



*“Expanding your world through
voices and sounds that inform and
inspire”*

VALLEY PUBLIC RADIO

White Ash Broadcasting, Inc

Annual Report 2021-2022

April 12, 2022

On the cover: KVPR hosts and reporters Elizabeth Arakelian, Kathleen Schock, Marv Allen, Madi Bolaños, David Aus and Soreath Hok

Dear listener,

Over the past 12 months, our team has worked hard to bring you the news you need to stay informed and to inspire you with music, the arts, and to showcase life here in Central California in the way only public media can.

In a turbulent world environment amid global unrest, the second year of a pandemic, and wildfires, KVPR has been dedicated to accelerating the pace of change, with a goal of improving our service to the community, evolving to meet a rapidly changing world, and building a more sustainable operation, all while maintaining fiscal discipline and the trust of our donors whose investments have helped build this organization.

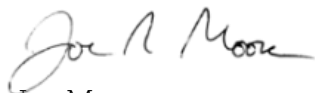
In the last year, we've rebranded our various broadcast and digital content offerings under the KVPR banner, complete with a new logo, and launched an all-new KVPR.org website in partnership with NPR. We also debuted two new local podcasts, *Escape From Mammoth Pool* and *The Other California*, that have expanded our audience and storytelling techniques, creating our most successful digital efforts to date. We also took our long-running *Young Artists Spotlight* program and developed it into a new digital video and broadcast series.

We produced content in an innovative new partnership called the Central Valley News Collaborative, a pilot project funded by Microsoft and the Central Valley Community Foundation, covering the impact of issues from COVID-19 to California's drought to communities of color in the valley. In the process, our news department received three Regional Edward R. Murrow Awards, our third consecutive year receiving Regional Murrow Award honors.

While the pandemic limited the options for in-person events, we continued to engage with listeners online. *Science Friday* host Ira Flatow joined us to host an online trivia night fundraiser, and we partnered with StoryCorps' national *One Small Step* project, bringing together local residents from different backgrounds to examine our shared humanity.

Despite the continued challenges with COVID-19, we also successfully reopened our broadcast center to our staff, making necessary upgrades to our facility to ensure safety. We also welcomed new staff to our team this year, including new Content Director Alex Burke and *All Things Considered* host Elizabeth Arakelian. Together with the rest of our team, they are working on even more exciting projects and developments to improve and increase our service in the year to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Joe R. Moore". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "M".

Joe Moore
President and General Manager
KVPR / Valley Public Radio

Financial Performance

KVPR has a forty-plus year history of prudent financial management. For the last eight years, the station has earned the coveted “Four Star” rating by the independent Charity Navigator, which evaluates the financial performance and governance policies of not-for-profit organizations. Only 7% of non-profits nationwide have earned this distinction. The following information is drawn from the station’s audited financial report as prepared by Price Paige & Company, CPAs in February 2022. A link to the complete report can be found on our website at [KVPR.org/financial-statement](https://www.kvpr.org/financial-statement)



Revenue:

For the fiscal year ending September 30, 2021, the station had a total revenue of \$2,314,709. As a non-commercial radio station, KVPR relies on individual and corporate donations for the bulk of the station’s revenue. Multi-year grants from foundation partners including the James Irvine Foundation, California Health Care Foundation, and the California Endowment helped support the station’s local journalism. Other major grants included support from the California Arts Council, California Humanities, and the Central Valley Community Foundation/Microsoft. The station also received an annual community service grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, with payments in the fiscal year totaling \$150,851. For the second year in a row, the station did not hold its annual wine tasting event in 2021 due to COVID-19, which is typically a major source of station revenue. The station’s annual raffle contributed the bulk of station event revenue for the fiscal year, and for the second year in a row, was a sellout.

Expenses:

For the fiscal year ending September 30, 2021, the station had total expenses of \$2,072,547. Programming and production, including locally produced news and music plus programming purchased from NPR and other program distributors, made up the largest share of station expenses. Broadcasting and technical operations associated with operating KVPR’s two broadcast stations also made up a significant share of overall expenses. Together these two categories account for nearly 75% of the station’s expenditures.

Endowment:

The station’s endowment includes both donor-restricted funds and funds without donor restrictions. Combined endowment net assets totaled \$871,581 for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2021.

