

"To inspire, inform, educate, engage and entertain through the power of public media."

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WITH GRATITUDE



WGCU had another strong year of service to this community because of your increased support. We had a record year in our financial growth across membership, major gifts, and corporate support. We were able to meet our goals in our strategic plan on time and on budget.

WGCU has doubled our staff during the past three years from 32 to 64 but that is still too small to enhance the services of five TV stations, two radio stations, and our digital platforms. We are striving to be your one-stop shop for local, national, and international content. We have two years left in our five-year plan to reach 80 employees and keep pace with the needs of this growing community.

Approximately 500,000 people depend on WGCU each month. We think about this responsibility every day as we create our best work. Your contributions have an enormous impact on the daily lives of your friends, neighbors, and others.

Our radio services have grown again this year. Today we supplement the work of NPR, the BBC, and other partners with 12 continuous hours of local news inserts in addition to

our signature local program, *Gulf Coast Life*. We added a Culture and Connections desk to explore how our vast tapestry of different people and perspectives adds value to the human condition.

This was a big year for our TV expansion. We have a new TV documentary unit producing full-length projects to enhance our Thursday night prime-time portfolio of *Untold Stories*. One of these documentary projects, *Dream School*, explored the trials that parents and students go through in the journey to higher education. Approximately 50% of the PBS stations across the nation carried this important film produced here at our local studios. Our next set of releases will focus on the communities still impacted by the Hurricane Ian. These stories take us from the foundations of these communities through their resilience during the storm, and into their changing future.

Our most ambitious TV project started this fall. *Southwest Florida In Focus* is a weekly pilot in preparation for a nightly newscast. A single visionary donor gave us funding to launch this project as a weekly production and two subsequent gifts came in to jumpstart the nightly effort. We will focus on long-form journalism, interviewing thought leaders on the economy, education, healthcare, workforce development, housing and transportation, politics, arts, culture, and more. We hope you will join us in this expansion.

I am grateful for your support and the talented staff that you have empowered me to build. Our relationship with you is a virtuous cycle of resources in this community.

Corey S. Lewis General Manager

FROM OUR COUNCIL CHAIR



We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated staff and supportive members, whose unwavering commitment and enthusiasm are the driving forces behind WGCU Public Media's ongoing success and impact. As WGCU looks to the future, it is poised for growth and innovation, fueled by its dedication to delivering high-quality journalism and engaging community programming. The advisory council plays a vital role by offering strategic guidance, fostering community connections, and ensuring that the station's initiatives align with the diverse needs and interests of its audience.

-Lydia Black

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Lydia Black

Chair

Shavon Chester

Howard K. Cohen

Mimi Chapin Gregory

Ben Machielse

Igbal G. Mamdani

Joseph Mercurio

Peter Sulick

Peter Smyth

Corey S. Lewis

Ex-officio

EXECUTIVE TEAM

Corey S. Lewis

General Manager

Amy Shumaker

Associate General Manager, Content

Scott Miller

Associate General Manager, Business Partnerships and Corporate Investments

Michelle Rhinesmith

Associate General Manager, Membership and Campaign Strategy

Kevin Trueblood

Associate General Manager, Technology and Operations

David Duke

Director of Finance

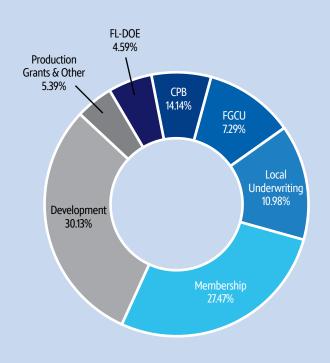
Pamela James

Executive Producer of Content

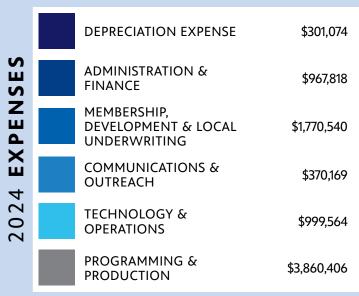
2023-2024 NET OPERATING REVENUES & EXPENSES

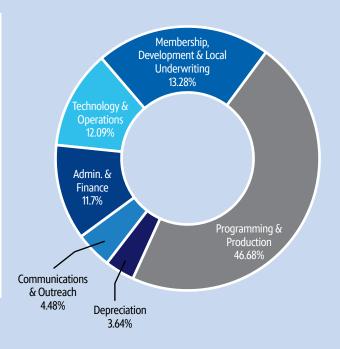
TOTAL INCOME \$10,238,217





TOTAL EXPENSES \$8,269,571





Above data is unaudited and does not include in-kind, trade, and indirect support calculations or the unrealized gains on endowment and distributions of restricted endowments.

