FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

We are always busy at WVPB. From the business office to the programming team, and the news team to our Folkways reporting corps, it seems as if we are always in motion. So when the coronavirus hit West Virginia, like everyone else, we had a lot of adapting to do and many things to juggle. Some of us could work from home, but for others it wasn’t possible. Wouldn’t it be an incredible feat to upgrade our transmission technology from the comfort of a dining room table instead of suspended from a tower over rugged West Virginia terrain? Our engineers don’t have that luxury.

During the pandemic, our production folks gave us Rosemary, the story of the state’s first openly transgender person elected to public office. Add to that, two major debates, a digital series about food in the forest and two Regional EMMY nominations, just to hit the highlights.

Those who connect with our members, research and write grants, or search for sponsors are always on deadline. WVPB’s survival depends on it.

Our radio and television programming is both news we need and the respite we require from it. Our essential employees show up and work hard. Our IT folks make working from home seamless so our employees can do their jobs well. Our reporters continually bring us news we need to know and features for which we’re grateful. The people of our award-winning podcasts, Inside Appalachia and Us & Them, upload quality content relevant to the surreal situation in which we find ourselves. Our Mountain Stage team brings us special streams when it can and gems from our archives when that’s the safest option.

Our education gurus are two former teachers who are sympathetic to the unique challenges educators, parents and guardians face with at-home learning. They have excellent resources at the ready. Our newsletters reach out to subscribers every week. We stay connected with our friends on socials. Our digital streams flow as easily as their namesake.

Everything points to a group of dedicated employees working hard for West Virginians (and fans everywhere). They do it because they believe that the important service we bring you on a good day is even more critical to you in the midst of a global pandemic. Despite challenges, WVPB employees have prevailed, excelled and continued to inspire. Their commitment shines on these pages.

Chuck Roberts is Executive Director of WVPB.

WVPB AT A GLANCE

West Virginia Public Broadcasting has been an indispensable resource for education, news and public affairs, emergency services and economic development for West Virginia for more than 50 years. Headquartered in Charleston, it has locations/reporters in Morgantown, Wheeling, Shepherdstown and Beckley.

Our 54-person team, from production to news, and education to programming, aspires to inform, educate, protect and inspire our listeners and viewers. The governing board of WVPB is the Educational Broadcasting Authority, which holds the federal licenses to broadcast both public radio and public television for the Mountain State.

WVPB airs international, national and statewide news and entertainment programs across West Virginia and in some surrounding states through its radio, television and digital networks. In the event of a serious crisis, emergency officials can communicate to the entire state from the Capitol through WVPB equipment.

Organizationally, WVPB has nine main departments and an Executive Director that make up its Leadership Team. They include:

- **DEVELOPMENT** helps support WVPB through the work of the West Virginia Public Broadcasting Foundation, Inc. and the Friends of West Virginia Public Broadcasting. It also handles all services for our supporting members.
- **DIGITAL** handles all website, streaming and social media efforts.
- **EDUCATION** supports both in-school and at-home learning with a number of special programs that focus on educating and inspiring students and supporting teachers, parents and guardians.
- **ENGINEERING** strives to keep our towers and transmitters working and in compliance.
- **FINANCE** handles the agency’s business, from accounting to human resources.
- **GRANTS AND UNDERWRITING** reinforces the organization financially though national and local business support, as well as with a number of prestigious grants.
- **MOUNTAIN STAGE** is our prized experiential music program. This team brings an eclectic mix of famous and up-and-coming artists to our stage and shares this experience with the world every weekend on more than 270 NPR radio stations, as well as statewide on WVPB radio and streaming at mountainstage.org.
- **NEWS** provides statewide coverage with nine full-time and two part-time reporters and producers, who craft audio, video and digital print feature stories that are also often distributed to regional and national outlets through editorial partnerships, NPR and The Associated Press. West Virginia Morning, Inside Appalachia, Appalachia Health News and The Legislature Today are a few highlight programs produced by the news team with support from programming and production departments.
- **VIDEO PRODUCTION** provides original television and digital content through documentaries and special programs. This team also supports news programming and special events.
- **PROGRAMMING** covers television and radio programming, including master control operations and on-air talent.

