

Minnesota Public Radio  
Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) – Station Activity Survey: Local  
Content Report  
Fiscal Year 2019  
CPB Grantee Name: KSJN-FM | ID 1466

**Question 6.1:** Describe your overall goals and approach to address identified community issues, needs, and interests through your station’s vital local services, such as multiplatform long and short-form content, digital and in-person engagement, education services, community information, partnership support, and other activities, and audiences you reached or new audiences you engaged.

Minnesota Public Radio (MPR) strives to be a leader in creating trusted and meaningful experiences for audiences. MPR continues to be a sustainable public service while deepening value to current audiences and expanding our reach to new market segments.

MPR is uniquely positioned to respond to the significant social and demographic changes throughout Minnesota. MPR is a multi-platform media company focused on addressing community issues by investing time, talent and money to create, curate, and connect audiences. This is achieved by using broadcasts, podcasts, voice-artificial intelligence and social listening experiences.

The following are examples of how MPR addressed community issues, needs and interests in FY19 through its three services — MPR News, Classical MPR and The Current.

**MPR News:**

- The MPR newsroom employs 24 reporters. The six reporters based in Greater Minnesota covered over 600 stories in FY19. The overarching goal of MPR’s reporting team is to foster a healthy news ecosystem across Minnesota.
- In 2018 MPR News closely covered statewide state and federal elections. It aired nine debates engaging Minnesota’s U.S. Senate, Congressional, and Gubernatorial candidates. The debates were also streamed on MPR News online and broadcast on the MPR News Facebook page. The *Minnesota Votes* online archive contains coverage of the 2018 elections from MPR News reporters, NPR and the Associated Press.
- MPR’s mental health initiative *Call to Mind* produces stories and studies around the state to offer resources and perspectives. Examples in the online archive include:
  - *Minnesota’s depression treatment outcomes are, well, depressing* detailed the findings on a new report from the Minnesota Community Measurement.
  - *Creativity and Mental Health*, a broadcast of a Duluth community conversation hosted by Duluth reporter Dan Kraker, featured experiences with mental health and the impact of the arts and self-expression to mental well-being.
  - *How to Change Your Mind with Michael Pollan and Dessa*, aired a live broadcast and discussion with singer, author and rapper Dessa and author Michael Pollen.

- *Women and PTSD*, hosted by Kerri Miller, focused on mental health and women's vulnerability to PTSD.
- *Counter Stories* is an MPR News podcast and weekly discussion with people of color discussing race, identity, social justice and culture in Minnesota.
- *Conversations on the Creative Economy* and the live broadcasts of its public events highlight the region's stories of entrepreneurship, innovation and creativity with host Chris Farrell, Senior Economic Contributor at *Marketplace*. Examples archived online:
  - *Entrepreneurs tackle mental health and well-being*. Three high-tech entrepreneurs discussed health, health care, and reimagining how to provide mental health support, at the MANOVA Summit, a global gathering in Minneapolis.
  - *Conversation with TU Dance*. The founders and artistic directors behind TU Dance, discussed their sustainable business model that allows them to pursue their passion — dance.
  - *Funding your startup*. Three women talked about their business insights and challenges, especially heightened for women entrepreneurs.
  - *Restaurateur Kim Bartman*. As her business has grown and expanded, so did Bartman's activism — from supporting women chefs to embracing sustainability.
  - *Land O'Lakes*. Beth Ford is the new CEO of the Minnesota-based agricultural cooperative Land O' Lakes and one of only twenty-five women to lead a Fortune 500 company.
  - *Medical Entrepreneurs*. The Mayo Medical Clinic in Rochester, Minn. has one of the world's most identifiable brand names and is now the anchor for the city's plan to become an innovation hub for entrepreneurs with ties to medicine.

