

2026 ANNUAL EEO PUBLIC FILE REPORT

Western North Carolina Public Radio, Inc.

d/b/a Blue Ridge Public Radio (BPR)

Stations and
Communities of
License:

WCQS (FM) Mars Hill, NC
WFQS (FM) Franklin, NC
WMQS (FM) Murphy, NC
WNQS (FM) Sylva, NC
WYQS (FM) Asheville, NC
WZQS (FM) Cullowhee, NC

Reporting Period:

August 1, 2025 – July 31, 2026

No. of Full-time Employees:

More than 10

Small Market Exemption:

No

The information required by FCC Rule 73.2080(c)(6) is provided in the charts that follow.

INITIATIVES

The employment unit engaged in the following broad outreach initiatives in accordance with various elements of FCC Rule 73.2080(c)(2):

*Established an **internship** program designed to assist members of the community to acquire skills needed for broadcast employment.*

In partnership with University of North Carolina – Asheville, BPR hosted two interns during the reporting period, as follows:

- January through May 2026: An intern who is a Business major learned about public media and helped build a volunteer management program and associated collateral. He conducted research, created a database, developed and administered recruitment tools, and interfaced directly with the public. He helped design and organized two public volunteer orientation sessions and provided related departmental support.
- April 2026 and ongoing beyond this reporting period: An intern who is an Environmental Science major is conducting a research project correlating BPR's listening audience to geographic areas to potentially be used to support fundraising initiatives and station-wide learning. As part of the research, the intern received training and information on station operations, public media audience data, fundraising methodologies, transmitter and translator sites, and general broadcast topics.

In partnership with Report for America, our Rural Communities Reporter mentored approximately 12 journalism students from West Henderson High School engaging weekly from August 2025

through December 2025 and including student reporting and recording outside of the classroom. This program offered students hands-on newsroom, field reporting, production, and studio experience.

*Participated in **job banks, internet programs**, and other programs designed to promote outreach generally (i.e., that are not primarily directed to providing notification of specific job vacancies).*

BPR and its stations continuously conduct broad online outreach and promotes engagement by maintaining an active social media and web presence.

The Community Forum, BPR's Community Advisory Board (CAB), is a volunteer group that provides community input to the station about programming and public service. The CAB represents different professions, geographic regions, and individual needs and interests from the listeners and communities BPR serves.

BPR Reporters regularly engaged in collaborative newsroom programs, extending networking and outreach beyond direct job vacancy postings.

BPR administrative and fundraising staff participate in cross-industry community events to promote public media in the community and to build networks, including Builders' Associations, Chambers of Commerce, other local nonprofits, State and community partners, marketing firms, Community Foundations, small business incubators and associations, and workforce development organizations.

*Established **training** programs designed to enable station personnel to acquire skills that could qualify them for higher level positions.*

Training and professional development opportunities are provided to BPR employees on an ongoing basis throughout the year. This training and opportunities help to enable station personnel to acquire skills, experience, and professional connections and exposure that could qualify them for higher level positions. Examples for this current period's report included:

- Account Executives participate in weekly and monthly speaking series, issues gatherings, and networking groups at local Chambers of Commerce to expand their knowledge and networks.
- Multiple Reporters participate in regular and ongoing NPR member station training opportunities throughout the reporting period.
- Development Staff participate in weekly regular and ongoing training provided by Member Services Bureau as well as mandatory database training at onboarding.
- A Reporter was selected as an Investigative Reporters & Editors fellow that included participation in a Data Journalism Bootcamp (Aug. 3, 2025)
- A Reporter attended and was a panel member at an Online News Association event about mental health and climate coverage (Sep. 10-13, 2025)
- A Reporter collaborated with WUNC's program Due South