Mortgage:

KVPR moved into a state-of-the-art 10,000 square foot broadcast center in May 2016. The approximately \$4 million project doubled the size of the station's production and broadcast facilities, and replaced a leased facility that was nearly 30 years old. As of September 30, 2021, the station's mortgage with United Security Bank had an outstanding principal balance of \$786,091. The note is payable in monthly installments of \$4,777 including interest at 3.95%.

Journalism & Content

KVPR's journalism brought listeners stories from across the San Joaquin Valley, focusing on issues like COVID-19, California's drought, homelessness and wildfires. We collaborated with NPR's *California News Hub* to produce and broadcast stories about the use of force by law enforcement in Kern County. Our coverage of the KNP Complex Fire in Sequoia National Park and the deaths of thousands of giant sequoias, and the drought's impact on family farms aired nationally on NPR stations across the country.

KVPR's participation in the new *Central Valley News Collaborative* got fully underway in the past year. This project has the station collaborating in a pilot project with *The Fresno Bee*, *Radio Bilingue* and *Vida en el Valle* on coverage of issues facing communities of color in the San Joaquin Valley. The pilot project is funded by Microsoft and the Central Valley Community Foundation.



New Podcasts Debut

In September 2021, the one-year anniversary of the Creek Fire, KVPR launched the podcast *Escape From Mammoth Pool*. The eight episode podcast told the story of the daring rescue of hundreds of people who were trapped by the fast moving fire at a remote Sierra Nevada lake, and examined California's wildfire crisis. The podcast was named one of the top



podcasts of 2021 by the editors of *NPR One*, and is the station's most listened to digital project to date, with over 131,000 downloads from 73,000 listeners.

In March 2022, the station launched another podcast,

The Other California, which is dedicated to telling the stories of the people and communities of rural Central California. Featuring cities in each of the counties served by KVPR, the podcast aims to explore the riches of the Golden State that lie outside Hollywood and Silicon Valley and reveal a fuller picture of life and the California story. The project is funded in part by a grant from California Humanities.

Our longtime series *Young Artists Spotlight* continued with a new season in 2021 with a new format, featuring videos of students performing at home, which were both broadcast on the air and shared via YouTube and on KVPR.org.



Awards

KVPR's News Department received numerous honors over the past year, including three 2021 Regional Edward R. Murrow Awards for Excellence in Writing, News Documentary, and Feature Reporting.

It is the third year in a row that KVPR has received Regional Murrow Award honors. Reporter Kerry Klein's piece 'Eureka Moment' In Valley Fever Case Paves Way For New Research, Treatment Options won in two categories: News Documentary and Excellence in Writing.

The CCNMA: Latino Journalists of California also named KVPR's Madi Bolaños as one of three



finalists for the prestigious Ruben Salazar Award for journalism in the broadcast category for her story about COVID-19 deaths among immigrants in Kings County. The awards highlight excellence in journalism that leads to a "better understanding of Latino communities by portraying Latinos fairly and accurately." KVPR also shared a national second place award from the Society of Environmental Journalists for a collaborative project with *Science Friday* on the issue of valley fever.

Branding

In 2021, the station debuted a major rebranding and visual refresh across all of its platforms and products. After years of inconsistent usage of names Valley Public Radio, FM89, KVPR, VPR and KPRX, the station launched a new coherent branding strategy that unifies digital, broadcast and print under the KVPR name, while our business continues to be formally known as Valley Public Radio. Our content includes KVPR / KVPR Classical / KVPR.org / KVPR App / KVPR Magazine. This new approach is also more compatible with smart speakers, online search and voice commands, and builds on our existing brand awareness.



The station also launched an all-new KVPR.org website in conjunction with this new logo / rebranding, as well as a refreshed version of the KVPR App. The new website is built on a platform managed by NPR's Digital Services teams, and features state-of-the-art technology with robust management tools, and the ability to grow and meet the station's needs for many years to come. It was the first complete rebuild of KVPR.org in nine years.

Operations

The last year marked the return to the broadcast center for most station employees, beginning June 1, 2021. After working more than a year from home, station staff adopted a split schedule, with some employees working Mondays/Wednesdays and others working Tuesday/Thursday at the broadcast center, with most staff working from home on Fridays.

Successive COVID-19 surges delayed plans to fully reopen on a Monday-Friday basis until April 2022.