WE’RE ALWAYS WORKING TO IMPROVE OUR SIGNAL

The FCC has mandated that television stations do a spectrum repack. This means two things: a new broadcasting standard called ATSC 3.0 and a shift of WVPB’s TV broadcasting signals. Our engineering team is taking this opportunity to improve the TV broadcasting infrastructure and expand emergency communication abilities so we can deliver more finely pinpointed alerts, thus reducing emergency response time for responders. This work is continual.
BOARD MEMBERS

EDUCATIONAL BROADCASTING AUTHORITY
The EBA is our governing board, and members are appointed by the governor or serve in an ex officio capacity on behalf of their organizations.

The Honorable Jim Justice, Governor, State of West Virginia
William H. File III, Beckley, Chair
Dr. Corley Dennison, Ona, Vice Chair
Ann C. Brotherton, Charleston
Michael J. Farrell, Huntington,
West Virginia Higher Education
Policy Commission
Stephen Hopta, Charleston
W. Clayton Burch, Charleston,
West Virginia Superintendent of Schools
Maryanne Reed, Morgantown,
Carol Rotruck, Morgantown
Nancy J. White, Berkeley Springs,
West Virginia Board of Education
Edwin Sweeney, Weston

WEST VIRGINIA PUBLIC BROADCASTING FOUNDATION, INC.
Our foundation receives major gifts, grants and bequests for WVPB and manages WVPB’s endowment fund.

Edward C. (Ted) Armbricht, Jr., Charleston, Chair
Peter Holloway, Wheeling, Secretary
Bob Baker, Beckley, Past Friends Chair
Barbara Bean, Bridgeport
Ann C. Brotherton, Charleston
William (Bill) H. File III, Beckley
Cynthia Geary, Petersburg
Ellen Goodwin, Lewisburg
Susan Hogan, Wheeling
Steven Hopta, Charleston
Leslie Nutting, Wheeling
Shana Phares, Charleston, Friends Chair
Patricia Proctor, Huntington
Carol Rotruck, Morgantown
Peter Sullivan, Charleston

FRIENDS OF WEST VIRGINIA PUBLIC BROADCASTING, INC.
The Friends, a charitable 501(c)(3) organization, supports WVPB’s quality services and solicits and manages annual membership donations on behalf of WVPB. Every individual contribution entitles a donor to membership.

Shana Phares, Charleston, Chair
Carole Garrison, Ona, Vice Chair
Walt Warren, Wheeling, Secretary
Michael Moore, Ona, Treasurer
Bob Baker, Beckley, Past Chair
Travis Baldwin, Charleston
Sally Barton, Charleston
Ernest Blevins, South Charleston
Cynthia Brissey, Salem
Bonnie Brown, South Charleston
Kathy Chiode-Holbert, Phillipi
Sara Crickenberger, Lewisburg
Craig Cunningham, Charleston
Gairold (Skip) Flynn, Huntington
Nicholas Freidin, Huntington
Brian Gallagher, Huntington
Max Gottlieb, Charleston
Dauna Hawkins, Buckhannon
Susan C. Hogan, Wheeling
Sally Howard, Athens
Ellen Hrabovsky, Morgantown
Betty Ireland, Charleston
Renee Margocee, Charleston
Cecelia Mason, Martinsburg
Jack Ozminkowski, Beckley
Elaine Parke, Berkeley Springs
Rita Ray, Charleston
Karen Rice, Martinsburg
Laurie Ruberg, Wheeling
Kym Scott, Morgan town
Caroline Smith, Oak Hill
Peter L. Staffel, Bethany
Tom Witt, Morgantown

OUR FUNDING MODEL
West Virginia Public Broadcasting has several sources of funding – the State of West Virginia, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and federal grant programs, as well as private dollars from our community raised from individuals, businesses, organizations and foundations that believe in the mission of public broadcasting. This graphic reflects the funding model of the EBA’s funding for Fiscal Year 2020.

TOTAL GRANT AWARDS
Benedum Foundation
EQT
Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies
One Foundation
The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation
Toyo ta
WV Humanities Council
WETA
CRC Foundation
Corporation for Public Broadcasting
$420,688

THEY LIKE US ONLINE
wvpublic.org
1,853,894 (up from 1,276,466)
Radio Stream
627,225 (up from 611,595)
@wvpublic Facebook
42,506 (up from 34,979)
@wvpublic Instagram
5,680 (up from 4,190)
@wvpublicnews
16,379 (up from 15,840)
@wvpublicYouTube
14,812 (up from 9,950)

HOW DO YOU SELL DURING A PANDEMIC LOCKDOWN? COMPASSIONATELY.