- and presented about post-Helene topics. (Sep. 25, 2025)
- Two Reporters participated in a speaking engagement at UNC-Asheville's Symposium (Sep. 26, 2025)
- Two Reporters participated in an Associated Press Education Reporting Network collaboration surrounding how natural disasters impact students (Sep.-Oct 2025)
- The Director of Donor Engagement attended the Marsicano Philanthropic Leadership Award Luncheon (Oct. 14, 2025)
- A Reporter presented at Samford University's Timothy Sumner Robinson Forum (Nov. 3, 2025)
- A Reporter/Host presented at the American Association of University Women, relaying newsroom operations and discussing how storm coverage occurred and sharing reporter experiences (Dec. 11, 2025)
- The Director of Donor Engagement attended the Wake Forest Executive Education Session (Jan. 22, 2026)
- The Director of Business Sponsorship and Manager of Audience Engagement Strategy attended the 2026 Audience Development Summit (Feb. 10-11, 2026)
- A Reporter/Host served as speaker and moderator at the Gala Plenary of Confluence Philanthropy's 16th Annual Practitioners Gathering (Mar. 4, 2026)
- A Reporter served a panelist and attended other journalism conference panels at the NC News & Information Summit (Mar. 27, 2026)
- The CEO/GM and the Director of Donor Engagement participated in the MSB Leadership Conference (Apr. 7-10, 2026)
- A Reporter was a speaker at and participated in the 2026 WFAE Climate Summit (Apr. 16, 2026)
- An Account Executive attended a professional education workshop hosted by Greater Public on FCC Underwriting Guidelines & Compliance (May 6, 2026)
- A Reporter was a panel presenter at the Investigative Reporters & Editors 2026 Conference and spoke informally with journalism colleagues about career opportunities at BPR (Jun. 20, 2026)
- An Account Executive presented at a small business center about brand foundations (Jun. 25, 2026)
- The CEO/GM, two Account Executives, the Director of Business Sponsorship, and a Development Communications Specialist participated in the Public Media Growth Conference and attended training and informational presentations, and networking events about the public media industry (Jul. 8-10, 2026)
- The Director of Business Sponsorship participates in periodic webinars conducted by Greater Public, PMDMC, PMCC, NPR to grow skills related to his position (Aug. 8, 2025, Sep. 4, 2025, Nov. 5, 2025, Dec. 17, 2025, Apr. 29, 2026)

- Three Account Executives and the Director of Business Sponsorship attended 8 training sessions designed to teach them how to use, implement, and sell from a new digital advertising sales platform (Dec. 8, 2025, through Apr. 29, 2026)
- BPR sponsored and Account Executives attended an AI BrainHub Summit about applications of AI in the workplace, providing both training and networking and broad, general outreach where BPR was prominently displayed (Jun. 4-5, 2026)
- An Account Executive attended a Jacobs Media Webinar to learn more about digital media and radio (Jul. 16, 2026)

*Established a **mentoring** program for station personnel.*

BPR engaged a 3rd-party subject matter expert from a broadcast engineering firm to provide year-round mentorship to its Broadcast Manager. The mentorship includes weekly 1:1 meetings, in-person and hands-on educational opportunities in the technical aspects of broadcasting, and supportive guidance in specific areas of expertise. This mentorship ended in June 2026.

BPR engaged a 3rd party subject matter expert from a Management Science background in a mentorship program on leadership, time management, prioritization of work, and core scientific principles. Each member of management participated, and the program kicked off with a retreat on Oct. 15, 2025 and continues with periodic check-ins, guidance, and feedback to enhance management skills.

The CEO/GM is participating in the RUN Leadership Forum, a cohort of station General Managers along with Greater Public and Station Resource Group (SRG) to provide the cohort with resources and education exploring national audience research. The cohort began in June, 2026 and continues beyond the reporting period.

