

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a town square. In the center-left, a tall, light-colored stone clock tower with a pointed roof and a bell is visible. The square is surrounded by trees with vibrant autumn foliage in shades of yellow, orange, and green. The sky is a clear, bright blue. In the foreground, there are some low-lying bushes and a paved area. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

WSKG

Connect • Inform • Discover

2019 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

Dear Friends,

WSKG is always challenging, always changing and always fulfilling our mission to educate, entertain, engage and inspire. We exist to serve you in the best ways we know how on TV, radio, online and in our communities.

We did that a few ways this year, in part, by making one of the biggest changes in WSKG history by making bold programming changes on our two radio stations. WSKG-FM (NPR) went all news and conversation and WSQX-FM went all classical music with some jazz and weekend folk, Classical WSKG. Both stations previously offered news and music.

Now, with one format for each station, our listeners and members have a choice.

The majority of you have embraced the new sound, and it positions our public media organization for future growth.

Another milestone was the official opening of our WSKG Ithaca office complete with a functioning news/radio studio thanks to 2 special supporters. We celebrated with a ribbon-cutting and a brand new sign.



We improved the WSKG Classical signal (formerly WSQX) in the Chenango County area for our listeners and we're working to improve the Classical signal in Tompkins County.

I could go on and on, but keep reading. We want to offer more to serve you...and fulfill our mission.

Thank you for your support!

Y.U. Cat.

Greg Catlin
President and CEO



Radio

Preliminary information taken from a survey done in Spring 2019, just after WSKG radio switched its emphasis to news and conversation, indicates listenership is up. For example, the number of individuals tuning in for All Things Considered was up 21%. There were also immediate improvements during Morning Edition and Fresh Air.

Online

WSKG Radio has entered the digital era in a big way. For example, there's no longer a need to wait for your favorite programs. Many shows like On Point, Free Range Folk, and the PBS NewsHour are now available at your convenience on both the WSKG app and on smart speakers like Alexa devices.

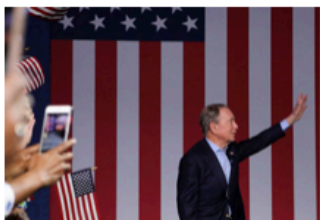
Local arts interviews, in-depth news features, WSKG newscasts, and WSKG's By Special Invitation are also available as podcasts.

WSKG  

[Donate](#)



