

Grantee Information

ID	1461
Grantee Name	KAXE-FM
City	Grand Rapids
State	MN
Licensee Type	Community

6.1 Telling Public Radio's Story

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The purpose of this section is to give you an opportunity to tell us and your community about the activities you have engaged in to address community needs by outlining key services provided, and the local value and impact of those services. Please report on activities that occurred in Fiscal Year 2021. Responses may be shared with Congress or the public. Grantees are required to post a copy of this report (Section 6 only) to their website no later than ten (10) days after the submission of the report to CPB. CPB recommends placing the report in an "About" or similar section on your website. **This section had previously been optional. Response to this section of the SAS is now mandatory.**

Joint licensee Grantees that have filed a 2021 Local Content and Services Report as part of meeting the requirement for TV CSG funding may state they have done so in the corresponding questions below, so long as all of the questions below were addressed as they relate to radio operations in such report. You must include the date the report was submitted to CPB along with the TV Grantee ID under which it was submitted.

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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.

Over the past year, we created a strategic plan to help guide our organization over the next 5 years. As part of this plan, we are specifically looking at ways to engage with a new diverse audience and to provide content which provides diversity we may be lacking in our community. We also held our annual Community Advisory Board Meetings on March 22, 2021. At this meeting we heard from community members on issues that were affecting them. From the information gathered, Northern Community Radio has aired stories in response. Topics covered include the outdoors, sustainability, arts, science, culture, education and history. During the pandemic we found what a vital role we play in informing and engaging with our community. We were able to pivot quickly to hosting interviews via Zoom and not rely on in-person interviews. We found that we were able to reach and engage with a wider range of people, especially those that didn't live near the station. We have continued to use Zoom as an option for interviews. This has led to more community involvement and inclusion. It's a simple change, but made a big difference. Our stories and interviews have been distributed on our website and social media sites, apps like NPROne and public media exchanges with PRX exchange. We have also relied on other media outlets in the area as resources for stories or to help distribute ours including, The Timberjay Newspaper, Grand Rapids Herald Review, MinnPost, Ampers and Duluth Public Television. With the pandemic we didn't do as much in-person events, but we continued our Phenology in the schools program to get school age children out in nature observing the natural elements around them. Northern Community Radio has made a priority to keep our communities informed. With the volume of misinformation circling on social media, we have made connections with local health and human services agencies to provide accurate information about the COVID-19 Vaccines. We have hosted interviews with area elected officials about the disruptions at local city council and school board meetings. We also held candidate interviews for special school board elections. These interviews were to better inform voters on the candidates running.

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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.

Community partnerships and engagement is central to the work we do at Northern Community Radio. Some of our key initiatives include: Health – We continued to partner with Ampers, the MN Broadcaster Association and the State of Minnesota to keep our community up to date with the latest on COVID-19. These conversations included weekly calls with the Lt Gov of Minnesota, Peggy Flanagan, and other state officials including from the Dept. of Employment and Economic Development, the Board of Education, and the Department of Health. This initiative was crucial in keep the community informed on vaccine roll outs and where people could access financial assistance and more. We also had on-going conversations with our local tribal communities as well. Arts - Artists and arts organizations found creative ways to bring art to the community during the pandemic. While things were more locked down or closed, we helped spread the word on virtual events and Covid safe outdoor events. We talked to artists who were pivoting and finding new ways to create art. Some of the arts organizations we partnered with including the MacRostie Art Center, Reif Performing Arts Center, Watermark Art Center, Edge Center for the Arts, Ely Folk School and Central Lakes Community Performing Arts Center. Employment – Many of the industries that support the economy of northern MN were hit hard in the pandemic. We worked with local organizations like Itasca Economic Development Corp to help spread the word on resources that were available to area small business owners. Education – We serve a wide variety of K-12 schools, community colleges and State Universities. We continue to check in with them to see how they have adapted to COVID-19 restrictions and how they have responded to the growing pressure from parents and the community. We also had on-going conversations with the local community colleges as they have adjusted program offerings to help with displaced workers from the pandemic. Northern Community Radio continues to partner with 15 schools across the state as part of our phenology program (The observation of nature and natural events). Some of classrooms are located in the following cities, Grand Rapids, Baudette, Northfield, Cloquet, and Two Harbors. We weekly air the students outdoor observations for the week. Media Partnerships – We have working partnerships with The Timberjay Newspaper in Tower, MN, MinnPost, Lakeland Public TV, and WDSE in Duluth.

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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 conversations in 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.