*Sponsored at least 2 **events** in the **community** designed to inform and educate the public as to employment opportunities in broadcasting.*

Leadership Asheville Sponsorship/Partnership: Leadership Asheville (LA) is a program of the University of North Carolina – Asheville that seeks to foster an equitable, inclusive, sustainable, and collaborative community. As a Sponsor and Partner with LA, BPR staff attend special events and community briefings, and our company information is displayed prominently as a community partner on print and web media. BPR also sends one participant per year to a tuition-based, inclusive, and intense cross-sector training Program from September through May. The program aims to promote collaborative community leadership and civic responsibility by developing, connecting, and engaging citizens throughout the region to address challenges and opportunities in the community. This also provides a unique opportunity to inform community leaders about the broadcast industry and various careers related to the industry in sectors including business, nonprofit, education, and government. This year's participant was the CEO/General Manager

Provided **training** to **management level personnel** on methods of ensuring equal employment opportunity and prevent discrimination.

Participated in **other** activities designed by the station employment unit reasonably calculated to further the goal of disseminating information as to employment opportunities in broadcasting to job candidates who might otherwise be unaware of such opportunities.

BPR developed and instituted a structured hiring process that leads with blind candidate review and incorporates matrix-based scoring techniques to help reduce bias and prevent discrimination in hiring. BPR's management-level personnel were trained on that policy and were provided hands-on, process-reinforcing coaching during hiring events.

BPR regularly conducts public outreach through community engagement events, panels, and town halls to provide opportunities for the public to learn about broadcasting and public media. Examples during this report period include:

- BPR sponsored and provided curtain speeches at a monthly speaker series highlighting creativity, lifelong learning, community engagement, life skills, and more called Creative Mornings Asheville, held at various locations in Asheville. BPR advertises its career opportunities at these events. That series continues beyond this reporting period.
- Sponsoring, tabling, and conducting a curtain speech about BPR at The Moth Asheville storySLAM series, a monthly storytelling showcase. BPR advertises its career opportunities at these events. This series continues beyond the reporting period.
- BPR sponsored the following events and tabling opportunities where our logo and website were prominently displayed, BPR speakers widely shared information about the station and open positions:
 - Martin Luther King Jr Prayer Breakfast
 - White Squirrel Festival
 - Asheville Symphony Concerts and Events
 - Brevard Music Center Concerts and Events
 - NC Child Hunger Leaders Conference
 - Asheville Rotary Weekly and Monthly Gatherings
 - Sylva Pride Festival
 - TEDxAsheville Conference
 - Connect Beyond Festival
 - Blue Ridge Pride
 - Sylva Pride
 - Literacy Together Events
 - brAln Hub: AI Summit

LIST OF POSITIONS FILLED

DATE OF HIRE	JOB TITLE	RECRUITMENT SOURCE REFERRING HIREE
01/12/2026	Development Communications Specialist	On-air Messaging
01/20/2026	Business Sponsorship Account Executive	On-air Messaging
04/20/2026	News Director	LinkedIn

INTERVIEWEE REFERRAL SOURCE SUMMARY

Total Number of Persons Interviewed during the reporting period: **15**

Recruitment Sources Referring Interviewees during Reporting Period	Number of Persons Interviewed that the Source Referred
Station Website	1
On-air Messaging	4
Word of Mouth / Friend of the Station	3
LinkedIn	2
Social Media	2
ZipRecruiter	1
Public Media Journalists Association (PMJA)	2

RECRUITING SOURCES USED

POSITION FILLED

Date of Hire	Job Title	Recruitment Source Referring Hiree
01/12/2026	Development Communications Specialist	On-Air Messaging

Total Number of Persons Interviewed: 5

RECRUITING SOURCES USED

List all recruiting sources used, noting contact at recruiting source, address, phone, e-mail, web address of posting, etc.

