2023 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



"I turn to WUFT-FM/TV for broad but nuanced insight into complex issues – delivered with great aplomb."

-Patrice Boyes,
Attorney and Artist
Gainesville, Florida

The mission of WUFT-TV/FM is to educate, enrich, enlighten and inspire diverse audiences and individuals through high quality educational programming and related services that enhance the quality of life for people in the communities we serve.

LOCAL VALUE

WUFT-TV and WUFT-FM are an integral part of the North Central Florida community for 66 and 43 years, respectively. WUFT-TV is committed to providing value through educational programming for students in preschool, elementary, secondary and higher education. Local programs highlight non-profit organizations that provide valuable services to the community. WUFT- FM provides news, weather, public affairs and entertainment programming. It also serves as a facilitator of community dialogue on various topics. Both stations include a daily, multi-platform news operation with local and state news and expanded severe weather coverage when needed.

2023 KEY SERVICES

WUFT-TV/FM highlights the services of non-profit and community organizations through weekly episodes of "Greater Good" on television and on "Tell Me About It" on radio. "Artistry in Motion" features local artists explaining their work and accomplishments in video and audio vignettes. "Knight Talks" features UF students interviewing media industry leaders and "WUFT Amplified" showcases local musical groups. WUFT-TV/FM also provides current and breaking news content and serves as a source for severe weather and emergency information for the local community and other public broadcasting stations through the Florida Public Radio Emergency Network during Hurricane Idalia and other storms.

Local Impact

WUFT partnered with other public television stations in Florida for implementation of Jump Start's *Read for the Record Day*. Station representatives, including WUFT Executive Director Randy Wright and UF CJC Dean Hub Brown were recorded while reading *With Lots of Love.* The recordings were featured at various times on Oct. 26 on each Florida public media stations' Facebook page.

WUFT is also a training facility for student news journalists and meteorologists and is a valuable resource for critical news and weather information in the 21-county television and 19-county radio service area in North Central and Mid-Florida.

2023 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT

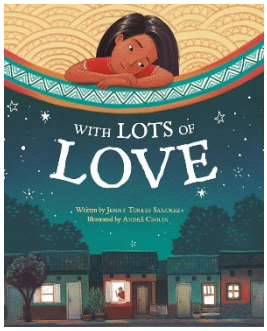
IN THE COMMUNITY

WUFT-TV signed on in 1958 and became the area's first television station to provide educational and entertainment programming to individuals and families in North Central Florida. Today, the station reaches 21 counties over-the-air, on cable and on satellite. WUFT-FM signed on in 1981 and serves 19 counties in North Central and mid-Florida. In 2023, both stations continued to produce award-winning news content with accolades from the National Broadcasting Society, RTDNA (Radio, Television, Digital News Association), Florida Association of Broadcast Journalists, Society of Professional Journalists and PMJA (Public Media Journalists Association). In addition, several WUFT news students placed in monthly Hearst Journalism Awards competitions and the National Championship.

Education Outreach

Preschool and Elementary

Jump Start's Read for the Record Day



WUFT partnered with other public television stations in Florida for the implementation of the 18th annual Jump Start's *Read for the Record Day*. Station representatives including WUFT Executive Director Randy Wright and University of Florida College of Journalism and Communications Dean Hub Brown were recorded while reading the Book, *With Lots of Love* by Jenny Torres Sanchez. WUFT staff coordinated logistics and scheduling for WUFT and other Florida station recordings, some of which were in Spanish and in sign language, for posting on the WUFT Media Facebook page at various times on Oct. 26.

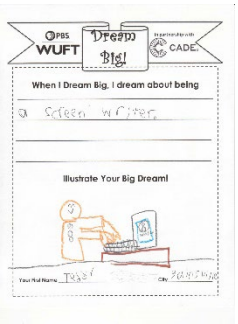
Best Friends for Life Reading Buddies Program



WUFT's pursued a partnership with Stop Children's Cancer and University of Florida Shands Children's Hospital staff to help fund the reading program in the Infusion Clinic and Immune Compromised unit in the Gainesville, Florida facility.

