



WISCONSIN PUBLIC RADIO

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WERN: Telling Public Radio's Story 2017-2018

- 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.*

Wisconsin Public Radio's (WPR) WERN is committed to community service through news, information, music and entertainment content on air, online and in communities across the state. All of our content is produced with the highest standards of ethics and audience service. We strive to serve Wisconsin's diverse communities and perspectives with content that is trustworthy, informative, useful, civil and inspiring.

WPR regularly gathers input on community issues, programming decisions and other concerns of our listeners and the broader public. Our reporters, producers and hosts rely on state and national survey results, including regular Marquette Law School Polls in Wisconsin, to help guide production of news content heard within newscasts and special segments during WPR's broadcasts of NPR's Morning Edition and All Things Considered.

Results of surveys were used to shape stand-alone news stories, but they also influenced coverage of stories throughout the year in broadcast and on wpr.org. During the reporting period, WPR provided unbiased coverage of Wisconsin state and federal elections. WPR also launched a year-long project to learn more about how Wisconsinites view the role of government in their lives and the issues they were most concerned about. The project, called "Beyond The Ballot," included more than 500 interviews to collect perspectives from across the state. The issues and stories were featured on a special website section as well.

Long-form documentaries were also developed and broadcast from multi-part series that aired throughout the reporting period. "New in Blue" looked at the recruiting, training and deployment of new police officers in the Madison Police Department with a focus on community policing. Issues surrounding the future of Wisconsin's land, water and food were featured in a year-long series called "State of Change" that also aired as a documentary.

The WPR news team and digital content received numerous awards during the reporting period including “best website” and honors for our partnership with the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism and our WisContext.org partnership with Wisconsin Public Television. Our reporters were honored for coverage of opioids and public health, mining, farming and immigration issues, the Foxconn plant, transportation and more. Reporters at our seven statewide affiliated news bureaus also supplied carefully researched stories from diverse voices and locations across the state.

And, in addition to the reporters’ contributions to the daily news broadcasts, WPR’s regional reporters also contributed to award-winning local programs - including Route 51 in Wausau, The West Side and the cultural magazine Spectrum West in Eau Claire and Menomonie - on affiliated stations.

As part of WPR’s continuing commitment to training the next generation of journalists with public media’s high standards of ethics and integrity, the station hired three reporters as part of our fellowship program during the reporting period. The Lee Ester News Fellowship provides opportunities for early career journalists in WPR’s award-winning newsroom. The Mike Simonson Investigative News Fellowship, a partnership with the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism, focuses on in-depth reporting. The Milwaukee-based Second Century News Fellowship provides new and diverse journalists practical, hands-on experience in public radio news production.

WERN’s and its affiliates news and cultural stories are also featured in articles at wpr.org where audiences can post comments, ask questions and connect with other listeners through our online forums. During the reporting period, wpr.org received millions of pageviews and delivered thousands of articles and live-streamed and archive audio. WPR also offered its Politics Podcast, a weekly program focused on state issues and politics. The podcast is free and available in the iTunes and Google Play stores and can also be heard or downloaded at wpr.org. The podcast also held the first of several planned, low-cost live shows in venues around the state.

WPR also uses Twitter and Facebook to distribute content, engage audiences on and off air, and for promotion. During the reporting period, WERN and its affiliates invited listeners to post questions, share information and engage with our hosts and guests on social media. Our main Facebook page “Likes” increased by 14%, to more than 46,000, as users continued to turn to WPR’s social media to stay up to date on everything from breaking news to job openings and community events.

On top of our community engagement events, our website, and our social media pages, WPR collaborates with WPT to offer a toll-free phone number and email account for public feedback. Each year this in-house audience services team answers tens of thousands of requests from Wisconsinites eager to learn more about the news and information they hear on our programs. These public comments are compiled and shared with the entire WPR staff on a regular basis.

The station and its affiliates are also dedicated to providing a cultural resource to its listeners, with curated classical, folk and jazz music and other related programming. Concert recordings from venues around the state, interviews, and performances ranging from small student ensembles to professional symphony orchestras are part of WPR's Wisconsin Classical program.

Live music continues to be an important part of our mission and programs like The Midday regularly feature performances from some of the best state, national and international talents available. We are proud to sponsor many community performances, knowing that exposure on WPR's airwaves and website help keep local musicians and venues strong. Simply Folk broadcasts live studio performances and concerts recorded in Wisconsin, songs for the season and traditional music of people the world over. Higher Ground with Dr. Jonathan Overby features "world music with African roots and more" each Saturday night. WERN's The Odyssey Series explores many types of music and its power to create greater understanding of those near and far.

