FY2019
Local Content & Service Report
To the community from WGCU

July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019

WGCU Public Media
2-11-20
“My wife and I thoroughly enjoy public television and feel that it is incredibly important to have an independent public media and press.”

- John A. Mayer, Fort Myers

Introduction

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I. Local Value, Key Services, and Local Impact

The Mission of WGCU Public Media is to inspire, inform, educate, engage and entertain through the power of public media.

**WGCU Public Media is a valuable part of the Southwest Florida area.**

WGCU’s award-winning news team provides daily news and in-depth local and statewide reports during Morning Edition and All Things Considered. A wide variety of news, current affairs and the arts in Southwest Florida are explored four days a week on Gulf Coast Live.

With an enhanced focus on digital offerings, WGCU implemented a strategy in FY19 that best utilized our web and social media platforms. This resulted in wgcu.org serving 687,360 users, 683,997 of which were new users. We also saw an increase in overall traffic and sessions to our website, which shows that people are visiting wgcu.org more and more each year.

**FY18 - 955,302 sessions**
**FY 19 - 960,193 sessions**

**In FY19, WGCU Public Media provided these key local services:**

- WGCU serves all or part of 12 counties in South and Southwest Florida with five distinct digital TV channels, two FM radio channels, two HD radio channels, and one subcarrier. WGCU also delivered national and international programming including relevant, informative and educational local programs to the Southwest Florida community.

- WGCU’s programs, community-based initiatives, and informative and entertaining events make public media vital to Southwest Florida. In addition, WGCU is reaching beyond its service area to the country and the world through web-based applications such as the WGCU App, Podbean podcasts, PBS Media Manager, and NPR One.

**WGCU Public Media local services had a deep impact in the Southwest Florida area.**

In FY19, WGCU worked with the following community partners:

II. In The Community

WGCU Public Media Local Productions & Engagement Efforts

During the last fiscal year, from July 1, 2018, to June 30, 2019, WGCU Public Media produced more than 350 hours of local content. The content aired on WGCU-TV, FM/HD radio and is also distributed on multiple online platforms. Local television programs were re-distributed to county schools and aired on local government television channels as well. All newscasts and programs are archived on wgcu.org for access by teachers and students 24-hours a day. Highlights of our TV and radio productions, digital platforms and community outreach efforts are featured in this report.

WGCU’s Notable Broadcast Reach

For all of 2018, WGCU-TV was ranked nationally as the No. 1 public television station in cumulative audience percentage. That means WGCU had the greatest reach into its market — 83.6% — of any public media station in the country. For context, Southwest Florida’s TV “universe” consists of 541,000 TV households. WGCU reached 452,000 of those households or approximately 1.04 million viewers. **Even more gratifying, in households with an income of less than $40,000, WGCU ranked No. 2 in the country with an 84.6% reach into those 190,000 households.** (Source: Nielsen, TRAC Local 2018.)

WGCU FM has a weekly cumulative audience of 143,000. (Source: Radio Research Consortium, January 2018.) The news team aired 319 hours, or 19,143 minutes of local content, including newscasts and Gulf Coast Live, and garnered over 16 national and regional awards in the past fiscal year.

Local Productions & Engagement Efforts

**Curious Gulf Coast**

One trait WGCU has noticed among viewers and listeners is that they’re an inquisitive lot. They have plenty of questions about Southwest Florida, whether they are natives (the few, the proud!), long timers, newcomers or sometimers. Some of their questions have histories as big and murky as the Everglades, and you can be sure the WGCU news team is talking about them. Others can be answered in less than two minutes in video segments now airing between programs on WGCU TV in the series “Curious Gulf Coast.” “Curiosity Correspondents” Gabby Kadoo and Mariana Lamb are hosts of the features in English and Spanish, respectively.
Noticias de WGCU en Español

Launched on February 1, 2019, WGCU News en Español is a weekly news brief reported by Andrea Perdomo in Spanish specifically about issues important to immigrant communities. The audio series is distributed via social media and airs on Radio Conciencia, a low-powered community-based station managed by the Coalition of Immokalee Workers.

Joyful & Triumphant

WGCU worked with FGCU’s Bower School of Music Chamber Choir, University Choir and Symphony Orchestra to present the annual holiday concert Joyful & Triumphant. This yearly performance features traditional holiday favorites, familiar carols, and new works that capture the spirit of the season.

