

Corporation for Public Broadcasting
Local Content and Services Report
February 24, 2015

- 1 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 reached or new audiences you engaged.

WSGE has consistently provided programming designed to educate and entertain. This was achieved in Fiscal Year 2014 through airing short and long form informational programs. Nonprofit organizations regularly submit public service announcements via a standard form housed on the station's website. These announcements are aired free of charge on a rotating basis throughout the broadcast day. Some of the information obtained is periodically addressed on the station's weekly magazine formatted show, *The Roundtable Sunday Edition*. Generally a wide range of topics that are of interest to the audience are discussed on the show. It also includes a music segment that showcases the talents of local and regional musicians. Podcasts of selected topics are made available each week on the website. To further increase awareness of community issues, a new segment titled "The Local Leaders Forum" will be added in March 2015. This segment is an outgrowth of an informal ascertainment process that included interviewing and interacting with community leaders and members about key areas of concern. It will be produced and hosted by representatives from organizations and industries that have expertise in the identified areas. They are as follows:

- Health and Safety
- Minority Affairs
- Business/Finance
- Educational Outreach

Glimpses of Gaston is a short form program that's produced in-house. It's hosted by Gaston College President, Dr. Patricia Skinner and provides information about educational programs and activities that are available on campus and online. It airs three times a week and has been well received by our listeners.

In honor of Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday, a series of commentaries were produced that featured local African Americans that participated in the civil rights movement of the 1960s. *The Roundtable Sunday Edition* has routinely featured guests who reflect unique and insightful viewpoints during Black History Month, Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday and Women's History Month. The goal moving forward is to more fully recognize other minorities on a regular basis that may or may not coincide with pre-determined holidays or other reasons for minority recognition.

- 2 Describe key initiatives and the variety of partners with whom you've 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.

In order to produce programs that speak to the concerns of the local community, the station's public affairs producer has collaborated with a number of influential people that represented organizations such as the Gaston County Sheriff's Department, Gastonia Police Department, Gaston County Department of Health and Human Resources, Gaston County Schools United Way of Gaston County, City of Charlotte, NC and other religious and civic groups in the area.

Beyond the airwaves, WSGE has actively worked with several organizations that are making a difference in the community. The staff attended and provided music for Taste of Gaston, a fundraiser for the United Way of Gaston County. In addition to promoting a concert to raise money for Charlotte-Mecklenburg's Communities in School Program, our jazz announcer served as the emcee for the event. Students from the Gaston Early College High School's Music Club were taught basic audio production skills in the WSGE studio. During the month of December, the station partnered with Socks for Senior to collect and distribute clothing and toiletries to residents of area nursing homes and homeless shelters and in April served as a media partner for House of Mercy's annual Walk for AIDS.

- 3 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 or from a person(s) served.

WSGE routinely receives audience feedback on our programming. A form for this purpose can be found on the website under the "Contact Us" link. Although the majority of the written responses are related to our music shows, periodically organizations featured on *The Roundtable Sunday Edition* have shared verbal and written feedback they've received after being on-air.

The following is a letter that the Public Affairs Producer, Randy Walker received from a listener that demonstrates support for an issue addressed on his program:

Hi Randy,

I am a loyal listener of WSGE FM for many years. As I returned home from church today, I was tuned to the station while you were giving your Roundtable program. Although, I have never done this before, I felt compelled to let you know how much your comments were appreciated. The statistics you gave about the health of young children are all so true. We are raising a generation that will experience obesity, diabetes, and a host of other health problems caused by their diet.

As an educator for many years before I retired, I saw first-hand the food the students would choose in the cafeteria: pizza, French fries, burgers, etc. Few would eat vegetable when they were made available. Fresh fruits were rarely offered in schools

where I worked. Students sit in classes all day with minimal physical activity. Or First Lady is trying to change these unhealthy habits but meets with resistance from politicians who do not belong to the same party. Thank you again for your commentary about the health crisis of our future leaders. I hope you will air the program again and again.

Kaye Taliana

- 6.4 Please describe any efforts 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 2014, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2015.

For three years, WSGE hosted a Beach, Rhythm and Blues Festival. It primarily served as a promotional vehicle and fundraiser. Since African American represents only 2.4% of the total audience, it was good to see that their volunteerism and attendance increased each year.

The increase may have been due in part to a weekly two hour music show, *The Saturday Night R&B House Party* that's broadcast from 7 p.m. – 9 p.m. It's produced and hosted by two local musicians, Tyrone Jefferson and Toni Tupponce. Mr. Jefferson is executive director and Mrs. Tupponce is program director of A Sign of the Times of the Carolinas, a nonprofit organization that seeks to preserve the legacy of the African Diaspora through music, dance and the spoken word. Both are very active in the community and their organization is responsible for a number of cultural activities/events in Charlotte, NC. In honor of Black History Month, Mr. Jefferson also produced, "The Heart and Soul of American Music," a four part series that examined the role that 20th century African Americans played in producing music that is uniquely American. The series initially aired in Fiscal Year 2013 and was re-aired this year.

WSGE's program schedule includes other specialty music shows that may interest African Americans. They include *Highway 321 Blues*, *Carolina Beach and Shag*, *The Jazz Spot* and *Jazz Set with Dee Dee Bridgewater*. The last two are hosted by African Americans. To grow this segment of the audience additional emphasis must be placed on identifying strategies and establishing partnerships that will help to increase awareness of the station.

Public Affairs Producer, Randy Walker has partnered with local business owner, Jose Cruz Garcia to produce a pilot for a Hispanic music/cultural show titled, "Crossing the Border." The bi-lingual segment will be broadcast quarterly during *The Roundtable Sunday Edition*.

Dr. Amy Sifford, Co-Founder of PFLAG of Gaston County, a support group for Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays was the recipient of WSGE's 2014 Phenomenal Woman Award . Her work with this population was covered on the station and publicized in local media.

- 6.5 Please assess the impact that your CPB funding has on your ability to serve your community. What were you able to do with the grant that you wouldn't be able to do if you didn't receive it?

CPB funding is a vital part of the revenue needed to operate WSGE. Since the station has a modest budget, it would have been impossible to purchase quality nationally recognized news and music programs without the aid of our Community Service Grant. The music schedule is currently strengthened by shows like *American Routes*, *Undercurrents*, *Jazz Set with Dee Dee Bridgewater* and *World Café*.

The goal in Fiscal Year 2014 was to better promote the station and grow its audience. Therefore, funds were used to implement ideas and strategies provided by Becky Chinn of Lewis Kennedy Associates for rebranding and marketing, which included advertising in online publications and via billboards in Gaston and Mecklenburg Counties.

To assist the staff in evaluating the effectiveness of the programming schedule and WSGE's overall sound, Paul Marszalek was hired. He was primarily helpful in reshaping the sound of our Triple A day parts through the creation of new music clocks and imaging. JC Patrick continued to serve as a consultant in the area of corporate support to ensure that best practices were used in this area. Funds were also used to support staff in news and membership (pledge captains).

Because of the support received from CPB, improvements have been made in staff development, marketing and programming. These improvements should assist in increasing the station's cumulative audience and individual/corporate support.