

White Ash Broadcasting, Inc

Annual Report 2019-2020

April 14, 2020



Expanding your world through voices and sounds that inform and inspire

Valley Public Radio

FM89 / KVPR.org

April 14, 2020

The world we face today is full of fear and uncertainty. In times like these the calm, reasoned and fact-based approach of public radio is more valuable than ever. We have heard from listeners from across the country who have shared with us how important the station is to them in normal times, and even more so now.

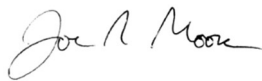
Throughout the present Coronavirus crisis, Valley Public Radio has been there for our listeners with trustworthy information, a friendly voice to comfort and console, and with music and culture to take our minds beyond the walls of our sheltered-in-place world.

While the current crisis dominates our collective mindshare right now, it is also helpful at times like these to look back at all of the great work accomplished by the radio station in the past year. It may seem like a different era, but the last year was one of great success for the station. Valley Public Radio posted all-time highs in broadcast audience and online audience. Membership had a strong year, setting a revenue record. We partnered with the national organization StoryCorps, bringing their mobile tour to Fresno and Bakersfield and we launched an all-new streaming audio service, providing 24/7 classical music to local listeners.

Our station's work was also recognized beyond the valley. In 2019, we were named "California Nonprofit of the Year" by Senator Melissa Hurtado. Our news department was honored with its first ever regional Edward R. Murrow Award for investigative journalism, in addition to four Golden Mike Awards from the Southern California RTNA. And for the sixth consecutive year, Valley Public Radio was awarded the prestigious "Four Star" rating from Charity Navigator, which ranks community benefit organizations on their governance and fiscal stewardship.

As you peruse this report, I hope you get a sense of the accomplishments achieved in the past

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joe R. Moore". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Joe Moore

