



Memorandum

To: Local Group Officers
From: Dr. John Sheehan, Development Officer
Date: September 3, 2008
Re: 60 Minutes

As you may know, Lesley Stahl of *60 Minutes* attended the Annual Gathering in July and filmed for an upcoming story about Mensa. At this time, we do not know the exact date the story will air, but her producers have indicated that it will be late September to early November.

Last year, *60 Minutes* was the most-watched news broadcast in America, and 16 of their 33 broadcasts in 2007-2008 ranked in Nielsen's top ten shows of the week. Because of its huge viewership, the upcoming Mensa story could result in a large upswing in inquiries and interest in our organization.

We're working hard to capitalize on that possibility. Our staff in Arlington is prepared to respond to a larger volume of inquiries to our Web site and national 800#. They will also be updating the Web site after the airing to highlight how to join, contacting local CBS affiliates to suggest follow-up stories about area chapters, and assisting Local Groups with test session publicity.

There are lots of things your Local Group can do as well to help make the most of this opportunity. I've listed some ideas below:

Before the show airs

- **Check your Local Group Web site** and make sure it has updated group and testing information.
- **Plan test sessions** throughout the fall so prospects may test while they are most interested.
- Plan a "watch party."
- Offer to **speak about Mensa** to community organizations or to **set up a display** in your library or school, or at a local festival. The Marketing Department (email laurenf@americanmensa.org) can provide a sample Powerpoint presentation or loan your group a pop-up display.
- Once we know the air date, use your local elists, as well as members' Facebook and Twitter networks to **spread the word**.

After the show airs

- Plan some events for late fall that are **open to the public**. This will encourage people to learn more about Mensa. Promote these open-to-the-public events through the calendar section of local newspapers and on your Web site. You can also ask your members to share information about these events through their Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn networks.
- Several Young Mensans were interviewed at the Annual Gathering, so it is possible that there may be an increase in inquiries from parents of gifted children. If so, you may want to have **at least one public event that is family-friendly**. You may also want to give your Gifted Children Coordinator a "heads up" to prepare responses regarding activities for gifted children in your area. If you don't have a Gifted Children Coordinator, this is a great time to recruit for that position!

- Prepare one or two Local Group officers for working with the media. After the show airs, local newspapers, radio and TV stations may want to learn more about your chapter. **Review the External Press Kit and Internal Publicity Guide** to get ready for interviews.
- Plan how you will **welcome new members** that may come as a result of both Mensa Testing Day and the *60 Minutes* story. You may also see a rise in the number of renewals and rejoining members. If rejoining members have not been part of the organization for several years, they'll need an extra 'welcome' and orientation, too!

Once we know the air date for this story, we will post a message to the AML Newsflash list, as well as various officer lists. Please note, that as with all media, even a planned air date could be delayed if an urgent news story develops. We also have no control or knowledge of the exact focus of the story, so we will not know until after the airing what the tone of the story will be.

If you have any questions or concerns about the *60 Minutes* story or preparing for inquiries generated as a result of that story, please contact the National Office staff at NationalOffice@americanmensa.org or 888-294-8035 ext. 199.