### **Classical MPR (CMPR):**

- *Classical Kids Storytime* is a monthly production of an animated fairytale that features storytellers recounting childhood favorites along with related classical music. CMPR is breaking new ground for digital products in the classical space, distributing *CKS* via web audio, YouTube, Podbean, social media, and online.
- *Regional Spotlight* is a weekly recording showcasing talent around the state. Examples of *Spotlight* conversations and performances:
  - Lakes Area Music Festival.
  - Female group Aizuri Quartet, the 2018 grand prize winner of the M Prize Chamber Arts Competition.
  - Twin Cities native Xavier Jara, 2016 first prize winner of the Guitar Society of America Competition.
  - Vox Nova, a chorale of young, talented singers, composers and conductors, highlighting women composers.
  - Ameriikan Poijat, a Minnesota-based brass band, performing a piece from their new CD, *Juhlat, Festivals*.
  - The Land of 10 Thousand Choirs presenting a requiem performance.
- *Music with Minnesotans* with host Steve Staruch features notable Minnesotans talking about the classical music that inspires them. Examples archived online:

- Bach Society of Minnesota Associate Artistic Director Marco Real-d'Arbelles, a violinist and conductor who has performed with the Miami Symphony Orchestra and the Chicago Summer Opera.
- Explorer Lonnie Dupre who listens to classical music to keep him focused, calm, brave and empowered as he makes his plans to cross the North Pole in summer, to circumnavigate Greenland by kayak, or solo climb Denali in the darkest time of year.
- The Monsens, a musical family of four children and their parents, in house with a piano, a violin, a viola, trumpets, a French horn, a cello, a ukulele and a two-year-old who likes to conduct.
- Kordula Coleman, an artist highlighting how classical music has defined key moments in her life.

**The Current**, MPR's AAA music service:

- *The Duluth Local Show* continues to lead audience engagement efforts and community partnerships places like Ely, Grand Marais, Hibbing, Hinckley and Duluth. The show's focus remains on Minnesota-based artists, drawing from the Arrowhead region and Greater Minnesota. Host Brittany Lind is a leader in the Duluth arts community and a connector within the Minnesota music scene.
- *The Current Rewind* is an eight-episode podcast of Minnesota music history. It takes listeners from Duluth to Minneapolis and beyond, puts unsung stories on the map, and immerses listeners in music history. It can be heard via Apple Podcasts, Stitcher, Spotify, NPR One, and The Current website.
- *The Current Music News* is a ten-minute daily podcast for fans of all genres to catch up on what matters in the music world. Hosts Jay Gabler and Jade break down industry developments and breaking news about upcoming releases.

**Additional Examples:**

- In FY19, MPR's parent company launched NewSignal Studios. The audio-technology production unit is designed to meet the growing statewide and national audience demand for branded podcasts, voice-enabled applications, and sonic brands. It will also be used to experiment with innovative production methods and explore new technologies.
- Four American Public Media (APM) initiatives focus on community issues and needs, and use different platforms such as stories, live broadcasts and community events to reach and engage audiences statewide. These initiatives interact with all three of the MPR services platforms in FY 19:
  - *Call to Mind* is designed to activate and amplify public conversation by bringing people together to increase awareness and understanding about mental health.
    - *Call to Mind's* work in FY19 led to over 150 stories with a mental health focus produced for MPR News, Classical, The Current, Brains On! and other podcasts.
  - *The Water Main* goals are to measurably increase the public's understanding of and affinity for water and build a societal ethic that values clean, abundant, accessible water.

- *Field Work* is a social impact project designed to change the culture of farming and mainstream the acceptance of sustainable ag practices. It launched as a podcast and YouTube program with over 210,000 listens and views.
- The *Water Main* received the Outstanding Journalism Award from the US Water Alliance for its work drawing attention to the rising cost of water throughout the Great Lakes Region. The award recognized the importance of combining data and investigative journalism with local partnerships and community engagement.
- *APM Research Lab* performs and curates independent research delving into important issues to provide facts and analysis to the communities MPR serves. The *Lab* highlights key debates and discussions on Twitter and Facebook and in its newsletter. In addition:
  - The *Lab's* work was cited by 61 news citations across twenty-five different outlets including *Boston Globe*, *PBS Newshour Online*, *the Chronicle of Higher Education*, and the *Atlanta Black Star*.
  - Over 38,000 visitors have visited the *Lab's* website gaining access to over 145,000 data visualizations.
- MPR created the Glen Nelson Center (GNC) in FY19 to help launch new businesses, accelerate existing ventures, invest in startups at the frontier of media and technology, and advance public media through entrepreneurship.
  - GNC invested in eight new companies.
  - GNC and Lunar Startups, a shared workspace and new venture incubator, reached over 380 business founders, leaders, and partners such as Blacks in Tech, Hack the Gap, Women in Podcasting, and Voice is the Interface through its programs and public partnerships.
  - The first cohort (six companies) of Lunar Startups graduated from the program in September 2019. The second cohort (seven companies) started the program in March 2019.
  - MPR initiated a process to spinoff Lunar Startups as an independent not-for-profit organization by January 2021.

