

2020

In a year when so many things had to change, our commitment to Wisconsin kept us grounded.



WISCONSIN
PUBLIC RADIO



ANNUAL REPORT



TRUSTED. TESTED. RESILIENT.

People in Wisconsin and across the U.S. lived through three simultaneous storms in 2020 — the uncertainty of the pandemic, a reckoning with racial injustice and a contentious election. Protecting our staff and maintaining our service to you meant dramatic changes to nearly every aspect of our work.

I am in awe of our team and all that they accomplished under very difficult circumstances. In a matter of weeks, our engineers rebuilt WPR's network so we could safely broadcast from staff homes. While so many were isolated, we connected Wisconsinites through trusted news, vital conversation, the solace of music and free virtual events. And, we shone a light on businesses and non-profits working to sustain families and communities in this time of need.



Through it all you supported us. You listened, you followed the news on wpr.org and you donated. Our service to Wisconsin would not be possible without you — thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mike Crane'.

Mike Crane, WPR Director



VITAL & TIMELY

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected life in Wisconsin in real and, sometimes, confounding ways. Few news stories have felt so urgent, for so many people over such a long — and continuing — timeline. In 2020, Wisconsinites trusted WPR to keep them up-to-date with vital information and perspective on the fast-changing health crisis.

When COVID-19 struck, Wisconsinites had questions and trustworthy answers were hard to come by. Our engagement project, WHYsconsin, fielded more than 3,000 questions and reported 59 stories on topics like where to get tested, eviction rules, and changes to schools. Every person who reached out to us received answers to their questions. The project won the “Best Use of Community Listening in a Crisis” award from Hearken in 2020.

WPR carried daily updates with expert analysis and advice on air and online. WisContext, our collaboration with PBS Wisconsin, offered deep dives into

Opposite Alfreida Casterlow plays with her granddaughter A'marii Brilliance Felder, 4, at the Berryland Playground near their home in Milwaukee in June. Her unemployment claims story was part of our COVID-19 coverage. ©Coburn Dukehart/Wisconsin Watch

Above Nurses and doctors at UW Hospital walk through a hallway in one of the hospital's COVID-19 units in November. ©Angela Major/WPR

Mike Crane Photo
©Jeffrey Potter/WPR



In 2020, WPR reporters told Wisconsin's story to the world with more than 30 appearances on NPR nationally and dozens more on other outlets, including the BBC.

the numbers to make sense of the statistics. Our reporters and producers turned to experts from around the state and nation to provide timely and useful information to keep Wisconsinites safe. And we also covered COVID-19's impact with personal stories of loss, hope and resilience.

At the start of the pandemic we reached out to Wisconsinites and asked them to record their experiences for "Outbreak Wisconsin," a partnership with the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism. Madison emergency room nurse Mariah Clark, Milwaukee business owner Adija Greer-Smith and Eau Claire mom Jessica Barrera were just a few of people who shared their stories throughout the year.

With more than 5,000 Wisconsinites taken by COVID-19 in 2020, our reporters tracked — and continue to track in 2021 — the impact of the virus and honor and celebrate the lives of the family, friends and neighbors we've lost.

FREE & FAIR

Wisconsinites have always turned to WPR for trustworthy, research-based and unbiased political coverage. At the start of 2020, Wisconsin was in the national spotlight. Anticipating a closely watched race, WPR news launched its “Swing State” project and developed partnerships with NPR to cover the Democratic National Convention in Milwaukee and the Republican National Convention in North Carolina.

As the pandemic surged, our seasoned reporters, producers and editors never took their eyes off the story, even as they worked from home and behind masks. In April, the outcome of Wisconsin’s presidential primary became secondary to whether Wisconsin would have in-person voting. Could an election be safely managed during a pandemic? Would voters turn out? From late night court rulings to the lines of voters waiting for hours to cast their votes in person, WPR helped break the story for audiences around the state and around the world on NPR, CNN and the BBC.

