

Contact: Rachel Boon

**IOWA PUBLIC RADIO ANNUAL REPORT AND BOARD APPOINTMENT**

**Action Requested:** Receive the Iowa Public Radio FY 2017 annual report.

**Executive Summary:** Iowa Public Radio enriches the civic and cultural life in Iowa through high quality news and cultural programming. IPR's statewide public radio network (a total of 24 stations licensed to the University of Iowa, Iowa State University, and the University of Northern Iowa) now serves 250,000 listeners with three programming streams: News, News/Studio One, and Classical. IPR's combined radio groups serve rural and urban Iowa, touching all of Iowa's 99 counties. The history of public radio in Iowa is long and proud – Iowa State University and the University of Iowa each have public radio stations that are *almost a century old*, with FCC licenses that were among the first 100 radio licenses ever granted; IPR's statewide network is seen as a model by other states.

Iowa Public Radio manages \$11.3 M in assets (24 stations) for the universities and 15 university staff: (4 ISU, 6 UNI, 5 U of I). In addition, IPR promotes all three public universities through regular on-air announcements and helps the universities accomplish their outreach missions by regularly featuring university experts on IPR's talk shows – *Talk of Iowa* and *River to River* which air daily Monday through Friday.

**Background:**

- Creation of Iowa Public Radio. In December 2004, the Board of Regents created Iowa Public Radio to consolidate the radio stations at the three Regent universities.
- Incorporation of Iowa Public Radio. In February 2006, Iowa Public Radio was incorporated under the Revised Iowa Nonprofit Corporation Act, Chapter 504 of the Iowa Code. The Articles of Incorporation of Iowa Public Radio provide that IPR is organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and has the primary purpose of supporting and promoting the welfare and growth of the network of public radio stations licensed to the Board of Regents and operated for the public benefit.
- Operating Agreement. In May 2007, the Board of Regents approved the Public Service Operating Agreement between Iowa Public Radio and the Board, with the consent of the Regent university presidents. The purpose of the Agreement is to engage Iowa Public Radio to manage the day-to-day operations of the Radio Groups on behalf of the Board of Regents and the universities consistent with FCC requirements for licensee control; and to serve as the primary fundraising entity for the Radio Groups. The agreement was renewed in 2013 for 6 years, through June 30, 2019.
- Board of Directors. The IPR board of directors is currently comprised of ten members, including seven community directors, and three licensee directors representing the interests of the station licensees, the University of Iowa, Iowa State University, and the University of Northern Iowa. The current board includes Ambassador Mary Kramer (Chair); Marsha Ternus (Vice Chair); Steve Firman (Secretary); Douglas West (Treasurer); Robert Downer; Zachary Mannheimer; Vickee Adams; Scott Ketelsen (UNI); Jeneane Beck (SUI); and John McCarroll (ISU). IPR by-laws allow for 11 members.

- Senior Management. Iowa Public Radio is overseen by a senior leadership team which includes the Executive Director, Director of Finance and Operations, Music Program Director, News/Talk Program Director, and Engineering Services Manager.

Progress Report (pre-audit FY 2017)

