

WKMS Response to 2017 Station Activity Survey Section 6 Each year the Corporation for Public Broadcasting audits its grantees finances, employment, governance, programming, public service, journalists, and station activities. CPB mandates that this section of its annual SAS (Station Activity Survey) be placed at wkms.org within 10 days of its having been submitted – in this case by February 25, 2017.

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.

The overall goal/vision of WKMS is to “To inspire and empower a diverse audience by being a trusted and essential resource for information, culture, community, and regional growth as a critical part of the educational mission of Murray State University.” WKMS is a small but mighty shop in rural Western Kentucky that serves around 40 counties with a largely homogenous population of approximately 420,000 people. We believe WKMS should be a resource for all people and we constantly strive to increase awareness to audience who are not the standard “demographic.” New audiences engaged are generally associated with geographic locations through community events. WKMS hosted a storytelling contest in Hopkinsville, KY. One of our hosts presented research from past documentaries to the Hopkins County Historical Society. These engagement activities supplement long-standing projects like the local WKMS book club, and Battle of the Bands and the Lower Town Arts and Music festival.

We use our network of listeners, donors and social media followers to help identify issues and trends in the region that need a journalistic light shined upon them. We also use the void of issues or populations to ensure our coverage of news, arts and culture give our audience a trusted perspective. Once the issues are identified through surveys, local meetings and interpersonal relationships, a multi-pronged approach begins to determine how WKMS can best produce the content given the restrictions of staff size and budget. WKMS uses a similar approach to music programming, to provide alternatives including boutique Jazz, Classical and AAA music through three streams of programming. WKMS has harnessed new volunteer hosted podcasts to increase community engagement with live productions. We also harness the expertise housed within our community to promote educational services through annual *Shakespeare Minutes* and *Poetry Minutes*.

WKMS produces nine local newscasts each weekday, supplemented with six mid-day statewide newscasts to which WKMS feeds content. The newscasts primarily consists of news of the day to provide listeners context on a local, regional or statewide issue. Additionally, WKMS produces/ airs approximately 10 to 15 long form interviews or

feature reports each week. The increase in reporting comes from the aid of a new Regional Journalism Collaboration, The Ohio Valley ReSource.

Every story WKMS produces, receives a digital treatment that often includes more detail, depth and imagery. Digital first productions include local podcasts and extended interviews. WKMS is harness digital products to expand reach including NPR ONE, TUNEIN and a soon to be developed smart-speaker skill.

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.

The WKMS Podcast Pilot Project was a key initiative in the last year. WKMS staff and many volunteers agreed that WKMS needed to serve the region with a podcast, but maintaining core services meant resources were limited a staff driven program. So, by way of community engagement WKMS issued an open call to listeners with an interest in becoming a podcaster with aid from the WKMS Station Manager for training, editing and distribution. Listeners provided more than 20 proposals with two becoming viable services. Those podcasts have now concluded a second season. Respondents to the current WKMS programming survey have identified these shows and projects they'd like to hear more of, which appears to be a success for the project.

These two podcasts have increased partnerships with the Paducah School of Art and Design which provides recording space for one podcast. The McCracken County Library hosted a free live taping of the second podcast, deepening the station's relationship with MCLIB.

WKMS has a continued partnership with public radio stations in Kentucky through the membership organization, Association of Kentucky Public Radio Stations. In the last year, the collaboration has maintained the State Capitol Reporter, Statewide Newscasts and Statewide Underwriting. This year, the partnership grew with a statewide news special facilitated by a new interconnect funded through a CPB COS grant. WKMS has also seen continued private support growth through membership thanks in part to an AKPRS funded membership study.

The Ohio Valley ReSource regional journalism collaboration is flourishing in its second year as seven member stations have supported, in part, an in-house journalist to report on issues of the transition economy in Kentucky, Ohio and West Virginia. This partnership has provided national award winning content on important issues like the opioid crisis, trade and manufacturing, health outcomes in rural America and agriculture and infrastructure issues.

WKMS continues to partner with many area school districts to record and air performances by their ensembles as part of a grant project funded by the Carson Myre Charitable Foundation. These recordings are packaged and aired on WKMS Classical (HD-2) which can be heard on analog translators serving approximately 60,000 people.

Other valuable partnerships include: the Small Business Development Center of Murray State, regional chambers of commerce, regional theaters, pennyroyal arts council, the Paducah Symphony Orchestra.

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.

