

## **2016 Report to the Community**

### **Welcome from the General Manager**

As we look forward to another year, it's traditional to pause and take stock of the year that brought us here.

In light of the national and global political climate, we find our mission of creating experiences that deepen understanding and connect people more important than ever. Throughout this 2016 report, you'll learn about some of the ways we're delivering on our mission through fact-based journalism and community events that reflect and engage the audiences we serve.

Highlights of the year include in-depth reporting that puts a human voice to some of the issues we face in our community, such as the Road to Zero series from KUT News and our Adult Crime, Adult Time report from "Texas Standard." On the music front, KUTX was named "Best Radio Station" for the third consecutive year. And our KUTX Live at the Four Seasons and the Cactus Summer Fundraiser brought diverse audiences together over a shared love of music.

In September we unveiled bold new logos to represent the distinct services and personalities of KUT 90.5 and KUTX 98.9. The KUT logo signals the depth and perspective we strive provide to listeners every day, while the throwback Cooper Black font and bold, vibrant colors of the KUTX logo connect our content with a crisp, clear graphic language that lets our personality shine through.

I hope you'll find this snapshot of our year enlightening and maybe even inspiring. Don't hesitate to reach out with questions.

Appreciatively,

[Stewart Vanderwilt](#)

## **Our Mission**

KUT and KUTX create experiences that deepen understanding and connect people. We are committed to authenticity, craft, context and the unique power of the human voice in all its forms.

## **Our Vision**

KUT and KUTX are leading sources for knowledge and ideas that enrich and sustain greater Austin's unique sense of place, cultural identity and position as a center of leadership. KUT will inform, inspire and engage while becoming the most trusted source for news, information and the Austin music experience.

## **KUT 90.5 News Austin's NPR Station**

From reporting on the impact funding cuts will have on developmentally delayed children, to investigating whether charter schools are taking advantage of loopholes in the city's building codes, we strive to deliver in-depth stories by and about people in Austin from a variety of thoughtful perspectives.



*The Road to Zero series examined traffic calming measures. Credit: Gabriel Cristóver Pérez*

For example, our 10-part series “[Road to Zero](#)“ looked closely at Austin’s Vision Zero plan – and where it could fall short. The series examined the initiative from the perspectives of families, neighborhood representatives, Austin traffic engineers and officials from other communities who have followed the Vision Zero philosophy. Since the series aired, it has been referenced in city council discussions about Austin’s Vision Zero plan.

Each month, our crowdsourced reporting project, ATXplained, invites listeners to get involved in the news and storytelling we do by asking a question about life in Austin, then voting on which story we investigate and report. Many unforgettable stories have come out of this project, including the story behind the “Fair Sailing Tall Boy” memorial, an investigation on why grackles flock to grocery store parking lots at dusk, and an exploration of Austin’s shrinking African American population – despite an overall population boom.

While our work on the air and online reach the broadest audience, our community events allow our reporters to more directly connect with listeners and listen to their concerns, making sure our work matters.

For example, we collaborated with “The Austin Monitor” to produce a series of city council candidate forums, called “Ballot Boxing,” for the five seats up for re-election. In these forums, citizens asked the questions, while reporters moderated.

Other community events included a series of presidential debate-watch parties produced by “The Ticket,” our podcast focused on the 2016 presidential race, produced by KUT and the “Texas Tribune”; and our “Real Talk” public series of frank, sit-down conversations with newsmakers, produced in collaboration with “The Austin Monitor.”