Referral Source	Address of Source	Contact Person at Source	Phone and Email of Source	# of Persons Interviewed	*
Station Website	73 Broadway St. Asheville, NC 28801	HR Staff	828-210-4800; hr@bpr.org	-	N
On-Air Messaging	73 Broadway St. Asheville, NC 28801	HR Staff	828-210-4800; hr@bpr.org	1	N
Word of Mouth / Friend of the Station	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	N
Social Media	73 Broadway St. Asheville, NC 28801	HR Staff	828-210-4800; hr@bpr.org	2	N
Indeed	N/A – online only	N/A	www.indeed.com	-	N

Ziprecruiter	N/A – online only	N/A	www.ziprecruiter.com	1	N
Talent	N/A – online only	N/A	www.talent.com	-	N
LinkedIn	N/A – online only	N/A	www.linkedin.com	-	N
Greater Public / Public Media Jobs	N/A – online only	N/A	www.publicmediajobs.org	-	N
Association of Fundraising Professionals – WNC	N/A – online only	N/A	www.afpwnc.org/jobs/	-	N

POSITION FILLED

Date of Hire	Job Title	Recruitment Source Referring Hiree
01/20/2026	Business Sponsorship Account Executive	On-Air Messaging

Total Number of Persons Interviewed: 5

RECRUITING SOURCES USED

List all recruiting sources used, noting contact at recruiting source, address, phone, e-mail, web address of posting, etc.

Referral Source	Address of Source	Contact Person at Source	Phone and Email of Source	# of Persons Interviewed	*
Station Website	73 Broadway St. Asheville, NC 28801	HR Staff	828-210-4800; hr@bpr.org	-	N
On-Air Messaging	73 Broadway St. Asheville, NC 28801	HR Staff	828-210-4800; hr@bpr.org	3	N
Word of Mouth / Friend of the Station	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	N
Indeed	N/A – online only	N/A	www.indeed.com	-	N
Ziprecruiter	N/A – online only	N/A	www.ziprecruiter.com	-	N
Talent	N/A – online only	N/A	www.talent.com	-	N
LinkedIn	N/A – online only	N/A	www.linkedin.com	-	N
Greater Public/ Public Media Jobs	N/A – online only	N/A	www.publicmediajobs.org	-	N
Henderson County Chamber of Commerce	204 Kanuga Road Hendersonville, NC 28739	N/A	(828) 692-1413 chamber@hendersoncountychamber.org	-	N
Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce Job Board	36 Montford Ave, Asheville, NC 28801	N/A	https://ashevillechamber.mcjobboard.net/jobs	-	N

POSITION FILLED

Date of Hire	Job Title	Recruitment Source Referring Hiree
04/20/2026	News Director	LinkedIn

Total Number of Persons Interviewed: 5**RECRUITING SOURCES USED**

List all recruiting sources used, noting contact at recruiting source, address, phone, e-mail, web address of posting, etc.

Referral Source	Address of Source	Contact Person at Source	Phone and Email of Source	# of Persons Interviewed	*
Station Website	73 Broadway St. Asheville, NC 28801	HR Staff	828-210-4800; hr@bpr.org	1	N
On-Air Messaging	73 Broadway St. Asheville, NC 28801	HR Staff	828-210-4800; hr@bpr.org	-	N
Word of Mouth / Friend of the Station	N/A	N/A	N/A	-	N
Indeed	N/A – online only	N/A	www.indeed.com	-	N
Ziprecruiter	N/A – online only	N/A	www.ziprecruiter.com	-	N
Talent	N/A – online only	N/A	www.talent.com	-	N
LinkedIn	N/A – online only	N/A	www.linkedin.com	2	N
Greater Public / Public Media Jobs	N/A – online only	N/A	www.publicmediajobs.org	-	N
Current.org / Public Media Jobs	N/A – online only	N/A	https://jobs.current.org/	-	N
Public Media Journalists Association (PMJA)	N/A – online only	N/A	https://jobs.pmja.org/	2	N
National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ)	N/A – online only	N/A	https://nabjcareers.org/	-	N
National Association of Hispanic Journalists (NAHJ)	N/A – online only	N/A	https://www.nahjcareers.org/	-	N