

2019

Report
on

**Local Content
and
Services**

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SAS Community Outreach for FY19 July 2018 – June 2019

Overall Goals and Approach

In a recent presentation for a public radio conference, we shared a slide that read: “We are more than radio. We are a convener, a haven, an educator, a friend, a resource, a port in the storm, a community partner, an idea, an asset, a public service, a conversation starter, a constant companion.”

Over the last couple of years, we have striven to do more and be more for our listeners and our community. This strategy encompasses our news coverage, community engagement, and commitment to education. It means listening to the members of our community, providing the content that matters the most to them, and trying to develop a deep understanding of what they find important. We have simplified our mission to read: “inform, connect, educate, inspire.” This is our guiding principle in everything we do, and defines how we pursue our public service.

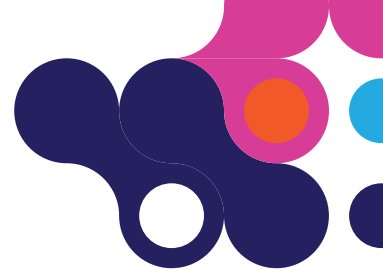
In addition to continuing our community-driven reporting project, Carolina Curious, in FY19 our news team produced two separate investigative series on subjects near and dear to the hearts of the members of our community—topics that are also important across America. These reports touched many lives, and created awareness of WFDD and the work of our reporters among new audiences across our listening area.

We have found our community engagement efforts to be immensely successful in introducing WFDD to new listeners, and while the evidence is anecdotal, we believe this work has also helped increase our fundraising revenue. With the shift to producing our own events, rather than piggybacking on the events of other organizations, we have seen greater participation and much deeper connection with our audience. These activities include our Photo of the Week initiative, the WFDD Book Club, and various free and ticketed events.

Because we believe that young people in our communities have a unique and important perspective on the world and current events, we continue to grow our youth education program. Part of the mission of this program is to deepen and diversify the future talent pool for public media and the field of journalism, but it’s also about bringing the stories and perspective of youth to our listeners. This multi-tiered initiative includes programs for students from middle school all the way through college (and even to adults), and through it we connect not only with students, but also with schools and school administrators, teachers, parents, and community members.

Through our commitment to be more than radio, WFDD has become even more intricately woven into the fabric of the 32 counties we serve, a trusted resource to which the community can turn for the information they need, a purveyor of

meaningful events
that provide stimulating conversations
and deep connections, and even a friend and companion.



Key Initiatives and Partners

88.5 WFDD has continued, and grown, several of our key initiatives, and even introduced some new ones.


In FY19 we held our 10th annual December Backpack Campaign, which continued our partnership with Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest North Carolina and Kaplan Early Learning Company. The synergy between the Food Bank's Backpack Program, which provides children suffering from food insecurity food to take home over the weekends during the school year, and Kaplan, a company whose mission is to foster the mental, physical, and social health of children, is natural. During this annual campaign, our corporate partner donates a backpack full of food to the Backpack Program for each gift to 88.5 WFDD. For the December 2019 campaign, Kaplan generously increased its support, which allowed us to up our goal to 1,200 gifts of support for WFDD and 1,200 backpacks of food for the Food Bank's Backpack Program. Not only does the campaign raise awareness of the significant challenges our community faces with childhood hunger (our area has one of the highest instances of childhood food insecurity in the nation), it also raises essential support for 88.5 WFDD, and brings the community together to help alleviate childhood hunger in our region.

We've continued our Photo of the Week initiative, launched in January 2018, and this relatively simple activity continues to have an incredibly high impact on our community engagement. Listeners submit their original photos taken all around our listening area, and we select one each week to feature in our Weekly Roundup email and on social media. This has a dual purpose of demonstrating the reach of our broadcast signal and letting listeners know that we want to know what's important to them and appreciate their talents. Because we're always seeking new ways to deepen our engagement with our community, we extended this initiative to include a Photo of the Year event. We partnered with the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art (SECCA) in Winston-Salem to hang an exhibit of all the chosen weekly photos, and invited the public to an opening reception where they could vote on their favorite photos. The photo with the most votes became our 2018 Photo of the Year. It served as the cover photo on our Facebook page for the following year. The winner and two runners-up also received trophies and gift baskets donated by a local establishment. Thanks to powerful partnerships with SECCA, Canteen Market & Bistro, and Spring House Restaurant, Kitchen, & Bar, we could keep this event free to the public. Our hard cash costs for the entire event totaled \$330.

