

Local Content and Service Report

Fiscal Year 2023 (July, 2022 – June, 2023)

WSIU – Powered by You!

Fiscal Year 2023 was an extraordinary 12 months for content and service by the WSIU stations. The following narrative details our efforts in outreach, education, television, radio, and the sustainability efforts to ensure WSIU continues this essential work.

During the fiscal year, WSIU Executive Director Fred Martino completed a program review of the operation. Before and during the review process, Martino met WSIU staff, University administration, and WSIU Friends Board members to discuss ways to grow WSIU's impact while aligning the budget to those needs. This effort resulted in the WSIU management plan. Program reviewers endorsed adoption of the goals in the management plan, as well as the creation of a new strategic plan.

Following the conclusion of restructuring efforts in 2023, work on the strategic plan began, using the WSIU management plan as a key blueprint. That plan is designed around the key concepts of structure, service, and support:

1. Structure: Focus on revitalizing the organization, its people, and the technology that helps expand its reach
2. Service: Grow efforts in digital innovation, dialogue, and diversity. Known as the "three D's," these have been identified as key priorities by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB)
3. Support: Foster community, media, and educational partnerships to ensure the structural and service enhancements are sustainable

Structure

- a) Organization: WSIU is developing organizational changes centered around a renewed focus on its core mission of producing the best in radio, television, and online programming. As viewers and listeners access

national programming from a variety of sources, it's essential for WSIU to create an organizational structure centered on local programming.

b) People: WSIU is looking for ways to grow the talent pool for the organization. This includes collaboration with educational partners at the high school and college level. It is also working with Southern Illinois University to ensure salary adjustments to replace key personnel.

c) Technology: Focus on new infrastructure for streaming and remote interviews in the television studios and the newsroom. These efforts will make it easier to produce programming for the entire service area.

Service

a) Digital innovation: WSIU's digital presence is essential. The digital audience continues to grow. To reach new audiences and better serve the public, WSIU has started efforts to revamp its digital footprint. This included a new unified website with a news focus. Previously, the news website had a separate URL from the station site, which did not offer daily content updates. The station's mobile application is also being redesigned and will feature new content available on the website, such as updates from regional partners and additional podcasts, including a third daily newscast.

b) Dialogue: Public media's greatest asset is its ability to provide content not available anywhere else that will spark dialogue about the people, issues, and events that shape our world. WSIU should build on its strong commitment to increasing dialogue in the region.

c) Diversity: The additional programs will allow WSIU to feature a more diverse mix of topics and guests. This can include more interstitial content that airs during program breaks.

Support

a) Community: Shortly after WSIU acquired the stations in Quincy, Springfield, and Macomb, the coronavirus pandemic damaged efforts to integrate the stations, due to reduced outreach and programming efforts.

WSIU should update and relaunch a plan to increase engagement. This includes more corporate support by increasing WSIU presence through additional events and underwriting visits. Plans to develop a Friends board in Quincy should also be pursued. That city was once a strong source of financial support for the previous community licensee.

b) Media: WSIU should develop partnerships with media organizations in Quincy and the other new markets. Meetings have already been held with the Herald Whig, Quincy's daily newspaper, and WGEM-TV its number-one rated NBC affiliate. WSIU should also build on current partnerships with public stations in Champaign (WILL) and Peoria (WTPV) through content sharing agreements. The new WSIU website has also expanded the use of news content from public radio partners throughout Illinois.

c) Educational: Build on the partnership underway with the student media advisor at Quincy University, which will allow WSIU to showcase student videos in local programming. WSIU's executive director has visited area high schools and community organizations to recruit more student interns, and that has potential for growth. WSIU should continue working with SIU-C's Africana Studies department and other faculty to integrate students into programming efforts. This could include "SIU Connections," a regular segment highlighting the University's multicultural impact in the region.

WSIU performance measures should include the number and success of these various community, media, and educational partnerships.

ACTIVITIES – FISCAL YEAR 2023

Outreach

SIU Spring 2023 Saluki Student Job & Internship Fair, February 21, 2023. WSIU's Susan Coloni participated on behalf of the stations.

SIU Volunteer/ Student Involvement Fair August 2022, Faner Plaza SIU Campus. WSIU's Abby Asher participated on behalf of the stations.