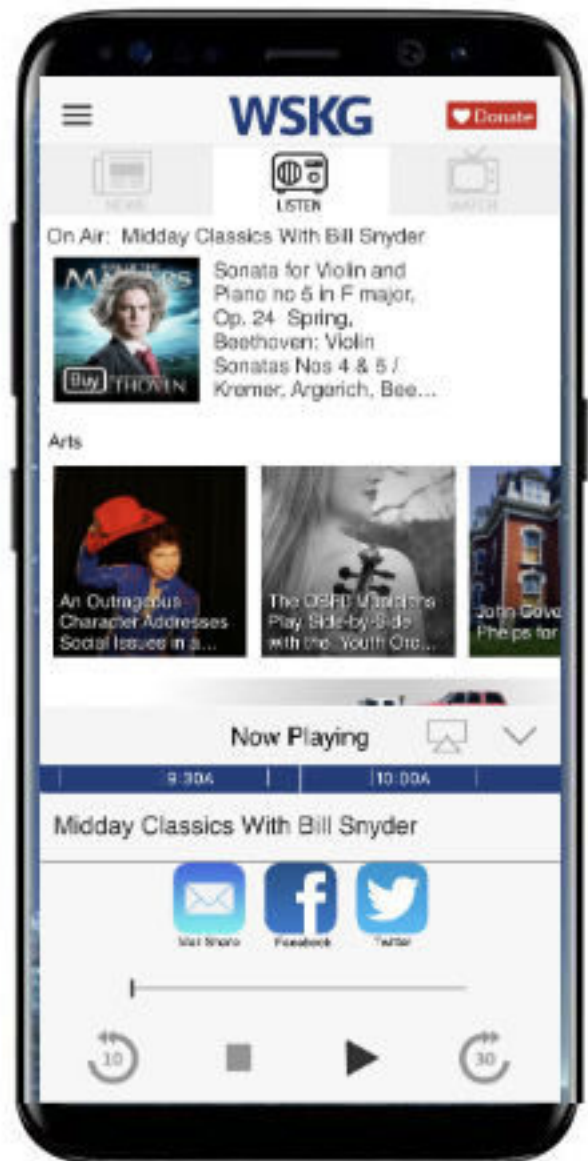
WSKG Votes 2020



Bloomberg's Super Tuesday Flop



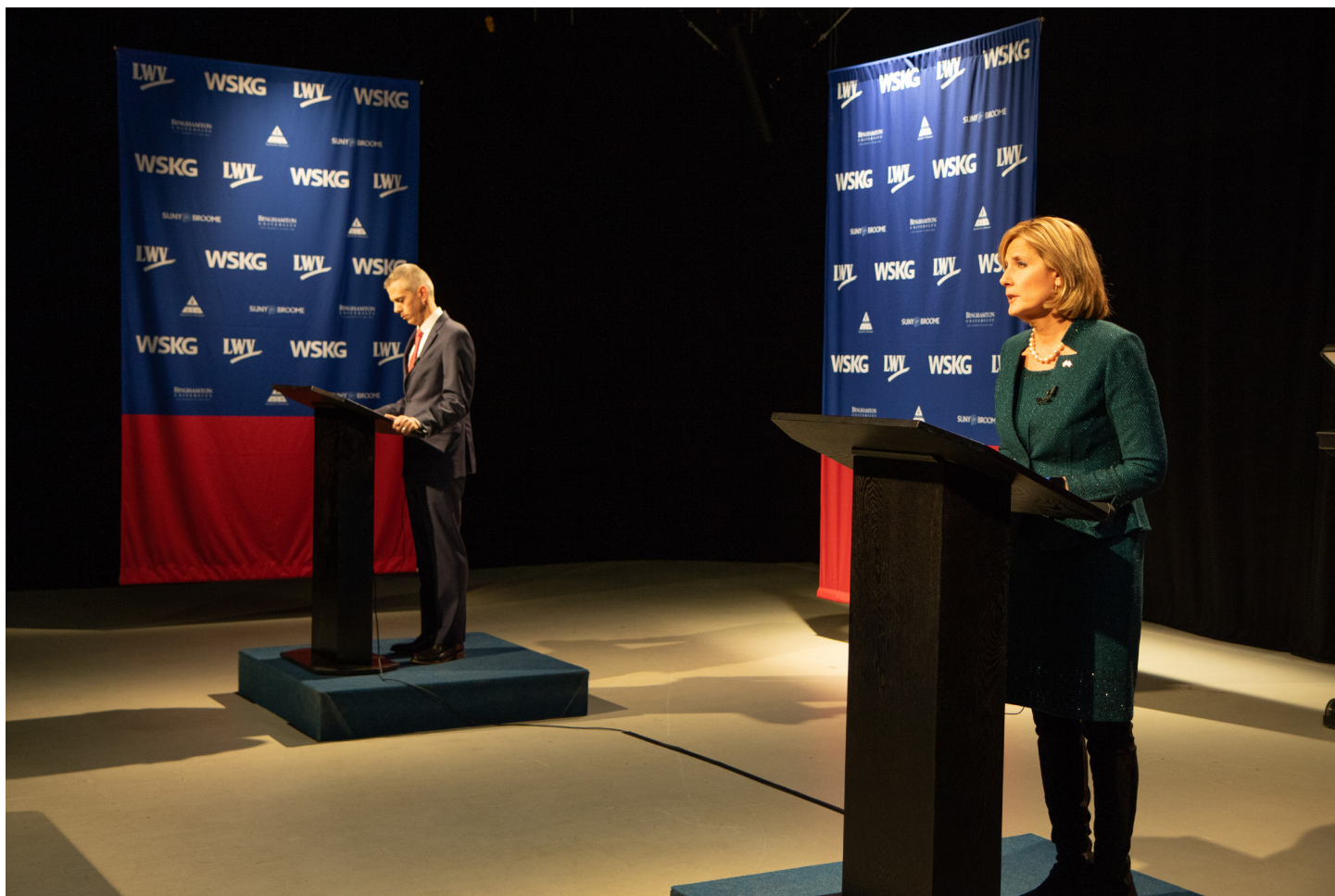
Former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg spent more than \$500 million to wage a national campaign, starting with the 14 states that held primaries on Tuesday. He lost all of them.