In response to the economic crisis resulting from COVID-19, our Underwriting team offered a series of free radio announcements to independent and locally owned restaurants and small businesses that were still open and following social distancing guidelines during the pandemic. Owners of more than 40 small business responded. Each one that met the criteria received a three-week rotation of sponsorship spots on our statewide WVPB radio network.

The idea to help was born when our sales team saw many current underwriters struggling with closed signs and canceled events. Two waves of selections followed, the first focused on locally owned restaurants and the second targeted the broader classification of small businesses.
Kelly Griffith, a former teacher with a strong focus on early literacy, was named Education Director for West Virginia Public Broadcasting. Griffith, who has served as WVPB’s education specialist for the past year, has a B.A. in Elementary Education Multi-Subject K-6 from West Virginia State University and a Master of Education degree in Literacy PreK to Adult from Marshall University. She brings to the position 17 years of teaching experience in the classroom with a strong focus on early literacy, and she spent most of her teaching career as a first-grade teacher and Title 1 Reading Specialist. Griffith also has worked with the West Virginia Department of Education as part of its Instructional Materials Review Committee and is presently working with schools, libraries and communities across the state to support early literacy.

WE ARE FILLING A NEED FOR MORE LOCAL PROGRAMS WITH HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS AT WVDE AND WVU

WVPB and our PBSKids Channel always have been a safe haven for children. It’s also been a most trusted educational resource for parents and guardians, but when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, our Programming Team ramped up educational programming offerings to meet the needs of kids who were attempting distance learning, many without access to reliable internet. WVPB entered into a partnership with the West Virginia Department of Education to deliver student engagement content for state students during the COVID-19 school closures. This partnership continues to provide students with access to a five-day a week program twice a day called Education Station. It provides students with content to keep their skills sharp, keep them connected to the learning process and serve as a resource for at-home learning. The program is created and provided by educators from classrooms as well as WVDE staff members, and addresses the critical need for student engagement, regardless of internet connectivity or operational devices at the student’s home. Season 1 consisted of 23 episodes. We are currently airing Season 2.

Over the summer months, we also worked with the WVU Extension Service to bring the summer Energy Express program to kids who would not be able to attend. WVPB also began airing historic, scientific and cultural programming from noon to 6 p.m. on the West Virginia Channel to reach older students. We know the divide still exists between our children who have access to broadband and can learn online and those who don’t. We are continually working to be a resource for students during the pandemic so they can continue to learn, grow and thrive during this unprecedented time.

FORMER TEACHER LEADS EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

NEW EDUCATION NEWSLETTER NOT JUST FOR TEACHERS

The Education Department launched a weekly electronic newsletter at the start of the COVID-19 school closures in West Virginia. It is designed for parents, caregivers and educators of students in K-12 grades. Each week, it showcases our newest PBS resources and activities, as well as the latest educational news from WVPB, NPR and PBS. Content ranges from social-emotional development, math, science, social studies, West Virginia history, geography, English, creating an anti-racist classroom, and much more! It is distributed to more than 5,000 subscribers.

OUR FAMILY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM CONTINUES TO GROW

Inquire Within is our out-of-school program designed to encourage family engagement and early literacy. In FY 2020, we continued our partnership with the original 11 libraries and brought on two new libraries. Before the pandemic struck in March, our Inquire Within libraries had offered more than 33 live events with 992 children participating in those events. Since March, libraries have had to change how their programs run because of COVID-19. Many have offered a variety of virtual events, grab-and-go kits and lawn activities for kids and their families to stay connected. A total of 528 families participated in these types of activities.
12,000 people pledged financial support to WVPB; half are sustainers.

45,621 people used our free online resource, PBS LearningMedia (up from 34,114).

534 news/feature stories filed by our team of nine reporters.

WE TOOK OUR TALENTS INTO THE COMMUNITY

Each year, WVPB partners with the Jumpstart Organization to help promote early literacy. A book is carefully chosen that fosters language and social-emotional development, honors the diversity in our world, has a strong narrative and appeals to young children. That book is read across the country and around the world by adults and young readers on Read for the Record day. Employees and friends of WVPB pledged to read to children across the Mountain State to encourage the love of reading and express the importance of literacy to our children. We had 200 volunteers and friends read the same book to 5,127 children on November 7, 2019, reaching all 55 counties.