Beyond steps taken last year to improve the broadcast center's HVAC systems and air filtration, this year the station invested in new outdoor furniture and the buildout of new workstations within the existing broadcast center to support social distancing in the office. The station also continued work to bring photovoltaic solar power to the broadcast center, and in January of 2022 entered a contract to construct a 43 kW

rooftop solar array to serve a portion of the station's energy needs. The system is expected to go online later in 2022.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

KVPR is committed to diversity, equity and inclusion in our content, programming and across our team. California's San Joaquin Valley is one of the most diverse regions in the nation, and KVPR is dedicated to reflecting that diversity in both our content and in our team. While the public media system has long taken pride in its values of serving all Americans, far too often, our system and our institutions have fallen short in putting those values into practice. At KVPR, we acknowledge our role in those systemic failures, and recognize that we need to do more to better represent the values of diversity, equity and inclusion in our work, and in the composition of our staff and our board. We also believe that in order to remain relevant in today's increasingly diverse world, we need to change and adapt to serve the needs of our community. In recent years we have made strides in this area, though significant work remains. Recent accomplishments include:

- Launch partner for the bilingual [Central Valley News Collaborative](#), with partners *Radio Bilingue*, *Vida en el Valle*, and *The Fresno Bee*.
- Expanded [weekday news & talk programming in September 2020](#), to better serve our most diverse segment of listeners.
- Community engagement with special projects in marginalized communities across our area with StoryCorps

- News content focused on issues facing underserved communities, which resulted in our nomination as a finalist for the [2021 Ruben Salazar Journalism Award](#).
- Sponsoring a local [scholarship program for student journalists of color](#), which is led in part by our Valley Edition host Kathleen Schock

Other work still remains, including increased diversity among our staff among non-journalism positions, increased diversity on our Advisory Councils and our on Board of Directors, and in building a more diverse audience for public radio in the San Joaquin Valley.

Community Engagement

While the pandemic's second year did limit the station's in-person community engagement activities, KVPR used online platforms to reach new and existing audiences. In April 2021, the station held an online social hour fundraiser, featuring local food and wine stars, called "A Night Out." It provided listeners a chance to interact with each other and learn about local food and wine, and engage with station personalities.

In October 2021, the station collaborated with WNYC's *Science Friday* to present an online science trivia night. Frequent SciFri guest and KVPR reporter Kerry Klein co-hosted this event with SciFri's Ira Flatow.





Throughout summer and fall of 2021, KVPR also conducted around a dozen community engagement activities in communities across the San Joaquin Valley as part of the station's participation in the StoryCorps *One Small Step* initiative. This project culminated in December 2021 with an

interactive online event streamed on YouTube.

Future Activities:

Work is currently underway on a number of projects that will debut in the coming year. These include the station's expansion of news content for Kern County with the addition of a reporter based in Bakersfield, covering the south valley. This position is a part of the Report For America Corps, which helps support newsroom expansion in communities throughout the country. It's also a part of a project with the new non-profit newsroom Public Health Watch, which is dedicated to producing reporting on issues that impact America's well-being.



KVPR has also been selected to be one of six NPR stations nationwide participating in a new project with WAMU/NPR's daily talk show *1A*, called *1A Remaking America*. Over the next two years, our station's reporters will work with the *1A* team covering issues related to the threats to American democracy. The partnership will

also include live events in the San Joaquin Valley with the *1A* team and more.

Later in 2022, the station will also bring back its annual Wine Tasting event, a three-decade plus tradition that had been on hold for the past two years due to COVID-19. The event is typically the station's biggest fundraising event of the year.

KVPR by the numbers:

3,686	Active members (as of 12/31/21)
2,152	Sustaining members (as of 12/31/21)
454,109	Unique users at KVPR.org (1/1/21-12/31/21)
869,705	Pageviews at KVPR.org (1/1/21-12/31/21)
59,000	Weekly listeners (Nielsen Fall 2021 Fresno + Bakersfield)
261,338	Podcast/on-demand downloads (1/1/21-12/31/21)
926,478	Streaming listening hours (1/1/21-12/31/21)
11,159	Email newsletter subscribers (as of 4/5/22)
4,660	Facebook page likes (as of April 5, 2022)
\$786,091	Mortgage principal balance (as of 9/30/21)