



2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Working for Wisconsin



WISCONSIN
PUBLIC RADIO



A BIG YEAR BEHIND US, A PIVOTAL YEAR AHEAD

We're a few months into 2025 and it's shaping up to be a pivotal year. As I write this, I am proud to say that our commitment to serving Wisconsin through trustworthy news, information, entertainment and education is as strong as ever. In this report, you'll see ample evidence of that commitment. 2024 was a big year, with lots to celebrate, thanks to you.

In January, we relaunched wpr.org and made it easier to read, hear and find the incredible work of our journalists, hosts and producers. In May, we re-organized our broadcast services into two new networks — WPR News and WPR Music — to help listeners more easily find news and music on their radios, smartphones and smart speakers. And, in June, we switched on our 39th station, 90.7 WEPP in Rice Lake, a WPR Music station named in honor of the late WPM Executive Director Gene Purcell.

We made these changes to better serve you and all Wisconsinites. At meetings in communities across the state, many of you told me how important WPR has been to your life. Although some of you had concerns about the changes, you said if it would be good for WPR, you were willing to adjust to the new networks. Thank you for staying with us. Now, nearly a year later, the good news is the transition to the new networks has gone incredibly well.

I frequently hear how much you value WPR News, "Wisconsin Today," our new hourlong state news program and the expanded "The Larry Meiller Show." Likewise, the appreciation we hear for WPR Music — our full-time classical music network — is gratifying. We are always evaluating our service and your feedback is welcome anytime at listener@wpr.org or 800-747-7444.

In 2025, calls to defund public media and changes to how people access news and entertainment require us to innovate to ensure WPR can thrive in the years ahead. We have seen many changes in our 108-year history, but one thing that hasn't changed is our commitment to serving the people of Wisconsin. With your support, WPR will remain an important part of life in Wisconsin for generations to come. Thank you for your commitment to WPR's future.

A portrait of Sarah Ashworth, the WPR Director. She is a woman with long, wavy brown hair, smiling at the camera. She is wearing a black blazer over a light-colored top and a necklace with a small pendant. The background is a soft-focus outdoor scene with green foliage.

Sarah Ashworth

Sarah Ashworth
WPR Director



WISCONSIN PERSPECTIVES

WPR has always been centered on Wisconsin voices, Wisconsin perspectives and Wisconsin communities and 2024 was no exception. Powerful personal stories from the criminal justice system — like Megan Hoffman Kolb whose father died by suicide in solitary confinement — were shared on “Wisconsin Today” and wpr.org as part of our coverage of calls for reform at the Waupun prison.

During the contentious election year, WPR committed to helping more Wisconsinites learn about the issues, candidates and how to register to vote. In addition to rigorous election coverage, our reporters produced a bilingual registration guide and an online candidate guide. Thousands of voters used the interactive guide to compare the candidates’ positions on the issues that mattered most.

Reporters at our eight bureaus fanned out to cover local, state and national issues. Our award-winning journalists shared stories and perspectives from inside and outside the Republican National

Megan Hoffmann Kolb, daughter of Dean Hoffmann, who was found dead by suicide a year ago, wishes she knew earlier how much more her father needed from his family while he was in prison.

“I could have done more,” she said. “That’s what I would hope other families would know going into it ... You are the lifeline to keeping them sane in there.”

From a story by “Wisconsin Today” Producer Jonah Beleckis. Scan the QR code to read or hear it.



After dropping out of high school when she was 16 years old, Sarah Wells (right) told herself she would graduate eventually.

It took more than seven decades, but she made it. “I wanted to finish school like the rest of my friends did,” Wells said. “And I still had that in my mind all those years.”

From a story by WPR Reporter and News Fellow Robert D’Andrea — the 92-year-old became the oldest person to ever receive a High School Equivalency Diploma from Madison College. Scan the QR code to read or hear it.

Convention in Milwaukee and the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. Our coverage was informed by Wisconsinites who shared their top concerns with us at in-person “Reporter Office Hours” and via an online survey.

We look at the personal impact of policies in the state and help Wisconsinites understand complicated issues like PFAS contamination which has shut down local water supplies, raised concerns about our beloved lakes and rivers and inspired legislation, lawsuits and contentious debates. Few issues are more urgent than the safety of our drinking water. WPR aired and published dozens of stories on PFAS in 2024 highlighting voices of the affected, those seeking solutions and the researchers who can help explain the science.

WISCONSIN VOICES

WPR introduces you to Wisconsinites you can’t meet anywhere else. People like Marquette University graduate Anne Yatco, a voice actor on the Japanese anime series “Jujutsu Kaisen.” And Jeff LaMay,

the State Capitol's decorative painter, who is responsible for maintaining the National Historic Landmark; that includes all 600 paint colors in the building.