President and General Manager

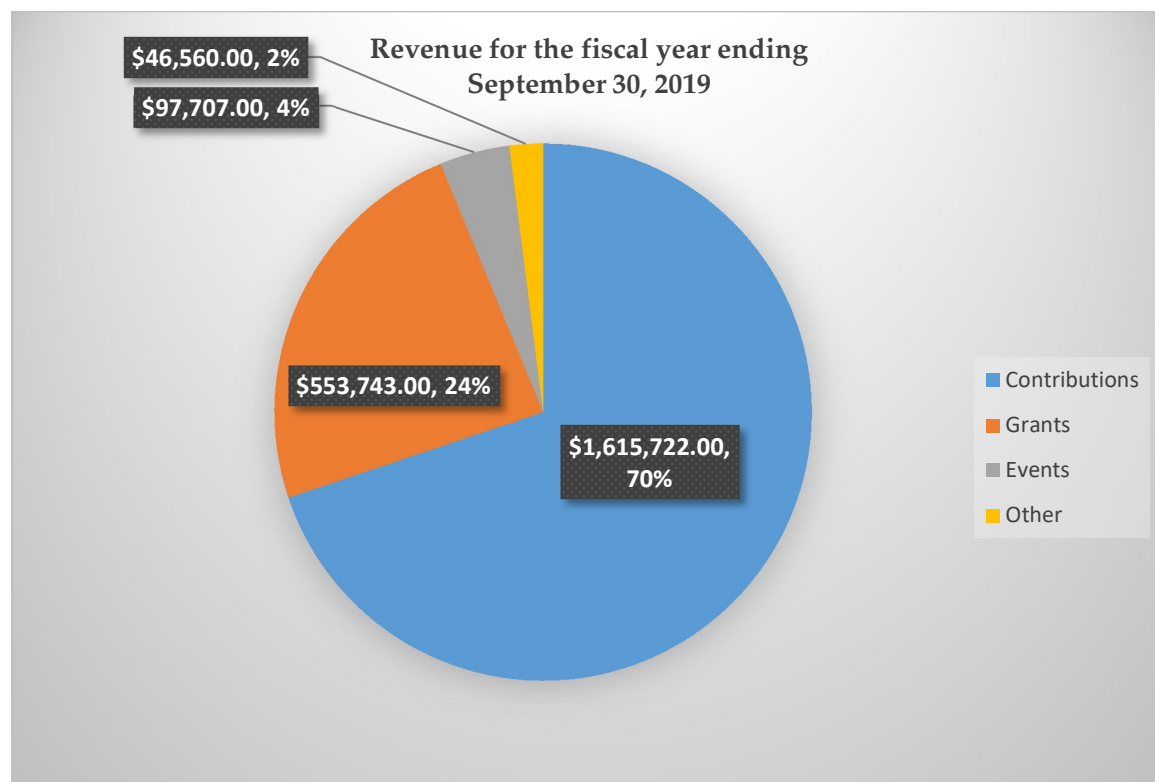
Valley Public Radio

Financial Performance

Valley Public Radio has a forty-plus year history of prudent financial management. For the last six years the station has earned the coveted “Four Star” rating by the independent website Charity Navigator, which evaluates the financial and governance policies and performance of not-for-profit organizations. Only 9 percent of non-profits nationwide have earned this distinction. The following information is drawn from the station’s audited financial report as prepared by Price Page & Company, CPAs in February 2020. A link to the complete report can be found on our website at KVPR.org/financial-statement

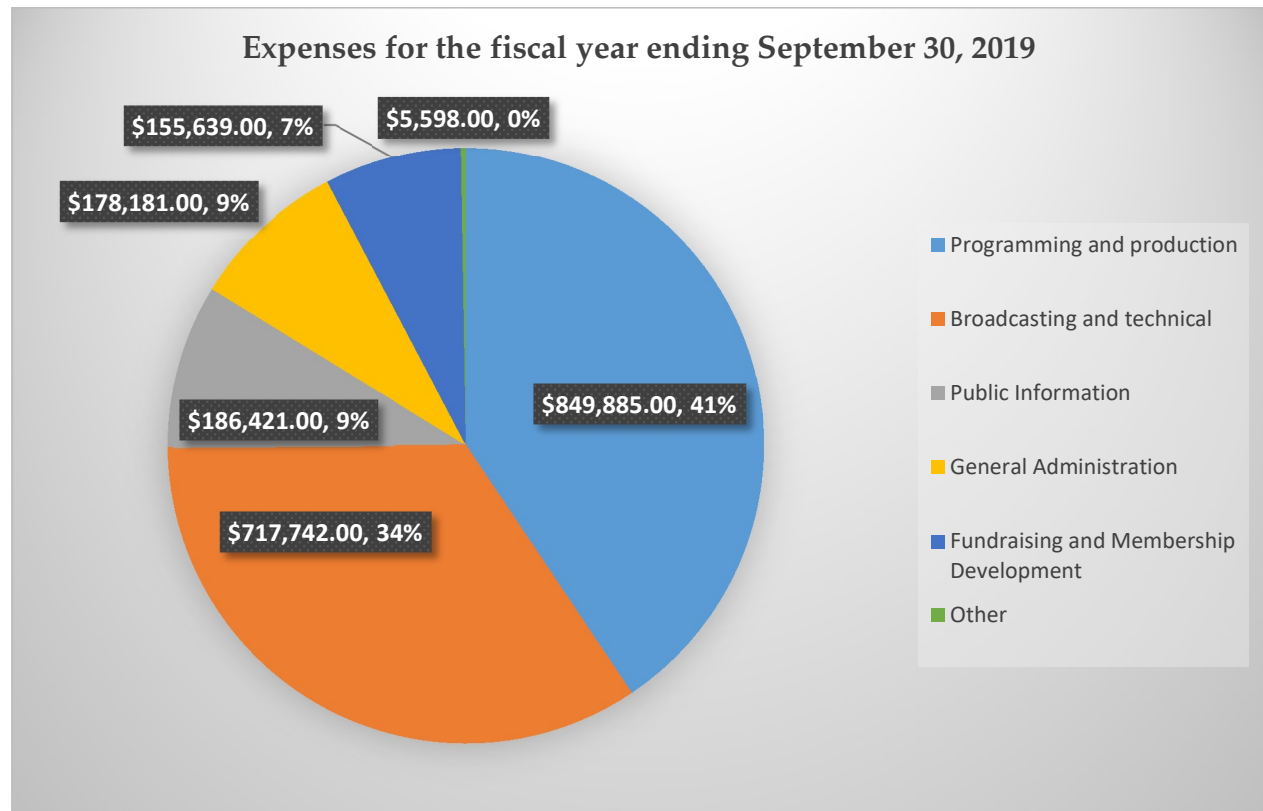
Revenue:

For the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019 the station had a total revenue of \$2,313,732. As a non-commercial radio station, Valley Public Radio relies on individual and corporate donations for the bulk of the station’s revenue. Multi-year grants from foundation partners including the James Irvine Foundation, California Health Care Foundation, and the California Endowment helped support the station’s local journalism. The station also received an annual community service grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, with payments in the fiscal year totaling \$157,112. This federal funding accounted for just 6.8 percent of the station’s overall revenue for the fiscal year. Events including the station’s annual wine tasting and annual radio raffle also contributed to station revenue. Total revenue for FY 2018 decreased by 5.8 percent versus FY 2018 (\$2,457,363).



