



2022-23 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY: RADIO



Sophia Saliby of **WKAR News** profiled Lansing ArtPath's 6th exhibition. Visitors were invited to drop by WKAR's booth to scan QR codes that linked to stories about individual exhibits.

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

LOCAL VALUE



FY23 KEY SERVICES



LOCAL IMPACT

WKAR's Radio stations are a valuable part of Michigan's capital area advancement.

The stations provide public broadcasting service with **WKAR (AM)**, **WKAR-FM**, online, and the Radio Reading Service.

Serving a 60-mile radius from East Lansing, **WKAR** is involved with nearly 80,000 weekly listeners. **WKAR's** range of programming includes **WKAR News**, classical music, folk, and jazz.

WKAR staff participate in community events with station representatives serving on a variety of boards and community committees. Community support is provided through student learning internships.

During FY23, WKAR provided these vital local services:

- Two Radio Stations
 - **WKAR (AM)** 870, 102.3 FM, & 90.5-HD2
 - **WKAR-FM** 90.5
- One Television Station with five channels
 - **WKAR-HD**
 - **WKAR-Create**
 - **WKAR-World**
 - **PBS Kids**
 - **Michigan Learning Channel**
- Online Streaming (24/7 Classical, Jazz, and News streams)
- **WKAR Radio Reading Service**
- National and local news, public affairs, arts and culture, health, science, and education programming.
- Music education throughout Michigan's capital area.

WKAR's local services had deep impact in Michigan's capital region.

WKAR reached a weekly audience of nearly 80,000 listeners through the station's partnership with local educators, businesses, governments, arts organizations, schools, and social services agencies.

Through our timely local and national news reporting and coverage, **WKAR** helps local non-profits and government agencies reach and engage new audiences.

Volunteers at **WKAR's** Radio Reading Service read local newspapers to area listeners who are unable to see or turn a page.



2022-23 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT IN THE COMMUNITY

This past year at WKAR (July 2022-June 2023) was marked by more news, more classical and folk music, a new weekly jazz program, and a greater digital presence.

News that matters, Music that inspires

For a century, **WKAR** from **Michigan State University** has informed and entertained listeners across the capital area of Michigan. That tradition continued in 2022-23, as **WKAR** celebrated the 100th anniversary of its first broadcast license on August 18, 2022 marking a century of service filling the airwaves from Grand Rapids to Detroit with news, classical music, and an intense dedication to connecting with our community.

NEWS

2022-23 was a particularly demanding and turbulent time for **WKAR's** small newsroom. On the evening of February 13, 2023, three **Michigan State University** students were killed and five injured in a mass shooting on the **MSU** campus. **WKAR News** reporters demonstrated dedication and the utmost professionalism as they quickly began working to gather facts and post updates online while students and staff still on campus were instructed to shelter in place. Coverage was shared with other public radio stations in Michigan and nationally with **NPR**. In the wake of this tragedy, a measured approach was taken by **WKAR** reporters to ensure victims had space to grieve and process their losses, while also keeping our audience up to date on steps taken by **MSU** to ensure campus security and facilitate the healing process.

In other news from the **MSU** campus, Politics & Civics reporter Arjun Thakkar produced several stories that provided exclusive insight into leadership changes at **Michigan State University**. Arjun reported on the contentious relationship between the **MSU Board of Trustees** and former **MSU** President, Samuel Stanley Jr., which led to Stanley's resignation. When fall elections resulted in two new members of **MSU's Board of Trustees**, Arjun moderated a conversation in which the newly elected trustees described their priorities for the **MSU** campus.

On a brighter note, 2022-23 was a time to reengage in person with our audience. **WKAR** staff made stage appearances at the **East Lansing Art Festival** and participated in the kickoff event for **Lansing ArtPath**. Sophia Saliby produced a series of *ArtPath Profiles*, focusing on the artists behind the work in the annual public art exhibition along the city's beloved River Trail. The collaboration with the **Lansing Art Gallery & Education Center** was a multimedia project featuring artist profiles and interviews, along with vibrant descriptions and photographs of the pieces themselves online.