In May, voters in the 7th Congressional District were back at the polls for a special election to fill Rep. Sean Duffy’s seat. WPR was the only news outlet to offer a live candidate debate for voters in a region covering more than one third of the state. In 2020, we helped voters decide with more than



Opposite Vicki Nicolas-Ibarra holds a photo of her mother, Rosemary Kraemer. Kraemer died of complications from COVID-19 at age 74. ©Angela Major/WPR

Above top Grace Koger, left, and Awa Phatty, members of Memorial High School’s Black Student Union, register people to vote at Madison’s Juneteenth celebration. *Bridgit Bowden/WPR*

Above Election officials work on the recount behind plexiglass at the Wisconsin Center in Milwaukee. ©Angela Major/WPR



WPR's Milwaukee-based Reporter Corrine Hess was named a "Local Journalist Hero" by PEN America as part of their World Press Freedom Day celebrations.

30 candidate debates and dozens of interviews tied to local, state and national elections.

As the fall general election approached, WPR offered Wisconsin analysis of the issues, candidate interviews and up-to-date information on voting guidelines. We reported the results and the recounts in Wisconsin with research-based, fact-checked journalism while our colleagues at NPR offered insights and analysis from Washington, D.C. and bureaus around the nation.

While the election is important, it's the day to day choices we make that impact our lives and our democracy the most. Daily coverage of politics on NPR News & Music, with civil conversation and diverse perspectives from across the state on The Ideas Network, is an essential part of our service to you.

SEEKING SOLUTIONS & JUSTICE

The police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis sparked a deeper reckoning with racism in America. Wisconsinites gathered for peaceful protests that, in some communities, were followed by riots and vandalism. On WPR, we covered the whole story in all its complexity.

The police shooting of Jacob Blake, a Black father in Kenosha, brought home questions of racism, police violence and injustice in Wisconsin. WPR reporters were on the ground 24/7, tracking the perspectives of locals, business-owners, protesters, national guard troops, armed militia, politicians and the police. All of it was brought to life for our growing digital news audience by our new photojournalist whose work is featured throughout this report and on wpr.org.

The Ideas Network has always provided a welcoming place for Wisconsinites to discuss complicated issues through civil discourse and a respect for diverse points of view. From conversations with Black mothers in Milwaukee to the Chief of Police in Green Bay, our producers and hosts invited guests and audiences to connect on issues of diversity, equity and inclusion that are essential for our families and communities.



Opposite Two friends watch the final day of the DNC from a car at the Milwaukee County Zoo in August. ©Angela Major/WPR

Above top Protesters march in Wausau after the killing of George Floyd while in police custody. ©Rob Mentzer/WPR

Above Shyne Marie of Milwaukee yells with the crowd facing police in riot gear in Kenosha in August. ©Angela Major/WPR



WPR's research into source diversity has garnered national interest as public media continues to struggle with diversity and inclusion on air. Read the report at wpr.org/sourcing.

WPR's journalists and producers rely heavily on sources like guest experts, authors, scientists, elected officials and business owners to provide context, perspective and experience. In a typical year, more than 3,500 individuals may appear on our airwaves.

In 2020, our news and talk teams publicly released the results of a year-long study of the demographic diversity of sources. While the report included some positive news — such as near equal representation of males and females and generally strong geographic representation of sources statewide — it also showed that WPR turned to white sources in nearly nine out of 10 instances.

In response, we appointed a source librarian position within the content team. They are responsible for working to diversify the collection of contacts and support continuing research to measure progress and help improve inclusion on air.

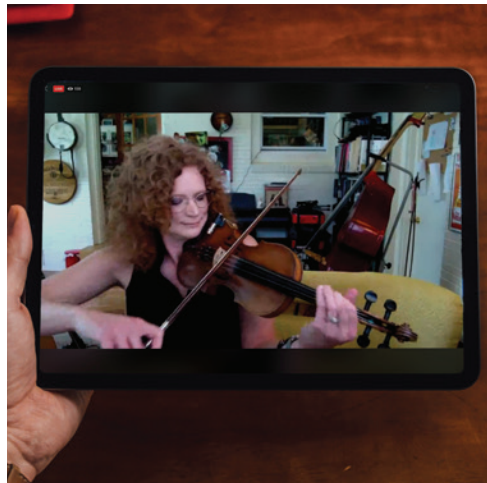
INSPIRED & CONNECTED

Every year WPR partners with hundreds of community programs and non-profits across the state. In 2020, in partnership with Alliant Energy, WPR and our audiences contributed more than 30,000 meals to Wisconsin food banks and more than 600 books for kids through the Reach Out and Read program.

