

Grantee Information

ID	1345
Grantee Name	WQCS-FM
City	Fort Pierce
State	FL
Licensee Type	University

6.1 Telling Public Radio's Story

Jump to question: [6.1](#) ▼

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 2022. 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 2022 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.

6.1 Telling Public Radio's Story

Jump to question: [6.1](#) ▼

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.

The mission of WQCS is to provide high quality, appealing and culturally enriching radio programming that informs, educates and entertains, with special emphasis on serving the local interests and needs of Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee and Saint Lucie counties. While there are pockets of great wealth in the WQCS listening area, the local per capita income is still generally well below the state average. In addition, due to the area's heavy dependence on agriculture, it also has one of the highest seasonal unemployment rates in the state. WQCS remains the area's sole source of in-depth national news and public affairs programming. The station is also the only source in the four-county area for NPR News, BBC News, classical music, traditional jazz, radio drama, adult alternative music, blues, variety, state and local news. WQCS produces an award-winning daily newscasts examining issues of immediate concern to the station's large listenership. Given special emphasis are topics relating to emergency management, education and environmental issues. WQCS also produces a weekly Program "In Focus", to address community events, fundraisers, and other important local information, often from underserved communities. In FY22, "In Focus" launched in tandem with "RiverTalk", a new weekly program discussing educational issues and featuring leaders of Indian River State College, along with staff, faculty, and students. During FY22, WQCS finalized the purchase of two additional radio stations, WQCP-FM Fort Pierce, FL, and WQJS-FM Clewiston, FL. WQCP allows expansion of music and cultural programs. WQJS-FM is currently featuring a Jazz format, the first in the Lake Okeechobee area. In fact, WQJS-FM is the first public radio station in the Lake Okeechobee region to be an affiliate of a qualified CPB grantee. The area served by this station is one of the most diverse yet poorest in the state of Florida.

6.1 Telling Public Radio's Story

Jump to question: [6.1](#) ▼

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.

WQCS is a designated LP1 station. The radio station serves as the Emergency Alert station for Indian River, Saint Lucie, Martin, Okeechobee, and Palm Beach counties. WQCS is an active member of FPREN (Florida Public Radio Emergency Network) and the General Manager serves on the Florida Public Media Organization's Executive Board as Secretary. WQCS is connected via ISDN/IP to four local EOC's (Emergency Operation Centers in Indian River County, St. Lucie County, Martin County, and the City Of Port St. Lucie) and broadcasts timely emergency weather related updates; WQCS has an operational studio inside the Saint Lucie County EOC. Annually, WQCS prints local hurricane information brochures. These brochures are included in membership mailings and are distributed in bulk to the local chambers of commerce, libraries and IRSC (Indian River State College) campuses. They are published in English, Spanish, and Creole to reach as much of the community as possible, including those not proficient in the English Language. Special pre-produced hurricane preparedness PSA's and pre-recorded audio of what to do before, during and after a storm are readily available for air should a storm threaten. In the last year, the WQCS newsroom covered breaking news on-air and through social media tools - on weather advisories and tropical updates, local Amber Alerts, emergency evacuations and road closures. WQCS was a media sponsor and participated in the City of Port St. Lucie Hurricane Expo. The Hurricane Preparedness Expo provided educational presentations and the community was able to connect with some of the best businesses and emergency services providers on the Treasure Coast. WQCS was a media sponsor for the St. Lucie County Safety Festival. WQCS provides tower space for three amateur radio repeaters, which are used to facilitate communications throughout a four-county area during special events and emergency situations. This is a part of the station's outreach activities with national, state and local organizations of vital importance to public safety communication. The WQCS newsroom shares public affairs packages with the Florida News Exchange, through PRX and Florida Public Radio via FTP. WQCS operations manager continues to assist IRSC educational services with providing assistance to students with special needs and provided audio assistance on various college projects including editing soundtracks for the IRSC Planetarium shows. The WQCS Chief Engineer sits on the Saint Lucie County Code Enforcement Board. The WQCS General Manager and two Underwriting Specialists serve as mentors for IRSC's "LEAP" program, helping first-year students, providing resources for student success.