IMPACT IN ACTION



Jack & Nancy WIADRO

"The first thing we did, when we relocated to Southwest Florida, was to join WGCU," write Nancy and Jack Wiadro of Naples. "Volunteer opportunities brought us to the late Glenn Sabatka's Radio Reading Service. At 6:30 am, in the old studio, we'd read three local papers to the visually impaired."

"As WGCU grew, so did our involvement and financial support. We continue to volunteer to maintain and grow programming during Pledge Week. Today, we are blessed to have Corey Lewis as general manager, and his splendid and expanding staff. After almost 35 years, WGCU has our full support and it should have yours, too!"



Clive & Sunny LUBNER

When WGCU was first incorporated, Sunny and Clive Lubner were among our earliest underwriting partners. Their enduring commitment to public media is reflected not only through their business, Clive Daniel Home, but also in their personal giving, which continues to support WGCU's mission today.

"Clive and I came to Southwest Florida 46 years ago from South Africa," Sunny Lubner said. "All we knew about public broadcasting was the SABC – the propaganda arm of the then-apartheid government." As proud, naturalized citizens, "NPR provides the soundtrack to our American lives and PBS informs and entertains us without spin. Life without public broadcasting is unimaginable, and we're grateful to live in a community that treasures it."

The Lubners' support continues to make a difference in WGCU's ability to provide quality news, entertainment, and educational programming across Southwest Florida.

Reflections of a Colored Girl



Martha Bireda as a young girl in Sarasota, Florida



Bireda and her parents on graduation day at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

Reflections of a Colored Girl is a riveting memoir of essays detailing the life of Dr. Martha Bireda and her personal journey of hope and resilience in the face of adversity. In partnership with WGCU, these essays were transformed into a series of audio and online episodes that aired on WGCU-FM in 2024. From this, a grant from Florida Humanities helped further develop this story into a longform documentary produced by WGCU's Documentary Unit. As part of its strategic expansion, this documentary team is dedicated to amplifying the people, places, and experiences that impact Southwest Florida.

Additional support for WGCU's Documentary Unit comes from The Jack Forte Foundation, Howard & Nancy Cohen, Dr. & Mrs. Nelson A. Wright III, Edie Hunt, and Bruce & Janet Bunch.



Dr. Martha Bireda recording *Reflections of a Colored Girl* in the WGCU FM studio.



Behind the scenes of the documentary Reflections of a Colored Girl

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

WGCU is proud to be part of Southwest Florida and participates in a variety of engagement opportunities meant to further deepen the connection between our mission and members of our community









- Environment Presentation, Tom Bayles
- Be My Neighbor Day
- Bob Ross Paint Night (2)
- An Evening with Margaret Hoover
- An Evening with Geoff Bennett
- A Special Conversation with Rick Steves
- Milestone Donor Lunches (3)

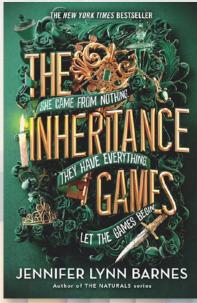


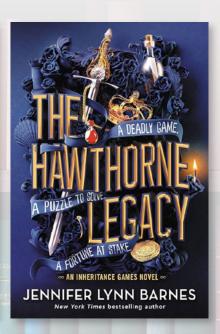




MOVE TO VIRTUAL BOOK CLUB







The WGCU Move to Include Book Club is a unique social opportunity for people with an autism diagnosis and their peers to promote inclusion and reduce social isolation among young adults. The virtual book club is reading its ninth book together, finding that books can be even more interesting when you can discuss them with friends. Here's what one member says:

"I have always looked for a group that made me feel like I belong. One day, I had stumbled upon the WGCU Move to Include Book Club and decided to take a chance, knowing that if nothing else I could share my love of reading with others. But this book club has been so much more for me. It has given me not only a community of people where I feel like I belong, but a community that lifts me up, gives me confidence, and more. It is something that I look forward to every week, and I am so glad that I took that leap of faith so many books ago. Thank you, WGCU Move to Include Book Club for being a community that I can call home."

- Emma Skinner

2023-2024 **EVENTS**



Gerben and Janice DeJong chatted with WGCU Development Directors Sara Jordan and Pedro Lora at the Geoff Bennett event.



WGCU's Bryant Monteilh, *PBS News Hour* host Geoff Bennett, and Collier County NAACP President Vincent A. Keeys



Cello Bennett Nadler and Paul Nadler met and talked with WGCU GM Corey Lewis and *Firing Line* host Margaret Hoover.



