TIPS FOR WRITING AN OP-ED

- **Find a timely news hook.** Make it clear why your viewpoint should be given attention right now.
- **Know the word limit.** Newspapers have limited space. Generally, op-eds are about 500 to 750 words, but check the paper's website to find its guidelines.
- **Provide your contact information.** List your name, address, phone, and email at the bottom of the piece.
- **Provide a "headshot".** Some publications ask for a picture of authors. Picture should be framed like a passport or license photo.
- **Draw the reader in.** Your first paragraph should draw the reader in with a brief but dramatic anecdote, a compelling statistic, or a thoughtful argument.
- **Make a clear point or argument.** Make one point or argument clearly and persuasively. While it can be tempting to try to include all of your ideas, it's better to pick one main takeaway to focus on.
- **Support your argument.** Use a few, interesting facts to support your case. Don't just list facts, though. Find a way to incorporate them and relate them to personal details.
- **Identify a solution.** Make sure you have a solution to offer to help rally people to your cause.
- **Create a call-to-action.** Give the readers a sense of purpose by asking them to take action somehow, whether by visiting a website for more information, contacting their legislators about the issue, donating to a cause, etc.

TIPS FOR SUBMITTING AN OP-ED

- **Identify where you want to submit.** Weigh the pros and cons of submitting to a large paper vs. a small paper. While large papers have a wider readership, they can be harder to get published in. You typically will have the most luck submitting to a publication associated with your town or city of residence.
- **Submit as early as possible.** Ideally, we suggest submitting your story by Sept. 1, to ensure editors have plenty of time to consider running it during PAM.
- **Follow instructions**. Instructions for submitting an op-ed are usually on the opinion page of the paper's website. They may have specific word limits or formatting requirements.
  - **In most cases, you should submit your op-ed via email.**