### **KUT News Awards for work produced in 2016**

#### **Radio Television Digital News Association NATIONAL Murrow Awards**

Best Social Media – work examples include: [Live Blog: Trump in Austin](#), [City Council](#)

[member's comment on likelihood of Prop 1's defeat](#) and [Come for the headline, stay for the photos](#), reported by Andrew Weber

### **Radio Television Digital News Association regional Murrow Awards**

Best News Series - [ATXplained](#)

Best Writing - senior reporter [Mose Buchele](#)

Best Social Media – work examples include: [Live Blog: Trump in Austin](#), [City Council member's comment on likelihood of Prop 1's defeat](#) and [Come for the headline, stay for the photos](#)

### **Texas Associated Press Broadcasters Awards**

First place: [APD New Officers](#), in the General Assignment category

Honorable mention: [Music Sound Tunnel](#), in the General Assignment category

First place: [Austin Runner Eyes Olympic Gold](#), in the Sports Story or Sports Series category

First place [Infinite Voyage Through Austin's Recycling Stream](#), in the Use of Actuality-Production category

First place: [Kate McGee](#) in the Specialty or Beat Reporting category

First place: “Donald Trump and Texas,” in the Continuing Coverage category

First place: [Fair Sailing Tall Boy](#), in the Feature (serious) category

Second place: [KUT.org](#), in the Digital category

Second place: [Road to Zero](#), in the Online/Special Content category

Second place: [Mose Buchele](#) in the Reporter category

Second place: [ATXPlained](#), in the Special Series category

Honorable mention: “[Turtle Nerds on Patrol](#),” in the Feature (light) category

### **PRNDI (Public Radio News Directors Inc.)**

Second place Best Multi-Media Presentation: “[The Road to Zero](#)“

Second place Best Writing: Road to Zero/[Distraction](#)

## Texas Standard

### The National Daily News Show of Texas

Heard by more than 400,000 listeners on 27 stations across the state each month, “Texas Standard” is striving to live up to its tagline – the national daily news show of Texas.

In its second year on the air, “Texas Standard” continues to expand and deepen its coverage of issues that matter to Texas. The show’s success and ability to cover much of the state is the result of a strong spirit of collaboration among the four partner stations: Houston Public Media, KERA North Texas, KUT Austin and San Antonio’s Texas Public Radio (TPR).



*David Brown and Laura Rice atop the UT Tower for the documentary "Out of the Blue." Credit Miguel Gutierrez Jr.*

One of the show’s biggest highlights of 2016 was the radio documentary, “[Out of the Blue: 50 Years After the UT Tower Shooting](#),” featuring stories from survivors of the University of Texas Tower shooting on Aug. 1, 1966. The powerful documentary and website were the culmination of a two-year effort to locate survivors and witnesses of the shooting and gather their stories. The oral history features firsthand accounts from nearly 100 people – many of which had not been shared publicly before. The project was made possible with support from the Dolph Briscoe Center for

American History, which maintains a permanent archive of the oral histories.

In December, Texas Standard’s investigative story [Adult Crime, Adult Time: How Texas Fast-Tracked Kids to Life in Prison](#) examined how some juveniles are sentenced as adults in Texas courts. The story focused on the experience of Miguel Navarro who – at age 15 – was tried as an adult and sentenced to 99 years in prison for murder. His guilt is not in question, but the fairness of the process could be. “Texas Standard” producers spent eight months mining court records, interviewing attorneys and visiting Navarro at a maximum security prison to get the story right. After it aired, State Rep. Gene Wu of Houston tweeted and shared the story with constituents citing it as evidence for the need to change Texas’ juvenile sentencing laws. Wu filed bills during the 85<sup>th</sup> legislative session to raise the juvenile sentencing age from 17 to 18.

### Texas Standard Awards for work produced in 2016

#### National Headliners Awards

Best in Show and First Place Radio Documentary “[Out of the Blue](#)”

Second Place - Radio: newscast [Nov. 9, 2016 newscast](#)

Third Place - Radio: breaking news (July 7, 2016 show on “[Dallas police shooting](#)”)

### **Radio Television Digital News Association NATIONAL Murrow Awards**

Best News Documentary – “[Out of the Blue](#)” in the large market radio category

### **Radio Television Digital News Association regional Murrow Awards**

Best Investigative Reporting “[Adult Crime, Adult Time](#)” in the large market radio category

