



## WISCONSIN PUBLIC RADIO

821 University Avenue, Madison, Wisconsin 53706 [wpr.org](http://wpr.org)

 800.747.7444

 608.263.9763

### **WHA: Telling Wisconsin Public Radio's Story 2018 - 2019**

- 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) WHA 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. During the reporting period, guests, hosts and callers came together for smart, meaningful conversations on "The Morning Show," "The Larry Meiller Show" and "Central Time."

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 topic selection for our 6.5 hours of daily, local call-in programs.

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](http://wpr.org). During the reporting period, WPR provided unbiased coverage of Wisconsin state and federal elections. WPR also completed 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. WPR explored Wisconsin's complicated relationship with alcohol in the special series "High Tolerance." In more than 20 stories

featured in our newscasts, talk shows and on [wpr.org](http://wpr.org), the project examined the many ways alcohol impacts our lives. Stories ranged from profiles of women in the industry to the challenges of finding alcoholism treatment in rural areas.

The WPR news team and digital content received numerous awards during the reporting period including awards for Excellence in Innovation for our “Beyond the Ballot” series, Best Online News Coverage for WisContext, and Best Radio Show for our Western regional show “The West Side” for its coverage of the 93<sup>rd</sup> state assembly debate. Our reporters were honored for coverage of active shooter training, immigration, local sports, and more.

Reporters at our seven statewide affiliated news bureaus also supplied carefully researched stories from diverse voices and locations across the state. WPR began a new project, WHYsconsin, during the reporting period, asking listeners to tell us what they wonder about Wisconsin, its people or its culture. Listeners from all across the state submitted a total of more than 150 questions. Ten of these were answered through fully reported radio features, talk show features, and web articles.

During the 2018-2019 school year, WPR invited students at Monona Grove Liberal Arts Charter School to create pieces for our broadcast and web series “Wisconsin Life.” The students told the stories that they most wanted to tell — about themselves, their families, music and history. Working with staff producers and engineers, students learned interviewing skills and audio production. The final stories were broadcast statewide in a special called “Classroom Frequency: Student Voices From Wisconsin.”

And, in addition to the reporters’ contributions to the daily news broadcasts, WPR’s regional reporters also produced and hosted award-winning local programs including “Route 51” in Wausau, “The West Side” and the cultural magazine “Spectrum West” in Eau Claire and Menomonie, and “Simply Superior” in Superior and Ashland.

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. Since 2008, 18 fellows have filed more than 1,300 stories on issues around the state.

WHA’s and its affiliates news and cultural stories are also featured in articles at [wpr.org](http://wpr.org) where audiences can post comments, ask questions and connect with other listeners through our online forums. During the reporting period, [wpr.org](http://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](http://wpr.org). The podcast also held several 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, WHA and its affiliates invited listeners to post questions, share information and engage with our hosts and guests on social media. Our main Facebook page followers increased by 14%, to more than 52,000, 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. The Ideas Network Facebook page also had more than 28,000 followers over the reporting period.

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.

In addition to covering news and current affairs, WHA and its affiliates provide some of the best educational and life-long learning content in the state. Listeners always hear something they can use on "The Larry Meiller Show," which focuses on gardening, consumer issues, and "how-to" topics. "The Morning Show" brings listeners knowledgeable guests from different perspectives on state and national news, as well as lifestyle topics like healthy living, travel and recreation. And listeners in Wisconsin and around the nation turned to "Zorba Paster On Your Health" for perspective on medical concerns.

The station and its affiliates are also dedicated to providing a cultural resource to listeners, with curated entertainment, comedy and music programs. "To the Best of Our Knowledge" is WPR's Peabody Award-winning national program of big ideas. "Chapter A Day" is the original audiobook, aired every weekday for a half hour. "University of the Air" provides interviews on a variety of topics with experts, and "Old Time Radio Drama" shares the classics of radio's golden age with listeners each Saturday and Sunday night. On Saturdays, WHA features world music with African roots and more on "Higher Ground with Dr. Jonathan Overby." On Sundays, "Simply Folk" broadcasts concerts recorded in Wisconsin and traditional music of people the world over.

WHA's licensee, the Wisconsin Educational Communications Board, partners with the University of Wisconsin to produce and distribute programming under the banner Wisconsin Public Radio. According to Nielsen, the partnership reached an average of 420,300 listeners each week in the spring of 2019. WPR's websites – including [WisconsinLife.org](http://WisconsinLife.org) and [WisconsinVote.org](http://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 WHA 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](http://wisconsinlife.org).

In election years, we invite ballot-certified candidates to participate in broadcast interviews. During the reporting period, WPR hosted and aired more than a dozen debates for regional Wisconsin Assembly and Senate seat candidates.