In addition to continuing our series Carolina Curious, which uses Hearken to involve

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listeners and community members in guiding our coverage and brings them into the reporting process, in FY19 our local news team embarked on two ambitious investigative reporting projects. The resulting series, Unsafe Haven and On The Margins, brought to light significant issues surrounding immigration and housing in our region. Both series were the culmination of months of work and presented powerful and sometimes difficult stories, as only public radio can. For On The Margins, we were fortunate to collaborate with the Carolina Data Desk at The UNC School of Media and Journalism and Wake Forest University's Journalism Program. This reporting was made possible through funding from the Knight Foundation.

In FY19, we continued our WFDD Book Club, a listener engagement initiative we began four years ago. The WFDD Book Club meets quarterly at two area independent bookshops, one in Winston-Salem and one in Greensboro. The bookshops partner with us to offer the selected read at a discounted price, and allow us to utilize their space for meetings. We also partner with the Guilford College Bryan Series, a speaker series produced by Guilford College, to select a book by one of their speakers for one of our quarterly meetings. The Bryan Series donates tickets to the author's speaking engagement, attends the Book Club meeting, and has occasionally been able to facilitate an interview with the author before the meeting.

We also continued producing a variety of events in FY19. From our Mug Stops and Bar Meet-Ups, which combine fundraising with community engagement; to ticketed events designed to bring awareness to programs we air; to listening parties that create space for new connections and conversations among community members, WFDD demonstrated a commitment to a forward-facing approach to community and listener engagement, reaching out and meeting our listeners where they are. We hosted our 2nd annual Look Up And Listen outdoor listening party at Hanging Rock State Park. This event benefits from partnerships with Stokes County Economic Development, Hanging Rock State Park administration, the Forsyth Astronomical Society, and Green Heron Ale House. We brought listeners together in the state park after hours to listen to a special episode of Mountain Stage, view celestial objects through high-powered telescopes, and enjoy s'mores around a campfire. Afterward, attendees gathered at Green Heron Ale House, a pub adjacent to the State Park, for more conversation and fellowship. We were also fortunate to be selected as one of two US stations to partner with the BBC for a special community event featuring Newshour presenter James Coomarasamy and producer Jo Floto. We drew on community partnerships once again for this event, working with five different local restaurants to provide a special tasting menu for the evening, and hosting the event in a historic roller mill. This event helped our audience better understand how a live news program like Newshour is produced and gave attendees a true inside perspective on newsgathering and presenting.

Our education program continues to grow, thanks to the addition of a full-time manager. In FY19, we extended the offerings of Radio Camp, our summer camp for middle school students, to include a week of Advanced Radio Camp (to accommodate repeat campers), as well as a week of camp in Boone, NC, located in the mountain



region of our listening area (to serve a different part of our community). We continued our partnership with Guilford College to hold a session of Radio Camp in Greensboro, NC. Enrollment for Radio Camp in FY19 saw the same number of students on the waiting list as we had enrolled in the program. We continue to envision ways to serve more students for this program, but we are limited by space constrictions. During these weeks of camp, middle school students learn the basics of radio story production, from studio and field recording, to subject research, to interviewing techniques, and the other skills needed to write, record, edit, and create stories for radio broadcast. Each student concludes the week with a story of their own that is also broadcast on WFDD and shared on our website. Each Radio Camper interviews a community member for their story; local organizations and businesses, artists and entrepreneurs, and general people of note are all subjects for these interviews. Radio Camp doesn't stop with middle school, though. In FY19 we were able to reinstitute our Radio Camp for Grown-Ups . . . because we think grown-ups should get to have fun, too.