**Question 6.2:** Describe key initiatives and the variety of partners with whom you collaborated, including other public media outlets, community nonprofits, government agencies, educational institutions, the business community, teachers and parents, etc. This will illustrate the many ways you're connected across the community and engaged with other important organizations in the area.

MPR's strategic plan, Audiences First, is guiding a transformation to create the finest next-generation public media service for the many communities it serves. Its main priorities are audience growth and new connections leading to the support of new contributors.

MPR collaborates with statewide and local community partners including universities, elementary schools, nonprofits and media organizations. Through these collaborations, MPR reaches new audiences in innovative and creative ways. With its partners MPR is building relationships in communities throughout the state. MPR hosted events, community conversations and performances throughout Minnesota in FY19.

### **Partnerships with Public Media Outlets:**

- MPR News partners with WAMU's *IA*, to provide Minnesota's 2020 general election stories to *IA*'s 3.63 million weekly listeners on 335 NPR stations. With deep community ties and the ability to source stories, MPR News reporters conduct live broadcasts and events, and produce collaborative content for *IA*.
- MPR News distributes staff-written stories to 35 local newspapers every day and collaborates with public radio and television media organizations including KAXE/KBXE, WTIP, WPR, Prairie Public Television, and KARE-TV. MPR provides news partners throughout the region with investigative and daily coverage to ensure that MPR content reaches new audiences.
- MPR works closely with public media partners like National Public Radio (NPR). In November 2018 Noel King and NPR's *Morning Edition* broadcasted live from MPR's Duluth studio after spending a week in Northern Minnesota talking with community members in MN's 8<sup>th</sup> Congressional District.
- MPR serves as a resource for journalists covering Minnesota. Producers from C-SPAN visited Rochester, Minn., literary and historic sites and interviewed local non-fiction authors and historians. MPR News senior reporter Catharine Richert was one of those interviewed.

### **Partnerships with Community Nonprofits, Educational Institutions/Teachers and Parents, Business and Government:**

#### **MPR News Partnerships:**

- In partnership with ThreeSixty Journalism at the University of St. Thomas, MPR News annually welcomes a diverse group of teenagers for a week-long "Radio Camp" to learn the basics of radio journalism, and to write and voice their own features. The students work with MPR mentors to hone their journalistic skills and to produce a feature story.
- MPR brings world-renowned journalists and correspondents to Minnesota for the *Broadcast Journalist Series*. Journalists share insights on their craft, as well as the people and events they cover. The audience is invited to join the broadcast discussion.
- MPR partners with the following Greater MN organization and events:
  - North House Folk School Unplugged event in Grand Marias.
  - Cocktails and Conversation at Zeitgeist Arts in Duluth.
  - Bemidji State University Council of Indian Students Pow-Wow.
  - Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates conference in Walker.
  - Earthfest Expo in Rochester.
- MPR News partners with *Sahan Journal*, a nonprofit digital newsroom service dedicated to providing authentic reporting about Minnesota's new immigrants and refugees. Mukhtar M. Ibrahim, founder and executive director, is an employee of MPR News and

founded *Sahan Journal* in response to the need for storytelling in Minnesota's underserved and immigrant communities.