Key Initiatives & Community Outreach Efforts

The Great American Read

The Great American Read was an eight part PBS series with digital components and viewer participation to choose America’s favorite novel from a pre-selected list. Through two PBS grants, WGCU was able to add local events to this national project: a live screening to reveal America’s No. 1 book, and a book giveaway at The Guadalupe Center in Immokalee. WGCU collected new or gently used books at locations throughout the viewing area, including Lee and Collier County libraries, the IMAG History & Science Center, Sunshine Booksellers, Preferred Travel and Annette’s Book Nook. And in case you missed the big reveal in October 2018, America’s favorite novel was/is To Kill a Mockingbird.

Family Pictures USA Community Photo-sharing Events

WGCU was proud to be one of two stations in the inaugural national production of Family Pictures USA, a three-part PBS series. The program explores American cities, towns and rural communities through the lens of the family photo album, unearthing rich personal stories that expand our understanding of our shared history, diversity and common values. The national production crew spent time in Southwest Florida and filmmaking began with two community photo-sharing events coordinated and hosted by WGCU. Community
partners provided locations: at the Boys and Girls Club of Collier County in Immokalee and at the Heights Foundation in Fort Myers. During the events, national host Thomas Allen Harris used the pictures as a starting point to engage participants in conversation, guiding them through stories of hardship, perseverance and love. WGCU staff manned all of the five photo-sharing stations which included taking “portraiture” of participants and digitizing family photos at no charge.

**WGCU “Meet the Helpers” Kids Day**

Nearly 1,800 parents and children came to the station for free activities with 28 community partners, from vendors to nonprofits including local first responders. We attracted the most diverse crowd we’ve seen to date for any event, and it garnered rave reviews. Kids enjoyed visits with PBS characters Princess Presto, Nature Cat and Daniel Tiger. During the day, we collected another 222 books as a part of The Great American Read initiative. The 2020 WGCU Kids Day is scheduled for Saturday, March 23.

“My kids and I had a blast! Thank you for putting on this amazing event! I look forward to the next one!”

-Jessica Zimmerly, LaBelle

**Education and Outreach Highlights**

Life-long learning is a hallmark of public media. Outreach includes programming for preschool and school-age children with PBS Kids; helping teachers and parents with PBS LearningMedia; engaging screening events in the community; and taking trips with learners of all ages through WGCU’s On The Road and international travel.

“I’ve had the pleasure to work as a volunteer for WGCU on a couple of events. Never have I met a more dedicated staff of professionals and volunteers. The programming is great. The live events they sponsor are top notch! I have been a huge supporter of NPR and PBS for decades. I will continue to do so for many more!”

Mary Luz-Johnsen, Cape Coral

**Outreach by the Numbers:**

- 294 teachers in 11 PBS Learning Media sessions were taught how to use PBS content.
- 826 children and 447 adults were given the tools to learn how to read, providing a head start for preschool age children before they enter school. Our primary partners were Title I schools and area libraries.
- 12 screenings of PBS programs/specials at Vi at Bentley Village, Cypress Cove, The Conservancy of SWFL, J.N. “Ding” Darling Sanctuary, Gulf Coast Town Center, with Alliance Francaise, and both the Collier and Lee County libraries. In honor of the 50th anniversary of the Apollo moon landing, we screened American Experience: Chasing the Moon, in two locations: Naples Space Festival and the WGCU studios. Ready Jet Go!
provided a special space episode which we offered for families along with a presentation from an FGCU astronomy professor and a hands-on activity. Screenings were made possible by a grant from The Florida Humanities Council with funds from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The children's event was made possible by the Florida Humanities Council, along with Naomi Bloom and Ron Wallace.

- 8 On the Road trips throughout Florida, with the trips sponsored by Preferred Travel of Naples.
- 30 tours of the WGCU-Myra Janco Daniels Public Media Center.

III. Gulf Coast Live

_Gulf Coast Live_, WGCU's locally produced, call-in radio show, gives Southwest Florida listeners a chance to share their thoughts and connect to their community live on the air. Gulf Coast Live, airing four days a week at 1 p.m. and 9 p.m., covers a range of topics including environmental and political news, trends, arts and community features.