While many areas across the country can be considered "news deserts," **WKAR News** works hard to keep surrounding communities informed. Examples include coverage of a \$16 million EV facility in Charlotte, **Clinton County's** one-year moratorium on utility-scale renewable energy projects, efforts in Perry to rebuild following a tornado, and the dismissal of the **City of DeWitt's** clerk-treasurer. **WKAR News** also looked into possible coal ash contamination in **Delta Township**, and in the **City of Jackson**, **WKAR News** reported on the mayor's State of the City address, lead water line replacements, and the new deputy fire chief.

The *Michigan Minute* is a daily look back at significant events that happened in Michigan or affected the state's residents. It airs during *Morning Edition* and *Weekend Edition* on both **90.5 WKAR-FM** and **WKAR NewsTalk**, and is appointment listening for many.

WKAR News is committed to serving mid-Michigan's Spanish-speaking population. Select stories are translated and posted at wkar.org/noticias, shared on social media, and heard on the *¿Qué Onda Michigan?* podcast.

From telling the story of the North Pole Express, a story broadcast nationally on **NPR's Morning Edition**, leveraging our partnership with **NPR** to ensure Michigan voices are heard in the national conversation on abortion, how the Tender Heart Garden brought together Lansing's LGBTQ+ community, and the story of a man who reached the milestone of singing 3,000 karaoke songs, the original reporting of **WKAR News** and its service to mid-Michigan were unmatched during FY23. **WKAR News** content is heard on **WKAR (AM)** and **WKAR-FM**, and is available online at wkar.org and through the **NPR** app.



2022-23 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT IN THE COMMUNITY

CLASSICAL

WKAR's classical music programming remains a mainstay for **90.5 WKAR-FM**. **WKAR** also operates **WKAR-Classical**, a 24/7 web stream devoted entirely to classical music programming. During 2022-23, **WKAR** broadcast 2,028 hours of locally produced classical programming presented by **WKAR's** classical music hosts. In addition, **WKAR** also broadcast 52 hours of classical music programming produced by and made available to us by partner stations in Michigan.

WKAR's flagship Michigan music program: *Great Lakes Concerts*, began its fifth season highlighting a variety of ensembles in Ann Arbor, Interlochen, Jackson, Lansing, and Traverse City, the **Saginaw Bay Symphony** and the **Michigan Philharmonic** in Detroit; as well as smaller in-state partnerships with the **Absolute Music Series** in Lansing and the **Baroque on Beaver Island Festival** right in the middle of Lake Michigan. The program continues to fulfill its goal of knitting together more of The Mitten's classical music makers into hour-long programs.

For the 7th year running, **WKAR** celebrated *International Women's Day*. On that day, **WKAR-FM** featured works spanning centuries, all of which were composed by women, most of whom greatly had their music suppressed because of their gender. **WKAR's** classical hosts also created online resources to allow visitors at wkar.org to explore the lives of these women more in depth.

FOLK

Folk With Matt Watroba, hosted by local folk legend Matt Watroba, features acoustic folk, blues, bluegrass, and more, performed by artists from the Great Lakes region and from all over the world. The program is broadcast twice each week, with an original 3-hour episode airing Sunday nights at 6 PM exclusively on **90.5 WKAR-FM**, and an encore broadcast of the first two hours of the program Saturday evenings at 6 PM.

JAZZ

In its second year since moving to **WKAR-FM**, Michael Stratton's *A Groove Supreme* continued to be a beacon for mid-Michigan jazz fans. The two-hour show is broadcast Saturday nights at 8 PM on both **WKAR-FM** and the **WKAR Jazz** web stream.

