



2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Connecting Wisconsin



WISCONSIN
PUBLIC RADIO



KEEPING WPR STRONG ...

When I joined WPR last summer, I was impressed by the legacy and staff of America's oldest public radio station, and the commitment to remain relevant and vital for Wisconsinites of today and tomorrow. At the time, results of WPR's largest audience survey ever — more than 6,000 listeners responded in the winter of 2023 — were informing our plans to update WPR's website and broadcast service.

We spent more than two years analyzing audience data and looking at industry trends in order to better serve Wisconsinites on air and online. You have more choices than ever when it comes to news, music and entertainment, but we believe WPR offers you the best mix of original Wisconsin content on your radio, smartphone and computer. Our investment in stories and programs from Wisconsin is stronger than ever.

As I've traveled the state and met so many of you, I've heard your passion for your favorite programs and your questions about the changes, but above all I've heard your commitment to WPR. More than a few of you have told me, "Do what you need to do to keep WPR strong." Ultimately, I think that's the secret to WPR's longevity. It's not just the commitment to evolving and trying new things over the past 107 years, it's the commitment of listeners and supporters like you who have been open to changes.

Thank you for your commitment to WPR. Your support and trust through the years keep us strong and ensure a bright future for our service to you and generations of Wisconsinites to come.



Sarah Ashworth

Sarah Ashworth
WPR Director



REPORTING THAT CONNECTS WISCONSIN

WPR's hosts, reporters, and producers work every day to find the voices and stories that keep you connected with Wisconsin. In a world of shifting currents, WPR anchors your day with news and information you can count on.

In 2023, reporters at eight bureaus offered grounded and engaging coverage, with thoughtful interviews and analysis of the issues affecting Wisconsin communities. As the nation tracked the political stakes and record-setting spending on the Wisconsin Supreme Court election, WPR focused on the issues, voters and candidates, bringing you diverse perspectives and voices from around the state.

Every day, WPR helps put national issues in a Wisconsin context. As the national debate around abortion rights continued, WPR's documentary podcast and web series "How We Got Here: Abortion in Wisconsin Since 1849" explored how the state's abortion ban came to be, and how Wiscon-

Above 17-year-old Jacy Mathison stands outside of a live burn exercise in Sparta, Wis. that she participated in. ©Angela Major/WPR

Opposite Sarah Ashworth ©Tom Krueger Photography/WPR



“Naomi’s affection for Hooçak was apparent when she chose to spend part of her summer doing recordings for the new app. The goal: Bring Hooçak to another generation of speakers.”

- From a story by
WPR Reporter
Sarah Lehr

sinites have lived with and without it since.

WPR also shared stories of Wisconsinites with their eyes on the future, like Jadyn Mathison, an Onalaska High School senior who signed up for the region’s youth firefighter program so she could continue a family tradition. Or Naomi Littlegeorge, who joined a project to record and preserve the sounds of Hooçak for an instructional app, so future generations can use current tools to learn and study the Ho-Chunk language.

This year WPR also launched a new podcast, “Wisconsin Today,” to give listeners a quick and easy way to get state news each weekday morning alongside arts and culture stories.

CONVERSATIONS THAT ENGAGE AND ENERGIZE

In 2023, experts from across the state and around the nation helped listeners understand the economy, politics, scientific breakthroughs and more. Outdoor, home improvement and other specialists

offered advice on practical matters such as gardening, personal finance, travel and more. “WHYsconsin” and “Wisconsin Life” explored stories of the state that you couldn’t find anywhere else, including the history of Wisconsin’s love of the tuba, the reason there’s a long line of railroad cars parked near Spooner, and the experience of hunting season’s opening day in the northwoods.

WPR hosts encouraged curiosity and fostered a shared understanding of challenging issues. Combined with national and global coverage from NPR, WPR offered a full picture of what was happening around the corner, around the nation and around the world.

MUSIC AND CULTURE

WPR music hosts shared the beauty and inspiration of expertly curated classical, jazz, folk and global music with the state each week. Live interviews and performances on programs like “The Midday,” celebrated Wisconsin musicians like the Bach Dancing & Dynamite Society, the Ancora String Quartet and others.

WPR’s commitment to the future of classical music included broadcasting some of Wisconsin’s top student musicians through the Bolz Young Artists Competition in the spring, and the Wisconsin School Music Association State Honors Concerts in the fall.



Opposite 16-year-old Naomi Littlegeorge, right, records Hoocąk words and phrases for a language learning app in Black River Falls. Myrtle Long offers help with pronunciation. ©Angela Major/WPR

Above top Barb Baryenbruch Luhning, left, and Sue Tringali Johnson recorded their story about being on the first girls’ state high school basketball championship team in 1975 as part of Story Corps’ visit to Green Bay. ©Ellen Clark/WPR

Above WPR Producer Jill Nadeau holds the mic for fans of “The Larry Meiller Show” at a live broadcast in Paoli. ©Debbie Borth/WPR



“I love listening to WPR. I am exposed to local, national and international news from a breadth of perspectives across a wide spectrum, as well as a wealth of entertainment. I never know what I am going to learn each day.”