Participated in scholarship programs directed at students desiring to pursue a career in broadcasting. Awards given include: O'Brien Award, TV & FM Student of the Year Award, Student Service Award.

The Stations announced a partnership with RIAS Berlin Commission Journalist Program in January 2022. This partnership will sponsor Station employees or SIU students interested in traveling to Germany to learn more about journalism and international issues. The station connected a recent SIU graduate with the program & she received a 3-week paid fellowship in Germany.

03-28-2023: The station welcomed W. Bolle, a journalist from Germany that visited as part of a German scholarship program. This provided engagement opportunities for Journalism students at SIU and WSIU employees.

10-28-2022: Provided a tour to Leadership Carbondale class and conducted classroom exercise with the group. Discussed career opportunities in media. WSIU's Brian Flath & Jennifer Flath.

04-12-2023: Provided a tour to middle school students in a WSIU media pilot program hosted by the Carbondale Public Library. Discussed future career opportunities in broadcasting & college enrollment. Fred Martino, Executive Director and WSIU's Beth Spezia.

03-31-2023: Provided a tour to Herrin High School media students. Encouraged media studies and discussed future career opportunities in broadcasting & college enrollment. Fred Martino, Executive Director.

06/05/2023: Provided a tour to graduate students studying at Center for English as a Second Language (Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, IL) and discussed career opportunities in media. Fred Martino, Executive Director.

02/22/2023: Executive Director & Education & Outreach Representative attended the Southern Illinois School Press Association's Winter Conference at the SIU Student Center. Provided workshops for middle and high school students interested in Journalism.

The stations offered Indie Lens Pop Up film screenings to the public at the Carbondale Library on February 5, 2023 & March 5, 2023. WSIU's Beth Spezia attended on behalf of the stations.

The stations hosted "WSIU Friends Connections" events to engage with supporters about opportunities for students and others to learn at WSIU and to learn from the programming offered. 7/2/2022- Quincy, IL; 10/21/2022- Springfield, IL; 01/24/2023- Carbondale, IL; 01/27/2023- Springfield, IL. These events were hosted by station employees, Fred Martino and Larry Hunter.

The stations connected with schools throughout the area to nominate students for our Top Teens program. Students completed television interviews for the segment. Fred Martino, Executive Director.

The stations annually host two PBS Kids Day celebrations. 04/15/2023- Mt. Vernon, IL and 04/29/2023- Springfield, IL. WSIU's Beth Spezia coordinates this event along with numerous other station employees.

The stations produced several Eye on Education episodes in which various educators highlighted their area of interest, opportunities for students as well as post-graduate employment. Fred Martino, Executive Director.

In FY 2023, the corporate support team participated in various events to highlight the station and its' commitment to serving the community. A few notes on these events:

-In August 2022, Assistant Director of Corporate Support Jeri Waldeck hosted SuperWhy at Knights Action Park in Springfield. Children enjoyed taking pictures with him and receiving PBS KIDS bracelets.

-In August 2022, Assistant Director of Corporate Support Tracy Hauser walked along with the WSIU Literacy Van in the Du Quoin State Fair parade, handing out PBS KIDS bracelets along the way.

-In April 2023, the corporate support team assisted with the annual Family Fun Day at Cedarhurst Center for the Arts in Mt. Vernon. They secured sponsorships for the event, as well as assisted other WSIU staff, along with Cedarhurst staff, sponsors and community volunteers, at the event.

-In May 2023, the corporate support team assisted with the first ever Family Fun Day at the Henson-Robinson Zoo in Springfield. They secured sponsorships for the event, as well as assisted other WSIU staff, along with Zoo staff, sponsors and community volunteers, at the event.

Partnership with American Cancer Society

WSIU was proud to partner again with the American Cancer Society by airing underwriting announcements on FM & TV to highlight ACS services. In return, WSIU was noted as a sponsor at many ACS events throughout southern & central Illinois.

Education

Top Teens

Worked with WSIU staff and area schools to schedule 50 Top Teens interviews.

The inaugural season of Top Teens recordings was completed and uploaded to a WSIU playlist on YouTube. At present, the videos have generated more than 7,000 views.

PBS KIDS Family Days

PBS KIDS Family Days at Cedarhurst Center for the Arts in Mt. Vernon, Illinois and Henson Robinson Zoo in Springfield, Illinois; total reported number of participants 3,050.

