**91.7 KAXE**
**CPB Local Content and Services Report 2024**
**6.1 Telling Public Radio's Story**

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.**

   In 2024, KAXE continued its mission to unite our community through music, conversations, news, and events. Our commitment to providing valuable information, entertainment, and fostering positive change remained unwavering. By actively seeking feedback from our Board, volunteers, Community Advisory Board, and listeners, we ensured that our content aligned with the community's needs.

   We expanded our reach significantly through on-air broadcasts, online streaming, podcasts, social media, weekly e-newsletters, and our text line. Our partnerships with organizations such as MinnPost and the MacRostie Art Center further enriched our programming and enhanced our community impact.

   Our 5-minute daily local newscast experienced notable growth, addressing the community's need for timely updates. We also saw a substantial increase in our digital audience, attracting over 435,000 unique visitors and nearly 1 million page views. Our comprehensive election coverage, which included moderated candidate forums, effectively informed and engaged voters.

   KAXE remains committed to serving our community and fostering connections through high-quality programming and meaningful conversations.

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.**

   Community connections and engagement are central to KAXE's strategic goals. Over the past year, we have been involved with several key initiatives, demonstrating our dedication to being a hub for news, information, culture, and community building.

   Media Collaborations:

   - Participated in community engagement training with America Amplified while collaborating with independent news organizations across the state and Great Lakes Region, including MN Reformer, WTIP, Interlochen Public Radio, The Timberjay, and MinnPost. Additionally, assisted in the launch of the Minnesota Journalism Center at the University of Minnesota by moderating a panel discussion.
   - Participated in a panel with the Report for America fellowship summit in Minneapolis, sharing insights on local journalism.

Community Events and Sponsorships:

- Helped co-sponsor and promote various events, including Bemidji Symphony Orchestra, GRIND Mountain Bike Race, Itasca Pride, Music in the Park Crosby, Mississippi Music, Earth Fest, Bemidji Block Party, and Back to Basics.
- Partnered with area breweries such as Bemidji Brewing for the Bemidji Block Party and Rapids Brewing Co for Festival Rialto.
- Hosted the 4th Annual Grand Rapids Riverfest, bringing together the City of Grand Rapids, local businesses, community non-profits like Itasca Life Options and United Way, and many community volunteers.

Educational Initiatives:

- Expanded our Phenology in the Schools program to include summer camps, with partnerships at Long Lake Conservation Camp and state parks, engaging children in nature-based learning beyond the classroom.
- Participated in the ISD 318 School Board candidate forum, fostering civic engagement and other candidate events throughout Northern Minnesota over the 2024 election.
- Moderated events with the Itasca Economic Development Corporation (IEDC) and collaborated with the University of Minnesota's Journalism School to enhance journalistic practices and student engagement.

These partnerships and initiatives highlight the various ways KAXE actively engages with our community, fostering collaboration, education, and informed citizenship throughout our region.

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.**

The key initiatives and partnerships undertaken by KAXE have had a significant impact on our community, fostering increased awareness, learning, and engagement across northern Minnesota.

**Phenology Programming:** Our Phenology segment continues to be a cherished part of our content, inspiring awareness of our natural world and community connection. One listener noted, "I love starting my day with the outdoor reports from the school kids. So cool!" Another remarked, "I think of John (Latimer) as a modern-day Johnny Appleseed, planting seeds of nature appreciation and awareness in the fertile young soil, all across the state. Bravo!" These comments reflect the program's role in fostering environmental stewardship and educational engagement.

**Music Programming:** Our wide-ranging music programming resonates deeply with our audience, creating personal and communal connections. A listener shared, "AWESOME music tonight during On the River!" while another said, "The volunteer is absolutely killing it tonight. I swear, every song he's played, I either knew and loved, or had to take a minute to look up and save for myself. Great variety, great selections. Really digging it." Such feedback underscores how our music programming not only entertains but also builds a sense of community and belonging.

