



2022 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY: TV



"We recognize the significant influence that WKAR has on our community and remain eager to partner to ensure the community we love remains strong."

Susi Elkins
MSU Federal Credit Union

Connecting people to powerful ideas that inspire personal growth, exploration of our world and positive change.

LOCAL VALUE



2022 KEY SERVICES



LOCAL IMPACT

WKAR Television is a valuable part of Michigan's Capital Region.

The station provides public broadcasting service on five WKAR television stations plus radio.

Serving a 19-county viewing area, WKAR is involved with those communities through a variety of activities including: Ready to Learn; WKAR Family, public community screenings and discussions; participation in community events and with station representatives on community boards and committees; and community support through student learning internships.

WKAR produces local content that addresses key issues impacting our community.

In 2022, WKAR provided these vital local services:

- Five Television Stations
 - WKAR-HD
 - WKAR Create
 - WKAR World
 - WKAR PBSKIDS
 - Michigan Learning Channel
- Three Radio Stations
 - WKAR-AM 870kHz
 - 90.5 WKAR-FM
 - 102.3 WKAR-FM
- Online Streaming of TV and Radio programming
- Educational workshops
- Community-wide family events
- Screenings/discussions
- National and local programming including news, public affairs, arts, health, education.
- 60+ hours of children's programming per week.

WKAR's local services had deep impact in Michigan's Capital Region.

Through station partnerships with local schools and agencies, WKAR Family initiatives centered on PBS Kids and additional resources reached thousands of local children and their families to better prepare them for school.

Locally produced programs, with work including DEI principles, target issues of importance to the community, and our free public screenings feature speakers and panelists of local experts and MSU faculty who lead dynamic discussions with participants.



2022 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT IN THE COMMUNITY

Connecting people to powerful ideas that inspire personal growth and positive change is the mission of WKAR. WKAR serves that mission through broadcast services WKAR HD, World, Create, PBS Kids 24/7, and the Michigan Learning Channel; through research partnerships at our host Big Ten university; through a rich digital presence across multiple platforms; and through educational outreach and engagement events across our community.

EDUCATION

WKAR Family is aimed at forming connections to help kids be resilient, lifelong learners. The initiative includes PBS KIDS 24/7, video shorts offering research-based tips for parents and educators, the Michigan Learning Channel and outreach to share PBS educational resources with parents and educators.

WKAR's primary HD channel airs over 60 hours of PBS KIDS shows per week. The WKAR PBS Kids 24/7 channel continues to offer free, over-the-air educational children's programming around the clock.

The weekly **WKAR Family** newsletter shares tips, resources, and curriculum-based content for parents and caregivers to help children to learn at home.

WKAR provided free books to classrooms and partnered with community organizations to reach Head Start families. The **WKAR Family** video series continued its partnership with the College of Education to create new research-based at-home-learning tips for caregivers.

WKAR Family Reading Kits

Through a project kicked off in March 2022 during National Reading Month and continuing into April, more than 5,450 children received WKAR Family Reading Kits containing new books, activities, and more. Made possible through community partnerships and donor support, the project is part of our commitment to supporting a culture of literacy across mid-Michigan communities

Early Childhood and Education Racial Equity Webinars

WKAR served as presenting partner for a series of statewide webinars put on by the Michigan Early Childhood System Racial Equity Leaders Cohort. The project of the Michigan Department of Education Office of Great Start and School Readiness Consulting (SRC) focused on increasing racial equity across the multiple sectors that comprise the early childhood system.

WKAR Summer Pop-Up Tour

WKAR Summer Pop-Up Tour was a free, direct family engagement celebration hosted by the WKAR Education team at more than twenty mid-Michigan locations from June 2 to August 21, 2022. The team partnered with libraries, childcare centers, and community organizations to pop-up, set-up and celebrate the resiliency of families. There were many give-a-ways and resources shared to decrease learning loss.

