Telling Public Radio’s Story

The below narrative is a copy of responses provided to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting related to WUNC’s content and services that serve local needs, and the reach and impact of local services in our community.

1. Describe your overall goals and approach to address community issues, needs and interest through your station’s vital local services, such as multi-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.

WUNC strives to enhance the lives of the citizens of North Carolina through journalism that asks and answers questions that are important to the community. The station supports one of the largest public radio newsrooms in the Southeast with reporters covering education, state government, politics, economy and breaking news. The station also produces the daily talk show The State of Things which is focused on North Carolina issues. For much of FY13 WUNC also produced the national program The Story in partnership with American Public Media. Host Dick Gordon retired from the program in the summer of 2013. At that time WUNC decided to end production of the program and put more resources into the production of local news. WUNC offered the staff of The Story new jobs working in the local news department.

Over the last fiscal year WUNC laid the groundwork to dramatically increase its online service and the reach of wunc.org. WUNC producers and technical staff were involved in the NPR/Knight Digital training program and completely revamped its approach to digital. As a result the audience for wunc.org is growing rapidly. Site traffic went from roughly 30,000 unique monthly visits to an average of well over 100,000 unique visits. There were several viral “hits” that provided short-term huge increases in traffic. WUNC expects to continue to grow its digital audience. It currently has two staff members assigned to manage its web and social media endeavors. In years past we have only had a portion of one staff member assigned to the web.

2. Describe key initiatives and the variety of partners with whom you collaborated, including other public media outlets, community non-profits, government agencies, education 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.
WUNC continued ongoing partnerships with prominent cultural and educational institutions to bring public radio news to a large and diverse audience in North Carolina. WUNC has an on-going partnership with Triad Stage, a professional theater group in Greensboro North Carolina. The theater is home to the station’s Greensboro News Bureau which is staffed by a full-time WUNC reporter. WUNC also produces its daily talk show The State of Things in front of a live studio audience at the theater at least once a month.

WUNC also has an on-going partnership with the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences which is part of the State Department of Environment and Natural Resources. This past year WUNC opened a new talk studio at the museum. WUNC is producing a monthly series of live broadcasts from the museum.

WUNC partnered with The North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, WAMU-Washington and the International Bluegrass Association (IBMA) on a series of live broadcasts from the World of Bluegrass festival in Raleigh. This partnership included a simulcast on WAMU/Bluegrass Country and WUNC. As a part of this work WUNC produced the 2-hour live broadcast that featured interviews and in-studio performances with musicians attending IBMA/World of Bluegrass. WUNC also produced its local talk show The State of Things from Raleigh as well. During these broadcasts WUNC worked through the technical challenges needed to put video cameras in the studio. It was a successful experiment and resulted in a live video stream being sent out online and to an interactive theater at the Museum of Natural Sciences. This involved coordinating with technical staff at the state sponsored museum.

In the Summer of 2013 WUNC partnered with the North Carolina Symphony on a 4-part series of concert recordings for broadcast. This is part of an on-going partnership with the State-funded symphony and the Musicians’ Union.

WUNC ended its long running partnership with American Public Media and its production of The Story with Dick Gordon. The partnership ended on a high note with strong journalism that covered world and domestic affairs from a personal perspective.

In the Spring of 2013 WUNC partnered with the Innocence Network on multi-platform coverage of the group’s annual gathering of former prisoners who have since been exonerated. As a part of this project WUNC produced a live talk show (The State of Things), 5 episodes of the nationally distributed program The Story, a 10 part series of video profiles of exonerees and related web content. This work is expected to have impact that lasts well beyond the initial broadcast. WUNC has been working to distribute the videos and related web content to teachers, activists and educators.

WUNC also partnered with local teachers, schools and youth mentor groups to produce the Summer Youth Radio Institute. The station hired and trained a diverse group of high school students to work for the station as reporters covering youth culture.
3. **What impact did your key initiatives and partnerships have in your community. Describe any known measurable impact, such as increase 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 or from a person served.**

Impact is always difficult to measure and track. During FY13 WUNC continued to be the most listened to public radio station in the state of North Carolina. It was consistently ranked number one in the Raleigh Radio Market for morning drive, beating out pop rock, country, urban and talk commercial radio stations. Over-all, WUNC consistently ranks in the Top Five for all radio listeners 6+ in the Raleigh Metro Market. In addition WUNC was consistently ranked as one of the most effective public radio stations in the country when considering audience measurements like Cume Rating.

Given its high penetration rate in the market WUNC it stands to reason that the public radio reporting is making its way into the conversations of residents of the communities it serves. WUNC strives to produce radio that informs listeners’ decisions and inspires civic action. Whether it be issues related to the public schools, elections, voter rights WUNC stories play a major role in the lives of its listeners and consequently in the life of the community.

4. **Please describe any efforts you have made to investigate and/or met 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 2013 and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2014.**

WUNC reporters and producers produce interviews, radio features and web stories on a regular basis that explore the needs of diverse audiences. During FY13 our production included:

- A look at the African American legacy in New Bern NC
- An SBI investigation into corruption in one of the state’s oldest African American towns
- A look at Alzheimer’s in the African American community
- Accusations of racism in the Wake County Schools
- A look at Native Americans and higher education in NC
- A conversation about diversity in popular media

WUNC’s Summer Youth Radio Institute provides the news team the opportunity to get to know a diverse group of youth in our community. Again, for the Youth Radio Institute WUNC went
into schools to recruit a diverse (economically and racially) group of high school students to work in paid summer reporter positions. This predominantly African American group of high school students worked in the newsroom for the summer and produced news features for broadcast on WUNC. In addition to the production of radio features, this kind of engagement helped the reporting and editorial staff better understand the needs and interests of young people of color in our community.

WUNC reporters, producers and editors held dozens of informal ascertainment meetings with educators and leaders in the African American community. These meetings helped to inform our daily news assignments.

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?

WUNC funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting remains at roughly 7% of WUNC's overall operating budget. The station continues to leverage this investment from CPB to raise the remaining 93% through active engagement with its listeners, local businesses and foundations. While WUNC is licensed to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and does receive in-kind support services, it receives no direct funding from the University or the State of North Carolina.

WUNC uses its CSG funding in direct service of listeners. The allocation is invested in acquired programming from NPR, APM, PRI and the BBC. These acquired programs serve as the core of our service to listeners and the State of North Carolina. WUNC builds on that core service with local journalism and the creations of original content that reflects the needs and interests of the citizens it serves. The absence of CPB funding would mean fewer local news reports, fewer questions asked and answered and a less engaged public.