As businesses struggled with economic uncertainty, our sponsorship team offered free on-air promotion and a matching grant program, giving away almost \$1 million in air time to over 300 different sponsors. WPR also supported Black-owned business and strengthened sponsor relationships with organizations who served vulnerable populations across the state.

In this difficult year, our music hosts helped listeners find perspective and inspiration with special playlists dedicated to gratitude and hope, request shows and a focus on lesser known composers and musicians of color.

Faced with a calendar of cancelled events, WPR's outreach team pivoted to offer free, virtual events that connected communities across the state. A lunchtime concert by Grammy Award-winning bluegrass musician Becky Buller, a 5K fun run/walk/roll dedicated to Beethoven's 5th Symphony and a meet up with "1A" Host Jenn



Opposite A protester holds a banner in a crowd of marchers in Kenosha in August. ©Angela Major/WPR

Above top Jon and Jo Ann Schedler as she was promoted to Major in the U.S Army in 1998. She participated in our veterans StoryCorps project. Photo courtesy of Maj. Jo Ann Schedler

Above Bluegrass musician Becky Buller performing at WPR's virtual Simply Folk Shindig Mini in May. ©WPR



Above The Klecker Family participating in WPR's virtual Beethoven-themed 5K run/walk/roll in June. More than 800 people in communities across the state registered to participate in the free event. *Photo courtesy of the Klecker Family*

White were just a few of the events enjoyed by nearly 20,000 people online.

Our partnership with Story Corps' Military Voices Initiative helped nearly 40 Wisconsin veterans and family members connect and record their stories online; some of them will be featured on "Wisconsin Life" in 2021.

We are Wisconsin's storytellers and storykeepers. We are the state's most trusted source of news, information and perspective. Our commitment to serving you — and all Wisconsinites — extends beyond radio, to digital and community engagement. In a year when so many things had to change, that commitment kept us grounded. Thank you Wisconsin!

2020 Financial Report

2020 Revenue



- 44% Listeners Member** contributions including major gifts and bequests
- 26% State Support** Money received from the state and university in the form of General Purpose Revenue (GPR)
- 10% Business Support** Underwriting revenue
- 7% Other** Investment income, public broadcasting carriage fees, merchandise and ticket sales, production fees and other miscellaneous revenue
- 4% In-Kind Support** Primarily administrative and facilities support which are allocated costs incurred by the UW System on behalf of WPR
- 6% Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB)** Community Service Grants (CSG) based on the amount of Non-federal Financial Support (NFFS) generated by WPR
- 3% Capital Contributions** State Building Trust Funds

2020 Expenses



- 70% Broadcasting and Programming** Acquisition, production and transmission of programming as well as related promotional materials
- 16% Fundraising** Costs incurred in the solicitation of membership and underwriting revenue
- 14% Administration** Management and administration including costs incurred by UW System on behalf of WPR

Revenues	FY20 Total	FY20 % Total	FY19 Total
State Support	6,747,943	26%	6,788,033
In-Kind Support	902,289	4%	986,531
Listeners	11,315,449	44%	10,408,516
Business Support	2,665,343	10%	2,915,414
CPB	1,620,526	6%	1,375,616
Capital Contributions	878,038	3%	227,386
Other	1,818,921	7%	2,348,989
Total Revenue	25,948,509	100%	25,050,485
Expenses	FY20 Total	FY20 % Total	FY19 Total
Broadcasting and Programming	16,607,168	70%	14,843,009
Administration	3,361,953	14%	3,433,249
Fundraising	3,702,057	16%	3,870,300
Total Expense	23,671,178	100%	22,146,558
Increase In Net Assets	2,277,331		2,903,927

For more than 100 years, Wisconsin Public Radio has served the people of Wisconsin with free and independent news, talk, music and entertainment. On air, online and in the community—we work for Wisconsin.



WPR is a service of the Educational Communications Board and University of Wisconsin-Madison with support from the Wisconsin Public Radio Association. It has reporters and studios throughout the state.

Listen, learn more and donate online at wpr.org.

Questions? Call our Audience Services team at 1-800-747-7444 or email listener@wpr.org



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THE IDEAS
NETWORK