Newberry Elementary Big Dreams Program





WUFT Educational Outreach staff partnered with a Newberry Elementary School second grade class to encourage students to "dream big" and capture it in an illustration. Their inspiration came from the 2022 *Read for the Record* book *Nigel and the Moon*. The illustrations were featured on the WUFT Facebook page and on WUFT-TV during breaks between PBS Kids programming in 2023. The program was sponsored by the Cade Museum for Creativity and Invention in Gainesville, Florida.

2023 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT

IN THE COMMUNITY

Community Engagement and Impact

Local Specials and Continuing Series:

"WUFT's FANFARES & FIREWORKS"
WUFT-TV/FM hosted the annual Independence Day eve kick-off with a free family-oriented music event for the community on the UF campus. The evening included performances by four musical groups followed by a spectacular fireworks show. Local businesses and foundations provided the funding. The event was recorded and edited into a special two-hour compilation program for broadcast on July 4.



"Greater Good" is a WUFT-produced half-hour series showcasing non-profit organizations in the North Central Florida community. Each participating organization leads the viewer on a journey of their organization's history, their mission and their impact on the community.



"Tell Me About It" is a 30-minute weekly radio show featuring non-profit organizations, events and research projects in North Central Florida.



"Artistry in Motion" celebrates the local arts community by focusing on the creativity, passion and perseverance of the artist. The program showcases each individual artist's story in an engaging audio and visual vignette.

"UF Homecoming Parade 2023" featured the University's annual celebration. A condensed one-hour version of the parade was rebroadcast during Homecoming weekend.



"UF Sounds of the Season - Rejoice and Be Merry: A Diamond Jubilee" The annual holiday special featured the UF Symphony Orchestra, the UF Concert Choir and Gainesville Master Chorale recorded in the Phillips Center in the UF Cultural Plaza in Gainesville.

"Knight Talks" is a 30-minute weekly radio and television show featuring UF students interviewing media industry leaders and UF alumni.



"WUFT Amplified" The WUFT-TV produced 30-minute program showcases local music groups in performance in the WUFT studio.

***"WUFT News First at Five"** The 30-minute weekday newscast is produced and directed by UFCJC broadcasting students.

* The 2/3/23 newscast was nominated for a College Television Award from the Television Academy Foundation.

2023 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT

STORIES OF IMPACT

STORIES OF IMPACT

SUMMARY:

WUFT's Innovation News Center provides news and information to North Central Florida. As a training facility for the University of Florida College of Journalism and Communications, students can hone their skills in print, video and digital reporting and production. Student work is honored in numerous student and professional competitions including the National Broadcasting Society, Florida Association of Broadcast Journalists, Hearst Journalism Awards, Society of Professional Journalists and Public Media Journalists Association.

Digital:
In 2023, WUFT.org featured stories about the curious case of community colleges and its evictions; Florida's new abortion law; a city park reopening; dog training in a Florida prison; a lawmaker's plans for Gainesville's city utility; the end of a fight over a Dollar General development; LGBTQ book ban; "Fresh Take Florida" story used as evidence in a court case against the subject that was sentenced to a racially motivated attack at the site of a massacre of Black residents a century ago; and a photo journalism year-in-review. "The Point" online newsletter had the highest click rate of the year in August with 47.24% open rate during Hurricane Idalia coverage. Hurricane coverage on Aug. 27 resulted in 114,750 page views on wuft.org.