As a rural public radio station, it is difficult to measure impact, given the coverage swath and limited resources. However, WKMS consistently receives listener feedback. Specifically feedback for the Ohio Valley ReSource has been quite positive and important. Here are a few examples of listener feedback for the reporting project:

*I am writing to compliment the OVR news piece on Dicamba. The report was especially effective at highlighting a current local issue that could have national implications. The presentation was balanced in that both points of view were presented. The use of herbicides is controversial. At the same time, much of the nation's production relies on chemical control of weeds to enable crop production without cultivating the land. There is evidence of weed resistance to the primary current weed control measure. The report covered an important issue that does not receive much attention outside of agricultural publications. –Howell Hopson, Trigg County, KY*

*I serve on the Advisory Board of our local station, WKMS, and I am finding, particularly in the last two years, that more and more people are turning to our local public radio station for reliable, factual, unbiased reporting that resonates with our market's listeners. I have heard more people mention getting their news from WKMS than ever before. I believe much of that is attributable to the regional reporting that is being developed by our Ohio Valley reporter. The pieces I have heard produced by this team of reporters have been professional, well prepared, and well documented. I believe this is an invaluable resource for our public radio market. Please keep up the good work! -Darlene Mazzone, Paducah, KY*

WKMS News has been, and remains, a key initiative. Recently, WKMS News responded to a tragic mass shooting at an area high school the feedback was important and validating that the reporting was having an impact.

*Kudos to WKMS for its excellent coverage of the school shooting in Benton. In tragedies like this, though devastating, it's good to have as much information as possible. WKMS's news team had more details than larger news outlets. Thank you for your dedication to your listeners.-Rhonda McBride (WKMS Social Media Follower)*

WKMS also strives to initiate projects with the sole purpose of making a measurable impact. In 2017, WKMS conducted an isolated fundraiser for its classical service with the intention of partnering with an area non-profit and a local business to provide access to musical instruments to children in need. The local “Boys and Girls” club received five violins and one clarinet. Children at the club will use the instruments for classroom-style music lessons for six weeks in the spring and ideally another six weeks in the fall. The children will also be able to check out these instruments for additional lessons if they choose.

Additionally WKMS partners with an area business to provide canned food for every pledge received during winter pledge drive. This year WKMS and True North Yoga collaborated to provide more than 500 lbs of food to a local food bank, to replenish after the influx of need during the holidays.

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 2017, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2018. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.

In FY 2017 WKMS in partnership with the Ohio Valley ReSource provided multiple reports on growing concerns for the large migrant labor force at work in the fields of western Kentucky. The reports hinged on what farmers wanted from the government regarding the process to obtain worker visas and the concerns of the workers regarding access to the U.S. Additionally, the reports highlighted concerns with immigrants workers rights and pay equity.

WKMS News told the story of how the vestiges of a black cemetery in rural west Kentucky, all that remains of a town that was once ravaged by racist factions of the Night Riders, is under threat of being demolished by developers. They say the cemetery doesn't exist, but a woman who runs a Civil Rights museum in Paducah says her grandmother is buried there.

WKMS News spoke with the subjects of the 2016 Mountain Workshops in Paducah - a longstanding Kentucky arts project. The piece featured stories of Paducah residents overcoming obstacles: a transgender woman finding acceptance, an amputee dedicating

her time to help others like her and a mom who cares for two young children while her husband works as a traveling musician.

WKMS News produced a Black History Month series delving into the archives of Pogue Library at Murray State University to uncover the stories of a woman who grew up in segregated Murray, Kentucky, a famed college basketball coach from Paducah, a woman who went on to work for a New York Governor in the Civil Rights era, a Pulitzer Prize-winning photo of Coretta Scott King and a man who dedicated his life to improving education for African Americans in Kentucky.

WKMS also hosted a movie night in partnership with Murray State University, showing “District 9” as an allegory on apartheid. The station also hosted experts from the university’s biology department to display insects and spiders to for children to see and handle.

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?

CPB Grants for WKMS-FM are essential to the operation of the station and its mission “To inspire and empower a diverse audience by being a trusted and essential resource for information, culture, community, and regional growth as a critical part of the educational mission of Murray State University.”

The grant funds allow WKMS to provide news and music content not otherwise freely available within the primary radio signal coverage. The funding also aids in content creation through the employment of a full-time staff member. CPB funds have also leveraged the hiring of the WKMS journalist in residence for the Regional Journalism Collaboration, Ohio Valley ReSource. Furthermore, CPB funds have aided in the expansion of the Kentucky Public Radio network to bring regional and statewide news to a much larger audience. CPB funds comprise about 15 percent of the WKMS operating budget. The CPB’s support is more important than ever to WKMS because despite increased local fundraising outcomes, Murray State University has continued fiscal challenges that result in a decrease in its investment in WKMS.