Notable Gulf Coast Live Segments

**We Sit Down with the Lee & Collier County Election Supervisors**

 Jul 23, 2018

We’re sitting down with the Lee County’s Supervisor of Elections, Tommy Doyle, and Collier County’s Supervisor of Elections, Jennifer Edwards, to explore how they’re preparing, what they expect on Election Day, and what steps they’ve taken to ensure a smooth and secure voting process. And, we'll find out what they've done to bolster their cyber defences as state and federal agencies work to ensure local election offices are adequately protecting their systems. [Read more >>]

**Blue-green Algae and Red Tide Algae Plague Southwest Florida Waters**

 Jul 3, 2018

While red tide rages along Southwest Florida’s Gulf coast, blue-green algae is making its way westward along the Caloosahatchee River toward the Gulf. The Florida Department of Health in Lee County recently issued a health advisory for the Alva Boat Ramp, Davis Boat Ramp, and the Franklin Lock and Dam. [Read more >>]
Personal Narrative: Life as a Young Boy in Hungary During the Holocaust
OCT 29, 2018

Retired engineer, Cesare Frustaci, was just eight years old when his family was forced out of their home in Budapest, Hungary -- and forced into an extremely crowded, so-called Yellow Star House because his mother was Jewish. Shortly after that happened, Frustaci's mom sent him out to live on the streets because he had been baptized as a Catholic, which meant he didn't have to live in the house with her and the rest of the Jews. Read more >>

The Past, Present, and Future of Cayo Costa
JUL 11, 2018

The island of Cayo Costa off the coast of Lee County, north of Captiva, is only reachable by boat, and most of it is a state park offering primitive camping. But, the still-unspoiled island has a rich history that we're exploring. Read more >>

IV. Stories of Impact

WGCU Book Collection

As part of The Great American Read Initiative, WGCU launched a community-wide book collection. Our goal was to reach 500 donated books. With the tremendous support of our partners we collected 3,105 books! They were donated to adults and children at The Guadalupe Center in Immokalee and St. Matthew’s House in Naples.

WGCU and the Florida Public Radio Emergency Network

In conjunction with the Florida Public Radio Emergency Network, WGCU was able to provide live reports of potential hurricanes and other inclimate
weather news for Southwest Florida. Since Hurricane Irma, FPREN added two meteorologists to its staff ensuring that public media stations in Florida are able to keep our audiences fully informed with reliable weather broadcasts and social media. WGCU is committed to providing public safety news and information to its audiences to help them prepare, survive and recover from potentially devastating natural disasters.

Documentaries

WGCU Public Media presented two new locally produced documentaries highlighting the history and nature of Southwest Florida.

**Mullets & Mangroves, The History of Pioneer Families of Cayo Costa**

Produced and directed by Ilene Safron, from Main Sail Video Productions, Inc., Mullets & Mangroves is a documentary about the way of life, past and present, on a remote Southwest Florida barrier island, Cayo Costa.

The history traces the island's inhabitants from its native Calusa origins, to Spanish colonization, up through modern day fishing families and their descendants.

**Southwest Florida’s Mangrove Coast**

Southwest Florida's Mangrove Coast is a documentary featuring the 40-year history of Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve and displays the nature and beauty of southwest Florida. Produced by Emmy award-winning cinematographer Elam Stoltzfus, the film delves into the scientific work being done at Rookery Bay on mangroves, pythons, sea turtles, and other species. Land managers, scientists, and local partners discuss potential threats to the region as well as what is being done to protect southwest Florida's mangrove coast for future generations.
V. WGCU Podcasts

WGCU two podcasts are thriving. Launched the Spring of 2018, Three Songs Stories and Grape Minds produced more than 78 original podcasts this past fiscal year.

Three Song Stories

Soon to be in its third year, the Three Song Stories podcast continues to gain an audience, and recognition from the local community, and fans from all across the nation and world. Notable year two guests include New York City playwright Rich Orloff; Emmy and Peabody Award-winning composer and musician Kat Epple; WWII hero and former Chief of Public Broadcasting at the FCC Robert Hilliard; Dick Spottswood, host of The Dick Spottswood Show on WAMU-FM in Washington DC since 1967, and Joshua Johnson, former host of 1A on NPR, and soon to be host on MSNBC. The podcast team is comprised of Mike Kiniry, Richard Chin Quee, and Tara Calligan. Listen at wgcu.org/threesongstories.

52 podcasts produced in FY19
5,457 total downloads in FY19

Grape Minds

Podcasters Julie Glenn and Gina Birch discuss wine varieties, winemaking and vintner families, along with ideas about wine and personality, such as pairing zodiac signs with appropriate wines. They appeared at the Southwest Florida Wine & Food Fest and earned a second place award from the Florida Associated Press Broadcasters for their “Wine in a Can” episode. This podcast was generously sponsored by The Wine Store. Listen at wgcu.org/grapeminds.

26 podcasts produced in FY19
3,531 total downloads in FY19