

CPB Annual Survey – Telling Public Radio’s Story; Local Content and Services Report

Describe your overall goals and approach to address identified community issues, needs and interests through your station’s vital local services, such as multiplatform long and short-form content, digital and in-person engagement, education services, community information, partnership support, and other activities, and audiences you reach or new audiences you engaged.

At WFCR, our mission is to provide our community with diverse, high-quality programming that informs, educates, and entertains. We accomplish this with a passionate staff in our newsroom, and with extensive national and international coverage from a wide range of programming provided by NPR, American Public Media (APM), Public Radio International (PRI), and other public media sources. It is also vital to our mission to connect our audience to the wealth of art and culture in western New England. We do this by providing locally produced classical, jazz, and world music programs, and in-depth coverage of local cultural resources by our news department. In addition to the on-air content we provide, WFCR offers a variety of non-broadcast resources, from an impressive digital archive and outreach initiatives, to online community resources and a robust college internship program. We strive to meet the needs of our community, reflecting its diverse interests in our programming, creating connections and exploring the world – across continents with NPR reporters stationed in far flung corners, and right here in western New England where our reporters cover state and local politics, our eclectic arts and culture scene, exciting academic pursuits at our many local universities and colleges, and so much more.

In October 2014, WFCR moved into new headquarters. The choice to move to the heart of downtown Springfield was a deliberate one for WFCR. We wanted to play a role in the city’s economic revitalization effort. We also recognized the opportunity to occupy a first floor space in the pedestrian center of the city would fundamentally change the profile of our organization. We now occupy a very public space – inviting a new level of community engagement.

The 15,350 square foot, state-of-the-art facility allows the staff of WFCR to do their best work; to continue to produce the caliber of radio that our listeners expect, to expand to new platforms with initiatives like *AudioFiles*, our online content program, new forays into digital production, podcasting and more, making our content available to everyone with computer Internet or mobile connection. It is our hope that our new location, and of course our work – presenting locally produced news, talk, and music programming - will add to the vibrancy of downtown Springfield.

At the end of August 2016, WFCR, in partnership with Berkshire Community College, opened a news bureau in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, and hired a full-time reporter to cover Berkshire County. As part of the partnership, WFCR will also offer three internship positions each year to Berkshire Community College students. This represents a significant expansion of WFCR’s news department and a major commitment to expand the station’s coverage of Berkshire County. In October 2016, WFCR completed renovations at our UMass Amherst location and officially opened the newly re-named Five College Studios on the campus. The Five College Studios houses a reporter, traffic coordinator/production assistant, and space for interns. A new digital editor will also work out of these studios when they’re hired in FY ‘17.

The WFCR news department focuses on stories relevant to the station’s diverse listening area, a region that includes major urban centers, struggling post-industrial towns, a large rural area and a vibrant academic community. The local news service produces newscasts, long-form features, interviews and commentaries. In FY ‘16, commentators included Michael Lynch, president of Strategic Energy and Economic Research, Inc. of Amherst, Massachusetts; Beth Reynolds, a

photojournalist for The Recorder in Greenfield, Massachusetts; Andrew Lam, a retinal surgeon in Springfield, Massachusetts; and Poet Dennis Caraher of Northampton, Massachusetts among many others.

The station regularly broadcasts stories about state government including a weekly segment with a reporter from the State House News Service. *The Short List* features a roundtable discussion with reporters and editors from the region's publications examining the top regional stories of the past week. An archive of nearly all locally produced news content, plus a growing collection of web-only content, is available at nepr.net. In FY '16, WFCR expanded its podcast offerings, making a wide variety of content available to new audiences

WFCR has long been a champion of classical, jazz, and world music. The station features a wide range of music throughout the week, including opera, classical, jazz, world, and Latin music. At a time when many public radio stations across the country are switching to an all-news format, WFCR remains committed to being western New England's source for high quality music programming. In addition to producing over 3,000 hours of local music programming each year, the station is actively engaged in promoting the region's vibrant music scene including broadcasting material by the Springfield Symphony Orchestra and the Boston Symphony Orchestra and from both the Marlboro and Yellow Barn Music Festivals. And for decades we have broadcast live concerts from Tanglewood, the summer home of the BSO. Our music hosts are out in the community throughout the year, hosting events like the Springfield Jazz and Roots Festival, pre-concert talks with the Hartford and Springfield Symphony Orchestras, at the UMass Fine Arts Center, and various venues throughout our listening area.