WERN's licensee, the Wisconsin Educational Communications Board, partners with the University of Wisconsin-Extension to produce and distribute programming under the banner Wisconsin Public Radio. According to Nielsen, the partnership reached an average of 482,900 listeners each week in the spring of 2018. WPR's websites – including WisconsinLife.org and WisconsinVote.org - had more than 10 million page views.

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.

WPR's WERN and affiliates provide extensive election coverage and collaborate with Wisconsin Public Television (WPT) to broadcast important events, including the governor's State of the State address, budget address, and state celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. We encourage listeners to experience the state from diverse perspectives. Wisconsin Life, our state culture collaboration with WPT, continues this commitment by featuring stories of unexpected Wisconsin people and places on WPR, WPT and online at wisconsinlife.org.

In FY2018, as in all election years, we invited ballot-certified candidates to participate in broadcast debates, forums and interviews and to record unfiltered candidate statements. During the reporting period, WPR and WPT collaborated to host and broadcast a candidate debate for the State Supreme Court.

In November 2017, WPR partnered with NPR and WPT on a centennial celebration, The Power of Story, at The Overture Center in Madison. More than 1,400 Wisconsinites attended the celebration of WPR and WPT's legacy and impact in the state and – via NPR

and PBS – around the nation. The event was hosted by All Things Considered Co-Host Ari Shapiro and featured talent from WPR and public media. As reported last year, the year-long celebration included special broadcasts, community events, a dedicated website and more.

WisconsinVote.org, WPR and WPT’s award-winning election site, offers immediate access to voting information, candidate statements and extensive unbiased reporting on issues that affect the people of Wisconsin. The site served more than 145,000 sessions during the fiscal year.

WPR, WPT and University of Wisconsin-Extension continued its collaboration on a long-form, digital-first news site called WisContext.org. The site presents the reporting, research and community-based expertise of these partners to provide information and insight about urgent and emergent issues that affect Wisconsin, including: agriculture/food, environment, health, money, people/policy and science/technology. WisContext.org content is open to syndication and has been republished by media organizations and educators free of charge. During the reporting period, the project received numerous awards for its work and served nearly 300,000 pageviews, a 62% growth over the previous year.

Wisconsin Remembers: A Face for Every Name is a traveling exhibit that features a photo for each of the 1,161 Wisconsinites officially listed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. This poignant display was created by WPR and WPT in partnership with the Wisconsin Veterans Museum. Four sets of the 17 panel exhibit – including an outdoor “wall” – were displayed by dozens of veterans and community groups at schools, libraries and other public buildings around the state during the reporting period.

Each year, WPR and WPT also collaborate on culture and entertainment programs, including Final Forte, an annual classical music competition for young performers managed by the Madison Symphony Orchestra. The final competition features four young soloists performing live on stage with the orchestra. It is a free public event and is broadcast statewide live on WERN and its affiliates and by WPT. WPR also continued partnerships with the Wisconsin School Music Association, Madison Opera and the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, to broadcast live and recorded concerts statewide.

As noted above, WERN and its affiliates also continued their commitment to educating the next generation of reporters with the Mike Simonson Fellowship for Investigative Journalism which is a partnership with the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism. The fellowship helps attract some of the brightest young minds in journalism to public broadcasting and supports a shared commitment to in-depth reporting on issues important to all Wisconsinites.

WPR hosts regularly make special appearances at events around the state that encourage cultural diversity, music education, the arts and more. And, each month, WPR sponsors dozens of community events around the state to help local nonprofits in the arts, science, business and more connect with our listeners.

