

## LOCAL CONTENT and SERVICES REPORT

### Pittsburgh Community Broadcasting Corporation dba 90.5 WESA / dba 91.3 WYEP

**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.**

In January of 2016, Pittsburgh Community Broadcasting Corporation (PCBC) underwent major change: 91.3 WYEP and 90.5 WESA were merged into a single corporate entity. Now, with a new unified governance and leadership structure, we are better reaching, better engaging and better serving the communities of Southwestern Pennsylvania.

Our two broadcast platforms provide discrete content services ("NPR News & Information" and "Music and Culture"), but they share a common goal of enriching lives and strengthening the communities we serve through media. 90.5 WESA "works for the public to inform people in ways that engage and inspire them to create dialog about community issues and stories", and 91.3 WYEP "enriches the community through musical discovery, expression and education".

On 90.5 WESA, coverage of national and international news from NPR is complimented by our own coverage of local and regional issues – a vital noncommercial and nonpartisan journalistic resource at a time of change. We have expanded the scope of our work, reorienting ourselves away from traditional news beats toward a more holistic approach to covering & engaging with the communities we serve. Rather than focus on anecdotal coverage of crime or politics, we take a broader view and build coverage around key community needs & issues, such as how we earn, how we learn, how we are evolving, how we are building and growing, how we are working to address our disparities, and how we find sustainability in the 21st Century.

Our journalism is platform-agnostic: we meet the needs of consumers and communities where they are: telling stories both on-air and online, using each platform to its best advantage. And through thoughtful live community outreach and listening sessions, we engage to share and to listen, and to deepen our ties to the community. For example, in 2016, we staged a series of community forums to seek input on critical issues and to drive editorial efforts to address those issues. Working with community organizations and churches, we attracted participants who live and work locally, but who may not be familiar with WESA. Sessions were conducted in Pittsburgh's predominantly African-American communities of Homewood and Hazelwood, as well as in Greenfield and in the Pittsburgh suburbs. The result was multiple reporting projects (on-air and online) that covered topics ranging from neighborhood neglect and redevelopment to workforce development in a booming tech economy.

We have also partnered successfully with other organizations to create and distribute content. Working in cooperative ventures like Keystone Connection (a partnership among Pennsylvania's public media outlets) and with new non-profit journalism centers (like PublicSource), we eliminate redundancy of effort and expense, maximize the reach of all our work, and amplify its impact in the communities we serve.

Our noncommercial, nonpartisan journalism serves more people in Western Pennsylvania every day. More than 160,000 local citizens listen to our broadcasts every week, and more than 70,000 use our online reporting each week. These audiences (broadcast and online) have more than doubled in the past two years.

Meanwhile, on 91.3 WYEP we continue our four-decade long tradition of bringing musical enjoyment, discovery and education to the region through broadcast...and we have also made significant investments in growing a digital adjunct to that over-the-air service. With digital as a priority, we have added dedicated staff in the past year and have reorganized our digital platform, improved audio streaming services, and moved aggressively into social media as an engagement tool with our listeners. In coming months, we envision the launch of additional digital services, including new streams of content for digital-first consumers.

Educational programs are an essential part of our community service. One of our priorities is to create meaningful music-related educational experiences for Pittsburgh area youth. So, we have partnered with Point Park University to offer new opportunities for young musicians in our Reimagination recording project. A diverse group of teens are led through a series of workshops on topics including marketing and business management, songwriting and publishing, and touring and venue relations...ultimately resulting in the public release of a CD of their work. These workshops have been very well received by students and parents alike. And we were honored to learn recently that a 2014 graduate of our Reimagination program has just been presented with a GRAMMY Award.

Audiences on-air and online continue to engage with 91.3 WYEP. In 2016, our over-the-air broadcasts reached an average of 110,000 listeners per week, and our website saw about 100,000 page views each month.

**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.**

PCBC engages in a variety of partnerships throughout the year, with an eye toward leveraging our assets to mutual advantage and the betterment of the community.

- In addition to the aforementioned partnerships with public media outlets across Pennsylvania (“Keystone Connection”), with other nonprofit journalism centers (like PublicSource) and with educational institutions (like Point Park University), we partnered with numerous local community organizations.
- Educational programming and community events were staged at our facilities on Pittsburgh’s historic South Side, including “Local 913 Live” music events (monthly), a summer “Rock Radio Camp” program for middle schoolers, and our ongoing series of WESA public forums and cultivation events.
- In partnership with the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, PCBC produced three free concerts at Oakland’s Schenley Plaza in 2016, attracting approximately 12,000 people to hear local and national musicians perform in a beautiful green space surrounded by The University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University.
- Our “Summer Music Festival” showcased the teen musicians who participated in our Reimagination CD recording project.
- And our annual “Holiday Hootenanny” concert was a partnership with local musicians to collaborate on an evening of holiday songs, with some of the proceeds benefitting area veterans.