WFCR also manages the 24-7 NEPR News Network, operating on six stations and heard throughout western New England and in portions of New York state. WFCR's local news is heard on the NEPR News Network. In FY '16, WFCR became a partner in the CPB-funded [New England News Collaborative](#) and added the Collaborative's new regional program, *Next*, to its Sunday morning line-up on the NEPR News Network and its podcast offerings.

Recently WFCR expanded its on-demand offerings on NEPR.net. Listeners can listen to past episodes of *Tertulia*, *Jazz Safari* and *Jazz a la Mode* for a week following their original broadcast. Our locally produced classical music programs will be available on-demand in FY '17. These on-demand offerings allow listeners to access our music programming whenever they like, not only during broadcast hours. Our podcast, *JazzBeat*, and our jazz blog have received praise from many in the jazz world.

With the goal of providing more content for our listeners and accessing the rich and varied resources of our region, *AudoFiles*, WFCR's online-only content source, was created in 2012. *AudioFiles* includes WFCR's 50 year-old archive, and recordings of varied, recent events on the five college campuses, to give the community access to new ideas, historical moments and a bit of everything in between. It also includes pieces created for the site by our team of college interns that are intended to share the stories of our community through sound. Pieces produced in 2016 included a conversation between the outgoing director of the Clark Art Museum, Michael Conforti and *The Takeaway's* John Hocknberry among others. This year, the *AudioFiles* team also produced a series of podcasts highlighting artists featured Live Art Magazine, a pop-up magazine-style event that WFCR co-produced with Amanda Herman.

WFCR's online archive contains more than 2,000 tapes of locally produced and performed music, primarily classical, as well as 1,500 tapes that document the cultural and political life of western Massachusetts from the 1960s through the 1980s. These tapes feature major poets and writers

(E.E. Cummings, Robert Frost, Joseph Heller, Hugh MacDiarmid, James Merrill, Richard Wilbur), politicians (Hubert H. Humphrey, Ted Kennedy, Sargent Shriver, George Wallace), activists (Saul Alinsky, Noam Chomsky, Angela Davis, Gloria Steinem), and scholars (Henry Steele Commager, Severo Ochoa, Linus Pauling).

With the help of a grant from the CPB American Archives Project and the work of archivists and students at the W.E.B. Du Bois Library at UMass Amherst, the tapes in the archive were inventoried and entered in a database in 2012. One hundred hours of recordings, representing a cross section of the collection were selected for digitization. These tapes are currently being added to our website.

WFCR hosts an annual celebration of our cultural community with its *Arts & Humanities Awards*. The community is invited to nominate their choice for the awards each year, and recipients are chosen by the New England Public Radio Foundation, Inc. Board and celebrated by the community at a special gala event in May. In FY '16, we were thrilled to honor the first poet laureate of Springfield, Massachusetts, Maria Louisa Arroyo, Amherst Cinema, Community Access to the Arts and Pulitzer Prize-winning author, Tracy Kidder.

Describe key initiatives and the variety of partners with whom you collaborated, including other public media outlets, community nonprofits, government agencies, educational institutions, the business community, teachers and parents, etc. This will illustrate the many ways you're connected across the community and engaged with other important organizations in the area.

The WFCR news department is a member of the New England News Network Exchange, where material from public radio stations in the six New England states is shared through Public Radio Exchange (PRX). This partnership allows WFCR to broadcast more news relevant to our audience, and to share our content with other stations in the region. WFCR also shares stories with WBUR in Boston and WSHU in Fairfield, Connecticut. Partnerships launched in 2013 with local newspapers, The Springfield Republican and The Daily Hampshire Gazette, have allowed WFCR access to the papers' photo archives and encouraged their reporters to talk about their stories on the air. These partnerships allow the papers to share WFCR's audio content on their websites, connecting our reporting to a new audience.