- MPR organizes community conversations. In December 2018 at the Duluth Folk School, MPR News and *Call to Mind* broadcast a community conversation on Creativity and Mental Health hosted by Duluth reporter, Dan Kraker. The event highlighted the impact of the arts and creative self-expression to mental well-being. Guests included Sam Miltich, jazz guitarist, and Carolyn Phelps, PhD licensed psychologist and founder of Dream Life Psychological Services.
- MPR News partners with other media organizations and educational institutions. In March 2019, a diverse group of 275 media professionals, educators and students participated in the Truth and Transformation: Changing Racial Narratives in Media conference. The intent was to learn from community members whose voices or stories are often ignored, marginalized or misrepresented in the media and was funded by the St. Paul & Minnesota Foundations. The conference was organized by MPR News and
  - Minnesota Humanities Center.
  - KMOJ/89.9 Radio.
  - North News.
  - KRSM Radio LPFM.
  - ThreeSixty Journalism.
  - Hamline University.

### **Classical MPR (CMPR) Partnerships:**

- CMPR's *Choral Works Initiative* supports Minnesota's rich choral tradition with *Choral Stream* to highlight concerts. CMPR and *Choral Stream* work closely with community and school choirs to feature performances. Examples include:
  - Bemidji High School.
  - Choral Arts Ensemble.
  - Saint John's University.
  - Concordia College.
  - VocalEssence.
- The *Young Artist in Residence program of Performance Today* highlights talented young musicians from conservatories around the country. Artists represent a variety of music schools and organizations including the Juilliard School, the Sphinx Organization, the New England Conservatory, and the Colburn School.
- Classical MPR and the *Water Main* reach out to communities throughout Minnesota. In 2019 they brought the Concert Truck, a popup classical concert venue on wheels, to waterfront towns and State Parks in Minnesota:
  - Excelsior on the shores of Lake Minnetonka.
  - Lake Bemidji waterfront by the statues of Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox.
  - Tettegouche State Park, Two Harbors.
  - Duluth on the shores of Lake Superior.

- Classical MPR's broadcast operations team records performances around the state for regional and national broadcast. FY19 communities included Duluth, Winona, St. Cloud, Northfield, Minneapolis, and St. Paul and performances by Minnesota Beethoven Festival, Schubert Club's International Artist Series, St. Olaf Christmas Festival, Minnesota Orchestra, and Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra.

### **The Current Partnerships:**

- The Current partners with the Walker Art Center for the outdoor music festival, *Rock the Garden*. In FY 19, it featured two stages with eight international, national and local musicians performing in the Sculpture Garden with over 10,000 people in attendance.
- The Current produces *Rock the Cradle* and hosts more than 10,000 people at this annual free event which brings families together at the Minneapolis Institute of Art / Children's Theatre Company. *Rock the Cradle* offers activities that incorporate music, art, stories, and movement.
- The Current collaborates with a variety of partners in the state. FY19 partners included:
  - Hoops Brewery in Duluth,
  - Castle Community Center in Rochester,
  - GNDWIRE Ski Party in Lutsen,
  - The Current and partner, Caravan du Nord, presented eighteen bands and solo artists and workshops at six venues in Greater Minnesota.
- The Current and Minnesota Music Day celebrates local artists including:
  - Twenty-four hours of local bands and artists were broadcast on the Current.
  - The Current hosted several local live performances across the state from Duluth to Zumbrota.
  - Current hosts Oake and Riley visited local record stores to recognize Record Store Day in conjunction with MN Music Day.

### **Other MPR partnerships in FY19:**

- MPR reached out to communities of color. In FY 19 it sponsored the inaugural Blacks in Tech Conference (BITCON) organized by Blacks In Tech, an organization that focuses on increasing the visibility and representation of black men and women in the tech industry. Events included a pitch contest, a job fair, and software engineering and entrepreneurship workshops. About 1,000 people from all over the country attended. Minnesota-based Target and Best Buy were sponsors.
- MPR staff supports other non-profits with their community outreach efforts:
  - MPR Staff held a warm clothing drive for the Hawthorne Neighborhood Council in Minneapolis and hundreds of families were able to pick out warm coats, hats and gloves.
  - MPR staff released a green heron into the wild to celebrate MPR's donation of more than \$40,000 to the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center. Money raised from the national phenomenon #mpraccoon supported this effort.
  - MPR News staff held a bake sale to support of ThreeSixty Journalism.

