

CPB STATION ACTIVITIES SURVEY FOR FISCAL YEAR 2019

This is a copy of responses submitted to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting as part of the Station Activities Survey submitted March 13, 2020

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.

WYPR's mission is to inform and connect the listeners we serve in the Baltimore Metropolitan area, and throughout the entire state of Maryland. We do this with our expanding news department, our two daily locally-produced talk programs, our suite of podcasts at WYPR's Podcast Central, our on-air connections with the leading cultural institutions of Baltimore and Frederick, and our media partnerships with an array of local organizations and institutions. In addition, our Community Advisory Board runs a series of ascertainment meetings in which overlooked and underserved groups are brought to the attention of WYPR's reporters and producers.

News: In the wake of Baltimore's urban unrest of several years ago, WYPR has a reporter assigned to investigative coverage of police malfeasance and corruption. Our reporter has worked with the Center for Investigative Reporting to do national segments on police corruption, and we continue to follow it closely. We have a reporter dedicated to news from Baltimore County, another following Baltimore City, and a reporter dedicated to statehouse reporting. In addition, we have robust environmental reporting, much of it dedicated to the state of the Chesapeake Bay. *The Environment in Focus*, a weekly program, tackles issues from an environmentalist's point of view; and *A Blue View* has been a weekly collaboration with the National Aquarium in Baltimore.

Podcast Central: WYPR's signature podcast continues to be *Out of the Blocks*, which tells the story of urban residents in their own words. In addition to blocks in Baltimore, WYPR received a grant from the NEA to produce segments in other cities, and to encourage producers in those cities to make segments of their own. *Out of the Blocks* has gone to Indian Reservations, big cities, and small towns to let people tell their own stories. In addition, the musical content of *Out of the Blocks* is such that it receives a grant from the Maryland Arts Council. *Out of the Blocks* was originally a radio show. And it continues to air on the radio in somewhat different form than the podcast.

Other WYPR podcasts include *Town of the Big House*, which told the story of a corrupt real-estate developer; Truth and Reconciliation, which is a forum for the people of Baltimore to discuss the challenges of law enforcement reform, alternative paths to improving communal

safety, and how to hold power accountable; and *One Day at a Time*, in which a recovering addict shares stories with others in recovery.

WYPR also believes that culture is every bit as important to our listeners as news, so our podcasts also cover the culture beat. Essential Tremors talks to musicians about the works that have influenced them, and the works of local icon Edgar Allan Poe are featured on *Poe Theatre on the Air*.

We have two locally originated talk programs, both of which air daily. *On the Record* allows Sheilah Kast, a long-time veteran of network TV and radio news, a chance for an unmediated deep-dive interview with community newsmakers and leaders. *Midday* is our daily call-in show, giving listeners a chance to interact with newsmakers, politicians, and artists. In the last year, *Midday* has, among other projects, allowed listeners to speak with most of the 20 candidates running for Mayor of Baltimore, and the candidates running for the congressional seat left vacant by the death of Elijah Cummings. Virtually every elected state-wide or Baltimore area politician has been a guest. In 2019 *Midday* initiated a series called *Midday in the Neighborhood*, and we intend to spotlight every neighborhood in Baltimore over the next two years.

Future City is a monthly program hosted by nationally best-selling author Wes Moore and takes on the challenges faced by urban Baltimore by speaking with those in other cities that have faced and beaten those challenges.

2. 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.

WYPR emphasizes on-air media partnerships in support of the missions of dozens of area nonprofits. Partners include local theaters, charities, museums, and hospitals. Our media partnerships give free airtime to these organizations to promote their events and activities.

WYPR airs a monthly radio collaboration with the director of the Baltimore Museum of Art, one with the director of the Walters Art Museum, and one with the leader of the Maryland Humanities Council. We have collaborated on a weekly environmental program with the National Aquarium in Baltimore; and work with the Kennedy Krieger Institute of the Johns Hopkins University. We provide arts events listings in Frederick, Maryland, in conjunction with the Frederick Arts Council; and we have open access for all area organizations to our on-line Events Calendar.

We present an annual live concert by the Baltimore Choral Arts Society, and are on-going media partners with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. Every Friday morning, we air a story recorded live at The Stoop Storytelling Series, which is another media partner. Friday's at noon

on *Midday*, WYPR often partners with area performing arts organizations for in-studio performances that are also streamed live on Facebook.

In 2019 WYPR brought area business leaders together to meet David Brancaccio of *Marketplace*, and partnered with the Baltimore Speakers Series to bring speakers like John Kerry and Susan Rice to Baltimore.