As mentioned elsewhere, NEPR also joined the CPB funded New England News Collaborative, partnering with eight other public media stations in the region to produce multimedia coverage focusing on the region's energy usage, climate, transportation infrastructure, and its people and immigration issues. This robust partnership is producing dynamic reporting projects for on-air broadcast, digital and web presentations, and a series of public Town Hall-style meetings centered on issues facing New England and its residents. We also air *Next*, the new program that the collaborative launched this fall on the NEPR News Network; and we host the podcast on our website.

In FY '16, WFCR also began two high-profile partnerships with local colleges which have had a major impact on the station's ability to serve our region with news and talk programming. In September 2015, WFCR began a partnership with Amherst College which allows WFCR to program the college's WAMH with its NEPR News Network programming from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily, providing Hampshire County with access to NPR programs like *On Point*, *The Takeaway*, *Here & Now* and much more on the FM dial. On July 1, 2016, WAIC 91.9 FM, joined The NEPR News Network, providing Hampden County with a 24-hour public radio news service on the FM dial, thanks to a partnership between WFCR and American International College (AIC) which

owns the frequency. With the addition of 91.9 FM WAIC, The NEPR News Network can now be heard on seven stations throughout the region including 89.3 FM in Hampshire County, 91.7 FM in Franklin County, 89.5 FM and 98.9 FM in Berkshire County, 88.5 FM HD-3 in Franklin, Hampshire and Hampden Counties, and on AM 640 across western New England and into New York State. Listeners can also stream the station at nepr.net and through NEPR's app.

WFCR brought our listeners coverage of major international, national and regional stories. Our newsroom closely tracked the 2016 election, with major coverage of the issues facing our region; ballot questions, and local races. In addition we continued our coverage of the opioid abuse epidemic in New England, airing stories that explored both the people affected by the crisis and the official response to it. We brought listeners extensive continuing coverage of the casino planned for Springfield, including the economic and social implications. Nearly every week, we aired conversations with a State House reporter about legislation under consideration on Beacon Hill. *The Short List*, our weekly round-table segment, in which a panel of journalists discusses the major regional news stories of the week, helped listeners explore key issues. Our newsroom won two regional Edward R. Murrow Awards in FY '16. Reporter Karen Brown won best feature for her story "Freed After 27 Years, Man Claiming Wrongful Conviction Gets Little Help From System," which profiled Mark Schand of Windsor, Connecticut, who spent nearly three decades in prison for a murder he says he did not commit. Reporter Jill Kaufman was honored in the sports reporting category for "Deflategate Swag is Sweet Revenge for Colts Entrepreneur," her piece about how an epic sports rivalry and a little ingenuity sparked a new business – one that deals in football shaped foam hats, and riles New England Patriots fans.

In what has become an annual tradition, WFCR works with a community organization in a special fundraising partnership during our winter fund drive. In FY '16, we partnered with The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts. Over 24,000 meals were contributed to the food bank thanks to a generous group of donors who contributed two meals each time a contribution was made to WFCR.

In addition, the station supports the work of more than 20 regional institutions through media partnerships. In 2016 WFCR was a media sponsor for the following organizations: Amherst Cinema, Arcadia Players, Berkshire Bach Society, Berkshire Film and Media Collaborative, Chester Theatre Company, Emily Dickinson Museum, Glasgow Lands Scottish Festival, Inc., Hartford Symphony Orchestra, Jacob's Pillow Dance, Jazz Ensembles of Mt. Holyoke College, Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts at UConn, Ko Festival of Performance, Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center, Mass MoCA, Mohawk Trail Concerts, Music In Deerfield, New Century Theatre, Northampton Arts Council: Transperformance, Northampton Center for the Arts/First Night, Novi Cantori, Pioneer Valley Jewish Film Festival, Pioneer Valley Symphony Orchestra, Signature Sounds / Green River Festival, Silverthorne Theater Company, Smith College Museum of Art, Smith College Music Department, Springfield Jazz & Roots Festival, Springfield Museums, Springfield Public Forum, Springfield Symphony Orchestra, The Berkshire Film Collaborative Film Exchange, The Seth Show, UMass Fine Arts Center, and the Wistariahurst Museum.