Radio 101, our program for high school students, offers instruction in journalism, audio storytelling, technology, audio editing, field recording, writing, and public speaking. In addition to the for-credit class embedded in R. J. Reynolds High School, a local arts magnet school with the most diverse student population in the school district, the program included after-school sessions open to students from all over the district in both the fall and spring semesters. We also offered Radio 101 "pocket editions" for Paisley IB Magnet Middle School (embedded in English classes) and at Salem College, the oldest female educational establishment that is still a women's college and the oldest women's college in the southern United States.


Because we felt strongly that the growth and expansion of our education program dictated a better name, we convened a group of community members to participate in a World Café discussion and ideation session to guide the development of that name. A group of 30, from different parts of our community, representing different ethnic backgrounds, different genders, and different organizations came together to share ideas and talk about what our education programs do and what they mean. This event generated so many ideas and resulted in the new name for our education program: Hive. We feel there are so many synergies with this name, and doubt we would have arrived at it without the input of our community.

Impact

Our annual December BackPack Campaign continues to raise awareness of the significant challenges our region faces with food insecurity. In addition, it allows us, through partnerships with Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest North Carolina and our corporate partner Kaplan Early Learning Company, to put much-needed food

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directly into the hands of children in our area at risk of going hungry. Thanks to the increased support of Kaplan, we were again able to increase our goal of backpacks to 1,200. All told, over the 10 years of this campaign, 7,700 backpacks of food have been provided to children all around our area by Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest North Carolina, whose service area closely matches ours. For FY19, specifically, the 1,200 backpacks filled provided 50 children with food for the weekend for 24 weeks, nearly half the school year. It's the equivalent of 6,000 meals.

Our education program (now called Hive) continues growing by leaps and bounds, serving more students than ever before. All the various Hive offerings expose young people to the power of audio storytelling, but they also teach writing, communication, and media literacy—skills that last a lifetime and benefit the students in many ways beyond their usefulness in our programs. Hugh Bray, a student who has enrolled in our for-credit Radio 101 class at Reynolds High School for multiple semesters, worked on a two-part story about a complicated and significant issue in the Winston-Salem community: the proposed building of a high school football stadium. On the surface, this doesn't seem like a controversial subject, but because the proposed location is adjacent to a neighborhood, and on (or adjacent to) land that was donated to the City decades past for a public park, there has been quite a bit of upheaval. It was a difficult topic to report on, even for a seasoned reporter. Here's what Hugh had to say about tackling this topic and his time with Radio 101: "Taking the Radio 101 class at R.J. Reynolds High School has had a huge impact on me and I think it has influenced the community around me. I think a measurable impact has been seen due to my feature stories on balancing school with athletics and my story about the [proposed] stadium at Hanes Park. [Radio 101] has helped me understand bias and what sources can be trusted or not. Taking the class has increased my awareness, and I have been able to decipher which news sources are credible or not. I have been able to calm down competing neighborhoods with the stadium story by stating what the land was initially donated for. Mr. Maisonnave has been very supportive and has given me great feedback."

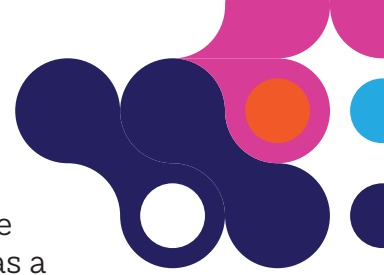
Cyndi Briggs participated in our Radio Camp for Grown-Ups, and was also interviewed by a middle school camper during Radio Camp. She shared these comments, which include feedback on our education programs, as well as community event, specifically our Evening with BBC Newshour:

"Since moving back to North Carolina 10 years ago, my radio is almost always tuned to 88.5 WFDD. In this politically divisive time, when so much of the news is delivered at full volume and for maximum dramatic effect, listening to news delivered objectively, critically, and reasonably keeps me informed, engaged, and sane. The weekend and evening programs entertain and enlighten, and have led me to many of my favorite podcasts, including This American Life and Wait, Wait Don't Tell Me. WFDD has done an exceptional job of extending their reach into our community in positive and meaningful ways, including classes, camps, and social events. I participated in Radio Camp for Grown-Ups and it was thrilling to be in the studio and to learn how radio production works. I have new appreciation for how much effort goes into every single



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story. In addition, learning about the process of making radio stories led me to create my own podcast. I was also interviewed for Radio Camp for kids, and experienced first-hand how valuable this experience is for young people learning how to listen and ask questions as a part of the learning process. Finally, I've absolutely loved the community events. My favorite was the Evening with BBC Newshour in March 2019. It was fascinating to meet the BBC News personalities in person and to hear their take on US culture and politics on the global stage. WFDD is a valuable and irreplaceable member of our community and I will continue to be a proud sustaining member.”