In anticipation of the 2020 elections, WSKG radio, television and education have created a voter resource page at WKSg.org. It includes election news from New York and Pennsylvania, updates on election-related programs, and information useful to voters.

News

WSKG news continues to collaborate with community groups on the production of election debates. In an October, 2018 broadcast on WSKG radio, WSKG television and CSPAN, Radio Director Charles Compton moderated a debate between candidates in New York's 22nd Congressional District. Similar debates are being planned for 2020. Our partners in these presentations are the League of Women Voters, SUNY-Broome, Apalachin Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and Binghamton University.



Above: Candidates from the NY-22 Debate.

Below: Logo for the Hear Here! Podcast

WSKG news was honored in the 2019 New York State Associated Press Association Newspaper Contest with First Place prizes for the documentary "The Hustle: Poverty in Motion", and for podcast "Hear, Here! A Music Appreciation Podcast for Kids". The New York State Broadcasters Association also honored WSKG news for Outstanding Use of Audio, Outstanding Election Coverage and Outstanding Podcast.



Music

WSKG music completed the digitalization of our music library. When coupled with a major upgrade in radio's computerized automation system, WSKG music curators and their listeners now have easier access to over 85,000 classical music tracks.

With the creation in 2019 of WSKG Classical, WSKG now has a service solely dedicated to arts programming. This means WSKG can offer a greater diversity of classical music, while also serving weekend listeners with folk, americana, jazz, and blues music. Much of it is locally produced.

On WSKG Classical, we now offer more music than ever before. Listener surveys indicate Midday Classics with Bill Snyder, Classical Commute and our folk/americana music programs are growing in popularity.

Crystal Sarakas' program on Saturday night is excellent in all regards. Her selection of music is wonderful, and I always enjoy hearing "The Wildwood Flower" be either Emmy Lou Harris or the Carter Family. Hope to hear it often. This show is so good that WSKG should syndicate it and sell it to other stations.

***Gerald
Via Web***

TV

WSKG-TV wrapped up celebrating 50 years of broadcasting the very best that Public Television has to offer this past year. Once again, some of the most original and compelling storytelling on television could be found on WSKG.

One of WSKG's unsung behind-the-scenes heroes is Stacey Mosteller, the Manager of Television Programming who, for 20 years, has been researching and acquiring the broadcast rights for the best programs in the public media landscape.

This year was no exception. Along with PBS staple favorites like Antiques Roadshow, Masterpiece and Great Performances, Stacey worked into the broadcast schedule new programs like 800 Words and wonderful multi-part series like Hold the Sunset and Still Open All Hours.



800 Words



Holiday Expressions ft. Binghamton Steel Band

Along with national offerings WSKG continued to air our popular locally produced series including Let's Polka! and Expressions. Producer/Director Andy Pioch, who also celebrated 20 years with WSKG, helped bring to the screen national known polka acts like the John Gora Band, Alex Meixner, Box On, and the Eddie Forman Orchestra. Mr. Pioch also helped shape the 12th season of Expressions with an eclectic arrangement of musical groups that included 13 holiday-themed community music groups, 3 Classical Pianists and the popular folk/rock group Donna the Buffalo.

Continuing WSKG's history and commitment to telling the stories that helped shape our communities, award-winning filmmaker Brian Frey produced two new documentaries this past year. In December, *Old Bones: The Story of Exterminator* chronicled the fascinating legacy of one of America's greatest but forgotten racehorse champions. Owned by legendary Binghamton entrepreneur Willis Sharpe Kilmer, Exterminator would become a local sports hero and icon for countless Southern Tier residents and become the inspiration for the beloved children's book *Old Bones: The Wonder Horse*, which has been read by generations of American children.



In June, Mr. Frey premiered the film *Main Street Rising*, a one hour documentary that looks at the rise, fall and potential re-birth of the American Main Street. Funded by a generous grant from the Corning Incorporated Foundation, *Main Street Rising* utilizes the story of several area Main Streets, including Owego and Elmira to illustrate the evolution and cultural importance of a community's downtown market center.