When a solar eclipse crossed Wisconsin in April, tens of thousands of people gathered to share the experience. WPR was there to capture the wonder, the science and the camaraderie. "It's sort of bringing people together in this divided society right now," Dorothy Washa-Riesing from Muskego said.

On WPR Music, our hosts brought you more hours of outstanding performances by local, national and international musicians each day. This included dozens of live broadcasts, such as Canadian pianist Janina Fialkowska, who shared stories of working with the legendary Arthur Rubinstein, and Wisconsin cellist Katarina Kenney, who won the Final Forte Young Artists Competition and performed on "Mid-day Classics" with Norman Gilliland.

WISCONSIN COMMUNITIES

"Wisconsin Life," our partnership with PBS Wisconsin, aired its food traditions series with stories about places like The Cozy Inn, the oldest Chinese restaurant in Wisconsin, which opened in Janesville in 1922. In November, we partnered with the Chippewa Valley Writers Guild for a night of storytelling in downtown Eau Claire.

"The Larry Meiller Show" hit the road



"There will be children all across the United States — particularly in the path of totality from Oregon to South Carolina — whose lives will be changed. Some of them will decide that they want to study science because of what will happen to them in less than three minutes."

From an interview with journalist David Baron by Anne Strainchamps, host of "To the Best of Our Knowledge." Scan the QR code to read or hear it.



“It’s an honor to be able to perform and to be able to present such a wonderful group of young people that are, I think, very inspiring to many others,” MYSO Artists Director Carter Simmons said. “And that we can do this with such a big expressive way across the state and even across the world, is just such an honor.”

From a story by WPR Reporter Corrine Hess. Simmons (not pictured) was interviewed as part of WPR’s live broadcast of “Midday Classics” from Milwaukee. Scan the QR code to read or hear it.

with live broadcasts in Bayfield, Fish Creek, Fall Creek, Plover and La Crosse in the summer and fall. Locals had a chance to meet Larry in person, watch the show live, and interact with the show’s guests and staff. The locations showcased regional festivals, theater, agriculture and natural treasures.

To celebrate the return of classical music radio in Milwaukee, WPR partnered with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra to present a live broadcast hosted by Norman Gilliland (pictured above). Audiences heard some of the best young performers in the city, including the Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra, Florentine Opera’s Baumganter Artists, the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music, and the Rufus King High School Advanced Choir.

WPR brings people together with powerful stories and shared experiences on air, online and at community events. With your support, we can help celebrate and share life in Wisconsin for years to come.



2024 Financial Report

2024 Revenue



- 42% Listeners** Member contributions including major gifts and bequests
- 24% State Support** Money received from the state and university in the form of General Purpose Revenue (GPR)
- 15% Other** Investment income, public broadcasting carriage fees, merchandise and ticket sales, production fees and other miscellaneous revenue
- 8% Business Support** Underwriting revenue
- 5% Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB)** Community Service Grants (CSG) based on the amount of Non-federal Financial Support (NFFS) generated by WPR
- 4% In-Kind Support** Primarily administrative and facilities support which are allocated costs incurred by the UW System on behalf of WPR
- 2% Capital Contributions** State Building Trust Funds

2024 Expenses



- 68% Broadcasting and Programming** Acquisition, production and transmission of programming as well as related promotional materials
- 16% Fundraising** Costs incurred in the solicitation of membership and underwriting revenue
- 16% Administration** Management and administration including costs incurred by UW System on behalf of WPR

These percentages are based on Fiscal Year 2024, WPR’s audited financials from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024. Find our latest financial reports on our website at www.wpr.org/policies-and-reports.

Above: Reporters Bridgit Bowden and Jenny Peek at one of WPR News’ “Reporter Office Hours” held in locations across the state in 2024. Reporters spent the day in libraries, community colleges and other locations to hear about the issues that were top of mind for Wisconsinites during the election year.



SO MANY WAYS TO LISTEN

Did you know that the famous goats at Al Johnson's Restaurant in Door County listen to WPR every day in their barn? The goats use a radio, but there are many ways you can listen to WPR — on FM, AM and HD radio or on wpr.org, with the WPR app or a smart speaker.

With our free mobile app you can listen to WPR anywhere you have an internet connection. The app is available in Apple's App Store and Google Play.

WPR live broadcasts are on most major smart speakers, too.

Learn more at:
wpr.org/ways-to-listen

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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wpm.wisc.edu