Theme: Wild World of PBS KIDS

Wild World of PBS KIDS highlights the natural world and creatures in it, especially flora and fauna native to the state of Illinois. Many community groups and volunteers support this free annual event. PBS KIDS videos and music entertain guests. Make and take art works are available. PBS KIDS characters Nature Cat and Dog from Word World make guest appearances. Each child receives a free book to take home.

Sponsors and community partners for these events included: Aisin Manufacturing, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois, CEFCU, Girl Scouts, Green Subaru, IBEW, Illinois Home Stores, King City Property Brokers, Mt. Vernon Convention and Visitor's Bureau, Rend Lake College, Sangamon Mass Transit District, SIU Credit Union, Springfield Clinic, SSM Health, and YMCA.

SIU Connections

SIU Connections is a digital series of short videos that showcases the creative work of students sharing the accomplishments of diverse people whose impact reflects their association with Southern Illinois University. The video library includes stories about Katherine Dunham, Charles Johnson, Saliwe Kawewe, and Bill Wilkerson, with more to come. Early stages; good student participation.

Here are testimonials concerning SIU Connections videos:

Faculty member Dr. Saliwe Kawewe comments in an email on 8/9/23:

I am so very grateful for all of the effort that has been put into this piece! It is thoughtful, beautiful and so very creative. You've done a wonderful job! I definitely approve!

Best Regards:

Saliwe Kawewe, Ph.D., MSW, BSW

Professor of Social Work, School of Human Sciences

Student Sophie Adams had the following to say in an email on 8/14/23:

Beth Spezia contacted me halfway through my senior year of undergrad requesting an illustrator and animator for a new docu-series through WSIU. This opportunity has been the highlight of my academic time spent at Southern Illinois University. While working on this project I encountered new challenges that can only be learned within a team project. Expanding beyond my previous skills of solo projects, this internship allowed me to practice incorporating my client's requests, and collaborate with a diverse team, each with their own unique background and skills to bring this production to life. It has been a phenomenal experience in learning effective communication, design, and the synergy that binds it all together.

Youth news bureau pilots

WSIU is working with area libraries and the journalism community to develop youth news production programs in after school settings. Libraries received \$12K in state grant funds to conduct this activity in partnership with WSIU. We have conducted a variety of workshops at libraries and in area schools to foster development of the program.

Indie Lens Pop-Up

2022-2023 season consisted of the following films:

Move Me, Love in the Time of Fentanyl, Storming Caesar's Palace, and Free Chol Soo Lee. Approximately 66 people participated in the film screenings and discussions at Carbondale Public Library. Highlights are provided below.

Love in the Time of Fentanyl by Colin Askey, Monika Navarro, Marc Serpa Francoeur, and Robinder Uppal

Film Description:

As the number of opioid overdose deaths in Vancouver, Canada reaches an all-time high, the Overdose Prevention Society (OPS) opens its doors in the Downtown Eastside, a neighborhood often referred to as “ground zero of the overdose crisis.” With loved ones dying in unprecedented numbers, the staff at OPS do whatever it takes to save lives, keep the doors open, and search for radical new ways out of the devastating but widely ignored crisis ravaging their community. 'Love in the Time of Fentanyl' reaches beyond the stigma of injection drug users, revealing the courage of those facing tragedy with dignity, love, and care.

Event Summary:

WSIU and Carbondale Public Library welcomed Eric Spurling of Overdose Prevention Society to our screening. Eric made brief remarks about his experience working in the field of harm reduction and answered many questions from participants. His personal insight added depth of meaning to this event. Agency representatives participated by providing short presentations on services and resources: Samuel Stearns of Centerstone; Cindy Johnson of Southern Illinois Healthcare; and Brent Van Ham of Southern Illinois University School of Medicine, Center for Rural Health and Social Service Development; and The Community Action Place, Inc. By inviting multiple local agencies to bring resources and share their services, there was a cross-fertilization of information and understanding about the opioid overdose situation in our region. A very informative NARCAN training was conducted. NARCAN spray and Naloxone injector kits were provided, along with instructions for use and related print resource materials. There was keen interest in the NARCAN training; having the training and kits available attracted some audience members to this event. This was an excellent exchange of information about care in our local neighborhoods and communities.

