must review all images and videos and approve the release of information prior to participants sharing visuals or information through social media or traditional media outlets.
- Media embargos will be in place if the release of information may affect ongoing investigations.

PRE-ACADEMY OUTREACH:

Community Relations Office:

- The community relations officer (CRO) assigned to the HSI field office will work with field office employees to determine potential candidates for the Citizens Academy. (See Attachment 1 for guidance.)
- The CRO will also reach out his/her community contacts to solicit participation in the citizen's academy.
- The CRO can also use materials created by the Office of Public Affairs to publicize and solicit participation in the academy.

Office of Congressional Relations:

- The Office of Congressional Relations will notify members of Congress about the upcoming opportunity to participate in the academy.

MID-ACADEMY OUTREACH:

Office of Public Affairs:

- The public affairs officer (PAO) assigned to the HSI field office will secure media stories about the academy.
- The PAO will invite key members of the media to cover specific courses as part of the academy.
- The Office of Public Affairs will post a web story highlighting the concept of the ICE Citizens Academy on ICE.gov and use social media to create buzz about participation in the academy.

POST-ACADEMY OUTREACH:

Community Relations Office:

- The CRO follows up with Academy graduates for potential outreach opportunities.
- If the SAC office has an internal newsletter, [either the CRO or the PAO] prepares articles with photos after each academy session for inclusion.

Office of Public Affairs:

- The PAO will continue to highlight the academy on local radio and television programs and invite media to attend training sessions.
- At the completion of the academy, the PAO will use the attached news release template (Attachment 1) and localized visuals (photos/video) to secure media stories about the success of the Academy.
- The Office of Public Affairs will also promote the Academies' successes on ICE.gov and through its social media channels.

Office of Congressional Relations:

- At the completion of the Academy, the Office of Congressional Relations will notify those members of Congress who had constituents participate in the Academy. In addition, OCR will push any news releases to the Hill.

Attachment 1:

Participant Selection Process

Participant referrals are provided by:

1. Community Relations Officers (CROs)
 - CROs promote the Citizens Academy at outreach events
 - CROs provide referrals to the CA from relationships built with community leaders and partners
2. HSI Leadership – SAC, DSAC, ASAC, GSs
 - Leadership refer community members from contacts they've made
3. Citizens Academy Alumni Referrals (after inaugural class)
 - Graduates from previous Citizens Academies are invited to recommend colleagues to apply for the program.
4. Public Affairs Officers (PAOs)
 - PAOs refer applicants from local media partners

CA Participant Selection Timeline (ideal time frame, could be compressed if needed):

1. About three months prior to the start date of the Academy, the Citizens Academy Lead sends communication out to the groups above to obtain referrals for the program.
2. Names referred are emailed information about the program with brochure and fillable pdf application attached. A due date, about 1.5 months before the start of the program, is included.
3. Applications are gathered and sent to local intel for background checks. (Local office should determine how much lead time they need to complete the checks.)
4. Those that pass the background check, will be included on an Applicant Selection List.
5. About five to six weeks prior to the start of the program, a selection committee composed of the SAC, DSAC, Citizens Academy Lead, and other designated leadership reviews the applicant summary list and selects applicants to represent a broad group of community leaders and partners.
6. Selected applicants are notified one month prior to the first Citizens Academy class.

Attachment 2:

HSI _____ graduates inaugural Citizens' Academy

LOCATION – U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) _____ office graduated the first HSI _____ Citizens' Academy.

SAC QUOTE

The graduating members are:

QUOTE FROM ACADEMY GRADUATE

The Citizens' Academy was an eight-week course including classroom instruction and practical, real-world exercises, similar to those which agents experience in training. Each week, a different investigative group presented an agenda and scenario for the academy. Participants also experienced live fire at a local range, defensive tactics instruction and a presentation by the Special Response Team.

Interested community members applied and underwent a limited background check before being selected to participate in the academy. The office is already looking forward to hosting its next class.

ICE

Attachment 3:

**U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
Department of Homeland Security
500 12th Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20024**

Release Form – Permission to Use Photograph/Video

Subject: _____ HSI Citizen’s Academy

Location: _____

I grant permission to U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), its representative and employees, the right to use my photograph in connection with the above-identified subject. I authorize ICE, its assignees and transferred to use and publish the same in print, video or electronically.

I agree that ICE may use such photographs of me, with or without my name, and for any lawful purpose, including publicity, illustration, training, advertising or Web content.

I have read and understood the above:

Signature: _____

Printed name: _____

Organization Name: U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s Homeland Security Investigations

Address: _____

Date: _____