WERN and its affiliates have partnerships with a number of non-profit arts and community organizations, including: International Wisconsin Ginseng Festival, Magic Space, McComb Bruchs Performing Arts Center, Midwest Renewable Energy Association, Shank Hall Productions, Three Lakes Center for the Arts, Wisconsin Farm Tech Days, Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy & Service, Chestnut Center for the Arts, African Heritage Inc., Appleton Boychoir, Appleton Downtown Inc., Appleton Public Libraries, ArtiGras, Barlow Planetarium, Bergstrom Mahler Museum, Birch Creek Music Performance Center, Blues on the Bay, Brown County Civic Music, Calumet County Fiber Frolic, Door Community Auditorium, Door County Historical Museum, Door County Land Trust, Door County Maritime Museum, Door County Wearable Arts Show, Door Shakespeare, Downtown Green Bay, Inc., Dudley Birder Chorale, FitOshkosh, Forst Inn, Fox Cities Book Festival, Fox Cities Multi-Cultural Center, Fox Cities Performing Arts Center, Fox Valley Symphony, Fox Valley Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Girl Scouts of Northwestern Great Lakes, Grand Opera House, Green Bay Antiquarian Society, Green Bay Botanical Gardens, Hardy Gallery, Heritage Alliance Door County, History Museum at the Castle, Homeless Connections, Lawrence University, Manitowoc Symphony Orchestra, Midsummer's Music Fest, Mile of Music, Miles of Art Shawano, Miles of Art Tour, Mosaic Arts, NE Wisconsin Land Trust, Neville Public Museum, New Voices Choir, Northeast Wisconsin Dance Organization, Northern Sky Theater, Oshkosh Public Museum, Oshkosh Symphony Orchestra, Peninsula Music Festival, Peninsula Players Theatre, PMI Entertainment, Rahr West Art Museum, Refuge Foundation for the Arts, Shawano Folk Festival, Sheboygan Symphony Orchestra, Sturgeon Bay Art Crawl, The Clearing, Third Avenue Playhouse, Thrasher Opera House, Trout Museum, UntitledTown Book and Author Festival, UW Oshkosh Theatre Dept., Washington Island Literary Festival, Weidner Center, WI Maritime Museum, Write On Door County, University of Wisconsin, YWCA of Dane County, Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestra, Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, Overture Center for the Arts, Madison Opera, Madison Symphony Orchestra, Madison Children's Theater, Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra, Bach Around the Clock, Wisconsin Book Festival, Wisconsin Science Festival, Madison Public Library Foundation, Wisconsin Veterans Museum, Mineral Point Opera House, Mineral Point Chamber of Commerce, Monona Terrace and Convention Center, Chippewa Valley Book Festival, Chippewa Valley Cultural Association, Chippewa Valley Home Builders Association, Chippewa Valley Jazz Orchestra, Chippewa Valley Museum, Chippewa Valley Post, Chippewa Valley Symphony Orchestra, Chippewa Valley United Way, Chippewa Valley Writers Guild, Chippewa Valley Youth Symphony, Chippewa Valley Theatre Guild, Clear Vision Eau Claire Poverty Summit, Volume One, Eau Claire Chamber of Commerce, Eau Claire Chamber Orchestra, Eau Claire Male Chorus, Eau Claire Regional Arts Center, Eau Claire Childrens Theatre, Lake Superior Big Top Chautauqua, Douglas County Historical Society, The Honeybee Festival, Bentleyville, Sacred Heart Music Center, Madeline Island Chamber Music, Couderay Film Festival, Driftless Area Art Festival, Driftless Music Festival, Dubuque Museum of Art, Dudley Birder Chorale, Duluth Chapter of the NAACP , Duluth Home Grown Music Festival, Duluth Playhouse, Duluth-Superior Film Festival, Duluth-Superior Symphony Orchestra, Bayfield Chamber of Commerce, Ashland Chamber of Commerce, Literacy Chippewa Valley, Mabel Tainter Center for the Arts, Madeline Island Chamber of Commerce, Madeline Island Music Camp, Superior-Douglas County Chamber of Commerce, The Moth, Barron County Historical Society, Blue Ox Bluegrass Festival, Dunn County Barbershoppers, Hmong Women Summit, Pablo Center at

the Confluence, Rusk Area Arts Alliance, Schola Cantorum, Waldemar Ager Association, ArtStart, Central Wisconsin Book Festival, Central Rivers Farmshed, Garden Visions, Hidden Studios

- 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.*

WERN and its affiliates provide the largest network of news bureaus of any media in the state, providing in-depth explorations of Wisconsin's public affairs issues and ideas. Every day our broadcasts and online resources help people across the state connect with elected officials and public servants at all levels of local, state and national government. Our coverage of the State Supreme Court elections during FY2018 was particularly important to voters.

In election years, we invite ballot-certified candidates to participate in broadcast interviews and to record unfiltered candidate statements. WPR and WPT's non-partisan WisconsinVote.org project helps citizens find information about voter registration and candidates and hosts public issue and candidate forums throughout the state. During the reporting period the site garnered more than 150,000 sessions.

WERN and its affiliated stations also worked to promote awareness of issues through its annual fundraising efforts. During the December 2017 fundraising drive, listeners were given the option of foregoing a tradition membership thank you gift and instead support Wisconsin-based food pantries. Through this initiative, our members contributed more than 12,000 meals to those in need.