POLITICAL COVERAGE

Political coverage in 2021-2022 included the *2022 Michigan State of the State* address and the annual *Evening with the Governor* series. WKAR distributes these specials to commercial and public media stations across Michigan.



2022 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT IN THE COMMUNITY

Off the Record has a history dating back to 1972 as Michigan's only statewide political talk show, with 52 new weekly episodes each season. In 2022, the show celebrated 50 years on the air and anchored by Tim Skubick.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

When public events were curtailed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, WKAR moved in-person film screenings to virtual events via the online platform OVEE. OVEE allows audience members to interact with each other and panelists around each film.

WKAR hosted 12 virtual events via OVEE in 2021-2022, including multiple "Be My Neighbor Day" sessions for families, special film screenings in partnership with MSU colleges and departments, and previews of "Benjamin Franklin" and "Muhammad Ali" from PBS. These virtual events drew more than 600 attendees for over 830 hours of participation time.

In the Community

Throughout the year, WKAR celebrated our diverse heritage and communities with special programming during Hispanic Heritage Month, Black History Month, Women's History Month, Asian American Pacific Islander History Month, and Pride Month.

Be My Neighbor Day

In November and December of 2021, WKAR hosted four *Be My Neighbor Day* virtual events for families in our community. Participants learned about the caring neighbors in their community and how they can be a caring neighbor, too. 500 WKAR Family Activity Kits were distributed to families to add an in-home participation element to the virtual event. Each WKAR Family Activity Kit included a *Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood* book, Impression 5 Day Pass, activity sheets, and more. The two events mark the third time that WKAR has hosted *Be My Neighbor Day* for mid-Michigan, in partnership with the PNC Foundation; Impression 5 Science Center; and Fred Rogers Productions.

Five Nights Toward Freedom: Poisoned Water

As part of MSU's 2021 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration week, WKAR partnered with MSU Libraries for "Five Nights Toward Freedom," a week of virtual film screenings and discussion honoring King's legacy. WKAR's virtual screening took place Jan. 22, 2022 and featured "Poisoned Water." From NOVA on PBS, "Poisoned Water" investigates what happened in Flint, Michigan when local officials changed the city's water source to save money, but overlooked a critical treatment process and exposed the community—including thousands of children—to dangerous levels of poison. Is there a way forward from chaos to community? Our panel explored that question.

WKAR Partners with MSU for Juneteenth Celebration

In collaboration with the MSU Juneteenth Celebration, WKAR hosted a virtual discussion on June 16, 2022 around a special screening of *Afrofuturism*. The documentary profiles five emerging artists whose work explores the intersection of race, class, identity, and aesthetics. Panelists included Julian Chambliss, MSU professor and Val Berryman Curator of History at the MSU Museum; Theodore Ransaw, Outreach Specialist for the MSU College of Education; Elka Stevens, MSU textile and mixed media artist; and Erik Ponder (Moderator), African Studies Librarian at MSU Libraries.



2022 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT IN THE COMMUNITY

WKAR ORIGINALS

The Art of Healing

Celebrating Youth Art Month, WKAR Public Media, Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum at Michigan State University, and Youth Arts Alliance presented *The Art of Healing*, a series of short-form videos featuring personal stories of healing through art, as told by youth and young adults navigating the complexities of life. Youth Art Month, observed in March by the National Art Education Association, is a month of promoting art and art education in the United States. Three videos in the series were published on digital platforms in March 2022 and aired on WKAR-TV in the months that followed.

Music for Social Justice

Music for Social Justice features artists as they relate the music they play to societal issues and their own lived experiences. Issues explored range from racism, policing, and internment camps, to the murders of trans women. Powerful and emotive, the series takes an expansive view of what social justice means. Produced in partnership with the College of Music at MSU.