This past year also saw the premiere of an exciting and important new local programming initiative from WSKG-TV. Historian James Truslow Adams defined the American Dream as “that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone.” Today, the pursuit of that dream continues for many of our Southern and Northern Tier neighbors. With funding from the Conrad and Virginia Klee Foundation, the Community Foundation of South Central New York, and NYS funding through Governor Andrew Cuomo’s Poverty Reduction Initiative, which was awarded to the Binghamton-Broome Anti-Poverty Initiative of the United Way of Broome County. WSKG-TV premiered the first season of Chasing the Dream.

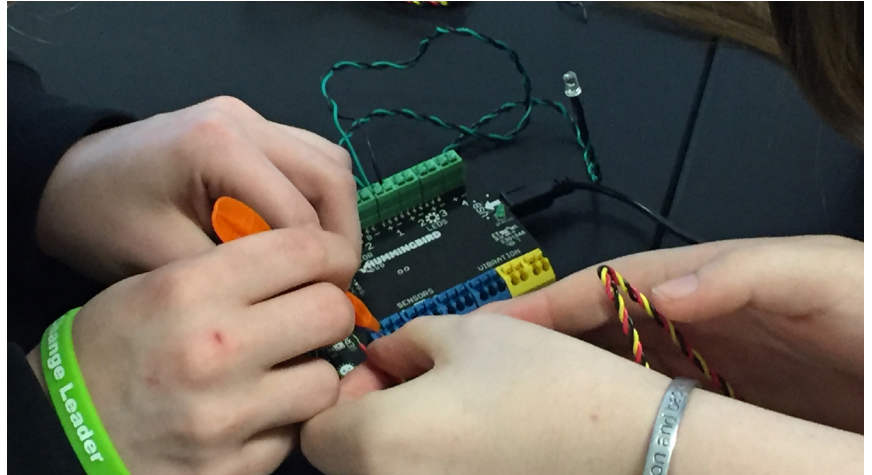


The 8 episode series showcases community members seeking their version of the American Dream and the organizations working every day to help them find it. Hosted by Natasha Thompson, President & CEO of the Food Bank of the Southern Tier, every episode features the work of local nonprofit organizations and Ms. Thompson engages community leaders in meaningful conversation. The New York State Broadcasting Association honored the series’ producers Bailey Normann and Alyssa Micha with the award for Best Public Affairs Program for their work on the first season of Chasing the Dream.

Science Education Outreach

SciGirls CODE, a year long coding after school program expanded into a second school reaching 40 underserved 6-8th grade girls. Girls learned how to code, design & create mobile apps using Thunkable coding language; explored robotics; and created wearable e-textiles using circuits and LED lights.

This weekly program taught perseverance and growth mindset skills at an age where research shows girl's interest in STEM and computer science declines. Mentors and computer science professionals visited with SciGirls participants sharing their career paths.



Sci Girls working on projects.



The PBS Newshour Student Reporting Lab



Combining science communication and media storytelling skills, WSKG has been part of educating students at Cornell University through a Student Reporting Lab for PBS NewsHour. This semester long class combines practice with pedagogy teaching students the art of storytelling, video production, presentation skills, and using social media for science communication.

WSKG is the first University student reporting lab for NewsHour, receiving mentorship and submitting finished videos to the PBS NewsHour. Student produced videos are available on WSKG YouTube and air around the PBS NewsHour.

Education & Community Engagement

Virtual Teacher Trainings

Jackie Stapleton served on a national team that developed “Little Learners”, a series of virtual professional learning workshops, spearheaded by PBS Teachers and based on PBS KIDS content. There were four workshops in this series with over 1,000 participants from across the U.S. Topics covered included Social-Emotional Learning, Media Literacy, STEM Education, and English Language Arts intended for Pre-kindergarten through 2nd grade.



Jackie also developed and moderated a series of Twitter chats focused on issues surrounding Digital Citizenship. Local guest experts shared their expertise during each chat. Participants shared, learned, and helped us to better understand the needs of our K-12 communities in regard to #DigCit! This work was part of an American Graduate Education Innovation grant.

National Twitter chat co-hosted by WSKG around the teachings of Fred Rogers and incorporating kindness into the classroom. PBS KIDS picked up on the momentum of this project.