Firing Line host Margaret Hoover and David Mink at Collaboratory



Rick Steves was a guest presenter at a Leadership Circle breakfast in the WGCU TV Studio.



Linda Penniman received an award for her leadership and 12 years of support.



WGCU members learned to paint like Bob Ross with certified instructor Mathew Halstead.



Certified Bob Ross instructor Mathew Halstead taught a class at WGCU.



Rich DeVoe from Subaru of Naples handed the keys to a new car to WGCU supporter Barb, our sweepstakes winner.



Gwyneth Wint and Danielle Pierce attended the StoryCorps listening event at Alliance for the Arts.



Patty Duncan, Mary Kluczycki, Barbara Shearer, and Margaret Gonzalez at WGCU's donor appreciation party hosted by Clive Daniel Home



Sunny Lubner of Clive Daniel Home introduced WGCU's new documentary film crew at WGCU's donor appreciation party.

BE MY NEIGHBOR DAY



On Saturday, March 2, the Myra Janco Daniels Public Media Center buzzed with activity at WGCU's annual Be My Neighbor Day event presented by Florida Prepaid.

Drawing nearly 500 attendees, guests were able to interact with 25 community partners who showcased their valuable resources while creating a vibrant atmosphere filled with learning and connection. Southwest Florida families were also able to meet and take photos with everyone's favorite PBS Kids star, Daniel Tiger.

Attendee feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with comments such as, "We come every year and it keeps getting bigger and better," highlighting the event's growth and importance. Every exhibitor expressed eagerness to return in 2025, affirming the event's role as a cherished community staple.











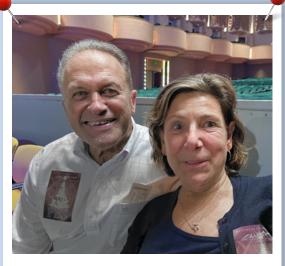


"In every neighborhood, all across our country, there are good people insisting on a good start for the young, and doing something about it."

2023-2024 **CONCERTS**



Mannheim Steamroller held a meet and greet for WGCU members.



Russell and Suzanne Janisch enjoyed the Manheim Steamroller event at Artis— Naples.



FGCU Bower School of Music students performed in the annual *Joyful & Triumphant* concert produced by WGCU.



WGCU members Rich and Myriam Rons attended the Classic Rock show.



Mr. and Mrs. Paul had their guitar signed at the Rumors of Fleetwood Mac meet and greet.



WGCU members Cindy and Anthony Pagano enjoyed the Brit Floyd sound check experience.



Marcia and David Custer moved to Southwest Florida from the Washington, D.C., area about 10 years ago. "All the while we've lived here, we've come to appreciate WGCU programming," said Marcia Custer.

"We enjoy what we're listening to throughout the day on the radio, and watching in the evening on PBS."

The Custers are pleased with recent developments at WGCU. "We've gotten to know their future plans for local program expansion and we agree wholeheartedly with what they're doing," said Marcia Custer.

She is also pleased to be part of a dependable and wide-reaching

audience with public media. "We know that the content is factual. We also appreciate that what we're hearing is not only local but also national and global and that WGCU has a strong partnership with journalism students on campus."

David Custer also appreciates that partnership. "We want to make a difference. And one of the differences is, I want to be sure there are funds available to help FGCU students in the journalism program."

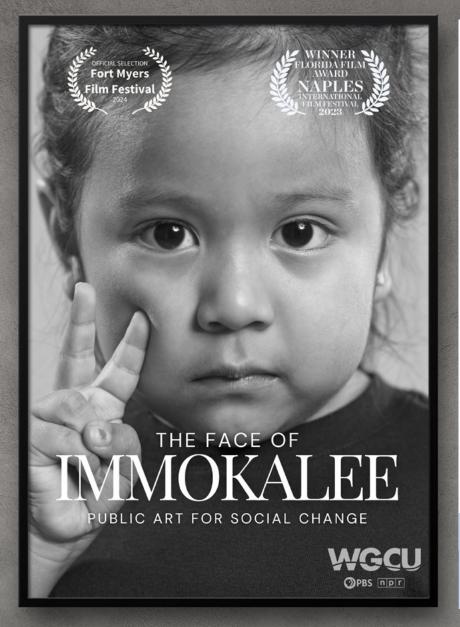


The Custers are committed to contributing to journalism today and tomorrow through WGCU as legacy donors. "Anything we can do to enhance the reporting, in this day and age of questionable news content, is important," David Custer added.

The WGCU Legacy Society honors people who make a provision for WGCU in their wills, establish

a life income gift to WGCU, or create an endowment of \$25,000 or more for sustainable support of WGCU.