Storming Caesar's Palace by Hazel Gurland-Pooler

Film Description:

What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas — until now. 'Storming Caesars Palace' chronicles the life of Ruby Duncan, a cotton-picker who fights the welfare system and ends up a White House advisor. It all begins when she loses her job due to a workplace accident and goes on welfare, where she discovers firsthand the stigma and harassment by an overzealous welfare department. Based on a groundbreaking book, 'Storming Caesars Palace' spotlights an unsung leader and movement whose stand for America's principles of justice, inclusion, and opportunity for all challenged notions of the "welfare queen" and continues to shape the calls for economic justice that ring today.

Event Summary:

Participants expressed a range of emotions in response to the film: surprise that they did not know this history and that it was not taught to them in school; anger and frustration that the same issues and problems are still prevalent today; passion regarding the need to organize locally.

Participants communicated their concerns about movements and the likelihood of sustaining them. Everyone in this all-woman audience conveyed willingness to help each other with practical experience and mutual support. This became most clear in conversation about Cairo, Illinois and the ongoing housing issues in this community, which are juxtaposed with a \$40 million state capital project to construct a river port at the confluence of the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers. Dilapidated, condemned public housing in Cairo is being destroyed and families are being displaced to other communities such as Carbondale. National news coverage has been extensive. We incorporated the comments and insights of two other Black mothers/community leaders: Nancy Maxwell from Carbondale United and Chastity Mays from Gift of Love Charity. Nancy and Chastity advocated for Carbondale community involvement in this issue, which has resulted in some people moving from Cairo to Carbondale in the last few years. Nancy and Chastity requested permission and received participant approval to use their email addresses to send a notice about a co-operative grocery store called Rise Community Market being established in Cairo.

Television

WSIU has invested heavily to provide the region with four 24/7 television channels and a fifth channel offering the program stream from WSIU-FM.

Total number of program hours:

WSIU HD: 6,861

World: 6,881

Create: 6,557

PBS Kids channel 7,040

Local Television Programming Highlights

WSIU “Meet the Candidates” aims to be the number one source of candidate information in the region. In FY23, we produced nine candidate forums in the 2022 general election. These followed a wide variety of candidate forums for the primary election, prior to the start of the fiscal year.

“CapitolView” is WSIU’s weekly program covering the Illinois General Assembly. It is the only prime time program of its kind on broadcast television. The program includes interviews with legislators, state administrators, and public policy experts. There is also a weekly segment featuring analysis from the state’s top reporters and political scientists.

“Scholastic Hi-Q” is an academically based game show featuring high school teams from the Southern Illinois region. It's a single elimination tournament in which 32 teams compete. Since 1985, the program has been produced as a weekly series during parts of the fall and spring.

“Eye on Education” features interviews with people making a difference in all facets of learning. The program was broadcast as weekly series during the fiscal year. From pre-K through higher education, we highlight efforts to prepare students to become the world's future leaders in every discipline. The program also shows how educational institutions provide research and public outreach. WSIU covers all this and more to make learning more accessible through our broadcast and digital platforms.

“In Focus” includes interviews and field reports covering some of the most important issues facing the region. The program was broadcast as a weekly series for most of the fiscal year.

WSIU's "Top Teens" are chosen by their respective schools throughout the region. The area students excel academically and in a variety of co-curricular activities. Many are also involved in community service. Condensed versions of these interviews are broadcast on WSIU-TV, with a different student featured every week of the year.

Radio

During the 2023 Fiscal Year, WSIU Radio served a population base of 413,000 individuals in 36 counties in southern Illinois along with border counties in southwest Indiana, western Kentucky, and southeast Missouri. WSIU's average weekly CUME listening audience is approximately 30,000 individuals. The WSIU Radio station network includes WSIU 91.9FM in Carbondale, IL; WVSI 88.9 FM in Mt Vernon, IL; WUSI 90.3 FM in Olney, IL; and a reading service, SIRIS, the Southern Illinois Radio Information Service.

WSIU's goal is to improve the lives of our listeners by providing diverse programming in news, music, and the arts. The stations celebrated an extremely successful year, including the addition of a daily (Monday through Friday) news program, The 21st, in partnership with Illinois Public Media. Radio also provided approximately 650 hours of student professional development during FY23.