Curious Crew and Curious About Careers

The educational series *Curious Crew* continues to challenge kids to explore science through hands-on learning activities. Episodes from the eighth season premiered on WKAR-TV in May of 2022. Episodes include *Curious About Careers* segments featuring young investigators exploring career possibilities by visiting women working in STEM-related professions. *Curious About Careers* segments are also available as standalone shorts for broadcast and on-demand viewing online. *Curious Crew* and *Curious About Careers* are offered nationally each season through NETA.

NOVA Science+Society

Three investigative video reports were produced and published to digital platforms as part of the *Science+Society* project from NOVA. "Zoomed Out" explores the negative effects of video conferencing on platforms like Zoom, the use of which skyrocketed during the COVID-19 pandemic. "Cannabis and Driving Under the Influence" explores the science behind THC levels, roadside tests, intoxication and cannabis. "Twice as Likely" explores how longstanding, systemic inequities result in racial disparity in every facet of maternal and infant health and may account for why the mortality rate for Black infants is more than twice that of white infants.

University Distinguished Professors 2021

WKAR produced a series of video profiles featuring *University Distinguished Professors* named in the fall of 2021. The videos are available in the PBS Video app and aired between programs on WKAR TV.

An Evening with Rep. James E. Clyburn

Jim Blanchard, former governor of Michigan, has a conversation with James E. Clyburn, as part of the *Governor Jim Blanchard Public Service Forum*. At the time of interview, Clyburn was the Majority Whip and the third-ranking Democrat in the United States House of Representatives. Recorded in November 2021 in partnership with the MSU College of Social Science, the television special aired in February 2022.



2022 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT IN THE COMMUNITY

TECHNOLOGY

The broadcast industry has been focused on deployment and development of the new ATSC 3.0 broadcast standard, with little thought being given to how to use the technology to serve communities. WKAR is focusing on real world applications of ATSC 3.0 technology. Working with industry partners, WKAR is developing interactive apps that address safety alerting, education, and fundraising.

LEADERSHIP – LOCAL TO NATIONAL

WKAR is fortunate to have a leadership team that gives our local community a voice within the public broadcasting system nationally. Until her departure in April of 2022, WKAR Director of Broadcasting and General Manager Susi Elkins served on the PBS Board of Directors, on the board of America's Public Television Stations (APTS), the PBS Children's Media & Education Station Leadership Committee, MSUFCU's Reseda Group board and the MAPB Board of Directors. WKAR's Julie Sochay, senior director of content and communication, completed the Public Media Diversity Fellowship Program in 2022. It's part of a national program designed to explore opportunities and challenges related to diversity, equity, and inclusion in the public media sector. WKAR's Brant Wells, senior director of television production and operations, serves as chair of the PBS Digital Media Advisory Committee. Additional WKAR staff members share expertise through presentations at public broadcasting and industry conferences and exhibitions.

PARTNERSHIPS

Local partnerships inspire WKAR to best serve our local community through educational resources, timely news and helpful information. This last year, WKAR collaborated with national partners: PBS, WETA, NETA, and Fred Rogers Productions to bring our community new content, educational and engagement opportunities; as well as local partners: PNC, Capital Area Head Start, Impression 5 Science Center, AgeAlive, Wharton Center, MSU Broad Art Museum, MSU College of Music, MSU College of Social Science, MSU College of Education, and MSUFCU.

IN CONCLUSION

Collaboration, innovation and community support. These are strengths that, through routine days and times of crisis, WKAR television draws upon to fulfill its mission to connect people to powerful ideas that inspire personal growth, exploration of our world and positive change.



American Exile | Film Preview with Q & A and national PBS broadcast

A groundbreaking documentary on the deportation of U.S. veterans from WKAR and MSU filmmakers John J. Valadez and Carleen L. Hsu aired nationally on PBS in primetime.

American Exile is part of the VOCES series of specials from Latino Public Broadcasting.

