Grantee Information

ID	1371
Grantee Name	WNIJ-FM
City	DeKalb
State	IL
Licensee Type	University

6.1 Telling Public Radio's Story

Jump to question: 6.1

The purpose of this section is to give you an opportunity to tell us and your community about the activities you have engaged in to address community needs by outlining key services provided, and the local value and impact of those services. Please report on activities that occured in Fiscal Year 2017. Responses may be shared with Congress or the public. Grantees are required to post a copy of this report (Section 6 only) to their website no later than ten (10) days after the submission of the report to CPB. CPB recommends placing the report in an "About" or similar section on your website. This section had previously been optional. Response to this section of the SAS is now mandatory.

Joint licensee Grantees that have filed a 2017 Local Content and Services Report as part of meeting the requirement for TV CSG funding may state they have done so in the corresponding questions below, so long as all of the questions below were addressed as they relate to radio operations in such report. You must include the date the report was submitted to CPB along with the TV Grantee ID under which it was submitted.

6.1 Telling Public Radio's Story

Jump to question: 6.1

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

The overriding goal of WNIJ News is to provide clear, accurate news reports that reflect the listening community we serve. We seek out national programs and develop local content that's informative and engaging to the citizens in our broadcast region and beyond. We look ways to frame national and international issues for the local audience. Our primary vehicle is broadcast news, supported by online posting stories that we cover. We seek to engage the community through social media by alerting them to our news activities and soliciting comm through the same media. We seek community involvement by providing opportunities for on-air comment through our Perspectives featur and through pursuing comment and expertise for our news stories. The managing editor keeps a pulse on the community through a daily digest of available information including media outlets, community events, activities, conversations and beyond. In addition, the director of community engagement advances partnerships and services through a regional network of contacts. These efforts yield ongoing interacti throughout the community, across platforms, at live events and participation at community gatherings, service Community engagement is multiplatform priority for the stations. We regularly engage with arts, cultural and educational institutions to ensure broad community acce related to their activities and offerings and look for partnership opportunities where appropriate. For example, WNIJ listeners have a demonstrated interest in literature, so we offer regular interviews with regional authors pegged as our "Read With Me" series. As the nam implies, we invite listeners to read the featured works before we broadcast the interviews. Before these interviews air, or appear on WNIJ. we reach out to area libraries and bookstores so they can alert their patrons about the series and WNIJ's commitment to regional literatur addition to our "Read With Me" interviews, we offer writing contests at least twice a year, one for short fiction and one for poetry, and invite regional authors to judge and issue prompts. These contests attracted hundreds of submissions from area listeners, ranging in age from t to eighties.

6.1 Telling Public Radio's Story

Jump to question: 6.1

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

Major collaborations for WNIJ include the Illinois Public Broadcasting Council. A primary objective is funding a reporter to cover Illinois

government/the statehouse. Additional partnerships extend around content sharing, joint coverage, and the presentation of a state focuse daily call in program. The stations regularly work with faculty and staff at Northern Illinois University and other area institutions of higher education to provide in-depth discussion and analysis of issues of concern to the region, recently at a forum dedicated to screen time and kids. We provide public safety information via the emergency alert system and seek out public health departments to provide information a warnings to our listening audience. As the broadcast arm of Northern Illinois University, Northern Public Radio is concerned with helping students and members of the community develop professionally and advance their career skills. To that end, the WNIJ developed "Public Radio 101" a seminar conducted by professional journalists at the beginning of the academic semesters. Over the course of four evenings students in this workshop are introduced to the principles and ethics of public radio, the basic practices of planning and gathering news stories, and recording and producing those stories for broadcast. "Public Radio 101" graduates are invited to work with WNIJ News journa on projects and stories during the remainder of the semester, with an eye on a future internship in the news department. They use professional equipment and receive professional guidance in preparing their work. This program continues to diversify the newsroom, whi results in more diverse content. Public libraries, authors and book sellers continue to collaborate around Midwest literature. We've expanc this partnership to include bringing authors to writers to broaden the discussion about their work and regional literature. Also, libraries and bookstores promote our writing contests for short fiction and poetry to area residents. Our audience includes a broad geographic area in diverse communities with a wide range of challenges and opportunities. Several key initiatives are ongoing as a means of deepening community connections. Perspectives, a community commentaries feature is now a daily feature at the station. These commentaries com the form of recorded essays from contributors speaking on a topics ranging from education and politics to gun violence and families. Regu contributors include university faculty, a high school teacher, a newspaper columnist, a minister and more. Arts and culture partnerships continue to be a priority. The station has broaden its relationships with regional musicians through a weekly program called Encore. Encor has made performances widely available that otherwise would require a ticket to the concert hall. Musicians are regularly visiting the static record music and interviews for a weekly program dedicated to covering regional and touring musicians. This program airs twice each wee and provides significant engagement opportunity for artists and audiences alike.

6.1 Telling Public Radio's Story

Jump to question: 6.1

3. What impact did your key initiatives and partnerships have in your community? Describe any known measurable impact, such as increa 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.

This year's initiatives resulted in greater awareness of the role public radio plays in a community and broader understanding of key issues opportunities facing local communities and residents. The commentaries feature, "Perspectives" has broadened the scope of topics prese on the air. This allows for stronger ties with a much more diverse group of voices and, well perspectives than previously heard on the stati Indicators of success include the significant web traffic and social media engagement generated by these pieces. Listeners regularly write applaud this project and to seek more information on what they heard and often to learn how they can add their own essay to the lineup. Literature programming has increased awareness of the many authors who are writing in the WNIJ WNIU area. The most measurable imp results from our writing contests (flash fiction and poetry) where we attracted submissions from all over northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin. The broadcast of the RSO concerts also increased awareness and interest in the local music scene and requests to include ot performances have followed. The Rockford Symphony Orchestra Executive Director has been a vocal champion. The stations' digital offe continue to grow and offer measurable success. We hear directly from users that they appreciate the expanded content available online a well as the stream services that listeners use to keep connected to their communities even when they're not in range of a transmitter.

6.1 Telling Public Radio's Story

Jump to question: 6.1

4. Please describe any efforts (e.g. programming, production, engagement activities) you have made to investigate and/or meet the needs 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 y regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.

WNIJ News reported an in-depth series to explore a view from the Midwest as it relates to how Veterans Choice was communicated to veterans and how it has been received by those seeking care in northern Illinois. Writing contests are open to everybody -- including creat writing students -- so people of diverse backgrounds have an opportunity to be winners. During the "Read With Me" interviews, half of the featured authors are women. As for ethnic diversity, we have featured and will continue to feature authors as diverse as the listening area The project is also expanding with discussion of books for young adults. The station operates a radio information service called NIRIS. NI provides access to local and regional print material for visually and print impaired residents throughout northern Illinois. NIRIS broadcasts hour per day. The station regularly look at issues affecting diverse audiences; this is always a consideration when making programming decisions and developing content. Issues such as legislation social and human service programs, marriage equality, geo-policing, food programs, education, and healthcare are regularly presented. In FY18 we will continue to examine these issues for broadcast and live eve

6.1 Telling Public Radio's Story

Jump to question: 6.1

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 you wouldn't be able to do if you didn't receive it?

Without this funding, programming and engagement initiatives would have been slower to develop due to a lack of resources. This funding also ensures the stations have the resources to present the highest quality journalism and music content available. This funding is used o local and nationally distributed programming. CPB funding is also leveraged to raise dollars from other foundation, the CPB brings a high

profile funder to the station's development efforts.

Comments

Question	Comment
No Comments for this section	