



SAS Community Outreach for FY23

July 2022 – June 2023

- (1) Describe your overall goals and approach to address identified community issues, needs, and interests through your station's vital local services, such as multi-platform 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.


At WFDD, it is our mission to connect with our community—every aspect of it. When making a recent donation, WFDD listener Julie C. wrote, "I am so thankful for radio based on building community connections and focused on education, arts, and current events. The programming helps me to keep on learning." Julie has captured what we strive to do every day. Connecting with our community makes us far better poised to identify the needs of the region we serve and ensure that we can meet those needs.

Our goal every day is to do more and be more for our listeners and community members. 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. 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.

Beyond that, our efforts create opportunities for our listeners to meet and interact with one another through events like our Book Club, Listener Expeditions, Look Up And Listen, and more. Through our Hive® youth education program, we provide various opportunities for young people to learn the craft of radio journalism and share their unique perspective.

All these efforts are designed to demonstrate that to which we aspire: to be a convener, a resource, a haven, a companion, an educator, a public service; to create connections and empower our listeners with trustworthy information. Interwoven in all of that is a commitment to ensuring that we are building trust and developing relationships with underserved populations in our coverage area. This is core to our overarching vision and to fulfilling our public service mission to inform, connect, educate, and inspire.

- (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.

Ensuring we are adequately covering issues related to underserved communities within our region is key to our values and mission, so we were fortunate to have a continued relationship with both Report for America and our regional Spanish language publication *La Noticia*, to support the placement of a bilingual reporter in our newsroom. In addition to helping to fund the salary of this reporter, *La Noticia* also shares her reporting, allowing this important work to reach an even wider audience.

Beyond that, our local news team worked collaboratively with other public radio newsrooms across our state to support the production of a special report on the effects of climate change in North Carolina. This report (<https://www.wfdd.org/story/adapt-changing-climate-carolinas>) covered everything from how the science of climate change is communication, to “heat islands” in urban areas, to how farmers must adapt in order to survive extreme weather events and changes. The collaboration with other stations made this reporting much more impactful and able to address a wide-ranging set of issues.

To educate is part of our mission. Hive®, our youth education program, continues to prove that understanding the viewpoint of young people has value. The mission of this multi-tiered initiative is to give young people the skills, the tools, and the platform to share their unique perspective — to open a window into the world (and worldview) of the youth of our community. Through Hive® we're able to connect with parents, teachers, and students across the community. FY23 marked the sixth year of our partnership with R. J. Reynolds High School, where we offer Radio 101 as a for-credit, honors class. Students in the Fall 2022 class worked on a series of stories about teen sexual health entitled *Miseducated*. These stories tackled a difficult, and sometimes awkward, topic, but provided important insight into what teens face, what they know (and don't know), and how adults can better support them. Radio Camp, also part of Hive®, saw collaborations with Guilford College, Appalachian State University, and the Documentary Film Program at Wake Forest University...not to mention the many community members who gave of their time to be interviewed by a middle school aged participant. Through the various programs contained with Hive®, we reached over 100 students across many ages and generations.

Thanks to strong community partnerships and collaborations, we were able to further expand our Photo of the Year initiative, displaying the gallery exhibit in the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art in Winston-Salem; the Blowing Rock Art and History Museum, located in the High Country of North Carolina; and the Greenhill Center for North Carolina Art in Greensboro. This allowed even more people to see the photo submissions from WFDD listeners and to vote on their choice for Photo of the Year.




We continued our Listener Expeditions, which take small groups of listeners on explorations of lesser-known locations around our coverage area. Particularly special were two Expeditions: one focusing on the Hidden Towns Project from Old Salem Museums and Gardens, which is working to uncover the vital history and contributions of African Americans in the historic town of Salem, a living history museum sharing the stories of the Moravians who founded this planned community in the 18th century. We also took listeners to visit the historic Richmond Hill Law School, the home of a former North Carolina Supreme Court Chief Justice (1858 – 1878), and the location of the law school he began and ran until his death.

Further, we once again held our outdoor listening party event, Look Up And Listen, which is done in partnership with Stokes County Economical Development (a rural county government organization focused on promoting and supporting businesses, organizations, and opportunities in the county), Hanging Rock State Park, and Green Heron Alehouse. These partnerships have been in place since this event's inception, and they continue because the relationships are so positive and mutually beneficial. The 2022 iteration of this event welcomed nearly 250 people to spend time lakeside in the State Park, listening to a carefully curated public radio show episode and enjoying s'mores around the campfire. Attendees commune with nature, get the chance to speak one-on-one with WFDD team members, and make connections with one another.

(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 a person(s) served.

Education continues to be a priority for WFDD. In FY23, our Hive® program served over 100 students ranging from middle school to adult, and representing a broad array of races, ethnicities, religions, and abilities. Beyond teaching the basic tenets of journalism, this initiative helps participants hone writing and communication skills—knowledge that provides lifelong benefits. During the 2022 fall semester, our R. J. Reynolds High School Radio 101 class worked on a series on teen sexual health entitled *Miseducated*. Topics covered in this series included PreP and understanding what it is and how it's used; how to talk with parents about sex, and how parents can approach these conversations with teens; and the lack of LGBTQ+ representation in statewide sex ed curricula. Because of the work these young people did, WFDD listeners learned a great deal about what young know—or don't know—about sexuality




and how adults can better support them and guide them through this period of transition, not to mention the inequity present in how school districts approach sex ed.