Expenses:

For the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019 the station had total expenses of \$2,093,466. Programming and production, including locally produced news and music, plus programming purchased from NPR and other program distributors made up the largest share of station expenses. Broadcasting and technical operations associated with operating KVPR and KPRX also made up a significant share of overall expenses. Together these two categories account for nearly 75 percent of the station's expenditures. Total expenses increased by 5 percent over FY 2018 (\$1,989,986).



Endowment:

The station's endowment includes both donor-restricted funds and unrestricted funds. Total net endowment assets totaled \$666,045 for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019. This is an increase of 4.83 percent from the total net endowment assets as of September 30, 2018 (\$635,318).

Mortgage:

Valley Public Radio moved into a state-of-the-art 10,000 square foot broadcast center in May of 2016. The approximately \$4 million project doubled the size of the station's production and broadcast facilities, and replaced a leased facility that was nearly 30 years old. As of September 30, 2019, the station's mortgage with United Security Bank had an outstanding principal balance of \$1,099,168. The note is payable in monthly installments of \$7,429 including interest at 3.95 percent.

Journalism

The past year was an outstanding one for the station's news department. In late April 2019, the station won its first ever [Regional Edward R. Murrow Award](#) for excellence in broadcast journalism. The award came in the category of investigative reporting, for [reporter Kerry Klein's report](#) about a previously undisclosed ICE hold room facility operating in Fresno. In early 2020, the station was also awarded [four Golden Mike Awards](#) from the RTNA of Southern California, for division B categories including Best News Reporting, Best Individual Writing, best Government and Political Reporting and Best Public Affairs program.



In addition to those awards, the station produced a wide range of coverage on important issues from [the Coronavirus](#), to a major report about [a potential breakthrough in the fight against valley fever](#). We covered ongoing issues related to [immigration](#) in our region, we shared stories of [Fresno's Hmong community](#) after a tragic mass shooting, and we brought listeners real-world insights into the [challenges valley farmers](#) and [rural communities](#) are facing in the race to implement the state's new groundwater sustainability law.

This year also saw major progress on an issue we helped to bring to light several years ago. In 2017, the station launched a reporting project focused on the issue of [contaminated drinking water](#) in the San Joaquin Valley. This has been an issue that has plagued rural towns and unincorporated communities for decades here, yet it largely had gone overlooked by those in state government. Since the launch of this series, our reporting on this issue has continued, with much of it focused on the efforts in Sacramento to solve the problem. After failed legislative efforts in 2017 and 2018, this past year California Governor Gavin Newsom signed a law that aims to direct funding to solve this problem and clean up the water contamination issue.

State Senator Melissa Hurtado cited our coverage of issues like this when she [named Valley Public Radio as California Nonprofit of the Year for 2019](#) for her senate district. While many outlets covered this issue, Valley Public Radio was one of the first to devote such significant reporting resources to covering the issue, and helped bring the issue to greater public attention.

The station also welcomed new staff in the news department, with [Kathleen Schock](#) joining as host of Valley Edition and Madi Bolanos as a reporter covering immigration and underserved communities.



Programming

Programming was another highlight for the station over the past year. In Spring 2019, the station posted its highest-ever weekly audience (77,400) according to Nielsen's radio ratings books for Fresno and Bakersfield. The station also tied an all-time high for highest average quarter hour audience. Our website saw similar audience growth, passing 1 million hits for the first time ever, and over 600,000 unique users.

In addition to our regular mix of news and classical music programming the station also launched a new service in early 2020 – a 24/7 classical music audio stream called [KVPR Classical](#). The service is available for free at KVPR.org and features programming from the nationally syndicated hosts of Classical 24. Valley Public Radio officially launched the service in March 2020 to offer listeners who are stressed or seeking an escape from the news of the Coronavirus crisis a local option for music around-the-clock.