Our Photo of the Week initiative has led to increased engagement with our listeners, in addition to more interaction with our social media posts and our email marketing. Photo of the Week posts are often our most popular, with increased likes and shares, and our Weekly Roundup email, which prominently features our Photo of the Week at the very top, has an above-average open rate. We've extended that engagement with our Photo of the Year opening reception and exhibit, where listeners and community members vote for our Photo of the Year. Our 2018 winner, Justine Luzwick, shared these comments: “I am an avid listener of WFDD and have always enjoyed its content. Until recently I had never been involved with the station outside of just listening to it on the radio. When the Photo of the Week contest was first advertised, I was excited. I thought it would be a great way for me to be more involved with WFDD. I had no idea that there would be a Photo of the Year contest at the end of the year when I first submitted my photo, but I am glad there was one. The reception was well put together and a ton of fun, it gave me an opportunity to meet people I otherwise would never meet. I also had the opportunity to shake hands with and meet the people I heard on the radio every day and that was very exciting. I am grateful that WFDD gave me the opportunity to share my photography with the community and thankful for the way they organized the Photo of the Year event. I look forward to participating in the upcoming shows.”

In FY19, our news team worked extensively on two separate investigative series. Unsafe Haven began as an investigation into a fire at a low-income apartment complex that claimed the lives of five immigrant children, and then extended into reporting on many issues that face immigrants in our community, including organizations whose mission is to serve these individuals and families. On The Margins was a ground-breaking reporting project done in partnership with the Carolina Data Desk at The UNC School of Media and Journalism and Wake Forest University's Journalism Program, with support from the Knight Foundation. It explored redlining issues prevalent in our communities, and examined conflicts between adjacent neighborhoods, where gentrification is present. Both series had significant impact. As an example, one story included in On The Margins led to a change in policy at a local housing agency so as to better serve its clients. WFDD reporter Eddie Garcia shared this:

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“One aspect of my story on the Housing Authority of Winston-Salem was the reveal of a document that was distributed to residents of Piedmont Park Apartments. It indicated not only that a firmer hand was going to be taken in terms of late rent and eviction proceedings, but that discussions of late or unpaid rent were being prohibited. Through my reporting, I discovered this was against not only their local ACOP policy, but Federal HUD regulations as well. The story aired on June 6, 2019. A document was sent to residents on June 7, 2019, stating in part, ‘That memo misstated our policy. It also did not reflect actual practices . . . ’ It continues to say that residents can meet to discuss hardships. [This document] was sent to us by Phleam Tart, a resident who is featured in the story.”

This particular story was shared on Facebook nearly 1,000 times, retweeted and commented on many times over on Twitter, and resulted in innumerable listener comments, some of which are shared below.

Ryan P.: “Thank you for your article about the Housing Authority of Winston Salem. It's certainly an interesting and important issue in our community.”

Peggy M.: “I am grateful for your report yesterday morning about HAWS in Winston-Salem and Greensboro. I transport folks from all over WS and Forsyth County and see housing from one extreme to another. Thank you so much for reporting on the status of low income housing. I hope you continue to keep our community updated.”

Edward S.: “I heard your story on HAWS today (I listened to it twice) and found it to be expertly reported and very informative. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss with you tenant evictions (either subsidized or private). I am an attorney with Legal Aid of North Carolina who works on landlord/tenant cases in both Greensboro and Winston-Salem.”

Dan R.: “Your piece was devastating. I'm so grateful for the work you all have put into this.”

Eric D.: “Terrific job. The comments from that PHA director were...concerning.”

Another story in the On The Margins series, about a resident who was being evicted from the home she had lived in for decades, resulted in WFDD being flooded with checks for the resident, as well as emails from listeners asking how they could help her. Through our reporting, we've been able to connect those who are in need with people and organizations who have the ability to help.

