

Northern Community Radio

Local Content and Services Report for 2017 Submitted February 2018

1. Describe your overall goals and approach to address identified community issues, needs, and interests through your station's vital local services, such as multiplatform long and short-form content, digital and in-person engagement, education services, community information, partnership support, and other activities, and audiences you reached or new audiences you engaged.

Our overall goals and approach to identified community issues, needs and interests is determined by our board of directors via their governing policies. The board reviews and updates its policies on a rotating basis as they oversee policy compliance throughout the year. The staff develops an annual work plan to carry out the board's policies.

The board establishes its policies with community input. They conducted two community advisory meetings in 2017 to better ascertain community needs, and get feedback about the organization's programming and board policies. The organization also maintains a talkback line for listeners, regularly solicits comments from the public, and engages with listeners and the community via email, US mail, and through social media. Northern Community Radio conducted an online program survey in March 2017, with 94 responses.

The Community Advisory Board identified several community needs including the following: we live in a multicultural area shared with Native American tribes; there is a vast socioeconomic range that includes some of the poorest counties in the state; we recognize the importance of natural resources, recreation and the outdoors—including public lands—to the economy of this region; the music and arts communities are strong and are an economic driver; environmental stewardship is important to continuing a healthy environment we all can enjoy; the school/student population is growing; downtown businesses are growing while the mall is shrinking—and more young people are business owners, especially downtown; there is a significant population of “snow birds” who live in northern MN in the summer and move to warmer climates in winter; there is a need for information that is sensitive to or reflects a rural point of view.

Multiplatform content is part of the work plan. Besides having an active website, Northern Community Radio participates in NPR One and continues to produce podcasts related to nature/phenology and other programs. Music programming is also part of the plan.

Northern Community Radio has moved into more classrooms with its work in nature observation and phenology. This year we developed a curriculum for use in the schools for teaching phenology (observing the rhythmic biological relationship of nature to

climate). Classrooms report on their observations weekly and reports are shared over the air and through podcasts.

We continue to produce several segments and stories about the creative economy of the area, the outdoors, sustainability, and history. We have engaged with state and federal legislators, representatives of local political parties, and candidates for office to listen to their ideas and viewpoints. We have produced many stories about sustainability, from local food to energy production. We have a weekly program dedicated to all-Minnesota music and integrate Minnesota music into all music programming to support the local music scene. We have produced many stories about Native American people, projects, and culture.

2. Describe key initiatives and the variety of partners with whom you collaborated, including other public media outlets, community nonprofits, government agencies, educational institutions, the business community, teachers and parents, etc. This will illustrate the many ways you're connected across the community and engaged with other important organizations in the area.

Northern Community Radio partners with a variety of community organizations. Among them:

- Red Lake (reservation) youth suicide awareness motorcycle ride, MN Reading Corps, Circles of Support (middle class families mentoring low income families), MN DNR (from having the DNR Commissioner on the air to field operatives talking about invasive species), Eldercircle, Mobility Mania (wheelchair access), Hospice, Senior Visitors Program, Itasca Community College, Beltrami County Historical Society, area farmers' markets, OutFront MN (working in schools to assist GLBT kids), Advocates for Family Peace, 4H, Visit Grand Rapids, Girl Scouts, NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness), St. Louis County Rescue, Bridges Kinship Mentoring, RReal (solar energy), and many more.
- Northern Community Radio has been a media partner/sponsor for several events, helping to promote Stomp on Stigma's 5K Walk/Run for Children's Mental Health Services, the MS Walk, and others
- We are work in fifteen classrooms across northern Minnesota to teach nature observation, implement a new curriculum, and integrate student observations into a radio program about phenology. Northern Community Radio received a special grant from the U of MN to support this program in 2017.
- We are an active member of Ampers (the Association of MN Public Educational Radio Stations—a nonprofit) to produce and air programs like Minnesota Native News, Veterans' Voices, and Honor our Traditions (an anti-smoking initiative focused on traditional American Indian tobacco use).
- We are in the second year of a collaborative monthly music series with the Miles Reif Performing Arts Center, featuring Minnesota Musicians and branded with the name of our Minnesota music program, Centerstage MN. We are planning to continue the series in 2018-19. We also collaborate with the Reif Center to stage and air the Great Northern Radio Show annually.