6.1 Telling Public Radio's Story

Jump to question: [6.1](#) ▼

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 conversational ties across 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.

WQCS Operations Manager provided technical audio support to IRSC's (Indian River State College) educational services for college students with special needs. WQCS engineer, in conjunction with the Indian River County EOC, participated in tests of the NWS (National Weather Service) HazCollect dissemination of NWEMs (Non-Weather Emergency Messages) in the state of Florida using the EMnet software. In addition, the Operations Manager is an active member of CoCoRaHS (Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network); the weather data collected is used by various organizations including the National Weather Service and Emergency Management officials. WQCS produces "in Focus" a half-hour public affairs program, which gives area non-profits a chance to promote their upcoming fundraising and community outreach efforts. "In Focus" airs twice weekly on WQCS, WQCP, and WQJS. The WQCS Chief Engineer visited Engineering classes at Indian River State College and spoke to aspiring engineers about careers in broadcasting. As the median age of radio engineers increases, it is crucial that a new generation is educated. Several students were hosted for tours and welcomed to return to continue their education on radio engineering. In addition, the Pioneer Radio club mentors aspiring broadcasting students by giving tours and hands-on experience on the latest digital equipment.

6.1 Telling Public Radio's Story

Jump to question: [6.1](#) ▼

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 2022, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2023. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.

One of the programming and engagement activities provided by WQCS is a 24-hour per day Radio Reading Service, using the SCA of the station. Each week, volunteers read books, newspapers and magazines for the benefit of the blind and visually impaired, or others with a disability preventing them from reading printed materials. The Radio Reading Service has been on the air since 1994. WQCS volunteers read from the Treasure Coast Newspaper and the Palm Beach Post. The volunteers read for two-hour shifts, six-days per week. During the COVID pandemic, many volunteers learned how to record remotely and upload the files to the Radio Reading Service, keeping them safe while continuing to keep the service functioning as normal. The RRS also simulcasts the Minnesota Talking Book to provide readings of many

national periodicals. The service is available to group homes or those who sign up for a specialized radio which are provided free of charge. Another community outreach activity through our Radio Reading Service program, is facilitating a central gathering point for our local chapter of the National Federation of the Blind. Monthly meetings are held at the radio station on the second Tuesday of each month. Paused during the pandemic, the meetings have resumed during FY22. When evaluating potential on-air programming, various objectives are taken into consideration, including if the program meets the needs of our diverse audience demographics and/or the interests of our listeners. Furthermore, an issues and programming list was developed following an audience survey where we received input from the community on issues they felt were of concern to them. The WQCS News Director uses that issues and programming list as a guide when approaching and developing stories for air. During emergencies like hurricanes, we feature segments broadcast in Spanish and Creole, for non-English speaking households. Our Hurricane Preparedness flyers are also printed in those languages in addition to English. Our Jazz programming on WQCS-HD2 and WQJS features diverse Jazz from all corners of the world, and complements the Jazz weekend program locally hosted. It has been well-received by our audience and has brought new fans to our stations.

6.1 Telling Public Radio's Story

Jump to question: [6.1](#) ▼

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?

The CPB grant has enabled WQCS to continue to provide national programming to our audience and to allow the station to support local programming and reporting efforts. WQCS relies on multiple funding sources, and is grateful for the federal assistance provided by the CPB. The CPB grant ensures that WQCS will remain a treasure on the "Treasure Coast". Our award-winning station has continued to remain a stable and reliable source for news and information. This stability comes from our federal dollars, that have helped to support this public radio station and have allowed us to continue our mission, which is to provide high quality, appealing and culturally enriching radio programming that informs, educates and/or entertains, with special emphasis on serving the local interests and needs of Indian River, Martin, Okeechobee and Saint Lucie counties. The pandemic caused a decrease in revenue from donors and underwriters, and CPB's help was crucial to maintaining our programming. We would not be able to fund our continuing operations without the assistance of the CPB funding. With escalating program costs from NPR and other program providers, we would likely have to discontinue programs or face a reduction in staff without the help of CPB.

Comments

Question

Comment

No Comments for this section