Best News Documentary - “[Out of the Blue](#)” in the large market radio category

### **New York Festivals International Radio Awards**

Gold - news programs – Best News Documentary or Special “[Out of the Blue](#)”

Silver - talk programs – Best Regularly Scheduled Talk Program “Texas Standard”

### **Texas Associated Press Broadcasters Awards**

First Place: Best Investigative Report – “[Adult Crime, Adult Time](#)”

First Place: Best Documentary – “[Out of the Blue](#)”

Second Place: News Anchor – David Brown

Honorable Mention: Best Local Talk Show - “[Mother of a Transgender Child](#)”

Honorable Mention: Reporter – Joy Diaz

Honorable Mention: Online/Special Content “[Out of the Blue](#)”

### **PRNDI (Public Radio News Directors Inc.)**

First place “[Out of the Blue](#)” in the Long Documentary category

First place “Texas Standard” in the News/Public Affairs Program category

### **First Amendment award from the Society of Professional Journalists, Fort Worth Professional Chapter (Regional)**

“[Adult Crime, Adult Time](#)” won in the investigative reporting category

Joy Diaz’s [homeless and pregnant series](#) was a finalist in the defending the disadvantaged category.

### **Lone Star Awards from the Houston Press Club**

First place, “[Pregnant and Homeless](#),” reported by Joy Diaz in the radio series category

First place, “[Pay to Pray](#),” reported by Michael Marks in the radio soft news feature category

Second place, “[Adult Crime, Adult Time](#),” reported by Alain Stephens and Hannah McBride in the radio hard news feature category

Third place, “Texas Standard,” produced by David Brown, Laura Rice, Emily Donahue, in the radio talk show category featuring “[Out of the Blue](#)” as an example of work

Third place, “[Angry, Sad & Undecided](#),” reported by Michael Marks in the radio politics/government category

## KUTX

### Connecting People to the Austin Music Experience

We believe that music is an important part of a healthy community. Since launching four years ago, KUTX 98.9 has been helping people discover music from the artists driving the sound of Austin today – from new and local artists, to music that has stood the test of time. In other words, we are relentless supporters Austin’s music and music makers.



*Corinne Bailey Rae plays Studio 1A. Credit: Stephanie Tacy*

Each month we highlight a local musician through our KUTX Artist of the Month feature, which puts a local artist on heavy rotation for four weeks. Our October Artist of the Month, [Nina Diaz](#) performed a live broadcast from Studio 1A, hosted an hour-long *My KUTX* set where she played some of the songs that have inspired her over the years, and was featured on KUTX.org and in the KUTX newsletter. Some of the artists featured in 2016 include: Harvest Thieves,

White Denim, Black Pistol Fire, Ruby & The Reckless, and Third Root.

Six days a week on the air and online, Laurie Gallardo’s Austin Music Minute delivers a roundup of live music performances from local artists at local venues, along with artist sound clips.



*Music fans enjoy a set from Gina Chavez at KUTX Live at the Four Seasons during ACL Festival. credit: Gabriel Cristóver Pérez*

Throughout the year, we collaborate with our partners to produce unique live music experiences that connect fans and artists. During Austin City Limits Music Festival and the SXSW Music Conference, we team up with the Four Seasons Hotel Austin to produce four family friendly live music showcases in March and one during ACL Fest. Proceeds benefit the Seton Shivers Cancer Center. Additional family friendly, live music events we produced in 2016 included Winter Jam at the ABGB and KUTX Live at Mueller.

The KUTX community experienced highs and lows in 2016. The year started on a low note with the [death](#) of longtime “Twine Time” host Paul Ray in January. Weeks later, “Twine Time” and Paul Ray were named “Best Radio Program” and “Best Radio Host” respectively in the Austin Chronicle’s annual Austin Music Industry Awards. KUTX was [named Best Radio station](#) for a third consecutive year.