PERFORM CLASSICAL MUSIC ON WVPB

Partly because our communities cannot gather in public to enjoy concerts and partly because we happen to have a passionate host of our Classical Music program, we’re proud to offer a unique learning opportunity for our radio audiences — Live Classical Music Without A Net With Matt Jackfert. Local musicians can perform on air during the classical music program. We plan to expand this program into a weekly offering and install equipment that will allow for live streaming of these performances on social media. This initiative is made possible by the Friends of West Virginia Public Broadcasting.

NEWS DEPARTMENT WINS MULTIPLE AWARDS, HAS NEW LEADERSHIP

The News Department has undergone a change in leadership to Andrea Billups, a native of Hurricane and a veteran national reporter, author, media consultant and educator. Andrea earned her bachelor’s degree from Marshall University and her master’s degree in mass communications from the University of Florida.

Her work has been published in Time, US News, Reader’s Digest, Money, the Washington Post, The Washington Times, PEOPLE and many other publications. She leads a team of nine award-winning reporters who cover West Virginia and other areas of Appalachia. This year, they produced 534 stories from features to news and were recognized for their reporting and storytelling as follows:

PUBLIC MEDIA JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATION 2020 AWARD
- Podcast, Second Place, Trey Kay, Us & Them, “Abortion Divides”

2019 VIRGINIAS AP BROADCASTERS CONTEST
- Best Specialty Reporting, Second Place, Caitlin Tan, Arts and Culture Reporting
- Best Mountain State Heritage, First Place, Caitlin Tan, “The West Virginia Monster That Crept Into International Pop Culture,” and Second Place, Caitlin Tan, “How to Bake Bread Like Appalachia’s Ancestors”
- Best Multimedia/Online Journalism, Second Place, Brittany Patterson, Larry Dowling and Chuck Kleine, “Mountain State Mead Makers Provide a Taste of Appalachia”
- Best Investigative Reporting, First Place, Brittany Patterson and Alexandra Kanik for “Mine Safety Debt for West Virginia Governor Justice’s Family Companies Grows to $4 Million”
- Best Serious Feature, Second Place, Liz McCormick for “Unseen Impacts of Opioid Epidemic: More Autopsies, Staff Shortages and Transporting the Dead”
- Best Website, Second Place, Chad Matlick

2020 REGIONAL EDWARD R. MURROW AWARDS/RTDNA
- Continuing Coverage, Brittany Patterson, Sydney Boles (Ohio Valley Resource) “Blackjewel Coal Miners Stop Trains”
VIRUS CLOSES DOOR TO LIVE SHOWS, BUT ANOTHER OPENS WIDE ON NATIONAL RADIO

Despite a global pandemic, Mountain Stage was carried on more NPR stations than ever in its 36-year history, and from June 2019 to February 2020, prior to the abrupt end to our live-show season, our team was able to produce 19 live events for national broadcast. This includes two nights of holiday jazz during WVPB’s presentation of Bob Thompson’s Joy To The World, and a special autumn evening of intimate performances at Adventures on the Gorge in Fayette County before 150 live music lovers. Performances by Larry Groce, Larry Campbell and Teresa Williams gave us a special opportunity to connect with Mountain Stage Members in new ways. They also helped inspire new members to come on board in a beautiful, rustic setting.

Another live highlight was our 36th Anniversary Show in December 2019 featuring Tyler Childers. It sold out in 11 minutes. Its LiveSessions stream on npr.org was logged into by 2,333 people.

A few of our live events were offered as free one-time live streams to audiences across the country through LiveSessions.NPR.org. Thirty-two performances were added to our existing content of 139 videos at LiveSessions and collectively they enjoyed 29,198 views. Artists from all over the world continue to come to West Virginia for the opportunity to have their music heard on 270 NPR stations across the country. Country music legend and West Virginia native, Kathy Mattea, stepped up to the host’s mic on occasion, bringing her fresh-yet-familiar voice to the national stage. Mattea is renowned throughout the world and is a revered peer among greats in Nashville. Her role in the recent Ken Burns documentary, Country Music further raised her profile.

