2019 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



"WUFT regularly features wonderful historical and documentary accounts of Florida history, folklore and culture that UF faculty and students use in our research in teaching and in exhibits."

-Dr. Paul Ortiz, University of Florida
Samuel Proctor Oral History Project

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's advancement.

WUFT-TV is committed to providing value through educational programming for preschool, elementary, secondary and higher education students. WUFT-FM provides news, weather, public affairs and entertainment programming and serves as a facilitator of community dialogues on various topics.

Both stations include a daily, multi-platform news operation with local and state news and expanded severe weather operations.

2019 KEY SERVICES

WUFT-TV continues to support the "Martha Speaks" Reading Buddy program and the "Best Friends for Life" program which provides PBS learning materials to immune-compromised children at UF Health and also to children in schools in the counties we serve.

WUFT-TV/FM provides current news content and serves as a source for severe weather and emergency information for the local community and other public broadcasting stations throughout the state with the Florida Public Radio Emergency Network.

LOCAL IMPACT

WUFT has partnered with local businesses, the University of Florida and non-profit organizations to provide educational materials to schools in Alachua and Marion Counties.

WUFT is also a training facility for budding news journalists and aspiring meteorologists. WUFT is the "go to" source for critical news and weather information in the 21-county television and 19-county radio service area and throughout the state via the Florida Public Radio Emergency Network.

2019 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT

IN THE COMMUNITY

In 1958, WUFT-TV signed on and became the North Central Florida's first television station to provide educational and entertainment programming to individuals and families in the area. 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. Both stations continue to produce award-winning news content with accolades from the National Broadcasting Society, RTDNA (Radio, Television, Digital News Association), Associated Press Broadcasters, Society of Professional Journalists and PMJA (Public Media Journalist Association - formerly PRNDI). In 2019 WUFT students won the Hearst Journalism Awards National championships in radio and television reporting. Their outstanding work led the University of Florida College of Journalism and Communications and WUFT to the national championship in the broadcast news category.

Education Outreach

Preschool and Elementary

Stop, Paws and Learn and PBS Kids Zone: The free annual family event highlighted PBS Kids programming and educational services and included Beau the Therapy Dog, K9's for Warriors, Gentle Carousel Therapy Horses, GPD K9 Unit, Guardian Angels Service Dogs and Judy Thigpen Dog Training.

Martha Speaks Reading Buddies Program: The program has become a mainstay in Alachua and Marion County classrooms. The "Martha Speaks" Read Aloud Book Club is featured in Alachua County Public Schools and the Public Library District Branches.

Best Friends for Life Book Buddy Program: This partnership, between WUFT-TV and STOP Children's Cancer, Inc., enables children in the 18-bed UF Health Shands Pediatric Immune-Compromised Unit to experience PBS Kids programming broadcast on WUFT-TV. The program includes books, tablets and ancillary materials.

Florida Museum of Natural History Collaboration: WUFT provided PBS Learning Media resources and support for a special event featuring "A Scientist in the Classroom" with Bruce McFadden at the Florida Museum of Natural History. WUFT was also a participant at the Museum's annual "Starry Night" event with a table featuring "Ready Jet Go!" information and materials.

CHILD Center Collaboration: WUFT Education and Outreach Coordinator Mary Brandenburg represents WUFT on the CHILD Center Advisory Board. She provides in-service training for the CHILD Center on PBS Learning Media and "Sesame Street" instructional materials.

Higher Education

WUFT-TV/FM serves as a training ground for future generations of journalists and multimedia professionals in the UF College of Journalism and Communications Innovation News Center. Student reporters, producers and editors, under the direction of WUFT staff, produce the news on multiple media platforms. The Innovation News Center provides state-of-the-art facilities for students and professional staff to create news content for the College's many distribution channels, including WUFT-TV, WUFT-FM and wuft.org. WUFT newscasts and Florida Public Radio Emergency Network weather forecasts provide professional-level training and real-world experiences for hundreds of students on an annual basis. In 2019, the stations produced more than 300 live newscasts and more than 100 short form news briefs and content.

"Noticias WUFT" (www.wuft.org/noticias) has expanded production of Spanish language news content to better serve the Hispanic community in the North Central Florida area. Students produce a half-hour radio show broadcast on Saturday mornings. They also produce a weekly Facebook Live newscast every Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. which focuses on a variety of topics including political scenarios in Latin America about protests, elections and immigration issues. Students also produce daily news briefs for WUFT-TV with the top 3 stories of the day.

