Corporation for Public Broadcasting Station Activities Survey (SAS)
Section 6: Local Content and Services Report
for the period covering 10/1/23 – 9/30/24

February 3, 2025

6.1 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.

WRVO Public Media is a non-commercial educational media service with a mission to inform, educate and entertain citizens of upstate New York. We provide news information and music through a mix of nationally-distributed programs from NPR, APM and PRX, and locally-produced content which includes daily newscasts, features and long-form reporting. Multiple daily local newscasts inform listeners on a variety of issues of importance to our community. Journalism from our capitol correspondent keeps listeners informed about decisions made by our elected officials. And long-form programs and podcasts provide deeper discussion, investigation and explanation on a variety of issues. Examples of local productions include a weekly half-hour public affairs radio program with extended interviews and discussions with local and regional newsmakers; and a weekly one-hour radio program focused on health-related issues and advances in the healthcare industry. A comprehensive report of stories and topics covered by WRVO is posted at regular intervals to our online Public Inspection File. WRVO's content is extended to areas which might not otherwise have access to a public media broadcast signal through several repeaters and translators, online streams, a free mobile app and our social media channels.

6.2 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.

WRVO continues to foster collaborations with our institutional licensee and other local and regional organizations to explore issues of interest to our community. We partner with the Campbell Public Affairs Institute at Syracuse University to produce the weekly half-hour radio program "The Campbell Conversations." "Healthlink On Air" is a weekly one-hour radio co-production with SUNY Upstate Medical University. And we regularly seek out expertise on a variety of topics from SUNY Oswego and other local educational institutions. The WRVO newsroom recently helped to establish the New York Public News Network, a collaboration of 12 public media newsrooms across New York to share resources, coordinate editorial planning, and address issues of statewide importance. Collectively, the NYPNN aims to enhance the overall quality and reach of news coverage, providing New Yorkers with a more comprehensive understanding of the diverse stories shaping their communities and the state. We expand our coverage of these and other issues with content from NPR and other national producers. WRVO continues to look for opportunities to collaborate with other journalism organizations to improve our public service.

6.3 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(s) or from a person(s) served.

WRVO continues to be recognized for excellence in journalism from professional organizations like the Associated Press and the Syracuse Press Club. During the current reporting period, WRVO received Syracuse Press Club awards for local reporting on a Syracuse-area theatre company that wrote, rehearsed and performed a new play in just 24 hours; a Syracuse Stage play about bringing Central New York Haudenosaunee history to life; a look back at the early days of retiring Syracuse men's basketball coach Jim Boeheim; and a first-place award for a long-form radio show and associated podcasts exploring clean energy and our future. The WRVO newsroom received an Outstanding Spot News award for a story describing the last days of classes before Cazenovia College closed for good. Online stories about the New York 22nd District Congressional race, a rise in school threats across central New York, and school closures due to a summer heat wave each received more than 10,000 page views. Local stories about regional urgent care centers dropping a national insurance plan, a proposed rate hike from a

local utility, and a posthumous award for a New York State trooper also generated significant engagement. We receive anecdotal feedback from listeners on a wide variety of national and local news stories, and review our listener data and online statistics regularly to help determine what content is creating the greatest engagements with listeners and users.

6.4 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 2024, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2025. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.

The WRVO News Department regularly reports on issues of interest to minority and diverse audiences in our region. In FY24 this included local stories on the closing of a downtown Syracuse queer bar and theatre; local response to anti-Semitic messages posted online; a conversation with Iranian refugee Dina Nayeri; a new ADA-compliant fishing jetty at Onondaga State Park; an accreditation honor for a local child advocacy center; a grant received by the Black Latino Asian Artist Coalition; an attempt to raise the state's temporary disability benefits; CENTRO riders advocating for equitable public transportation; efforts to improve SUNY campus' mental health services; Syracuse community centers working to preserve Black history; a new emergency shelter for teens with a focus on LGBTQ issues to open; Pride Month in central New York, and more. WRVO will continue to seek opportunities to cover stories affecting minority and diverse audiences.

6.5 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's funding through the Community Service Grant makes a profound impact on WRVO's ability to cover issues of importance to our community. The CSG helps pay for the salaries of WRVO employees, including our local journalists. Without it, we would not have the resources to cover and report on many important local issues which might not otherwise generate interest from the commercial broadcast stations. In an era of decreasing options for local journalism, CPB's continued support has a direct impact on WRVO's ability to provide a critical public service.

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