- The Current coordinated volunteers to help Second Harvest Heartland Food Bank pack food shipments for Minnesotans in need.
- The MPR employee resource group, the Equalizers, held a soup fundraiser for the National Center of Trans Equality to raise money and awareness of the issues facing trans lives.
- MPR sponsors the Dorothy Day Community annual breakfast. In FY 19 MPR News provided a fact sheet and links to MPR News reporting about homelessness and the housing crisis to inspire conversations between attendees. Over 300 people attended.

**Question 6.3:** What impact did your key initiatives and partnerships have in your community? Describe any known measurable impact, such as increased awareness, learning or understanding about particular issues. Describe indicators of success, such as connecting people to needed resources or strengthening conversational ties across diverse neighborhoods. Did a partner see an increase in requests for related resources? Please include direct feedback from a partner(s) or from a person(s) served.

MPR and its three regional services—MPR News, Classical MPR and The Current—produce programming for radio, digital and live audiences and reach more than one million listeners each week. MPR broadcasts on 46 stations that serve Minnesota and its border communities, with 41 translators providing additional local coverage.

MPR’s measures its on-air and on-line audience impact using various frameworks, metrics, and tools. Results are used to define key initiatives and company goals. MPR is constantly evaluating and prioritizing activities to earn audience trust, and to advance its public service mission.

MPR continues to create new partnerships in order to expand audience reach and create community connections. MPR hopes to evolve from being a content creator to creating meaningful experiences for our audiences.

**MPR News:**

- MPR News provides a platform for listeners to broaden perspectives and to stay informed on issues. MPR provides candid conversations and viewpoints to contribute to open dialogue. Below are examples of listener comments:
  - *“MPR is a trusted news source. Listening to MPR is like going to school every day. The programs, topics and interviews are very educational and are done so well with civility. Our two college sons are getting their degrees in Political Science & Economics and they also enjoy MPR because it represents respectful dialogue, moral values, equality and inclusion.”* - Dave, Ingrid, Brendan and Ian Klein

- *“I have been listening to MPR for the last 20 years. I love the unbiased coverage of the daily events and the in-depth reporting. I am more informed on my local, national and global news for being a listener.” - Farhana Karim*
- MPR is hosting *Conversations on Creative Economy* in Greater Minnesota. Below is an example of a listener comment from an FY 19 event:
  - *“I work for the State of Minnesota Department of Vocational Rehabilitation Services as a Placement Coordinator for individuals with barriers to employment, so I appreciated the chance to hear from the folks from Vikre, Epicurean and AeroDesign. After the event I contacted AeroDesign for a tour, as well as a chance to discuss the strengths and abilities of the many people that we serve. Since that time, we have had one gentleman hired by them and are hopeful that there may be additional hires in the future.” - Bruce Bock*
- Recently celebrating its ten-year anniversary, the weekly audience-driven radio feature, *Art Hounds* raises awareness about MN’s rich and diverse cultural scene. *Art Hounds* commits to featuring 30% of artists and performances from Greater MN. In FY19, *Art Hounds* highlighted 140 different artists in communities throughout Minnesota featuring:
  - The seven-county metropolitan area: Bloomington, Excelsior, Golden Valley, Marine on St. Croix, Minneapolis, St. Louis Park, and St. Paul.
  - Greater Minnesota: Carlton, Duluth, Ely, Fergus Falls, Granite Falls, Hutchinson, Lanesboro, Mankato, Morris, Northfield, Red Wing, Rochester, St. Cloud, St. Joseph, Waite Park, and Winona.
  - More than a dozen different art disciplines: dance, film, improv, mixed media and multidisciplinary arts, music, art festivals, opera, photography, pottery, puppetry, sculpture, storytelling, theater, and writing.
- MPR News holds a central role in organizing statewide listening sessions including fifteen sessions in nine cities in FY 19. For these sessions, MPR invited over one hundred participants from diverse backgrounds, including participants from Greater Minnesota. Themes emerging from these sessions led to content in the Truth and Transformation: *Changing Racial Narratives in Media conference* presented by MPR and several statewide partners.
- MPR News tells stories about Minnesota’s rich and diverse cultural scene. Correspondent *Marianne Combs* is particularly drawn to artists who use their creative talents to address racism and the abuse of power. Combs’ stories resonated with audiences and reached 737,031 stream requests and 1,023,725-page views in FY19.

