

Alabama Public Radio CPB Station Activities Survey for 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.***

Alabama Public Radio provides regular ongoing coverage of community issues through local news headlines and feature stories scheduled within our most-listened parts of the daily schedules. Our goal is to be an indispensable source of high quality, reliable information for our community of listeners. Our transmission system covers approximately two-thirds of the state of Alabama and in many parts of the state APR is the only source of noncommercial news and information. We also provide a full schedule of locally hosted classical, blue grass and big band music which has attracted an enthusiastic and loyal audience.

The station identifies concerns and needs through regular contact with a broad range of educational, political, religious and community leaders. This year APR held community listener events in Northport and Fairhope and has "Friends" groups in several communities to assist in developing partnerships with local organizations.

With three HD channels and a robust online presence, the station strives to reach a diverse audience through multiple platforms including an active website, online streaming, and multiple social media sites. Our online streaming includes our main broadcast channel as well as two sub-channels featuring BBC News and contemporary music and we continued to increase our emphasis on digital engagement through Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

This year the APR news team produced a multi-part series on one of Alabama's most pressing issues: delivery quality, affordable health care to rural communities.

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 APR news team led a year-long project investigating the status of Alabama's health care system. The result is a multi-media project titled, "Help Wanted: Alabama's Rural Health Care Crisis."

The National Rural Health Association reports that Alabama is "ground zero" for most of challenges facing rural healthcare in the nation. Studies frequently list Alabama as having the highest infant mortality and diabetes rates in the U.S. In 2016, the city of Gadsden, east of Birmingham, had the lowest life expectancy in the country. Despite these trends, rural hospitals in Alabama receive among the lowest reimbursements from Medicare. The result is that 80% of these healthcare facilities are operating in the

red. In the end, rural residents of Alabama frequently go without treatment. The APR news team focused on the impact of the lack of healthcare in Alabama's rural communities as well as possible remedies.

APR engages with the community in the production of major projects as well as the 107 minutes of news-casting the team does every week. For the 2017 rural health coverage, APR worked with the University of Alabama's College of Community Health Sciences, the low income population support group HERO in Hale County, the Alabama Rural Health Association, the National Rural Health Association, the Alabama Department of Public Health, Tuskegee University, Greene County Hospital in Leakesville, Mississippi, Bibb County Medical Center, and Ron Sparks who led the rural health task force for Governor Robert Bentley.

APR also engages the community through membership organizations including, but not limited to, The Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama, Public Relations Council of Alabama, Baldwin Business Council, Women's Business Alliance, Mobile Sr. Coalition, Mobile Chamber of Commerce, Eastern Shore Chamber of Commerce, and Coastal Alabama Business Chamber. These organizations enable APR to engage with the community through multi-media venues.

In addition, organizations including West Alabama AIDS Outreach (now Five Horizons Health Services), Alabama Department of Revenue, Bellingrath Gardens, Jewish Film Festival, Pensacola Opera, Mobile Ballet, and Alabama Port Authority use APR to inform listeners across the state about services and performance opportunities.

APR's classical music programming included collaborations with the Tuscaloosa, Mobile and Huntsville symphonies. APR's evening schedule included a special three-night broadcast featuring performances by the Mobile Symphony Orchestra, collaboration valuable to both our gulf coast audience and the orchestra. APR began a relationship with the Alys Stephens Center (ASC) in Birmingham to inform listeners of program opportunities across the performance spectrum which are hosted throughout the year at ASC.

StoryCorps came to Mobile in 2017. APR was pleased to host the mobile studio in Cooper Riverside Park. More than 500 community members interviewed each other resulting in more than 240 interviews including local politicians, writers, and local personalities. StoryCorps is unique in its community engagement tool, providing valuable content for local profiles of Alabama's diverse citizenry.

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.***

APR has been honored with over eighty awards for journalism excellence, one third of which are national or international. In 2017, the Alabama Associated Press recognized APR as the "Most Outstanding News Operation" in the state for the sixth year in a row.

Broadcast audience measurements as well as social media metrics provide information regarding our value to local audiences. Perhaps the most valuable measure of our impact on the communities we serve is the feedback we get from our listeners.

Comments like these are typical:

I listen to APR all through the day, first thing in the morning over coffee, during work while checking emails, and after dinner at night. I love the varying topics and always feel like I'm coming away from the programming having learned something valuable. When my husband and I

make long car trips, we oftentimes forget to listen to music because we start with APR and then get into a conversation about the program that keeps us involved for hours, and even if we have varying viewpoints, you deliver the news without being incendiary [sic] that it allows for calm discussion instead of a heated argument. You keep us both informed and entertained.

First thing on after the light in the morning, my trusted source for factual, valid news reporting, as well as my trusted source for quirky factoids, emotional human interest, and the BEST source for classical music programming.....can't make it through the day without you guys, don't want to make it without you guys! That is why I am becoming a sustainer, in honor of 9/11, and as a devoted public radio nerd!

I do think it is the most accurate news in light of the recent election. [I] have concerns in the media today and the right news instead of the fake news.

I couldn't live without Public Radio in my life. I've been listening for 34 years now - since I was a teenager.

You are my touchstone for truth. You provide me with critical information, as well as that human interest story that reminds me of the kindness in the world.

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.

APR provides regular ongoing coverage of stories of special interest to minority and other diverse audiences. APR focused on the Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment during its yearlong coverage of problems with the state's rural health care system. 2017 was the forty fifth anniversary of the Associated Press story that uncovered the scandal, where African American men in Macon County, Alabama who were infected syphilis went untreated while federal public health officials took notes on how the disease progressed.

Alabama Public Radio hosted ten student interns in the newsroom, 60% of which were female or minority. These students were treated as members of the newsroom and given news assignments to hone their researching and writing skills under deadline pressure.

APR also hosted journalist Ousmane Sagara from the West African nation of Mali. Ousmane worked alongside the news team and gave lectures before classes during his time in Tuscaloosa. This forged a partnership that will lead to a radio feature on how the people of Mali feel about Dr. Martin Luther King, Junior. This content will be featured during APR's coverage of the fiftieth anniversary of King's assassination.

One of the key elements of StoryCorps is its focus on engaging communities of interest. In preparation for hosting the mobile studio, APR held a community meeting of more than 40 organizations introducing them to StoryCorps and providing the ability to schedule recording sessions ahead of a public announcement. The organizations invited to participate included Mobile United, Mobile Baykeeper, 100 Blackmen, Buffalo Soldiers, The Refuse, and the Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind Mobile.

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 funding is critical to Alabama Public Radio's local mission: The APR News staff is the largest public radio news team in the state, covering political, economic and cultural issues of critical importance to the people of Alabama. CPB funding allows us to support staff who are engaged with our diverse citizenry. Alabama continues to grapple with significant social and economic issues; many of its counties rank among the poorest in the country. Our broadcast signal reaches more than 80 percent of the state. CPB funding helps us leverage the support of listeners and local companies extending our ability to produce high quality unique local programming.

Without the support of CPB Alabama Public Radio would be unable to provide the current level of community programming and outreach.