For more information, call 239-590-2514 or email *leadershipcircle@wgcu.org*.



In 2023, WGCU produced The Face of Immokalee: Public Art for Social Change as part of its "Spotlight on the Arts" interstitials series. that is generously funded by Naomi Bloom in memory of her husband, Ron Wallace. This feature followed photographer Michelle Tricca as she set out to humanize the people of the agricultural community of Immokalee in her public art exhibit, The Face of Immokalee. Reporter Tara Calligan chronicled Tricca's efforts and the way her art personalized a community in her documentary, also titled The Face of Immokalee. which won Best Florida Film at the Naples International Film Festival this year. The evolution of this project – from artist exhibit, to TV interstitial, to award-winning film exemplifies the power and impact of our community partnerships.



Photographer Michelle Tricca shows off a portrait on her camera.

Ordonez Ambrosío and Ariana Hernández at the RCMA Immokalee portrait session Tara Calligan and videographer/ editor Rendy Ramos checking sound levels while filming

CORPORATE SUPPORT

We encourage you to thank our corporate sponsors for their generous support:

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All Native Garden Center

ArtFest Fort Myers

Artis-Naples

Avow Hospice

Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall

BIG ARTS

Bigham Jewelers

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Collier Community Foundation

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Collier County Supervisor of Elections

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Conservation Foundation of Gulf Coast

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FGCU Wasmer Art Gallery

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FL Dept of Health

FL Dept of Veterans Affairs

FL KidCare

FL Power & Light

Florida Power & Light

Florida Prepaid

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Florida Seminole Tourism

Florida Southern College

Frantz EyeCare

Friends of Rookery Bay

Furry Land

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Neapolitan Enterprises

Nova Southeastern University

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Players Circle Theater

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Suncoast Credit Union

Supreme Auto Collision

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TECO Peoples Gas

TFM Carolina

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Unitarian Universalist Church of Fort Myers,

Inc.

Unitarian Universalist Congregation of

Naples

University of South Florida CPH

US Sugar

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Visit Central FL VCB



WGCU Public Media gratefully recognizes the generosity of our Leadership Circle donors.

This dedicated group of individuals helps strengthen and expand the impact of WGCU's work. Thank you!

Holly Aldrich in Memory of *Rod Aldrich

Judy Erwin and Wayne Andersen

Anonymous

Christopher Lange and John Beyer

Elizabeth and Jason Birkby

Naomi Bloom

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Sue Savage

Joyce Schaffer in Memory of *Wayne

Robinson

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Joan and Donald Sherman

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Helge and Erika Wehmeier Susan and Jay Weiss Mrs. Robert Weissman Nancy G. White Nancy and Jack Wiadro Bill and Sally Wildner Barry and Fran Wilson

Dr. and Mrs. Nelson A Wright, III

Leslie Young

A LOOK AHEAD



The WGCU crew at work filming our new weekly TV news show

SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

IN F@CUS

WGCU's new weekly TV news program, Southwest Florida In Focus, offers an in-depth, thoughtful approach to local journalism, combining elements of PBS News Hour with the insightful questioning of Firing Line. With expert interviews and longform storytelling, the program highlights key issues like healthcare, education, and economic growth. The funding to launch the weekly pilot of Southwest Florida In Focus was made possible due to seed money received in Fiscal Year 2024. As we continue this journey, our goal is to expand Southwest Florida In Focus into a nightly newscast, deepening our commitment to providing you with news that moves beyond the headlines to offer meaningful insights and real impact on our community. Stay tuned as we build on this exciting new chapter!

EVENTS FOR 2025



NOVA Executive Producer Chris Schmidt



All Things Considered
Co-host Mary Louise Kelly



FOR THE LOVE OF MASTERPIECE

"Such a great cultural resource...there's really nothing else like it," is the way Katherine Todd describes MASTERPIECE. Over the last two years, Katherine has contributed to the MASTERPIECE Trust, a collaborative initiative between MASTERPIECE's producer, WGBH Boston, and PBS stations nationwide. Because of her generosity, which has both national and local impact, WGCU Public Media became a designated MASTERPIECE Partner Trust Station - one of only about 25 stations with such support. She has been a fan of the drama series since its inception and urges others to "Start watching and become impassioned!"

WGCU is grateful to Katherine Todd, and all those who support valuable PBS programs like MASTERPIECE.





THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING WGCU! MGCU 10501 FGCU Blvd. South | Fort Myers, FL 33965 | wgcu.org PUBLIC MEDIA WGCU is a member-supported service of Florida Gulf Coast University.