The film, produced by MSU professors of practice John J. Valadez and Carleen L. Hsu and is presented by WKAR Public Media at MSU, is the story of two unlikely war hero brothers who became veteran's rights activists after being threatened with deportation and learning that thousands of veterans are being rounded up and deported.

It's a remarkable achievement that *American Exile* was produced by MSU faculty and students and will air in communities across the country.

WKAR and MSU School of Journalism, Film Studies Program, Chicano/Latino Studies Program, and community partners hosted a special preview screening of the film on Veterans Day, Nov. 11, 2021 ahead of the national broadcast on PBS.

Our panel included filmmakers Valadez and Hsu, and Manuel Valenzuela and Gloria Segura, both of whom appear in the film. ComArtSci Dean Prabu David moderated the discussion. We were pleased to have a capacity audience of 100 with us in Studio A -- safely, with masks required -- plus a virtual audience of 45 via Livestream. Streaming now in the free PBS App and online.

This screening and the broadcast generated a high amount of earned media.



WKAR Family Reading Kits

Kicked off in March 2022 during National Reading Month, the WKAR Family Reading Kit project provided thousands of children in mid-Michigan with kits containing new books, literacy activities, and more.

- More than 5,450 reading kits were provided to mid-Michigan families.
- Each kit contained two books, putting nearly 11,000 new books into the hands of mid-Michigan children.
- It took just three days to surpass 5,000 requests for the kits.
- Over 70 organizations partnered with WKAR to distribute the reading kits to families
- 18 WKAR donors provided more than \$33,500 in support of the project.

Made possible through community partnerships and donor support, the project is part of our commitment to supporting a culture of literacy across mid-Michigan communities.

The WKAR Family Reading Kit giveaway will return in March of 2023 with a goal of providing 10,000 kits for families.



Music for Social Justice

In May of 2022, WKAR and the College of Music at Michigan State University debuted Music for Social Justice, a new television series exploring societal issues through music and the personal stories of the artists behind the music.

Each episode features artists as they relate the music they play to societal issues and their own lived experiences. Issues explored range from racism, policing, and internment camps to the murders of trans women.

Powerful and emotive, the series takes an expansive view of what social justice means.

The host for the series is international recording artist Damien Sneed.



"The group at WKAR was the epitome of team. They effectively helped us navigate this project and were incredible partners in helping elevate the quality with their filming, directing, and editing. Their vision, guidance and ultimately their expertise for the deployment was a huge success for the College of Music."

Michael Sundermann
MSU College of Music



From July 2021 through June 2022, WKAR helped children learn to read, get excited about science, and be ready for school.

We expanded our programs and specials to showcase Michigan Capital Region talents and professions, and we addressed timely issues.

We increased awareness around local issues, provided discussions, and featured world-class MSU researchers.

As a result, membership and viewership are up and our audiences are more diverse.

"Kudos for the "Curious Crew." My 2-year-old grandson and 5-year-old granddaughter were mesmerized in the show yesterday... The five-year-old came out this morning showing us centripetal force with a basket and stuffed animals in it. Her mom is looking into the "Curious Crew" videos to hopefully spark more of their interest in science.

Great job on the show – the kids loved it!

**Diane
Ingham ISD**

"My family and I enjoy all of the science, nature, and travel shows! Thank you for providing these great educational programs for our community."

**Toby
Mason, Michigan**

"WKAR is my go-to station for 99% of my television viewing! Aside from local news, WKAR provides all my entertainment, informational and educational programming needs. Thank yous go out to all at WKAR that work behind the scenes to help bring the amazing programming to our community"

**Anna
Eaton Rapids, Michigan**

"It is my privilege to help provide literacy kits to children in Michigan!!"

**Angela
Mason, Michigan**

WKAR plays an essential role in Michigan's Capital Region and at Michigan State University as a key source for quality children's educational programming; as a showcase for local artists, musicians, and nonprofit community organizations; and offering a variety of engaging forums for community members to share their talents, interests, concerns, and cultural backgrounds.