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IN THE COMMUNITY

Community Engagement and Impact

Expanded Weather and Emergency Information:
WUFT-TV and WUFT-FM are the lead stations for the Florida Pubic Radio Emergency Network which provides emergency weather content to public broadcasting stations throughout Florida and to the South Carolina Emergency Network. Staff meteorologists and student forecasters produce radio and television weather reports and alerts for broadcast and online.

FANFARES & FIREWORKS: WUFT-TV and WUFT-FM present Gainesville's only pre-Independence Day community event. More than 10,000 individuals and families from throughout North Central Florida traditionally attend the free event to celebrate the holiday with food, fun, musical performances and fireworks.

University of Florida Homecoming Parade Live and Streamed Broadcast: UF hosts the annual Homecoming Parade each fall. WUFT-TV provides a front row seat for a live broadcast featuring floats, bands and dignitaries traveling down University Avenue in Gainesville. WUFT-TV professional staff and student reporters, producers and videographers coordinate the live broadcast that was also available on wuft.org and on Facebook where 36,527 people were able to see the content with 16,486 unique views.

Sounds of the Season: WUFT-TV provided live coverage of the concert and an edited version for broadcast on WUFT-TV. The event included performers from the UF School of Music and the Gainesville Master Chorale. The online archive on wuft.org received 540 views.

Downton Abbey Movie Experience: The event raised $15,000 from seven community sponsors and ticket sales of more than 600. The event was held in theaters in Gainesville and Ocala. WUFT attendees were encouraged to dress up as their favorite character for a chance to win the WUFT "Downton Abbey" costume contest.

Sneak Preview Screenings for "Les Miserables," "Chasing the Moon" and "Country Music": WUFT viewers and listeners were treated to special screening of three national series premieres. The free event brought large crowds to the Hippodrome Cinema in Gainesville.

WUFT-FM Anniversary Poster Signing: WUFT Members who pledged for the WUFT 89.1/90.1/WUFT Classic anniversary poster during the fall public radio membership campaign were able to pick up their poster at this event. Poster artist Eleanor Blair was on hand to sign posters.

WUFT-FM Brews and Talk: The community was invited to the second annual "Brews and Talk" at First Magnitude Brewery in Gainesville. A special beer that was brewed and canned in honor of WUFT featured the new WUFT logo.

WUFT-TV/FM Estate Planning and Bequest Seminar: WUFT offered a free Estate Planning Seminar for viewers and listeners in Gainesville and Ocala who wanted to learn more about tax laws and how recent changes could impact their lives.

"Tell Me About It" Program and Podcast: This weekly 30-minute radio program features conversations with non-profit organizations, information on upcoming events or noteworthy University of Florida research. The podcast is also available at wuft.org and npr.org on the WUFT Media app and on NPR One.

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STORIES OF IMPACT

“Fresh Take Florida”

“Fresh Take Florida” helped fill the gap left behind by shrinking newspaper budgets and the realities of commercial television interests. It proves the validity of WUFT’s mission in providing accountability journalism on stories where no one else has. A dedicated team of student journalists continued to report on stories of interest during the Florida Legislative session.



Gainesville Job Corps Center Problems

The Gainesville Job Corps Center’s problems — exacerbated to a crisis point by Hurricane Irma — extended much further back than the 2017 storm. WUFT reporters spent the better part of a year digging into its history, its environmental problems, and what local politicians are trying to do to see a job training center like it reopened.



Gainesville-Alachua County Drug Task Force Takes Down Drug Ring

The Gainesville-Alachua County Drug Task Force took down a drug ring that authorities described as one of the largest marijuana and cocaine investigations in the region. This is a story that had a WUFT reporter reviewing more than 1,000 pages of court documents over six months to piece together the scope of law enforcement’s investigation.



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STORIES OF IMPACT

School Employee Access to Student Social Security Numbers

It's difficult to come up with a reason why school employees like a bus driver or a lunchroom manager would have access to public school students' Social Security numbers. Yet across Florida, that's what state auditors have found over the past two years. The Fresh Take Florida team analyzed the auditors' findings and noted that thousands of employees in school districts, state colleges and state universities had access to student Social Security numbers which they did not need.