[WisconsinVote.org](http://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 890,000 sessions during the fiscal year.

WPR, WPT and University of Wisconsin continued its collaboration on a long-form, digital-first news site called [WisContext.org](http://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](http://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 more than 400,000 pageviews, a 35% 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.

As noted above, WHA 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.

WHA 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, Urban League of Greater Madison, Verona Area Community Theater, Beloit Janesville Symphony, the Wisconsin Historical Society, Centro Hispano, Janesville Little Theatre, River Arts Center, Literacy Network of Dane County, 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, Central Wisconsin Symphony Orchestra, A Walk In Their Shoes, Central Chamber Chorale, Lucille Tack Center for the Arts, UW Stevens Point, Wausau Pro Musica, Monteverdi Chorale, Wausau Lyric Choir, and Create Portage County.

*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.*

WHA 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 statewide and local elections in 2018 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 890,000 sessions.

WHA and its affiliated stations also worked to promote awareness of issues through its annual fundraising efforts. During the December 2018 fundraising drive, listeners were given the option of foregoing a traditional membership thank you gift and instead support Wisconsin-based food pantries. Through this initiative, our members contributed more than 20,000 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 FY2019, the exhibit toured the state and was seen in nine communities including Arpin, Neillsville, Sullivan, and West Bend. 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 displayed at The World's Largest Brat Fest and alongside traveling versions of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall.

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 2019, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2020. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.*

WPR, including WHA 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.

We continue our work to improve diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) throughout our organization and specifically within our "change team." Recognizing that our organizational culture has a huge impact on hiring and retention of staff holding marginalized identities, we emphasized creating a culture where employees take

responsibility for their own growth and learning in support of DEI, managers are responsible for supporting and encouraging work in DEI, and leadership is responsible for championing DEI initiatives. Our DEI vision and goals focused on four main areas: culture and retention, accessibility (abilities and gender-identity spectrum), content, and recruitment. The change team began publishing a monthly newsletter, presenting at monthly staff meetings, and holding all-staff presentations and trainings on topics such as Autism in the Workplace, Islamophobia, and Hmong in Wisconsin.

Our three statewide daily call-in talk shows regularly address topics that focus on historically marginalized communities. We make efforts to both highlight achievements and celebrations in communities as well as shed light on issues affecting the communities. A few examples are: exploring the “adventure gap” between white people and people of color getting out into the wilderness, looking at grants that help get more native American teachers in classrooms, a personal story of a Somali immigrant in Green Bay, renewed interest in two female African-American composers, and helping siblings in foster care.

From April of 2015 through January of 2019, we tracked the race and gender of our statewide and regional talk show guests. We did this by researching the guests’ background. We ceased this practice in February of 2019 and began work on a survey we could send to our guests and news sources to ask them directly to identify their race, ethnicity, gender and geographic location. We launched our new guest demographics survey on August of 2019 and will report on it in the next version of this report.

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. WPR and the Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service (WIPPS) partnered on a variety of community focused initiatives, one of which is Toward One Wisconsin, a conference on building communities of equity. In addition, WPR and WIPPS worked together on convening community conversation on critical issues facing our region.

On air and online during this reporting period, WHA and its affiliate’s 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 call-in shows and 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. During the reporting period, 29 stories in the series were produced by people in minority groups. During the reporting period, WHA also carried several national programs featuring diverse hosts, including "1A," "Latino USA", "Snap Judgment," "Reveal" and "Jazz Night in America."

Each January, we broadcast the official state ceremony honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., produced and hosted by WPR's Dr. Jonathan Overby. And, on our Green Bay affiliate, we offer a two-hour weekly program of Native American music called "Kalihwiyo'se" (Oneida for "good message"), hosted by Chris Powless, a member of the Oneida Nation. 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.

WPR partnered with the Literacy Network of Dane County during the reporting period, to draw attention to their work with low literacy adults and speakers of languages other than English. In addition, WPR staff attended workshops with the Wisconsin Council of the Blind and Visually Impaired to learn about making social media and web design accessible for all.

*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. WPR's news team and WHA producers work together to provide deeper coverage of big issues like elections, the economy, immigration, health and more. Because of strong funding support, we continue to attract and keep the best available broadcast producers and journalists, including two full-time reporters at the Capitol. Without CPB funding, all of these things would be affected.

CPB funding allows us to produce local programming and announcements to serve the communities of affiliate stations WRST-Oshkosh, WHID-Green Bay, WRFW-River Falls, KUWS-Superior and WUWS-Ashland.

The scope of national programs broadcast on WHA and its affiliates would be greatly diminished without CPB's support. Programs like NPR's "On Point" and "1A" 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 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.