WFCR partners with several organizations each year on special events that seek to engage the community. We continued our partnership with the Berkshire Bach Society to bring their annual new year's celebration, *Bach at New Year's*, to a packed house at Northampton's Academy of Music Theater, as well as *Valley Voices*, our live *StorySlam* event produced in partnership with the Academy of Music. Four sold-out slams were held over the course of the year, culminating in a *Best of Valley Voices*, mainstage event at the Academy of Music. The five minute stories were recorded live and posted on our website. The partnership launches season 3 in January and

WFCR now produces a podcast featuring the stories in *Valley Voices*. We collaborated with Live Art Magazine on their third edition of a popular pop-up magazine style event in Northampton, Massachusetts. WFCR helped to program the event, which features local and regional artists, musicians and writers in a one-night-only event celebrating creativity and risk-taking among artists. WFCR also produced a short podcast featuring three of the artists involved.

WFCR was proud to partner with Amherst College's Copeland Colloquium in 2015. As part of the partnership, WFCR collected the personal stories of 30 recent immigrants who have made their new home in western New England. An extensive oral history project, *Words in Transit: Bhutan to Springfield, Romania to Hartford, Palestine to Amherst*, traverses continents and cultures to illuminate the many pathways leading to our small corner of the globe. It explores shared experiences among the refugees, immigrants and DREAMers creating a new life in a foreign land. Excerpts from the project aired on *Morning Edition* and *All Things Considered*.

The project, at nepr.net/wordsintransit, includes first-person narrative recordings, accompanying photo essays by Beth Reynolds of Base Camp Photo, an interactive map showing where each participant's journey began, and resources for new immigrants in western New England.

In 2016, in partnership with The University of Massachusetts Press, WFCR published a book of the same name featuring the photographs and transcriptions of the interviews collected for the project. This fall we launched a series of events around the region featuring panel discussions on immigration and the themes found in the book. Proceeds from the sale of the book will support a newly founded scholarship at Holyoke Community College for immigrant students.

What impact did your key initiatives and partnerships have in your community? Describe any known measurable impact, such as increased awareness, learning or understanding about particular issues. Describe indicators of success, such as connecting people to needed resources or strengthening conversational ties across diverse neighborhoods. Did a partner see an increase in requests for related resources? Please include direct feedback from a partner(s) or from a person(s) served.

Each week over 166,700 listeners tune to WFCR as a trusted source for local, national and international news, as an oasis of beautiful music during the day, for the latest author or artist interview, or to learn more about what's happening in their community.

Our website was visited 528,661 times by 277,085 unique visitors in FY '16 by listeners who came to stream our three services, listen to archived programs, follow up on a story they heard on the air, or get information about an upcoming event. We are particularly proud of our improved website statistics. Receiving the most "hits" these days is, not surprisingly, our "listen now" page, which gives listeners access to our live streams, to blogs written by our music hosts like Tom Reney, who is garnering national acclaim for his Jazz blog; and to our local news stories. A focus on social media and the launch of a new mobile app have enabled us to engage with new audiences. To date, WFCR has 3,628 Facebook fans, 4,111 Twitter followers and over 1,000 WFCR app users - up substantially from the previous year.

Partnerships like *Feed Your Radio, Feed a Family* have provided visibility to local non-profits and those they serve. The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, our partner in *Feed Your Radio, Feed a Family* received money to provide approximately 24,000 meals to food insecure families in western Massachusetts. For The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, the partnership offered an opportunity to share the mission of the food bank with 166,700 new individuals. *Feed Your Radio, Feed a Family* was also able to support the Dakin Humane Society by offering "Dakin

Day,” a special incentive on one day of the fund drive. Dave’s Soda and Pet City, A.W. Brown’s, Pet Supplies Plus and Whole Foods made donations of cat food to the Dakin Humane Society for every pledge to WFCR. For listeners, these partnerships offer a way to double their impact on the community by supporting their public radio station and at the same time helping another non-profit fulfill its mission.

Our many event partnerships and media sponsorships allow WFCR to have an impact on the cultural community. Happily, these partnerships are mutually beneficial, and our partners are thrilled to have the backing of their local public radio station in their endeavors. We are able to offer underwriting and off-air promotion that has increased awareness about events and increased ticket sales for our partners.