COMMUNITY

WKAR's new on-air host, Linda Kernohan, made her debut as a concert guide for the ever-popular **Absolute Music Chamber Series** in Old Town Lansing; Jody Knol served as proctor of the **Lansing Symphony Orchestra's** PreView Conversations with visiting artists and musicians, including a farewell to **LSO's** inaugural composer-in-residence, Patrick Harlin. While Jamie Paisley took to the **Wharton Center** for a pre-concert interview with members of the African-American ensemble **Imani Winds**, not to mention serving as emcee for the 2250+ attendee, sold-out concert of the Spartan Spectacular featuring the **MSU Marching Band** and various student ensembles. **WKAR-FM's** trio of classical hosts also made appearances at the **Jackson Symphony Orchestra's** Summer Pops concert in downtown Jackson.

For National Reading Month, in tandem with **WKAR's** educational outreach, **WKAR Classical** presented special programming of *Literary Music Week* to help spread the word of those efforts to increase childhood literacy.

WKAR Promotes Community Dialogue

Michelle Jokisch Polo's profile of Lansing's Tender Heart Gardens explained how the formerly vacant lot was transformed into a welcoming space for the LGBTQ+ community.

Scott Pohl spoke with a Ukrainian family who escaped war and was welcomed into the home of distant relatives living in mid-Michigan.

Muchos reportajes de WKAR fueron traducidos al español para la comunidad hispanohablante de Michigan.



WKAR Engages with our Community

Great Lakes Concerts brings performances from concert halls around the state into the homes of classical fans with weekly broadcasts.

WKAR's Jody Knol, pianist Clayton Stephenson, and composer Patrick Harlin (shown at left) at a **Lansing Symphony Orchestra** PreView Conversation at the **Wharton Center for Performing Arts**.

International Women's Day was recognized by dedicating the entire day to airing works by women composers.

The *Monsters of Classical Rock* event mixed classical music and arrangements of classic rock tunes in the intimate space of REO Town's Robin Theatre.



WKAR News

Politics, education, health and safety, and reaching out to underserved communities were cornerstones of news coverage provided during 2022-23.

WKAR sports reporter Al Martin talks with 2022 MSU Homecoming Grand Marshall Jim Bibbs (both shown at right) about being named MSU's first Black coach.

WKAR continued broadcasting *¿Qué Onda Michigan?*, a Spanish-language news & information podcast.

WKAR News won the Outstanding News Operation award from the **Michigan Associated Press Media Editors** for the 3rd consecutive year.





WKAR News reporter Michelle Jokisch Polo covered Michigan State University's Music and the Garden series at the W.J. Beal Botanical Garden

WKAR engaged with our community through live and virtual hosting, and by leading discussions at live and virtual music performances.

We expanded our programs and specials to showcase Michigan Capital Region talents and professions.

We increased awareness around local issues, providing timely and quality news content and discussions.

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

"I like it all, but particularly appreciate the local and state news coverage and locally produced programs such as the Michigan Minute and Michigan Matinee."

Warren from Lansing, MI

"Beautiful music, even handed reporting, education discussions - what more could we want? Thank you WKAR folks."

Marylalice from Brighton, MI

"Thank you, WKAR, for the drama-free, unbiased reporting, as well as the incredible Classical music and evening programming offered each and every day. This is the only pre-set I need to fill my day."

Laurin from St. Johns, MI

"My radio is set to WKAR practically all day. Thank you for keeping classical music programming. I especially enjoy Game Play on Monday evenings."

Michael from Dexter, MI

"WKAR is listened to almost every day, sometimes all day. Jody and Jamie plan musical selections expertly, suiting facts about the day, such as a composer's birthday, a special event or even things like National Vinyl Record Day. Some of my favorite shows are All Things Considered; The Michigan Minute; Thursday Night at the Movies; Wait, Wait, Don't Tell Me; The Puzzle; and Fresh Air. Congratulations on a century of community service!"

Janet from Lansing, MI

"Thank you for the excellent programs and program hosts. I love the diversity you offer with Jody, Jamie, Matt, jazz, NPR,...all of it!"

Carol from Haslett, MI

WKAR continues to play an essential role in Michigan's capital area as a key source for quality news, music and cultural programming, giving a voice to a broad and deep variety of conversation, community, concerts, and more. WKAR commits to expanding its community relationships to better share the talents, interests, concerns, and cultural backgrounds of the people in mid-Michigan.