The station also began production work this year on a new podcast to debut later in 2020 called "The Other California." Across seven episodes, the station will offer listeners richly told stories rooted in seven different valley communities that most often go overlooked, but are hiding remarkable stories that inform our understanding of the valley and the state.



Another major accomplishment came in early 2020 with the visit of the [StoryCorps Mobile Tour](#) to Fresno and Bakersfield. Hundreds of valley residents sat down in the converted Airstream recording studio to record their stories with a loved one, and Valley Public Radio has begun airing them in a series we call ["StoryCorps San Joaquin."](#) The station partnered with CMAC to host the tour at

their facility in downtown Fresno.

The Coronavirus crisis also affected station programming. Locally hosted classical music was temporarily replaced by network classical from Classical 24, and the station ran numerous special broadcasts. Virtually all employees worked from home beginning March 14, 2020, including on-air staff, many of whom assembled home studios to help us stay on air.

Development



Valley Public Radio also experienced significant highlights in its development department. Overall development department revenue was up approximately three percent over the prior year, and membership set an all-time record with donations totaling \$865,710, an increase of nearly \$29,000 over the prior year. The station made a decision to change the calendar schedule of its on-air fundraising in mid-2019. This resulted in a shift in fund drive dates, which will now follow a more regular schedule of September, December, March, and June. The resulting December 2019 campaign helped make December the best membership month in the history of the station, and

the best membership quarter in station history as well. The Coronavirus crisis has unfortunately delayed the planned March fund drive indefinitely.

The station also received great honors from Charity Navigator, which for the sixth straight year awarded Valley Public Radio their highest honor, a rating of four stars. The rating is based on an independent analysis of Valley Public Radio's governance, transparency and financial performance. Only 9 percent of charities evaluated by the organization have received this honor for six consecutive years.

The station also joined the CDP partnership, a consortium of public media stations using data analysis and benchmarking to help stations identify areas of strength and areas for improvement. The station's corporate underwriting efforts have faced challenges in recent years, and corporate support was down for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2019. Performance had improved for the first quarter of the new fiscal year and into early 2020, but we anticipate



significant challenges in this area for the remainder of the year due to the Coronavirus crisis.



The station's annual Wine Tasting also saw increased attendance, and combined with excellent weather resulted in what we feel was the best event we have yet produced. The event produced a profit of \$81,055 for the station.

Operations

Valley Public Radio made great progress on a wide range of technical and operational projects in the last year. Faced with the prospect of widespread public safety power shutoffs from PG&E due to wildfire concerns, the station began to raise funds in spring to purchase and install a backup generator for the station's broadcast center. By summer the station raised in excess of \$60,000 to support the project and the permitting process began. In early 2020, after approval from the Valley Air District, the generator was installed and is now awaiting final certification.

The COVID-19 crisis led the station to completely re-work its broadcast operations, to allow all major broadcast tasks to be done remotely. This would be a monumental task in normal circumstances, but it was even more so given the health precautions taken by the station with virtually all staff working remotely from home.

Other major accomplishments this past year included a new server, new audio production workstation and software integration of the station's automation and traffic systems. HD-2 audio improvements were made, and a new backup link to the transmitter site was installed.

The station also pursued a plan for a photovoltaic solar installation at the parking lot outside the broadcast center. Unfortunately due to objections raised by neighboring property owners, the station is re-evaluating the project and is exploring other ways to bring solar power to the station.



Board

Over the past year the board saw several changes, including the resignation of longtime director Diane Buckalew, who is moving out of state. Diane's vacant seat on the board of directors was filled by Shirin Assemi in February 2020. Jay Center assumed the position of Vice Chair following Diane's resignation. The board undertook several major initiatives, including review of the station's bylaws, endowment policy, investment policy, as well as review of the station's proposed solar project.

Valley Public Radio

By the Numbers:

5,215	Active members (as of April 8, 2020)
1,905	Sustaining members (as of April 8, 2020)
600,921	Unique users at KVPR.org (1/1/19-1/1/20)
1,069,433	Pageviews at KVPR.org (1/1/19-1/1/20)
77,400	Weekly listeners (Nielsen Spring 2019 Fresno + Bakersfield)
130	Vehicles donated to VPR (CY 2019)
\$63,645	Net proceeds from vehicle donations (CY 2019)
4,833	Facebook followers (as of April 8, 2020)
469	Local reports posted at KVPR.org (CY 2019)
50	Hours of original Valley Edition content
\$1,099,168	Outstanding mortgage balance (as of 9/30/19)