K-12 DigCit

A series of Twitter Chats

presented by

WSKG Public Media featuring

special expert guests

1/17 'Relationships & Communication'

1/24 'Digital Footprint & Identity'

1/31 'News & Media Literacy'



All chats begin at 9pm EST
Follow #DigCit

Here Hear!

In 2018, WSKG's Sarah Gager produced this award-winning music appreciation series for children. Bill Snyder and local student Haley Smith co-hosted the series, WSKG radio staff contributed segments to each episode, and WSKG's Education team provided consultation.

Congratulations to Chenango Valley students Ajay, Haley and Madelyn who were recognized at the October 23 board meeting for their roles in WSKG's "Hear Here!"

Haley was the co-host for the entire series (alongside WSKG's Bill Snyder), and Ajay and Madelyn contributed their voices in an episode titled "Birdsong: The Story and Music of Hikari Oe." WSKG ended up winning two awards for this project: "Best Podcast 2019" from New York State Broadcasters Association and "First Place Radio II Category 2019" from the New York State Associated Press Association.



Native America Initiative

In addition to airing this groundbreaking three part series, WSKG hosted a screening event in partnership with The Rockwell Museum of American Art in Corning, NY, welcoming 175 guests. Workshops were held for local teachers to share educational content from the series. WSKG filmed local resident Alicia Merrill, telling and sharing her own story as well as uploading her 'Journey Home' educational board game to the national PBS LearningMedia platform. This board game is intended for students in grades 4-6 as a teaching tool to learn about Native American history and culture.

Grants and Foundation Recognition

Without grants, WSKG could not provide the communities we serve with the level of programming and community outreach that is such an intrinsic part of our mission. WSKG thanks the following granting organizations for their support:

Bert Santora Charitable Trust
Community Foundation of Tompkins County
Conrad and Virginia Klee Foundation
Cornell University
Corning Incorporated Foundation
Corporation for Public Broadcasting
National Science Foundation
New York State Education Department
New York State Office Substance Abuse Services
PBS
R.C. Smith Foundation
STEAMfest
Tioga Downs Regional Community Foundation
Twin Cities PBS (TPT)
United Way of Broome County
WETA

My husband and I are 48 and 49 years old, and have 4 grandchildren! We love your programming and plan on getting rid of cable and giving your station some of the money! I added up the time spent on PBS and other channel's and 80% was PBS! Thank you for your great programming ever since we were children!

***Tina
Conklin, NY***

Board of Trustees

WSKG is operated by WSKG Public Telecommunications Council, a private non-profit corporation chartered by the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York in association with the New York State Department of Education, and provides a public educational telecommunications service under the governance of a Board of Trustees which is selected from the communities served by the Station.

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A great show! Ethel and I were very well entertained! Our compliments to the show's staff and cast. Rick is an amazing pianist.

***Gerry
Newark Valley, NY***

Community Advisory Board

The Community Advisory Board meets quarterly to discuss WSKG's programs and services, and to present community needs that public media should be addressing. The radio stations' format change was a major topic this year, as was news coverage and local programming. The board alternates between meeting at WSKG's Vestal studios and the Ithaca office. CAB meetings are posted in advance at www.WSKG.org/CAB, and all are welcome.

Carolyn Adam
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I enjoy the programs on NPR stations. I listen to WSKG every morning when driving to my work from Binghamton, where I live, to Ithaca, where I work. My wife and I are faithful believers in public radio- my family has historically supported public radio. So my wife and I are transferring this family culture and tradition to our children. Thank you NPR. Thank you WSKG for your educational programs. Continue your great and excellent work.

Adeolu
Binghamton, NY

Leadership Society

The WSKG Leadership Society is comprised of members of our community who contribute 1000 dollars or more annually.