- **IPR's fundraising increased.** Overall, private support to IPR was up 15% over FY 2016. Membership revenue increased by \$501,000, major gift revenue by \$233,000 and corporate sponsorship by \$100,000. A sustainer program, which allows members to pay for their memberships monthly by credit card or EFT, has created an on-going source of revenue and continues to grow. The business community in the state has continued to support IPR, providing \$1.7 M in support in FY 2017. In FY 2017, 76% of IPR's revenue was from fundraising, with the remainder from Iowa's public universities, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the State of Iowa.
- **IPR completed a 2017-2022 strategic plan that outlines plans for IPR's future.** The plan includes the following goals: expanding our statewide news coverage, adding reporting staff in western Iowa and other underserved areas of the state; growing our support for the emerging music scene in the state; becoming a convener for the Classical music community in Iowa; innovating in a changing media environment; providing excellent management services to our license holders – ISU, UI and UNI; and developing the next generation of public radio professionals. In 2022, we plan to celebrate 100 years of public radio service to Iowans with our university partners. Stations owned by Iowa State University and the University of Iowa both received their FCC licenses in 1922, among the first 100 stations to receive licenses in the United States.
- **IPR's audience grew.** IPR's Fall 2016 Nielsen rating book exceeded 250,000 listeners per week, the biggest audience book ever logged by the combined stations that make up IPR. This represents a 4% increase in audience over the Spring 2016 Nielsen rating book.
- **IPR's News team was recognized for excellence.** IPR was chosen to be one of 17 news rooms across the country to participate in a national political reporting partnership. IPR *Morning Edition* host and reporter Clay Masters was IPR's representative in the partnership, and his reports on the election were heard regularly on NPR's *Morning Edition* and *All Things Considered*. In Spring 2017, three IPR reporters received recognition from the Midwest Broadcast Journalists Association, one received a regional Murrow Award from the Radio Television Digital News Association, and IPR received two first place and two second place awards from the Iowa Broadcast News Association. Recognized reports included a three-part series on water quality and the IPR news team's coverage of the caucuses, presidential campaigns and Election Night.
- **IPR extended the reach of each of the Regent universities, through IPR talk shows, exposure on our Classical music service, and other outreach partnerships.** For the six months from October 2016-March 2017, Regent university experts logged 150 appearances on IPR talk shows. That is an average of about 6 Regent university experts per week. Frequent university guests included UNI's Chris Larimer and Donna Hoffman, ISU's Richard Jauron, Jim Pease and Jim McCormick, and UI's Tim Hagel and Pete Damiano. *University Concert*, *Iowa Arts Showcase* and *Classical Music with Barney Sherman* also featured university guests, both student and faculty, on IPR Classical, highlighting university performances and interviews with university artists in Iowa.

- **IPR's Talk Shows engaged listeners in their communities.** IPR produces two talk shows each week day, and IPR took more of these out into the community in FY 2017. IPR partnered with NPR and three other stations across the country to host "A Nation Engaged," a conversation with Iowans about how they view the presidency, which resulted in not only a local broadcast, but also guests and audio being included in a national broadcast. The conversations were held at Presidential libraries across the country; IPR's was at the Hoover Presidential Library in West Branch. In addition, IPR talk show hosts moderated 6 live events in various communities, and IPR producers edited those recorded events into broadcasts. IPR also recorded and edited 9 shows "on location" outside the studio – paddling down the Skunk River with Jim Pease, traveling to newly reopened Lake Delhi, revisiting a Bonobo facility in Des Moines, and attending a permit to carry class in Hiawatha. Through these shows, IPR enriched listener understanding, and provided enhanced opportunities for listener engagement in the conversations about the issues facing our state.
- **IPR's Classical and Studio One services brought the best in Iowa performances to a broad listening audience.** Together, IPR aired hundreds of hours of music heard live in Iowa, and provided a platform for emerging Iowa artists. IPR is an important player in Iowa's music scene and an essential partner for organizations like the Des Moines Symphony, Des Moines Music Coalition, and Waterloo-Cedar Falls Symphony. Partnerships with the Des Moines Social Club and the 80-35 and Hinterland music festivals have provided opportunities for IPR to share live music from local artists and connect with a younger, passionate audience.
- **IPR furthered its commitment to developing the next generation of public radio professionals.** IPR provided learning and work opportunities for university students in our Music, News, Talk Show and Broadcast Operations departments and on all three university campuses. In FY 2017, we employed 41 students over the course of the fiscal year. Positions included reporter, on-air host, music library assistant, assistant producer and broadcast operations technician.
- **IPR increased its digital offerings, launching two new podcasts.** IPR developed a weekly podcast called "Under the Golden Dome", which provided in-depth coverage of the state legislature during the legislative session. *Talk of Iowa* host Charity Nebbe and producer Anna Williams created a second podcast called "Lit City" which focused on author interviews and historic author locations in Iowa City. In addition, listeners can now access all three of our streams – News, Classical and Studio One – 24 hours a day on-line or via their cell phone using the IPR app for iOS or Android. IPR continues to grow its digital offerings and presence as listening patterns change.