Local Content and Services Report

6.1 Telling Public Radio’s Story

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 2020. 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.

1. Describe your overall goals and approach to address identified community issues, needs, and interests through your station’s vital local services, such as multiplex platform 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.

KPCW is the only live, local source of daily news in Utah’s Summit and Wasatch Counties. Our goal is to provide area residents the key information they need for the safety, health, education and enjoyment for themselves and their families and neighbors. We have a newsroom of five reporters who not only cover immediate issues affecting our listeners and readers, such as severe weather conditions, power outages, traffic, and regional disasters like wildfires and backcountry avalanches. Our news team also provides in-depth coverage on critical ongoing issues, such as state and federal response to Covid-19 and ways that local leaders, businesses and nonprofit organizations have adjusted to address community needs during the pandemic. We cover these issues each weekday during our morning news program The Local News Hour (8:00 am), our midday Noon News Report (12:00 pm) and during The Local View, which is a combination of local, national news and community cultural interviews every afternoon (3:00 pm - 6:30pm). In 2020, we also added weekend local news reports on Saturday and Sunday mornings in combination with Weekend Edition from NPR. In addition to local, state, and national news, KPCW also conducts in-depth interviews during our locally-produced, original public affairs shows focused on business, the environment, physical and mental health, advances in science and technology, local arts and culture, and issues facing area minorities.

In addition to FM broadcasting and digital streaming, all KPCW news and public affairs content is available on our website, www.kpcw.org, and our public affairs shows are also available as podcasts on various platforms.

Beyond reporting news and public affairs, KPCW’s mission is also to support nonprofit organizations serving Summit and Wasatch counties by offering them our airtime and website to get the word out about their programming, upcoming events, and volunteer opportunities. We feature anywhere from 4-10 nonprofit interviews on our airwaves each week and these interviews are then posted on our website. We also offer free public service announcements for local nonprofits that are read daily by our DJ’s for a total of more than 28,000 PSA’s shared on-air to promote and support our Summit and Wasatch county nonprofits.

Our digital platforms continue to enjoy exponential growth. In Fiscal Year 2020, we had 371,119 users (and more than 1 M page views) on KPCW.org, which is up 118% from Fiscal Year 2019 when we had 170,197 users (and 570,000 page views). We are experiencing similar growth across our social media channels (Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter) where we have combined 14,000 followers as we continue to attract new audiences and our reach is easier to measure than over-the-air listeners.
Over the course of 2020, KPCW served as our region’s hub of pandemic related news and updates. Listeners tuned in for daily Covid-19 case counts, interviews with public health experts, and announcements about statewide executive orders. Summit County Health Director Bullough became a weekly figure on our airwaves and considered KPCW to be a vital megaphone.

Director Bullough utilized KPCW to inform residents on air and online about mask mandates, stay-at-home orders, Covid-19 testing locations and protocols, and other county and statewide health regulations. During 2020, our website use went up 120% with almost 1M users and 2.2M page views and social media subscribers increase from 12,100 to 14,000 — growth we believe is largely due to our extensive Covid-19-related reporting.

One specific example of how KPCW played a crucial role in informing and mobilizing our community was our collaboration with the Christian Center of Park City. Right after the ski resorts shut down on March 15th, the Executive Director of CCoPc, Rob Harter, asked KPCW if he could be on our air every week to provide updates about their food pantry and Basic Needs Assistance program as well as their mental health counseling services. Between March and June, CCoPc paid 825 rent/utility bills totaling $435,000 for 525 local families. Harter’s regular segments on KPCW helped inform both donors and recipients in the community.

Cada Domingo, our weekly Sunday evening broadcast in Spanish, had weekly appearances from Spanish-speaking representatives with the Christian Center of Park City, the People’s Health Clinic, Holy Cross Ministries and Wasatch Latino Coalition – three nonprofits that provided critical front-line services such as food pantries, rental assistance and free health care to those in the Park City community who needed it after the pandemic shut down the ski resorts and eliminated tourism-related jobs.

And as always, we continued to serve as a critical resource for area nonprofits, providing more than $800,000 worth of free public service announcements to local charitable organizations. And we launched a new initiative that provided free underwriting credit exceeding $34,000 in value to Summit and Wasatch County nonprofits who partnered with us for our 2020 Summer Pledge Drive.

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 2020, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2021. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.

KPCW produces our own Spanish language show, Cada Domingo, which airs every Sunday (7:00 pm – 10:00 pm). (Please see above for how this show helped the Latinx community in Park City during the COVID-19 pandemic.) Our bilingual host, Jorge Rodriguez, is a social equity advocate who brings three hours of national, international and local news, music and interviews of importance for the area’s Spanish speaking community. In 2020, he interviewed leaders such as José Borjón, head of the Mexican Consulate of Mexico in Salt Lake City to discuss programs available through the consulate and challenges the pandemic created. He also regularly interviewed Spanish-speaking representatives from local public health agencies to inform listeners about Covid-19 news, testing, and free health services provided to the Latino community. In Summer 2020, Cada Domingo also featured Spanish-speaking officers from the Park City Police Department to discuss the nationwide protests against police brutality in the wake of the brutal killing of George Floyd and Park City departmental policies, transparency, accountability, and accessibility.

KPCW also reported on local organizations including The Solomon Fund and the Youth Sports Alliance “Get Out and Play” program, both of which provide minority students across our community with opportunities to participate in local recreation activities like skiing, skating, mountain biking, and other sports. And we aired public service announcements in Spanish on behalf of nonprofits providing vital services like Summit County Mental Wellness Alliance and the People’s Health Clinic.

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?

Over the course of 2020, our local news reporting proved more critical than ever in terms of disseminating vital information and public health updates. KPCW was in the midst of a capital campaign when the Covid-19 pandemic hit. Funding from the Corporation of Public Broadcasting was absolutely critical in our ability to complete our station expansion, equipment upgrade, and digital reporting. Without CPB funding, we would have to cut back on our local programming and we certainly would not have been able to continue with our regular public affairs shows. As compared to other major metropolitan areas around the country, KPCW may be considered a “rural” radio station, but Park City is a ski resort town and international tourist destination, and our population can go from 9,000 residents to 100,000+ visitors at various times during the year. CPB funding is absolutely essential to our ability to inform, educate, and inspire our ever-expanding community.