

Diversity Statement for WMUK 102.1 FM | September 2018

Why diversity is important to our public media work.

WMUK 102.1 FM recognizes the importance of reflecting and reporting on the diverse voices, cultures and backgrounds of communities across our region. Our audiences value diversity in its many forms. Similar to the mission of our parent institution, WMUK continually seeks to grow its audience of listeners who are locally-oriented and globally competent, discovery-driven, as well as culturally and civically aware.

We believe providing coverage of topics and cultural programming that explore diversity, furthers our core mission of creating a more informed public.

The extent to which our staff and governance reflect such diversity.

WMUK's staff is becoming increasingly more diverse. Within the Station itself, the General Manager is an African-American male, the Corporate Support and Major Giving Manager (a newly created position) is an Indian-American female, and one part-time employee is an African-American female. This represents an increase of one full-time minority employee compared to the previous year.

Additionally, there were six news interns between 1 October 2017 and 30 September 2018 – one is an African-American female, two were African-American males, and one was an Hispanic-American male.

With regard to our governance, there are seven (7) Board of Trustees of Western Michigan University (the license holders for WMUK 102.1 FM). Of these seven, two are minority female trustees (one Asian-American, one African-American). Additionally, WMUK's governance includes the President of the University, who is an African-American male.

Progress we've made to increase our diversity in the last 2-3 years.

As per our diversity plans in the 2017 Diversity Statement, WMUK's News Department expanded coverage and reporting on the Asian-American community in our service area in FY2018. In particular, WMUK reporter Rebecca Thiele met with members of the local Burma Center, in order to better understand issues facing the Burmese community of Battle Creek, Michigan. This included gathering information from these members regarding mental health issues, loss of traditional culture, and racism in the workplace. This resulted in a feature segment and an extended interview exploring mental health issues facing Burmese refugees.

Thiele also contributed to our Islam series with a report on halal food and covered a theatre which is now providing sensory-friendly performances for audience members with autism. Additionally, Thiele did a story on what affect the President's anti-immigration rhetoric would

have on migrant populations traveling to pick Michigan's fruit crops. The Station further broadcast several reports that addressed issues or interests of minority groups, including stories on Vietnamese language classes to help youth communicate with their elders, Native American foods, and a local tribe's road to gaining sovereignty.

WMUK 102.1 FM's Earlene McMichael has also interviewed a number of community individuals on issues affecting the African-American community in the business and health sectors. Broader diversity topics included, but were not limited to, efforts to address urban blight in Kalamazoo, fair housing in Southwest Michigan, discrimination, racism, genocide, and issues facing prisoners re-entering the local workforce.

Finally, WMUK's diversity continued to be reflected in the wide array of Latin-American, jazz, folk and classical music offered, which together constitutes more than 160 hours of music each week on WMUK's three program streams (two on-air, one on-line).

Our diversity plans for the coming year (FY 2019 | October 1, 2018 – September 30, 2019)

- WMUK 102.1 FM will maintain its commitment to covering issues affecting diverse communities across our region, through locally-produced programming. This includes increased efforts by our News Department to ascertain community needs via local community organizations. This work will help to inform the shape of our coverage, particularly regarding issues surrounding diversity.
- Our News staff will also focus on an initiative to produce 2-3 feature segments and/or interviews on the diversity issues and experiences facing Indian-Americans in Southwest Michigan and/or Northern Indiana.
- The Station will continue to collaborate with organizations that promote diversity through sponsorships of local festivals and/or participation in other diversity-themed events.
- Finally, the Station will continue to actively recruit and interview qualified minority staff where employment opportunities exist, as well as students for our News internship program.