In December 2022, we held our 14th annual December Backpack Campaign, a collaborative fundraiser we do in partnership with Second Harvest Food Bank of Northwest North Carolina and Kaplan Early Learning Company. We hold this fund drive every year because childhood food insecurity continues to be a significant issue in our region. The synergy between the Food Bank's Backpack Program, which provides weekend meals to children facing food insecurity, 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. Our goal for the December 2022 campaign was 1,500 gifts of support for WFDD and 1,500 backpacks of food for the Food Bank's Backpack Program. Not only does the campaign raise awareness of the fact that our area has one of the highest instances of childhood food insecurity in the nation, but it also raises essential support for 88.5 WFDD, and brings the community together to help alleviate childhood hunger in our region. Since its inception 14 years prior, this collaborative fundraising campaign has resulted in the donation of 14,400 backpacks — over 72,000 meals for children at risk of going hungry.

We once again held our annual Photo of the Year Celebration. In 2023, we were able to display the photo exhibit in three different art galleries across our listening area. Our Photo of the Year is selected from among the 52 photos submitted by listeners for our Photo of the Week initiative, and it's selected by community vote. In 2023, over 5,500 votes were cast across three different gallery exhibits (and three distinctly different communities), and the Photo of the Year was revealed at a closing reception and event at the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art in Winston-Salem. Jennifer Sagerman and Lynn Hawks, both first-time Photo of the Week/Year participants shared their feedback on taking part in this initiative.

"I have been a devoted listener of WFDD for over two decades; however, 2023 was the first year in which I participated in the station's photo of the Week/Year contest. Imagine the thrill when my family portrait of baby raccoons was selected as a winner for the week of August 18th. I was compelled to share my image, not only because of the rare opportunity to have that many kits positioned together (almost as if they were posed) in beautiful natural light during the golden hour of early evening, but also because of their comedic facial expressions which made them appear like so many children, caught red-handed stealing my nut and berry bird food.

From winning the beautiful Vivid Metal Print, to the Photo of the Year Reveal reception at SECCA, this journey has truly been a delight. I have enjoyed meeting others in the area who share my love for photography and nature, and I look forward to participating again this upcoming year. Through projects such as this, WFDD pulls in listeners from



the region to offer them opportunities to share first-hand their passions and interests, all the while promoting a community-building environment. Without the support of listeners and donors, this past year would have been far less rewarding than it turned out to be. Thank You WFDD!" - Jennifer Sagerman

"In January 2023, I was introduced to The Photo of the Week and Photo of the Year Contest sponsored by 88.5 WFDD. What a wonderful program for local photographers to share their work and get recognition from the local community. I was fortunate to have three weekly winners and a 2nd runner up in the Photo of the Year. It was a joy to meet other photographers, visit the galleries with the photo displays, and to meet people that really appreciate the art of photography." – Lynn Hawks


The Photo of the Week/Year initiative allows us to simultaneously build a deeper connection between WFDD and members of our community, showcase the talents of community members, highlight the beauty of the region we serve, and create connections amongst community members. This ongoing project is an important part of our engagement strategy because of its myriad benefits both to the station and to our listeners.

(4) Please Describe any efforts (e.g., programming, production, outreach 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 2023, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2024. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the languages broadcast.

Serving our entire community, including underserved and underrepresented populations is core to our mission and vision.

We continue source tracking via our website, enabling us to download quarterly reports showing the demographic makeup of our story sources, which will help us to ensure that we are utilizing experts and sources in a way that is representative of the demographic makeup of our community as a whole.

Also in FY23, we continued our relationship with Report for America (RFA) and the largest Spanish language publication in our region, *La Noticia*, which supported the placement of a bilingual reporter to our newsroom staff, who covered the Hispanic and Latinx communities in



our region and worked with editors at both media outlets. Her stories were published by both entities—in English and in Spanish—providing even broader reach for this important reporting and introducing WFDD to new populations. This reporting was additionally supported by the Kate B. Reynolds Foundation, whose funding priorities focus on sustainable change for health and quality of life in Forsyth County and across North Carolina.

And our Hive® Education Program continues to present opportunities to reach a diverse population. We have a Radio 101 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). And as reported in the previous section, a wide spectrum of races, ethnicities, religions, and abilities are represented among participants across all our Hive® initiatives. We are also always cognizant of providing content of importance to diverse groups. In FY23, our Radio 101 class reported on the lack of LGBTQ+ representation in school sex ed curricula, and the effect that has on LGBTQ+ youth, as they seek information on sex and sexuality.

(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?

At WFDD, we see this funding as a chance to go beyond simply providing news and information programming and really be there for our community in unique and innovative ways. This grant allows us to see opportunities to extend our service and reach citizens who may not have previously been aware of our offerings. Because of this funding, we are able to make youth education a top priority and provide free programs that both benefit young people and illuminate the challenges teens today face for our mostly older audience. It allows us to foster a culture of having the freedom to fail, so that we are constantly dreaming and planning new initiatives...because if we never try new things then innovation doesn't exist. The generous funding from CPB once again allowed us to break the mold of a standard public radio station, to think outside the box, and to lead the charge in creative community engagement...to set the tone that our community is better because we are in it.