**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.**

The work we performed across our media platforms – in broadcast, online and at live events – has enriched and strengthened the communities we serve.

90.5 WESA's dedication to providing a reliable and nonpartisan source for news and information has been met enthusiastically by the citizens of Western Pennsylvania. Listenership for our local journalism and our NPR news programming has grown dramatically in the past year, as has use of our digital products and attendance at forums and listening sessions in the community. This growth in consumption is the best possible endorsement for the work that we do and of the value that local listeners and citizens place in it.

Similarly, our work in partnered journalism has met with great success. We are expanding our work with PublicSource, and with Point Park University (a key partner for both WYEP and WESA in 2016). We have expanded production of our weekly news roundtable program ("The Confluence") to include episodes produced at Point Park University, allowing students to see that work first hand. Our partnered educational program with Point Park brings dozens of high school and college students to professional music workshops, resulting in greater interest in Point Park's Sports, Arts & Entertainment Management program.

Other organizations, including HEARTH and the local Veterans Leadership Program have expressed gratitude for having been included in our programs during the year.

Finally, through our media sponsorship program, WYEP and WESA donate broadcast airtime and expertise to drive the visibility and mission-related work of other non-profit organizations. In 2016, we partnered with 99 local non-profit organizations and provided them with on-air and on-line support valued at nearly \$700,000 – all at no cost to them. This program is a flagship activity for PCBC, and all the organizations with whom we work have expressed gratitude for the contribution we make to their work.

**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 2016, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2017. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.**

Attention to the underserved and under-represented communities of Southwestern Pennsylvania is a critical element of our community service – and it starts with listening.

On an ongoing basis PCBC conducts community forums (both at our broadcast facility and in local communities across the region) to seek citizen input on critical issues facing individual communities and to assist our editorial staff in framing and pursuing those topics – including the aforementioned sessions in Pittsburgh's neighborhoods and in the surrounding suburbs. Multiple on-air and online reporting projects arose from these gatherings.

We have also used live events to bring focus to the issues facing minority and diverse audiences. In March of 2016, WESA brought NPR “All Things Considered” host Michele Martin to the August Wilson Center for African American Culture in Pittsburgh for an event called “Going There – Reinventing the American City”. The event featured a panel of local civic and cultural leaders discussing the barriers and opportunities for Pittsburgh to reinvent itself. Race and inclusion became the centerpiece of the discussion, and many perspectives were shared about the state of cultural and racial attitudes in Pittsburgh. The sold-out event was streamed live on NPR’s website, and featured robust social media engagement both during and after the event. The audience for this event was one of the most diverse ever at a PCBC event, and while the conversation was at times provocative, it was a worthy and meaningful discussion that provided context and understanding to these very complex issues.

We also leverage our role as a leader in the local music community to serve diverse audiences. In July, WYEP celebrated the 20th anniversary of The Soul Show, our weekend program that celebrates soul, funk and jazz and serves the most diverse audience we reach each week. This celebration including on-air programming plus a free concert in Schenley Plaza featuring performances by local GRAMMY Award winning jazz performer Poogie Bell and New Orleans funk band Water Seed.

And we make a concerted effort to see that diversity is an element of as many of our special projects and initiatives as we can. For example, a partnership is in development with the Lighthouse Program to engage youth and adults in media and music creation at their newly expanded facility at the Homewood YMCA, a predominantly African-American neighborhood. And WYEP’s Reimagine Media program engages high school students of all backgrounds in digital media creation.

## **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?**

Simply put, CPB funding is fundamental to all our work. It serves as the seed capital that allows us to envision and design new initiatives, which then inspires the support (financial and otherwise) of others.

As a media company that looks to the future, we see the requirement for new and expanded services – not just in broadcast but also on digital and mobile platforms. CPB support is critical in allowing us the flexibility to both serve existing audiences and to reach out to new, underserved audiences in new and inspiring ways.

In these most uncertain of economic times - when listener sensitive revenue is at risk – funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting allows us to create content and engagement opportunities that link the citizens of Western Pennsylvania to the world around them: providing trusted information, valued education and the inspiration that makes good on the promise of noncommercial public media.