

# 5 WAYS TO CONNECT WITH LOCAL COMMUNITIES

1

## Build Relationships in the Community

- Establish trust by finding ways to connect *before* a big story happens
- Get involved in causes or community events
- Let community members know how to reach you
- Use social media as a relationship-building tool

2

## Showcase a Variety of Voices

- Reflect variety in age, race/ethnicity, gender, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and socioeconomics
- Avoid relying on the same few sources for every story
- Refrain from focusing only on people with extreme views

3

## Examine Your Story Framing

- Use neutral language when describing contentious situations
- Avoid terms that serve as catch-all labels for people who may have very different beliefs
- Be fair and consistent in coverage of local communities

4

## Think Outside the Story

- Share information about community resources
- Look for positive community developments that might inspire stories
- Show empathy when asking sources about difficult situations
- Consider biases: Explore ideas or questions that might be uncomfortable

5

## Diversify Your Newsroom

- Diversify by age, race/ethnicity, gender, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and socioeconomics
- Remember that communities want to be represented in their newsrooms