- We partner with the MacRostie Arts Center, Ely Folk School, Crossing Arts Alliance, and Watermark Arts Center (all nonprofits) to provide a program of monthly arts information for the Grand Rapids, Ely, Brainerd and Bemidji communities
 - We have worked with Islamic Resources Group in 2017, to provide cultural diversity training to our staff and board of directors, to directly educate via the airwaves, and to publicize events that educate people and communities about Islam and Muslims.
 - We recently produced a special segment about the “state of hunger in northern MN” with the Bemidji Area Food Shelf and North Central Food Bank
 - We produced a series of segments related to “We Are All Criminals,” a community collaboration about the criminal justice system that included Itasca Community College, Reif Center, Blandin Foundation, MacRostie Art Center, Grand Rapids Area Library, YMCA, and more.
3. What impact did your key initiatives and partnerships have in your community? Describe any known measurable impact, such as increased awareness, learning or understanding about particular issues. Describe indicators of success, such as connecting people to needed resources or strengthening conversational ties across diverse neighborhoods. Did a partner see an increase in requests for related resources? Please include direct feedback from a partner(s) or from a person(s) served.
- Nature reporting: has led to increased awareness of invasive species and other factors facing area wildlife, such as Emerald Ash Borer, Chronic Wasting Disease, Starry Stonewort, zebra mussels. These effect quality of life and the economy of the region.
 - The program for teaching phenology in the schools and including students and classrooms in on-air programming is very strong. Phenology is our strongest podcast and program on NPR One. It teaches observational skills and gets kids away from screens and outdoors.
 - There is a strong effort to keep political reporting and opinion balanced and free of bias. We believe this helps bridge understanding between people in our communities and cross the political divide.

10/24/17

Great interview this morning on chronic wasting disease!

Please run it again! Community needs to know this!

Could you give me her (DNR gal) contact. I would like to write couple of paragraphs for the Floodwood paper - VERY important info!!

-Kellie Rae T.

7/24/17

John L., I am starting a new job teaching math at Circle of Life Academy in White Earth, MN. We are a Tribal K12 School. Because of my past history teaching environmental science from a phenological and other naturalist-type perspectives, the school has given me carte blanche to incorporate as much of

that as I want into the curriculum. Would you be interested in working with our school if I get more teachers on board? I know you mostly work with 5th grade, so I'll need to have a conversation with our 5th grade teacher and our science teacher to see what their interest is. Anyway, I love what you're doing on KAXE and with classrooms in the region and it would be great to be a part of that!!
-Steve D.

9/14/17

I am overdue to communicate my continued appreciation for the Making Sausage segments. The preparation for these segments requires effort, and I appreciate Heidi's efforts for the governor candidate interviews...

Including both Colleen Nardone and Brianna Bierschbach today to discuss the entanglement between the Governor and the Legislature made the Making Sausage segment a very good conversation this morning. Brianna's perspective as a very professional journalist raised the level of the conversation. Very well done.
-Larry S

4. Please describe any efforts (e.g. programming, production, engagement activities) you have made to investigate and/or meet the needs of minority and other diverse audiences (including, but not limited to, new immigrants, people for whom English is a second language and illiterate adults) during Fiscal Year 2016, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2017. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.

The population under our signals is 93% white/European, 5% Native American/Ojibwe, and 2% African/Asian/Hispanic/Other (combined). We define diversity to include cultural background, geography, point of view, age, gender, and disability. Northern Community Radio provides music and information programming from diverse populations and perspectives every day.

We play 50% women artists during all locally produced music programming, which compares to about 20% women artists played on commercial radio.

Native American newscasts are part of new programming every weekday.

Many Native American people are often included in Area Voices—a series about arts, culture and history. The series has included the American Indian Resource Center at Bemidji State University, Truth and Reconciliation in Bemidji, Human Rights Commission, and more.

With Ampers and other public radio stations in MN, we partner to broadcast a 5-minute weekly news program, Minnesota Native News. The newscast is about American Indian people, events, and issues in Minnesota.

We train community members of all backgrounds to be volunteer producers—in music programming or as public affairs contributors. We provide training free of charge. This year we held two sessions attended by 35 trainees.

5. Please assess the impact that your CPB funding had on your ability to serve your community. What were you able to do with your grant that you wouldn't be able to do if you didn't receive it?

Northern Community Radio is located in sparsely-populated rural northern Minnesota. Its signals cover a large geographic region. The restricted portion of its CPB funding is used to purchase National Public Radio programming for the citizens of its broadcast area, some of whom have access to no other public radio signal. This includes Morning Edition and All Things Considered.

The unrestricted portion of the grant helps Northern Community Radio provide programs to help fulfil its mission to build community in northern Minnesota. In particular CPB funds support local and regional news and public affairs on the Morning Show, engineering and equipment, training, travel, events, management, membership, and development. It underpins a number of services and positions that help grow other revenue, which raises the level of community service our organization can provide.