- A Listener in Deerfield, Wis.

COMMITTED TO COMMUNITY

WPR hosts and staff shone a spotlight on incredible community events and activities around the state, like Make Music Day and visits from the traveling Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall. Larry Meiller’s live broadcasts drew crowds to the shores of Lake Superior at Bayfield in Bloom and to a restored dairy operation in rural Paoli.

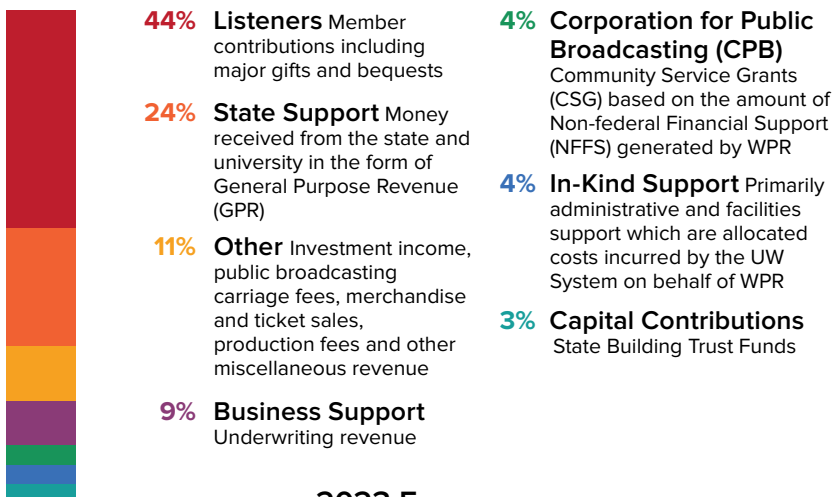
StoryCorps’ Mobile Tour stopped in Green Bay for three weeks, capturing the experiences of Wisconsinites like Joseph Ray Torres, a proud, two-spirit gay man who graduated from UW-Green Bay at age 58 with a double major in First Nations Studies and Business Administration. And WPR partnered with the NEW News Lab on “Home is Here: Stories Behind the Census,” a series that recorded the voices of the growing Black, Asian, Native American and Hispanic population of northeastern Wisconsin.

WPR’s commitment to Wisconsin is rooted in its commitment to people and communities on air, online and in everything we do.

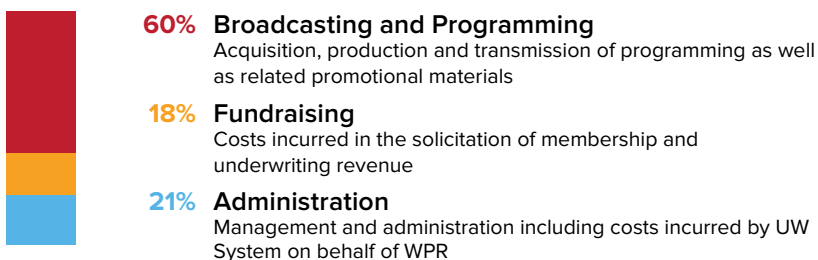


2023 Financial Report

2023 Revenue



2023 Expenses



These percentages are based on Fiscal Year 2023, WPR’s audited financials from July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023. Find our latest financial reports on our website at wpr.org/policies-and-reports.

Opposite Mai Lo Lee records her story for the “Home Is Here” project in WPR’s Green Bay studios. ©Laura Henderson/WPR

Above top A member of the band 1206 practices the keyboard at Girls Rock Camp in Madison. ©Angela Major/WPR



A FRESH NEW WPR IN 2024

As we wrap up 2023 with this annual report, we're looking forward to an exciting future with schedule and station changes coming.

After May 20, all 38 WPR stations will be programmed with either "WPR News" or "WPR Music" to make it easier for Wisconsinites to find the news, information and music they love.

All your favorite hosts will be there along with a new weekday news and information program, "Wisconsin Today," hosted by Rob Ferrett and Kate Archer Kent (pictured) on WPR News stations. On WPR Music stations, we're doubling the amount of locally hosted classical music you hear each weekday.

Find all the details at wpr.org/new.

WORKING FOR WISCONSIN

WPR is a service of the Educational Communications Board and the University of Wisconsin–Madison with support from the Wisconsin Public Radio Association and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. It has reporters, staff and studios throughout the state.

Listen, learn more and donate online at wpr.org.

Questions? Call our Audience Services team at 1-800-747-7444 or email listener@wpr.org



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