One of WSIU's primary goals is to increase the availability of local music and the arts to our listeners. To accomplish this goal, WSIU partnered with the SIU Student Programming Council and the SIU Office of Student Affairs to record concerts that were part of SIU's 44th Annual Sunset Concerts. Three concerts were recorded and produced for broadcast on WSIU Radio. The special on-air concert series, Southern Sounds, extended the reach of the concerts to individuals that were unable to attend the live performances. SIU students helped produce the concerts for air.

To expand the availability of the arts, WSIU Radio partnered with The Radio Players, a local group of SIU faculty, staff, students, and community members, dedicated to creating original radio plays. Five half hour plays

have been produced and aired to date. All plays are original works by author, playwright, and retired John A Logan professor Steve Falcone. The plays are recorded live in the WSIU Radio studio and edited for air by SIU student producers.

Overall, WSIU Radio provided some 8,736 hours of live over the air programming and streaming during FY23. WSIU news and public affairs staff and students produced 375 hours of local news content. In addition, WSIU produced 62 hours of local music, as well as arts and cultural programming.

WSIU also strives to serve underserved populations including individuals who are blind or have visual difficulties. During FY23 WSIU, through its radio reading service SIRIS, provided more than 8,700 hours of spoken word and descriptive audio programming to more than 1,300 blind and visually challenged individuals living in an eight-county service region in southern Illinois. A group of 32 volunteers including SIU students and community members provided 2,000 volunteer reading hours during the past fiscal year. Those hours represent more than \$32,000 in in-kind service to WSIU and the SIRIS service area.

Sustainability

Membership

Fiscal year 2023 was an extraordinary success for WSIU membership. Despite difficult financial conditions internally and in the region, WSIU increased membership in radio and television and secured almost \$100,000 in additional investment from those members. The tables below detail the fiscal year 2023 numbers, followed by the same table from fiscal year 2022.

FY23:

	TV	FM	MEMBERS	
			TV	FM
Total Donors \geq \$1,000	\$ 202,264	\$ 75,835	40	20
Total Donors \leq \$1,000 + Adj	\$ 476,571	\$ 133,172	4,803	3,432
TOTAL	\$678,835	\$209,007	4,883	3,452

FY22:

	TV	FM	MEMBERS	
			TV	FM
Total Donors \geq \$1,000	\$ 123,695	\$ 76,095	32	21
Total Donors \leq \$1,000	\$ 464,808	\$ 125,649	4,642	3,359
TOTAL	\$588,503	\$201,744	4,674	3,380

Property Donations

FY23: 25 vehicle donations totaling \$17,290.00; 2 real estate donations totaling \$6,465.68

FY22: 8 vehicle donations only totaling \$5,399.65

Corporate Support

In FY 2023, the corporate support team had a revenue goal of \$588,000. Actual revenue achieved was \$652,151, which represented 111% to goal.

In FY 2023, the corporate support department secured corporate matches from businesses for both the October 2022 and March 2023 drives. Post-drive, Associate Director of Corporate Support Brian Flath met with the donors at their business and accepted the checks. Social posts were made to recognize their generosity. Corporate support also secured on-air talent during each drive. Social graphics were designed by the digital services team to recognize the talent and encourage additional giving.

WSIU – Powered by You!

Since 1958, WSIU has provided trusted programming and services that inspire personal growth, community engagement, and a love for learning in people of all ages. The WSIU stations serve five million people across seven states and beyond through five digital television channels, three radio stations, a website, local production units, social media, and an educational and community outreach department. Additional services include the Southern Illinois Radio Information Service (SIRIS), operated by WSIU Radio, which helps 1,000 individuals who are blind or whose physical condition prevents them from reading to stay connected to the world.

WSIU also offers professional development in the broadcast industry to many students each year. Licensed to the Board of Trustees of Southern Illinois University, WSIU Public Broadcasting works closely with the College of Arts and Media and other academic and service units associated with the Carbondale campus.

WSIU is powered by you. Without your loyal support, the services we provide wouldn't be possible. When you contribute to WSIU, you are making an impact today, and you're a champion and advocate for a bright future.

State of Illinois support provided through the Illinois Arts Council