Mountain Stage per quarter hour, while total audience is about 182,100 listeners.*

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Larry Groce, 72-year-old singer-songwriter, host of WVPB’s Mountain Stage, festival producer and the person who has been called the voice of West Virginia, was named the 2019 Sunday Gazette-Mail West Virginian of the Year on New Year’s Day 2020.

Artist Patty Griffin performs on Mountain Stage.

In 2019-20, the Folksways Project received more than 50 applications for 13 spots on the Corps. Because of the coronavirus pandemic, reporting corps training was re-designed from a retreat format to virtual this year.

Over the course of a year, reporting Corps members produced audio stories on the folk arts, food ways, music, dance and other aspects of Appalachian culture from across the region. WVPB Folksways staff reporter, Caitlin Tan, contributed an additional two stories monthly to the project. Folksways stories air on WVPB’s radio show and podcast, Inside Appalachia, which also is heard on other radio stations throughout Appalachia. Many stories also were featured on WVPB’s morning news show, West Virginia Morning.

In addition to the reporting project, WVPB staff worked with classroom students to help connect them with counterparts in the British Isles so they could compare traditions and understand the folkways connections between their cultures. The purpose of the Folksways Project is that through the increased awareness it brings, the folk arts and cultures of Appalachia will be more deeply understood, more broadly recognized and more widely practiced.

Inside Appalachia and Folksways got a fresh new look this year! Logo design by AUGE+GRAY+DRAKE of Charleston.
WVPB PROVIDES ESSENTIAL SERVICES DURING PANDEMIC

WVPB television, radio and digital services continue to play an essential role in keeping the public informed about the COVID-19 pandemic on a global scale, but also, importantly, on a state and local level. We continue to broadcast live on the West Virginia Channel, our social media accounts and our website every briefing from the Office of the Governor relating to COVID-19, informing the public of spikes in cases, changes in how we should interact in public with social distancing and personal protective equipment, important closures, restrictions and reopenings, and changes in how the public education system operates.

TV PRODUCTION TEAM BRINGS US UNIQUE CONTENT

Despite the coronavirus pandemic, WVPB’s production team continued to create content — from an in-depth documentary about the state’s first openly transgender person elected to public office to producing key political debates. We never shut down. Instead, we figured out creative ways to continue to work and collaborate on projects small or large in scope. Other projects include:

- **EDIBLE MOUNTAIN** is a bite-sized, digital series that showcases some of Appalachia’s overlooked and underappreciated products of the forest while highlighting their mostly forgotten uses. We rolled out this series at the beginning of the pandemic when the state was under lockdown to encourage people to get outside, social distance and learn about wild foods.

- **DON’T JUDGE A SOCK BY ITS COLOR**, was written, illustrated and voiced by elementary school student Elliot Jackson, a winner in our PBS Kids Writers Contest. The animated digital short was produced by producer/director Patrick Sergent. **IN TUNE: A COMMUNITY OF MUSICIANS** is a celebration of old-time music history in the Mountain State produced by Russ Barbour. Both productions received Regional Emmy nominations.

- **THE FUTURE OF THE WEST VIRGINIA SUPREME COURT: AN EVENING WITH THE CANDIDATES** aired on WVPB television twice prior to the primary to give voters a look at nine candidates, who could not safely connect with them because of safety guidelines. Larry Dowling produced and directed this virtual debate. The **WEST VIRGINIA SECRETARY OF STATE DEBATE** featured candidates Natalie Tennant and incumbent Mac Warner. WVPB’s senior reporter Dave Mistich hosted.

- Hosted by Suzanne Higgins, **THE LEGISLATURE TODAY** is the state’s source for legislative news and information. The only live television program covering the West Virginia Legislature, the broadcast features reports from Senate, House and committee meetings with in-depth interviews and analysis of the state’s legislative process.

Above is an ad for Rosemary, which was produced by Corey Knollinger and Chuck Kleine, both Wheeling residents. The film may be streamed at wvpublic.org.

WVPB PROVIDES ESSENTIAL SERVICES DURING PANDEMIC

- **THE LEGISLATURE TODAY**
  - TV/RADIO BROADCASTS
  - LEGISLATURE’S LIVE FLOOR SESSIONS (WV CHANNEL)
  - WEST VIRGINIA SUPREME COURT HEARINGS

  246 HOURS
  OF PUBLIC SERVICE

wvpublic.org