10,000+

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David and Patricia Maule
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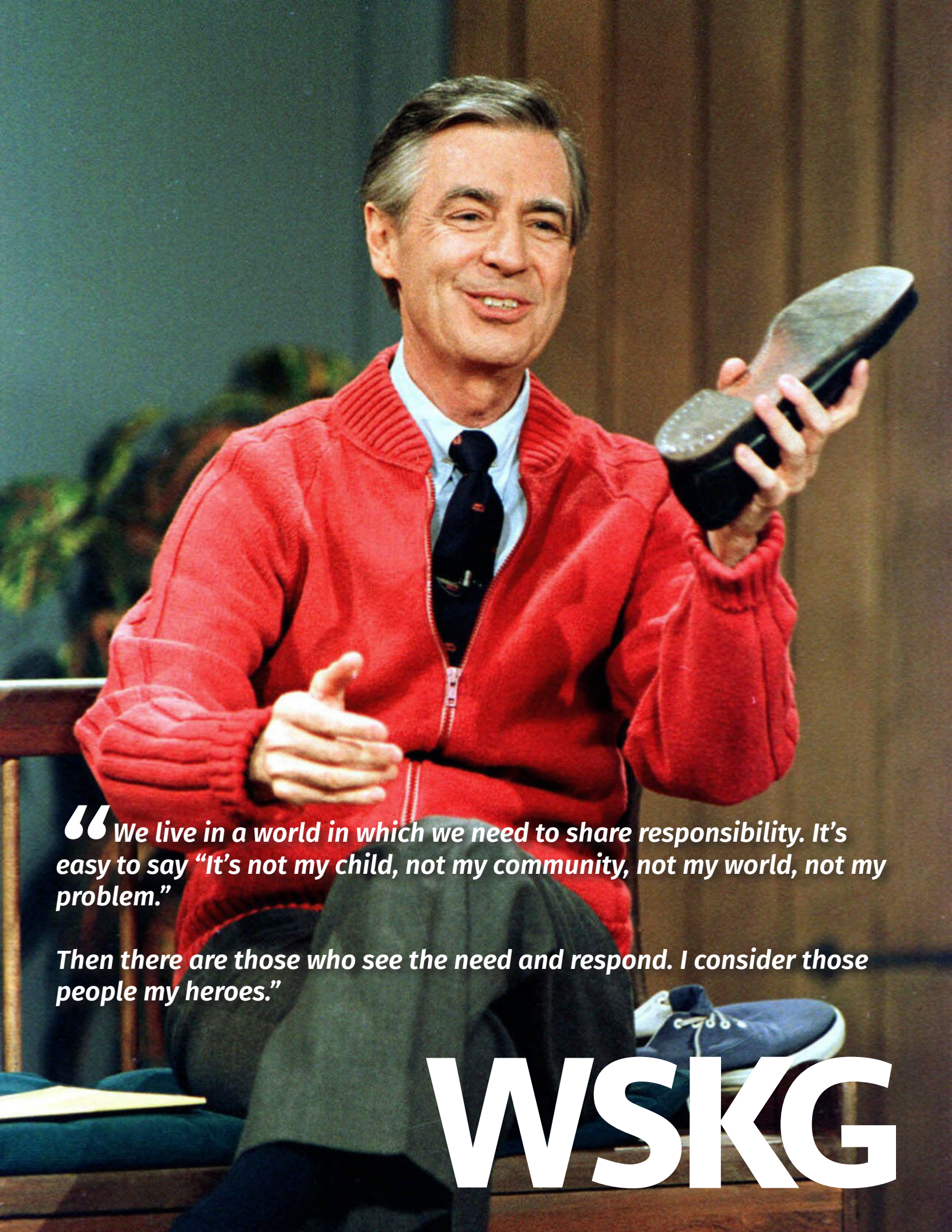
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Thomas Zaslavsky

32 Anonymous Donors

I just finished watching the last seven episodes of Chasing The Dream Season 2 today. Thank you for producing quality, inspiring programming. After watching, I made a donation to host Natasha Thompson's worthwhile organization Food Bank of the Southern Tier. Keep up the good work. I am a proud member of WSKG.

**Neal
Binghamton, NY**

A man with grey hair, wearing a red zip-up jacket over a light blue shirt and a dark tie, is sitting in a wooden chair. He is smiling and holding the sole of a black shoe in his left hand, while his right hand is gesturing. A pair of blue sneakers is on the floor next to him. The background is a blurred indoor setting with a plant.

“We live in a world in which we need to share responsibility. It’s easy to say “It’s not my child, not my community, not my world, not my problem.”

Then there are those who see the need and respond. I consider those people my heroes.”

WSKG