In June, *Midday* was broadcast live from the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of African American History and Culture; and September was broadcast live from the newly re-opened central branch of the Enoch Pratt Free Library. *Midday* also has a rotating feature with one-on-one's with the presidents of every college and university in the area.

WYPR sponsors a free outdoor summer concert series with the Friends of Patterson Park, and WYPR's local music programs are supported by the Maryland State Arts Council.

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 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.

Though we are based in Baltimore City, WYPR is heard throughout most of the State of Maryland, from populous suburban counties to remote and rural counties in Western Maryland on the Eastern Shore. Our programming connects listeners across the state, and while we shine a direct light on the urban problems of our metro area, we attempt to do it in a way that is understandable and relatable to everyone.

"Baltimore is fortunate to have such a quality independent, local news and talk station that delves into important issues local, national and global. Insightful conversations that you don't get anywhere else in our region. Proud to be a longtime listener and member." -Brad

"Thank you so much for the recent news story about Boone Street Farm and development in East Baltimore Midway. This story speaks to the heart of Baltimore and what it means to have a healthy, happy, green, sustainable community. I look forward to today's discussion on Midday with Boone Street Farm, the developer, and the deputy commissioner of housing. Thank you to WYPR for being a voice and shining a light on important issues in Baltimore!" -Aliza

“Thank you for providing factual information about our city, country and world. I listen daily to hear the news that affects our lives locally, nationally and internationally. I know NPR will provide me with both sides of every story and allow me to make decisions that affect our city, country and planet.” –Heidi

*“Was stirred to my soul, shaken to my heart & moved to the bone by this feature on [WYPR](#) this morning. Wiping tears as I sat riveted in my car outside the bank. Such deep gratitude for the work of Judge Halee Weinstein & all her partners! ❤️<3
She is a [#REALHERO](#) working right here in Baltimore! ❤️” –Katie*

Of course, for any organization that relies on member donations, membership is a key litmus test for success. WYPR’s membership was up 9% in 2019.

4. 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 2018, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2019. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.

The heart of WYPR’s listening area is an urban center recently scarred by racial unrest, so naturally the heart of WYPR’s program policy addresses issues of disparity. The podcast *Truth and Reconciliation* and our news series on the Baltimore Police Department’s Gun Trace Task Force are direct outgrowths of the aftermath of Baltimore’s uprising. Author Wes Moore (whose best-seller *The Other Wes Moore* told the story of two young Baltimore men who shared a name but had vastly different fates) explores solutions to Baltimore’s problems on *Future City*; and the program *Life in the Balance* looked at the issues facing Baltimore’s residents and the steps some non-profits are taking to solve them. The podcast *Higher Purpose* explores both the over-incarceration of African-American men and the quest of those men to rejoin the work force.

Both of our local daily talk shows dedicate frequent programs to the issues facing our Latinx and African-American communities; and *Midday* has several recurring series tackling those issues, such as *Midday in the Neighborhood* and *Culture Connections*. *Midday* also broadcast live from the Reginald Lewis Museum on June 19th, a program about reparations for slavery. The Baltimore Cease-Fire is an attempt to stem the violence that engulfs the city, and Ericka Bridgeford, Cease-Fire’s founder, is a guest on *Midday* every cease-fire weekend.

Ms. Bridgeford was also on for an hour of *Future City*. Other *Future City* topics included lead poisoning, incarceration, and gang violence.

Topics on our daily interview program *On the Record* have ranged from Protecting Migrant Workers’ Rights to Deadly Disparities in Breast Cancer to Outdoor Afro - those in just a three-week period, and typical of *On the Record*’s topic selection.

With the centennial of the 19th Amendment, which gave women the right to vote, WYPR produced a series called *Beyond the Ballot*, hosted by Dr. Sheri Parks, highlighting the accomplishments and contributions of Maryland women since earning the right to vote.

WYPR media partners included the Asian Festival, Baltimore Pride, the Baltimore Aids-Walk and Music Festival, and the Reginald F. Lewis Museum.

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?

CPB funding is essential to WYPR in our quest to provide service to our community. CPB funding helps our established programs and podcasts; allows us to take chances on new programs, podcasts, and other means of service; and allows us to continue to grow our local news reporting which is increasingly essential to our audience. And although we have here been talking about locally originated programs, CPB's importance in allowing us to present national and international news to our listeners should not be minimized. Just as growing news deserts make our local programs essential; those same audiences have fewer and fewer alternatives for world and national news, and filling that gap is an important part of our being as well.