WUFT-FM:

- "Unintended" and "Behind the Bet" special reports featured on "The Point" podcast
- "The University of Florida holds the remains of thousands of Native American ancestors –the 11th largest holding in the U.S.," a *Report for America* story from Katie Hyson
- "The ground of their practice field is too hard for tackling. The Hawthorne Hornets won the state football championship anyway," a "Report for America" story from Katie Hyson
- Coverage of UF's potential TikTok Ban and inauguration of UF President Ben Sasse
- The Florida Legislative Session and State Control of Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU)
- Promotion of "Living on the Edge" special report (on "The Point")
- Newberry Meat Processing Plant Developments and Peaceful Sunday conflicts
- Permit-less Concealed Carry bill's impact and GRU budget cuts
- Santa Fe Habitat for Humanity Build, Container Homes and Mosquito Fish
- Hurricane Idalia Impacts
- Controversy and lawsuits over HB1645 creating independent authority over GRU
- Housing issues in Gainesville, farm stories, and concerns about human-bear interactions
- Coverage of the Israel/Hamas War and UF vigil stampede injuring 20 students
- School book ban controversy and local high school teams in state football championships

Special Note: WUFT staff and students gained valuable experience reporting on the devastation and aftermath of Hurricane Idalia. WLRN host Tom Hudson assisted with the news coverage.

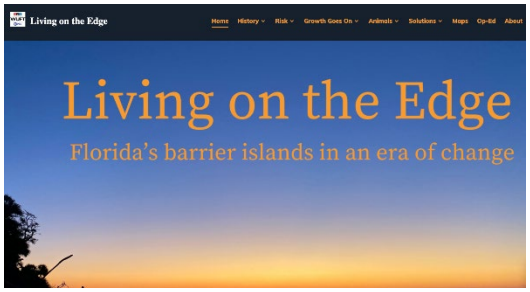
2023 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT

STORIES OF IMPACT

WUFT-TV

SPECIAL REPORT: "Living on the Edge: Florida's Barrier Islands in an era of Change"

Florida is home to the most extensive system of barrier islands in the U.S. and the greatest number of people living on the exposed enclaves. In the fall of 2022, Hurricane Ian blazed a reminder of the dangers — and a warning for the future.



University of Florida TikTok Ban

Florida's flagship public university went a step further, saying it will also ban all future academic research that uses TikTok, an occasional cultural touchstone that boasts more than one billion monthly active users in 150 countries.



UF Hamas/Israel War Coverage

WUFT student journalists covered the war and its impact on students in the UF community, including a vigil stampede on the UF Turlington Plaza.

Pro-Palestinian student group at University of Florida sues DeSantis to block shutdown orders



WUFT-TV Highlights

- "Unintended: Unsecured Guns Lead to Unintended Deaths – A Preventable Epidemic" special report
- "Behind the Bet: Stories of Illegal Spots Betting on the University of Florida Campus" special report
- Coverage of UF's ban on the social platform TikTok
- Controversy over rejecting an Advanced Placement course on African American history in Florida
- The advance of permit-less carry in Florida
- Disney control district controversy
- State control of Gainesville's utility company
- Various challenges to book bans in schools and public libraries
- Hurricane Ian's lasting impacts
- Florida's new abortion law after Roe v. Wade overturned
- "UFxFAMU 1963: Reporting from the U.S. Civil Rights Trail" special report
- Hurricane Idalia impact and the aftermath
- Multi-platform coverage of the Israeli/Hamas War and UF student stampede at campus vigil



2023 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT

STORIES OF IMPACT

WUFT-FM

"**The Point"** enewsletter and podcast offers a weekly roundup of the best of WUFT's reporting from north central Florida, produced by students at the UF College of Journalism and Communications.

State Control of Gainesville Regional Utilities and the Debt Crisis Gov. Ron DeSantis signed a bill appointing an independent Governor-appointed board to oversee the city utility. A reduction in funding will impact the City of Gainesville debt crisis.



"Horseshow Beach Community Rebuilding After Hurricane Idalia's Destruction" Horseshoe Beach residents have come together, with help from around the state, to attempt to clean up and rebuild their homes and livelihoods.



WUFT-TV

"WUFT-TV News First at Five" is a weekday newscast featuring national, regional and local news, sports and weather. UF student journalists serve as anchors and producers. WUFT news managers train and advise students on their stories and features.



