Telling Public Radio's Story:

Local Content and Services Report: FY2024

Corporation for Public Broadcasting

1) WWFM's classical music on *The Classical Network,* and jazz on *JazzOn2,* formats continued along with public affairs programming. We believe that WWFM's programming, by its very nature, appeals to the needs of a diverse audience. Our mission has always been to provide listeners with a wide variety of thoughtfully produced local concerts with a blend of complementary programming from national and international sources. For many years WWFM has broadcast partnerships with approximately 80 educational institutions, performance organizations, arts & culture organizations and venues from within our broadcast region and beyond. They range from Ivy League universities to world-class conservatories, from high schools to early music groups. These partnerships provide proprietary, long form programming to multi-platform outlets, combining a mix of broadcast, in-person and digital media. WWFM's programming includes a mix of community awareness for the arts, audience engagement and educational content. Through our partnerships with musical arts organizations, we've been able to keep alive our *Celebrating Our Musical Community: The Classical Network in Concerts* series. This is an ever-evolving series of classical music concerts from our partnership organizations mentioned above. The series features a diverse array of classical concert material performed by our broadcast region's students, amateur and professional musicians. Some concerts have been aired live, while others were recorded for air and post-produced for *The Classical Network in Concert* programming, which airs at least once a week, and sometimes more frequently as new concert material is made available to WWFM. Our *A Tempo* public affairs interview series offered information to the community about how arts organizations connect to the community with new educational and music programs to provide opportunities for the public to enjoy a diverse blend of arts topics. Wide ranging issues, community needs and interests have also been explored through public affairs programming on JazzOn2. WWFM maintains a website, which includes an interactive Community Events Calendar. WWFM also continues to stream its radio programming to listeners worldwide via the Internet. WWFM is in the process of building a station branded app with a projected launch by June 1, 2025. This will be designed to make it easier for listeners to connect with WWFM for listening, station information and membership options. Many times

over, WWFM listeners have said they've been grateful to have the opportunity to learn about and enjoy the arts, cultural topics and the music offered by WWFM as a connection to the timeless beauty of the arts - an oasis for comfort, joy, entertainment and education.

2) Our core values remain those of an educational arts institution based at a higher education institution, Mercer County Community College. Our dozens of community arts partnerships span higher education, music conservatories, high school, community arts groups and music professionals. These partnerships provide our listeners with an engaging stream of local concert content, and our partners with exposure for their missions. WWFM enjoys a symbiotic relationship with these types of programming partners, which number approximately 80 organizations. In additional to *A Tempo* mentioned in the preceding question, two popular, locally produced programs which speak to the core of our educational arts mission are music appreciation programs, *What Makes It Great,* and *Inside Music*. Here education and entertainment are treated as equal elements to great success within those program productions. *What Makes It Great* is produced before a live audience thereby offering the interactive relationship with the audience, including also the radio audience as an important element of the series. These programs have been presented as live programs and in recorded fashion. We particularly enjoy producing the live events because it gives us a chance to interact with diverse groups of community members in person, and they with WWFM staff members and with the performers. Our public affairs programming on The Classical Network and JazzOn2 has offered listeners insight as to how the world has continued to thrive and change, while highlighting the creative and unique ways organizations provide programs, education and information to those in need and/or who have a thirst for new ideas and knowledge. We also believe it's important to mentor young people interested in careers in broadcasting. Our college setting allows us to offer internship and volunteer opportunities for such interaction in addition to hosting students from community organizations interested in learning about broadcasting.

3) As in past years, the best indicators of success with partners are in retention. Our list of approximately 80 community partners – organizations and institutions that find value in expanding their resources to provide content, speak to us to engage in the best tradition of public broadcasting. We produce local concerts for air offered from our partnership organizations. This allows WWFM to offer a great diversity of musical programs reaching our equally diverse audience – and something for everyone. One program which continues to offer a measurable impact is our annual broadcast of the popular holiday program*, An Evening of Readings and Carols from Westminster Choir College of Rider University in Princeton, NJ,* hosted by WWFM's partnership manager. The demand for