The Wisconsin Remembers exhibit, which features a photo for each of the 1,161 Wisconsinites listed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington D.C., has been requested by community groups and displayed in dozens of locations throughout the state. The exhibit was created by WPR in partnership with WPT and the Wisconsin Veterans Museum.

In 2017, the exhibit toured the state in conjunction with special screenings of the PBS documentary The Vietnam War by Ken Burns. Three exhibits tour the state each year and served as a model for other public broadcasters around the nation. An outdoor version of the exhibit was developed and has been displayed at The World's Largest Brat Fest and alongside traveling versions of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall.

WERN and its statewide affiliates supported music education through partnerships with the Wisconsin School Music Association, the Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestra, the

Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra, the University of Wisconsin School of Music, Viterbo University, Lawrence University and other programs around the state. In FY2018, student performances and interviews were broadcast to statewide audiences and WPR sponsored community performances, competitions and educational conferences.

As noted above, our hosts regularly make special appearances at events around the state that encourage literacy, music education, cultural diversity and more. We meet regularly with community members to ensure our programs are addressing issues that affect real people in Wisconsin. We help local nonprofits promote community events that celebrate nature, agriculture, science, performing arts, families and just plain fun. These promotional partners often report back that our broadcast announcement had a significant impact on their event attendance and success of their programs.

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 2018, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2019. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.*

WPR, including WERN and its affiliates, is committed to serving all Wisconsinites and to reflecting the diverse experiences and perspectives of our state in our programs and staffing. During the reporting period, new hires brought new voices and experiences to our broadcast programs and work behind the scenes.

WPR also continued to implement its Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan with WPT to reinforce our commitment to serving all Wisconsinites. Staff were selected to participate in a cross-departmental, cross-organizational “change team” to work with leadership and colleagues on issues tied to the plan.

During the past reporting period, WPR and WPT were two of a handful of area organizations selected for training through the YWCA’s program “Creating Equitable Organizations” and WPR continued staff training as part of that effort. The program encompasses both internal culture and external content and constituents and included internal staff assessments and training to support strategic planning and action towards change as framed by the Multicultural Organizational Development Model (MCO) provided by the YWCA.

On air and online during this reporting period, WERN and its affiliate reporters covered a significant number of stories that explored issues of diversity, including education, policing, business development, farming, health care, immigration and homelessness in Wisconsin among other things.

In addition to exploring issues of diversity through our news coverage, our cultural coverage regularly features people and places that reflect Wisconsin's diverse population. Wisconsin Life, our collaboration with WPT, has featured stories by and about immigration, religion, community and important figures and events of Wisconsin's past and present.

Each January, we broadcast the official state ceremony honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., produced and hosted by WPR's Dr. Jonathan Overby. Our music programming also reflects the diversity of musical traditions around the world, including Higher Ground and the Odyssey Series, which focuses on music from around the world and its power to create a greater understanding of those near and far.

Our website, wpr.org, also live streams the annual State of the Tribes Address from the State Capitol. And, through our community partnerships, we regularly feature and promote events and educational activities that embrace diversity and inclusion.

WPR's community events featured topics and guests representing diversity and inclusion in partnership with local venues and non-profit organizations.

Finally, WPR worked with a nationally recognized Iroquois raised beadwork artist and member of the Oneida Nation who designed our Spring 2018 Pledge Drive Artist Mug. The mug was available to listener/donors throughout the pledge drive and the story of the artist and her work was shared on air and online.

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?*

We share and preserve the stories of Wisconsin's people. Our programs celebrate Wisconsin's way of life. We reach out beyond broadcasts to serve Wisconsin online and in the community. Without CPB funding, all of these things would be affected. WERN is the flagship for the largest and only statewide radio news organization in Wisconsin. Because of strong funding support, we continue to attract and keep the best available broadcast journalists, including two full-time reporters at the Capitol.

The scope of national programs broadcast on WERN and its affiliates would be greatly diminished without CPB's support. Programs like NPR's Morning Edition and All Things Considered help keep our listeners connected to the world and help us put local and statewide content in a national or even international context.

CPB funding helps ensure that our cultural programming - including the presentation of local, national and internationally respected classical musicians - is available for tens of thousands of listeners every week. And, of course, CPB funding contributes to our ability to reach audiences beyond broadcast with online streaming, news and cultural content, mobile apps, community events and more.