There is no doubt that this is life-changing radio.

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Diversity Outreach

As reported in the previous section, our news team worked for many months to report on issues related to unfair mortgage lending practices that disproportionately affect minorities (a series entitled *On The Margins*), and produced a series and documentary on the challenges facing new immigrants assimilating into our communities, including the lack of safe and affordable housing.

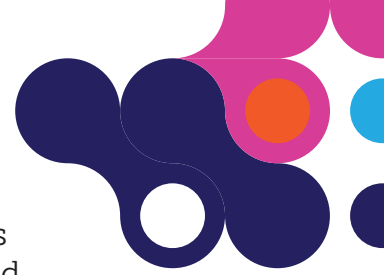
Unsafe Haven led to increased awareness of the issues facing new immigrants, as well as the organizations that serve these communities. It told the story of a family grieving over the death of five children in a fire at a poorly-maintained, low-income housing project, and humanized this community for the public radio audience. Beyond that, it exposed the many challenges faced by new immigrants. *On The Margins* exposed just how close many families are to eviction, and explored how our housing problems are rooted in our history and shape our present and future. It told stories of gentrification, and how redlining practices came to be, and how frequently redlining happens in our communities.


Also as discussed earlier, our Education Program continues to grow, thanks to a grant from the Winston-Salem Foundation and the support of a major donor. We are fortunate to have a class embedded at R. J. Reynolds High School in Winston-Salem, an arts magnet school with students from 38 countries, speaking 26 languages, making it the most diverse high school in the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County school system. Our after-school option is open to students from the entire school district (and neighboring districts). We continue to explore ways to promote this offering to students of color, including using the local Spanish-language newspaper, *Que Pasa*; the local African-American newspaper, *The Winston-Salem Chronicle*; and social media channels frequented by students. It is our goal to make all students from every part of our community aware of these opportunities. All Radio 101 offerings are free. Stories produced by Radio 101 students are aired on WFDD and posted to the station's website.

In FY19, we again presented several weeks of Radio Camp, during which the participants and their interview subjects represented a diverse population. Middle-school-aged girls and boys from a variety of socio-economic and cultural backgrounds interviewed community members of various ages, talents, and ethnic backgrounds. It is always our goal to accurately represent our entire community when seeking interview subjects for our Radio Campers. Every Radio Camp story is aired on WFDD and appears on our website.

Serving our entire community, including underserved and underrepresented populations is key to our mission and vision. To further these efforts, in FY19, we launched a scholarship program for Radio Camp and expanded that program to Boone, NC, to make it more accessible for residents of the more rural High Country

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areas we serve. Through support from past Radio Camper parents and other WFDD listeners, we raised enough money to fund two Radio Camp scholarships per year for the next several years. It is still our hope to secure trademark and licensing for our education programs, after which we hope to promote them to other stations across the public media industry, extending the outreach of these initiatives beyond our broadcast area.

Our vision for the future includes further expansion of Hive (our education program) to include taking Radio 101 into a juvenile detention center. We also plan to convene a Town Hall for Teens, to extend discussion of stories on school safety produced by our Radio 101 class at Reynolds High School.

Our news team has continued coverage on housing issues planned, as well as the creation of a series of community conversations with diverse groups about our changing cities. The question to spark the discussion is “what do you want your city to look like?”

We will also be embarking upon a partnership with the journalism program at Wake Forest University, where one of our reporters will teach radio journalism to students, and we will embed these students in our newsroom. They’ll create spot news pieces, allowing our team to focus on more feature-length and investigative reports.

Impact of CPB Funding

While WFDD has seen significant growth in donations over the last few years, the grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting allows us to dream big, and experiment with new ideas and initiatives. It allows us to better serve our community and increase our public service in ways we might not be able to without it. We believe our community engagement, education programs, and expanded local news reporting are key to who we are in our community, and the generous funding we receive from the CPB ensures our ability to continue those projects. It ensures we can continue to be a convener, a haven, an educator, a friend, a resource, a port in the storm, a community partner, an idea, an asset, a public service, a conversation starter, a constant companion.



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