this popular program nationwide has increased over previous years such that it required WWFM to increase its streaming capacity to accommodate listeners outside of our terrestrial listening area. (We also provided the much requested website links for the program guide.) Locally produced programs*, Inside Music* and *What Makes It Great*, along with nationally offered *Exploring Music* also continue to be popular because of their music appreciation, educational focus. WWFM continued to offer a variety of local and national public affairs programming within our classical and jazz formats. Various non-profit arts & culture organizations are featured in a wide variety of public affairs programming each week on WWFM as detailed in our public file reports, linked via wwfm.org. Additionally, we're still proud of the fact that two of our locally produced programs, a musical arts interview program called *Cadenza,* and a piano-focused series, *Between the Keys* were recognized nationally, each with the prestigious ASCAP Foundation Deems Taylor/Virgil Thomson Award for Broadcasting. Our local programming continues to be of value to our audience as many have contacted us to say how much they listen to and enjoy WWFM's exclusive, local specialty programs.

4) Our Jazzon2 HD2 station offers multi-cultural programming including jazz, world music, Latino culture programs and public affairs. This reaches a diverse audience worldwide through streaming. Plans continue to physically move our jazz station studios to our college's downtown Trenton, NJ, campus to engage new, diverse audiences in and around New Jersey's capitol city with broadcasts of live jazz concerts, and with interaction with Trenton-based students. By its very nature, we believe that classical music and jazz appeals to a wide and diverse audience that appreciates music and the arts and find it necessary for fulfillment in life. WWFM offers community members and students opportunities to produce and/or host programming and to learn the basics of broadcasting through internships and shadowing programs, offering mentorships for the next generation of broadcasters. An example of this showcases an on-going project in coordination with our college's radio students whereby under the guidance of our college's radio professor and our JazzOn2 station coordinator, students produced public affairs features that aired on our JazzOn2 station as a public service. This involved approximately five students each semester who produced segments of 3-5 minutes in length that aired twice a week. As opportunities become available WWFM participates in career education events to introduce people to jobs in radio, among them career fairs and job networking events produced by community organizations, Rider University and our licensee, Mercer County Community College. In February 2025 together with our licensee, Mercer County Community College, WWFM helped organize the second annual, successful, Black History Month event called Keeping Jazz Alive at our James Kerney Campus in Trenton. This featured donated food, the MCCC student Jazz ensemble and local community musicians, and was a vehicle to introduce students, community members and county dignitaries to our JazzOn2 – HD2 radio station and our

licensee, MCCC. We handed out station literature and awards to guests, and spoke to the attendees, a diverse group of community members, about WWFM and the offerings of our college. We will continue to engage in and expand these initiatives in the years to come, including concerts presented live over JazzOn2 for community members to enjoy in person and on the radio. While The Classical Network frequently presents music composed by and performed by persons of color and minority ethnic backgrounds, the network aired a special honoring musically the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr, and a local program from the Princeton University Chapel featuring music for the organ composed by Black musicians. WWFM produced another local concert as part of our The Classical Network in Concert series featuring an ensemble called TON, The Orchestra Now, in a program of music solely by African-American composers.

5) As always, our CPB grant funding provides the edge that allows WWFM to be innovative, creative and educational while evolving to provide new and engaging program content. We're able to offer local, exclusive specialty programming (music and informational) and concert programming, combined with a carefully chosen blend of nationally syndicated programs to meet the needs and interests of our diverse public radio audience. While our listener donations account for the largest source of revenue, our CPB grant funding provides the extra revenue needed to maintain and expand upon the programming services our audience expects from WWFM. In addition, through an affiliation with NPR, we're able to provide programming information and streaming services for listeners via the WWFM website. We are grateful for our CPB yearly grant and believe that our programming diversity and listenership would suffer a great loss of educational and entertainment listening opportunities should CPB funding not be a reality. Without our annual CPB grant, WWFM would be forced to make unpopular cuts in a variety of station services, ultimately depriving WWFM and its listenership of unique programming opportunities under WWFM's mission to preserve and promote classical music and jazz through listener-supported programming that is engaging, entertaining and enriching, while well-delivered by passionate, knowledgeable on-air hosts. WWFM The Classical Network acknowledges the importance of community partnerships to cultivate the seeds for financial stability, audience growth and unique programming capabilities. WWFM believes in the value of a sustainable model for our public broadcasting network which includes the important financial assistance from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.