(Environment) The protection and preservation of our natural surrounding is at the center of some of our programming. We find that our most successful fundraising stories are tied to this programming. We also see the most traffic to our website and podcast for Nature and Phenology content. This comment is in response to our Tuesday morning show which is all nature themed. Simon in Grand Rapids "I really enjoy listening to Heidi and John this morning. I always enjoy the morning show on KAXE, but Tuesday mornings are a particular treat. I miss Harry H of course, but it was great to hear Dallas and tornado Bob today, and it's always a treat to hear John's rich voice, and wealth of knowledge as he in the seasons progresses. What a marvelous resource John is, and right here with us in our own back yard. I am frequently taken aback by the breadth and depth of all that John has to share... Heidi is such a gift. Her warmth, professionalism and sense of humor has become synonymous with Northern Community Radio in the ten years that I have lived in this community. Thanks to everyone at Northern Community Radio for all the ways you help sustain the fabric of our community. Life is all the better because of what you do. (Elections) We have made a commitment an informed electorate. We did a heavy push around the 2020 election and continued in 2021. As we traffic to our web stories we see that many communities we had a heated school board election for ISD 318. This is in response to candidate interviews we hosted. Sue from Grand Rapid-" thanks so much for the informative interview with the 2 candidates for 318 School Board that I heard [Monday] morning. Well done! I was able to make an educated vote, instead of a guess, thanks to you!" Here's another comment – Gail from Wabana - I appreciate that you asked Scotty to cite the sources that made her decide "many doctors think vaccines don't stop people from getting covid." Asking people to specifically identify the sources reveals to me how much research they've done. Scotty could only cite one doctor by name and the rest of her sources were vague. That certainly made me decide she was talking more about what she wanted to believe instead of solid science and data. So, thanks for hosting the school board candidates! It was what I needed to make my decision. And yes, early voting has begun at the Itasca County Courthouse. (Mental Health) In response to an interview with Kevin Hines about his suicide attempt on the Golden Gate Bridge and how he healed his story of hope, healing, and recovery. Holly from NAMM in Grand Rapids emailed: Thank you for an incredible interview. John, it was so moving and brave that you shared your story. Kevin, I can understand how you have been doing this work for 21 years. Thanks Heidi, for KAXE and it's support for mental health through the years. (Health) This was in response to our on-going weekly call with the Lt. Gov, Peggy Flanagan, Teresa in Marcell. "Please Thank the Lt Governor for taking time out of her schedule to send time connecting with us. I appreciate her commitment to the people of MN and her public Service. She is such a model of leadership for all of us. (Art/Literature) This is in response to our show "What We're Reading" - This show is absolutely critical to help us know what local writers are producing as well as exposing us to larger works around the nation. As a writer and playwright in northern Mn we must get past the idea that creativity resides only on the coasts or in our case the Twin Cities metro . We have a distinctive voice as rural people and this show helps to give us voice. Love it! (Art/Culture) In response to our program "Area Voices" - One of the real strengths of KAXE is that it makes the whole area my neighborhood. I'm fascinated to meet the many neighbors I am able to meet through Area Voices.....This is such a highlight. So few area leaders are visible or recognized by the metro conglomerate media outlets. I love KAXE for that local relevance. (Gender Equity) In response to our program "Strong Women" Being new to the community, Strong Women events have helped me feel apart of the community and make connections. These are beautiful events and I often share the recordings of the stories to follow with friends and state. I only wish there were more Strong Women events, they are so impactful and I am forever grateful for them! (Politics) In response to our program "Dig Deep" The commentators in Dig Deep present thoughtful, divergent information and opinions. Such balanced commentary is rare, but so necessary. (Local Musicians) We support local musicians in our music programming and thru local music events. This Comment is from the band Brothers Burn Mountain, we hosted them as part of our Grand Rapids Riverfest in Sept 2021 – Jesse from Burn Mountain - First off, I wanted to thank you and KAXE for all the support over the past decade. We genuinely appreciate it. We have thousands of fans of both our live shows and our recordings, in Grand Rapids, Bemidji, Brainerd and all of northern Mn, who are itching to hear some of our new songs on KAXE/KBXE. Well, it's a humble request. It's reassuring to know people like you(Kari Hedlund), Katie Carter and Leah Lemm etc are on the airwaves. KAXE is my go-to station while driving between Cotton and Akeley every week, and the only one where I get full reception the whole drive. I feel very lucky about that. Warm wishes, and thanks for making the community a better place!

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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 2021, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2022. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.

We have many ways in which we are working to meet the needs of our minority audience. A little about the population we serve. Our signal is 93% white/European, 5% American Indian, and 2% African/Asian/Hispanic/Other. We define diversity to include race, cultural background, geography, age, gender and disability. To address the lack of diversity in our population, we find it important to partner and promote diversity in our programming. We have done this with interviews with the executive director of the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition to hear about the impact of boarding schools on the Native American communities, this was part of an on-going series. We aired weekly programs Racial Reckoning and Counter Stories produced by Ampers to cover the on-going social unrest in the state of MN following the death of George Floyd. Native Lights radio airs weekly and highlights people within the native communities. We continue to air National Native News, Minnesota Native News and Boozhoo Nana Boozhoo a small segment on Ojibwe culture and language. In our program Strong Women we highlight women in roles of leadership and the impact they have on their communities. Since 2008, we have play 50-50 male and female musicians. As part of our Strategic Plan we will be looking at adding more content created for and by minority creators including the LGBTQ+ community.

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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?

CPB funded is critically important to our station. Northern Community Radio is located in sparsely-populated rural northern Minnesota. Its signals cover a large geographic region. It provides stability to our organization as we are still dealing with some of the dip in business support as a result of the pandemic. We are seeing business support improve but some industries like those connected to tourism and food and beverage have been slow to come back. We are expecting another year or so before we are back to pre-pandemic levels. Our restricted portion of CPB funding is used to purchase programming from National Public Radio which is vital to keeping our rural population informed and educated.

Comments

Question

Comment

No Comments for this section