

## **Diversity Statement for WMUK-FM | September 2022**

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### **Why diversity is important to our public media work.**

WMUK-FM is licensed to Western Michigan University (WMU). As part of WMU's commitment to diversity, the Station annually provides a report on our internal diversity, as well as our efforts to reach an increasingly diverse audience with our reporting and programming. We also believe this is also an extension of our licensee's educational mission, in line with the Station's core mission of creating a more informed public.

### **The extent to which our staff and governance reflect such diversity.**

As of 30 September 2022, WMUK is comprised of ten (10) full-time employees and five active (5) part-time employees. Within the Station unit, the General Manager is an African-American male, the Corporate Support and Major Giving Manager is an Indian-American female, and one part-time employee is an Asian-American female. The latter employee self-identifies as possessing a disability. Additionally, there were four (4) news interns between 1 October 2021 and 30 September 2022 – of this group two were white females, one was a black male, and one was a white male. All four interns were paid.

With regard to our governance, there are eight (8) members of the Board of Trustees of Western Michigan University. Of these eight, two are minority female trustees (one Asian-American, one African-American). Another trustee is a Native-American male. WMUK's governance also includes the University President, who is an African-American male.

WMUK and WMU seek to reach diverse candidate pools as part of our employment outreach. This includes posting to minority job banks, both locally and nationally, when full-time employment opportunities become available.

### **Progress we've made to increase our diversity in the last 2-3 years.**

WMUK-FM maintains outreach to diverse communities through local coverage and community engagement. This includes on-air reporting and interviews by staff with people reflecting the diversity of our community. With the hiring of WMUK's first female news director in its 70+ year history and the hiring of a disabled minority reporter (part-time), we have continued our efforts to broaden the perspectives of our newsroom.

Examples of issues impacting diverse constituencies in the past year include a March 2022 three-part series on the history of forced removal of Native Americans in Southwest Michigan. This was part of our monthly *Why's That?* feature segment.

WMUK's weekly *Art Beat* feature series often covers arts and culture relevant to diverse communities. For example, in May 2022 *Art Beat* explored the troubled history of race at

Kalamazoo College with author Anna Dueweke. The author, a 1984 Kalamazoo College graduate, discussed her writings about racial disparities in how students have been treated at the college over the years.

In August 2022, the Station covered the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a Hindu temple in Portage, Michigan, and the challenges the temple is facing to remain relevant to younger generations of the approximately 600 families it serves in the Kalamazoo-Battle Creek metro area.

In February 2022, Julian Kuerti, Music Director of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra (KSO), was interviewed on WMUK's weekly Spanish-language music program *Alma Latina*. The subject of the interview was promotion of an upcoming KSO concert featuring the debut of a symphonic work by a Chilean composer. Due to the subject matter and Kuerti's fluency in Spanish, both the Station, KSO and the volunteer show hosts agreed an interview about this concert would be of interest to the predominantly Spanish-speaking audience of *Alma Latina*.

In a further commitment to bringing in outside voices and perspectives, the Station often hosts visits by international colleagues working in the fields of media journalism. These visits are coordinated by *Global Ties Kalamazoo* through the U.S. State Department. As an example of this program, in March 2022 we invited a group of seven international guests from Pakistan, to discuss efforts in Pakistan to combat fake news and fighting online extremism.

Further, a locally-hosted music and arts program ("*Let's Hear It*") continues to broadcast a number of interviews on topics of importance to minority listeners, which are aired on our sister station *Classical WMUK* (WKDS 89.9 FM and 102.1 FM HD2). A number of these interviews were with visiting guest or local minority artists who discussed their works or upcoming concerts on-air, as well as their efforts to promote diversity within their art forms.

#### **Our diversity plans for the coming year (FY 2023 | October 1, 2022 – September 30, 2023)**

- Under the new News Director, we will continue to reassess our strategic news objectives, with an eye towards enhanced outreach and reprioritization of coverage.
- As additional employment opportunities arise, the Station will continue to recruit and interview qualified minority staff, as well as students seeking to participate in our paid and unpaid News internship programs.
- WMUK's content unit, including our newsroom, will maintain our commitment to covering issues affecting diverse communities across our region, through locally-produced programming. This includes efforts to produce 2-3 significant features and/or interviews on the diversity issues relevant to the communities of West Michigan.
- We will continue seeking collaborations that foster outside, diverse perspectives; including visits by international colleagues in the field of media journalism.