**Riverfest:** The Grand Rapids Riverfest has become a cornerstone event, bringing people together and boosting local pride. One attendee expressed, "We loved Riverfest!! Fun city and nice people! Keep up the great work!" Another reflected, "Your impressive yet intimate atmosphere has created a memory that my daughter will never ever forget." These testimonials highlight the festival's role in strengthening community ties and creating lasting memories.

**Up North Report:** The Up North Report has significantly enhanced local news coverage, connecting communities with vital information. A listener noted, "Once again, this morning's Up North Report is full of important news that I didn't know… thanks again for providing it." This indicates the report's effectiveness in increasing public awareness of regional issues.

**Election Coverage:** Our comprehensive election coverage has been praised for its clarity and accessibility. One listener commented, "Thank you SO much for posting results on your website! Traditionally, I struggle to locate local election results, but you have made it SUPER easy and accessible, which I very much appreciate!" Another shared, "Thank you so very much for having election results on your website so quickly. We were out of the area and the only place I was able to find results was on your website." This feedback illustrates how our election coverage has become a trusted resource for civic engagement.

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.**

At KAXE, we're deeply committed to amplifying the voices of diverse communities through thoughtful programming and reporting. In Fiscal Year 2024, we made significant efforts to highlight stories from Indigenous communities, LGBTQ individuals, people with disabilities, and low-income populations.

**Indigenous Communities:** We've covered a wide range of stories focusing on tribal communities:

- **Renewable Energy Initiatives:** We featured the Pine Point Resilience Hub on the White Earth Reservation, a solar-powered microgrid project improving energy reliability and reducing costs.

- **Tribal Land Restoration:** Our coverage of State Senator Mary Kunesh's work to return state lands to Native tribes shed light on both the successes and challenges of these efforts.
- **Federal Law Enforcement Guidance:** We informed our audience about tribal leaders' advice for members on handling encounters with federal agents, promoting awareness of individual rights.

**LGBTQ and Diverse Populations:** We've continued to showcase stories from LGBTQ voices, including cultural events like the **Native Nations Fashion Show**, which celebrated Indigenous artistry and diversity within tribal communities. Additionally, we've reported on local Pride events, sharing the experiences of LGBTQ individuals in northern Minnesota.

**People with Disabilities and Low-Income Communities:** Our news team regularly highlights stories addressing the needs of people with disabilities, focusing on accessibility issues in local infrastructure and education. We've also covered economic challenges faced by low-income families, particularly around housing insecurity and access to healthcare.

**Music Programming**: We have initiated a renewed effort to showcase a diverse range of musicians, intentionally including BIPOC and LGBTQ artists. Our programming features a balanced mix of voices, ensuring a 50/50 representation of women and men. Volunteers are empowered to curate music shows that reflect their unique preferences, fostering an inclusive atmosphere. Our "Album of the Week" segment serves as an additional platform to spotlight a wide variety of artists and genres.

**Plans for FY25:** Looking ahead, we plan to:

- Expand coverage of Indigenous communities, particularly in Northern Minnesota and tribal nations.
- Deepen our reporting on disability rights, with a focus on inclusive education and employment opportunities.
- Continue addressing economic disparities by reporting on affordable housing, food security, and healthcare access.

Our goal is to reflect the diversity of northern Minnesota, ensuring every community feels heard, represented, and connected through our programming.

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?**

In northern Minnesota, CPB funding has been crucial for enhancing our local news coverage. It has helped us grow our newsroom and kickstart initiatives like the Up North Report, allowing us to better serve underrepresented communities in ways we never thought possible.

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But it's not only about the headline stories; it's also about capturing the everyday essence of our community — from phenology reports to showcasing the talent of local artists and musicians. This ongoing presence, made possible by CPB funding, is what establishes us as a trusted source of information in the region.

Without this support, we'd face a significant reduction in our reach. We'd likely need to scale back on original reporting, limit our coverage of rural and tribal communities, and lose the diverse voices that make our station special.

CPB funding isn't just a financial boost; it's the foundation that allows us to deliver reliable, local journalism.