Immigration Issue in Newberry

Watching the national immigration debate play out in tiny towns is among the tasks WUFT reporters faced in 2019. WUFT shared a story of how a hit-and-run incident in Newberry helped to shed light on the effects of a new state law regarding immigration enforcement.



Nestle Company Requested Permit to Bottle Water from Local Spring

Environmental issues also took center stage, this time in Gilchrist County where a permit request to pump water from Ginnie Springs, so it could be marketed by the Nestle company as bottled water, brought complaints and protests. As the year wound down that controversy became even louder as it was learned nothing is paid to the state for taking millions of gallons of water from the aquifer, save a $115 permit fee.



Florida Public Radio Emergency Network and Florida Storms

Reach in the Community:

Four WUFT meteorologists serve audiences in two states - Florida and South Carolina - with emergency weather information critical to public media's mission of public safety. The Florida Public Radio Emergency Network (FPREN), known also under the social media alias "Florida Storms," provides weather information to all 13 public radio stations throughout Florida. WUFT acts as a contributor of content (through FPREN) to the other 12 stations for use in their audio broadcasts, website stories, and social media posts.

Partnerships:

UF College of Journalism and Communications
WUFT-TV/FM
Florida Department of Emergency Management

Impact and Community Feedback:

The **Florida Storms** Facebook Page reaches more than 50,000 people, not only in Florida, but across the entire country. The engagement rate exceeds what most marketing experts would consider "good" (one percent) with some posts even eclipsing 60 percent.

Tweets from **@FloridaStorms** during the last 365 days reached more than six million users and averaged an engagement rate of just over one percent. The most engaging post was about a potential tropical cyclone that ended up having only a minimal effect on Florida, but it formed after the scare from major Hurricane Dorian.

FPREN coverage of severe weather events garnered the prestigious CPB Community Lifeline Award.



A new version of the Florida Storms mobile app was released in August, just in time for the peak of hurricane season. Since its release, it has been downloaded by 42,584 users who have opened the app 788,830 times. A graph of iOS sessions reveals how effective the app is during times of potentially catastrophic weather. The peak in usage in late August was during Hurricane Dorian coverage.

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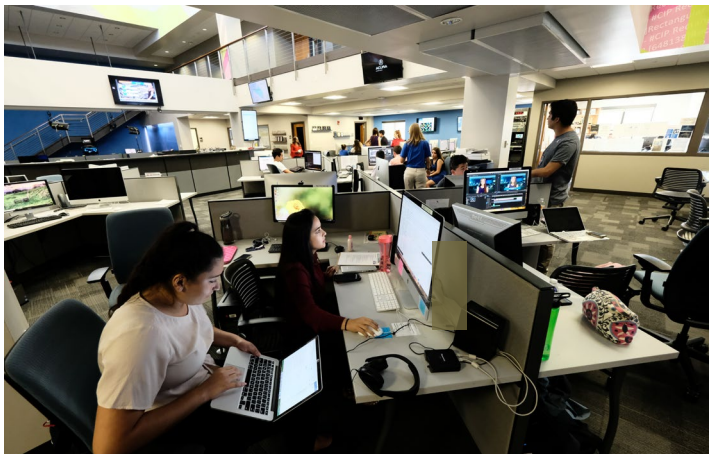
SUMMARY



"In an era of declining print news, WUFT is essential to the local citizenry being able to operate from a common set of facts. There is no alternative."

– Patrice Boys, attorney and former journalist

WUFT's Innovation News Center provides news and information to a 19 counties North Central and Mid-Florida. As a training facility for the UF 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, Associated Press Broadcasters, Hearst Journalism Awards, Society of Professional Journalists and PMJA. In 2019 WUFT students won the Hearst national championships in radio reporting and TV reporting. Their outstanding work led the College of Journalism and Communications to the national championship in the broadcast news category.



WUFT and the Florida Public Radio Emergency Network continue to provide news, information and weather on a timely basis. WUFT also covered the one-year anniversary of Hurricane Michael. Reporters returned to the Florida panhandle to find that there had been some recovery. However, many people have left for good. The agriculture timber industry remains in ruins. And state taxpayers are helping foot the bill for more recovery costs.

WUFT-TV/FM provides programming and services to viewers and listeners in North Central 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.