Our internship program has graduated a number of individuals who have gone on to successful careers in public broadcasting, including Audie Cornish, now co-host of *All Things Considered*, Aaron Schachter, assignment editor and occasional fill-in host at *The World*, and Tina Antolini, producer of [Gravy](#), a podcast of the Southern Foodways Alliance. Our local *Morning Edition* host, Henry Epp, came through our intern program in 2011. Our *Morning Edition* Producer, Kyle Sullivan was an intern for the station in 2013, and is now helping to launch WFCR’s digital media presence in addition to his duties as *Morning Edition* producer. Over the years our paid internship program has continued to grow. Thirty-one students participated in the program in FY ‘16. Our internships offer experience for students interested in journalism, working alongside WFCR’s news team; in production, recording and producing on-air testimonials and writing fund drive scripts; in non-profit and public media marketing, and in content creation, production, audio recording, video editing and photography through AudioFiles.

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 2015, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2016. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.

For four decades, WFCR has produced *Tertulia*, a program broadcast in both Spanish and English that features Latin and world music, and addresses important issues to the region’s Latino communities. *Tertulia*’s host, Raquel Obregon, has incorporated more interviews of late to better serve Latino audiences. *Latino USA*, *Concierto*, *Jazz a la Mode* (aired Monday through Friday), and *Jazz Safari* (aired Saturday) serve audiences of diverse composition throughout our signal area. In the summer of 2013, we added *The Moth Radio Hour* and *The Ted Radio Hour*, and in 2014 *The Takeaway* to our schedule in an effort to provide programming to more diverse audiences. For years, we have aired *Snap Judgment*, *State of the Reunion* and *The Tavis Smiley Show* on the NEPR News Network. On the digital side, local music programs *Tertulia*, *Jazz a la Mode* and *Jazz Safari* are now available on demand, a significant development allowing listeners to hear programs again or for the first time.

As noted elsewhere in this report, WFCR partnered with Amherst College’s Copeland Colloquium to produce *Words in Transit: Bhutan to Springfield, Romania to Hartford, Palestine to Amherst*, a collection of the personal stories of 30 people from around the world who have made their new home in western New England. The project, at nepr.net/wordsintransit, includes first-person narrative recordings, accompanying photo essays by Beth Reynolds of Base Camp Photo, an interactive map showing where each participant’s journey began, and resources for new immigrants in western New England. In FY ‘16, that project was produced as a book and

proceeds from its sale will support a scholarship fund at Holyoke Community College for immigrant students.

The Short List, WFCR's week in review, also aims to serve diverse audiences by connecting listeners to reporters and editors of local news sources, including *Lioness*, a magazine for female entrepreneurs, *El Sol Latino*, and *Point of View*.

In January of 2016, WFCR launched Media Lab, an after school program for young people, ages 14 to 18. Through basic journalism and audio production, participants learn to tell stories with sound. The curriculum includes learning how to interview, write for radio and produce commentaries and radio features. Fundamentally, it's about providing opportunities to young people and encouraging their expression and exploration of issues that are important to them.

"When New England Public Radio relocated from the campus of UMass Amherst to downtown Springfield, we wanted to engage the community in a new way- particularly young people," said John Voci. "Springfield and Holyoke are communities that have suffered a severe economic downturn over the past few decades and we hope that Media Lab can help some kids think about the future and to realize that their voices are valued."

The third group of Media Lab students are working with the station's newly hired Media Lab Director, Carlos McBride, on their final projects as they wrap up their semester. For more information on Media Lab, and to listen to some of the projects produced by the students, please go to nepr.net/audiofiles/media-lab

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?

WFCR's CPB funding has a direct impact on what we are able to accomplish in local programming in any given year. There is no question that a cut in this funding would have a dramatic effect on our listeners. Currently, WFCR uses its CPB grant to pay for NPR programs like *Morning Edition* and *All Things Considered*. If funding were cut, we'd be forced to pay for our most listened to programs with other funds at the expense of local programming and community outreach, two crucial tenets of our mission. We would of course make every effort to make up the difference through our own fundraising, but we rely on that grant annually as an important piece of our budget.