"UFXFAMU1963: Reporting from the U.S. Civil Rights Trail – 60th Anniversary Special" UF and FAMU students spent their 2023 spring break reporting from the U.S. Civil Rights Trail on the anniversary of the historic events that occurred in 1963.





2023 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT

STORIES OF IMPACT

STORIES OF IMPACT

SUMMARY:

WUFT and the Florida Public Radio Emergency Network (FPREN) continue to provide news, information and weather on a timely basis. FPREN, known also under the social media alias "Florida Storms," provides weather information and storytelling support to all public radio stations throughout Florida. WUFT acts as a contributor of content (through FPREN) to the other 13 stations for use in their audio broadcasts, website stories, and social media posts. FPREN staff also trains UF College of Journalism and Communication students to become weather forecasters. The Meteorologist's-in-Training (MITs) are often featured on "WUFT News First at Five" newscasts, on the low-power commercial cable station WRUF-TV and on social media platforms.

The Florida Storms Facebook Page reaches a diverse audience of more than 65,000 followers, not only in Florida but across the entire country. In addition to the page, the most effective tools for informing the public of a potential or current weather hazard are live radio broadcasts and social media such as Facebook Live and X.

As of June 2023, Chief Meteorologist Jeff George joined meteorologists Megan Borowski and Justin Ballard to provide daily weather updates to Florida public media stations. The team of WUFT meteorologists also serve public media audiences across the Palmetto State through the South Carolina Emergency Information Network. This arrangement is similar to the arrangement FPREN has made with Florida stations and content is distributed for over-the-air radio broadcasts, website articles, and on social media.

The FPREN team was honored with the 2023 Florida Government Productivity Award presented by Florida TaxWatch, the Florida Council of 100 and the state of Florida. The award recognizes and rewards excellence in productivity and highlights individuals and teams who have demonstrated outstanding commitment to finding innovative solutions that enhance efficiency and effectiveness in public service.



Photo includes UFCJC Dean Hub Brown, Jeff George, Megan Borowski, WUFT Executive Director Randy Wright and members of the selection committee.

2023 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT

STORIES OF IMPACT







The following list of activity represents only a portion of the total catalog of FPREN content produced for Florida and South Carolina during the past year.

Feb. 6-10:	Severe Weather Awareness Week highlights
March 29:	“Ian” is retired from the list of possible hurricane names
April 18:	Temperatures dip into the mid to lower 40’s in north Florida
June 1:	The 2023 hurricane season begins
June 2:	Tropical Storm Arlene forms in the Gulf of Mexico
June 23:	Formation of Tropical Storms Cindy and Bret
July 3:	Dangerous heat with an index up to 110 degrees in North Florida
July 6:	Hurricane season forecast update and now will have above average activity
July 22:	First hurricane of the season is named Don
Aug. 21:	Eighth named storm forms. Only seven other years on record have eight or more storms by this date
Aug. 30:	Hurricane Idalia makes landfall in Florida’s Big Bend region
Sept. 27:	A wet winter may be on the horizon due to El Nino
Sept. 28:	One year anniversary of Hurricane Ian striking southwest Florida
Oct. 3:	Canadian wildfires bring dangerous smoke levels to Florida
Nov. 30:	Atlantic hurricane season ends with 19 named storms
Dec. 4:	FPREN wins Florida Government Productivity Award
Dec. 14:	Nor-Easter to impact state with heavy rain and strong winds
Dec. 18:	Freeze watch in effect in parts of north and central Florida





2023 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT

SUMMARY

WUFT-TV/FM provides programming and services to viewers and listeners in North Central and mid-Florida. WUFT strives to be the standard-bearer in the region and is dedicated to serving and enhancing the quality of life for a diverse audience. WUFT/FM offers unlimited access to free high-quality programming and services on-air, online and via social media platforms. The Florida Public Radio Emergency Network continues to provide forecasts and severe weather information updates on-air, online and on the Florida Storms app on a timely basis.