We celebrated John Aielli's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary on the airwaves in September and the City of Austin proclaimed Sept. 1, 2016 "John Aielli" day in recognition of his longevity and contributions to Austin's music and cultural scene. To show our appreciation for his service over the years, we offered a John Aielli bobble head as a membership drive thank-you gift. A John Aielli Anniversary Concert is being planned for the spring.

### **KUTX Awards for work in 2016**

KUTX 98.9 was voted "Best Radio Station" in the Austin Chronicle's annual Austin Music Industry Awards

"Twine Time" was voted "Best Radio Program" in the Austin Chronicle's annual Austin Music Industry Awards

Paul Ray was named "Best Radio Host" in the Austin Chronicle's annual Austin Music Industry Awards



## Cactus Cafe

Six years into our role programming the Cactus Cafe, the beloved venue continues to thrive.

Singer-songwriters, such as John Fullbright, Carrie Rodriguez, Will Johnson, Richard Buckner and Aoife O'Donovan continue to take the spotlight in front of the famous red curtains. Aiming to expand our audience, we have featured other music genres, such as classical, through a collaboration with the Austin Classical Guitar Society.

Each March Butch Hancock hosts the Townes Van Zandt Annual Birthday Salute featuring artists singing songs written by Van Zandt, who considered the Cactus Cafe his home club in Austin. This year's lineup – playing to a packed house – included Betty Soo, Graham Weber, Derral Gleason, Jimmie Dale Gilmore and Mickey White keeping the late singer-songwriter's memory alive.



*Ray Benson plays the Cactus Cafe. Credit: Amy Chambless*

The Cactus continues to host the Kerrville Folk Festival University Student Songwriter's Competition each spring. The event showcases some of the University's most talented students performing their original music with the winner earning the opportunity to perform at the Kerrville Folk Festival.

In addition to hosting performances in the intimate Cactus Cafe each week, we partner with KUTX 98.9 to produce special "Cactus Cafe Presents" concerts in UT's Hogg Auditorium. Some of this year's national acts included Yo La Tengo and Lucinda Williams.

In June, the Flatlanders reunited to headline the Cactus Summer Fundraiser at Hogg Memorial Auditorium. The nearly sold-out show featured the band revisiting favorites from their formative years in the 1970s and newer tunes, as well as a few choice cuts from their solo careers.

Our co-productions with KUTX and the annual Summer Fundraiser supplement the Cactus Cafe's annual operating budget, allowing it to host small shows that may not generate as many ticket sales.

While we see the primary mission of the Cactus being to provide an intimate venue to appreciate live music, we also see it as an opportunity to bring people together to discuss a range of ideas through our Views and Brews series, produced by KUT 90.5. Two nights a month we host discussions on topics ranging from race in America, to the psychology of civic engagement, to the future of theater. These discussions typically feature a panel of academic thought leaders sharing their perspective on the night's theme and answering questions from the audience. The Views and Brews series is free and open to the public.

## Membership

As public radio stations, KUT and KUTX are directly supported by a community of listeners and local businesses whose investments power the news, music and conversations that matter to Austin. Individual members, in particular, are the lifeblood of public radio, making up more than 50 percent of our annual budget.



*"A Prairie Home Companion" cast member Fred Newman poses with KUT listeners after the show. credit: Jake O'Hare*

Some of the benefits of KUT and KUTX membership include priority access to public radio events, such as the April A Prairie Home Companion performance at Bass Concert Hall, invitations to events featuring public radio personalities and first-listen access to KUT news specials.

Since introducing our sustaining membership program in 2011, nearly 20,000 listeners have chosen to support KUT and KUTX through an automatic credit card payment each month. By supporting the station year-round, this special category of listeners provides a steady and reliable stream of support, while reducing fundraising expenses, such as paper and postage.



*Volunteers write thank-you postcards during a membership drive. credit: Erin Geisler*

## **Advisory Board Members**

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\* Concluded term in 2016