### **Classical MPR (CMPR):**

- CMPR is dedicated to increasing access to music education. MPR brings classical music to schools statewide and provides music resources such as lesson plans, videos, and curricula - all free of charge. CMPR’s educational outreach in FY19 included:
  - 301 visits to 122 elementary schools, reaching more than 27,000 students through *Class Notes*, a program bringing educational music performances and standards-based curriculum to young and diverse audiences in Minnesota's schools within 25 counties of which 47% were in Greater Minnesota.
  - *Class Notes* inaugural high school and middle school program in four schools.

- 275,929 online views of *Class Notes* videos.
- 45,453 unique pageviews for *Music Learning*, a portfolio of programs designed to meet Minnesota K-12 music education standards and foster student passion for classical music.
- 1,224 unique pageviews for *Audio Backpack*, a teacher’s tool for creating, saving and sharing playlists of musical clips for classroom use.
- 61 high school music student applications to *Minnesota Varsity*, a competition where students submit recordings of an instrumental or vocal performance or an original score for evaluation by a panel of judges and vie for the opportunity to perform their music on a live broadcast.
  - Listener Nancy Nelson’s comment regarding *Minnesota Varsity*: “*My son was a MN Varsity semi-finalist in 2013. This year he will graduate from ASU with a Masters in Vocal Performance and is headed to Seagle Music Colony to sing this summer. Thanks for the encouragement along the way for him and other students.*”
- The *Daily Download* is a handpicked, free piece of classical music emailed daily to subscribers. *Download* doubled its audience in the past year and averaged around 120,000 monthly downloads, with a yearly download of 1,332,205 in FY19.
- CMPR holds *Bring the Sing (BTS)* events throughout Minnesota bringing thousands of voices of all abilities together for community choral events. All *BTS* events are recorded, produced for radio, streamed and archived online. As quoted by participant Lee Peterson, “*Bring the Sing in Duluth has been one of the highlights of my year!*” FY19 *BTS* events:
  - *BTS at Minnesota State Fair* and hosted by the Minnesota-based vocal ensemble Cantus.
  - *BTS at St. Olaf College* in Northfield led by Tesfa Wondemagegnehu along with the Shattuck-St. Mary’s Concert Choir in Faribault and One Voice Mixed Choir in St. Paul.
  - *BTS at The College of St. Scholastica* in Duluth with conductors Bret Amundson and Sarah Ludwig.
  - *BTS Solstice* at Como Park, an indoor-outdoor event featuring seasonal family-friendly sing-alongs on the winter solstice.
  - *BTS in Rochester* celebrating Martin Luther King, Jr. and featuring readings of King and an arrangement of the gospel song, “We Shall Overcome.”
- CMPR impacts its listener daily. Below are examples of listener comments:
  - “*I’ve always been a listener of Classical MPR but over the years, I’ve migrated back and forth from MPR News to The Current to Classical MPR. However, about two years ago I lost my husband after a long illness, and I have depended greatly since then on the restorative powers of classical music as I learned to make my way on my own. I live alone now, and Classical MPR is my constant companion at home and in the car as I go about my daily activities. The beautiful music has helped me navigate a tough time in my life.*” - Stephanie Lundquist
  - “*We have a one-year-old son who absolutely loves listening to Classical MN Public radio, and we thank you for sharing the gift of music with us.*” - Reid Larsen
  - “*Yours is the best classical music programming I have ever heard. I learn little tidbits about the composers, conductors, and musicians that make the music so*

*much more meaningful, memorable, and enjoyable.” - Judith Babbitt*

### **The Current:**

- *The Current Sessions* give audiences free access to live performances. A total of 121 live performances are available on The Current website. FY 19 highlights were:
  - Seven free microshows with big-name music acts performing in small, intimate spaces.
  - Fourteen live performances hosted by The Current at the SXSW Music Festival.
  - Six *Rock the Garden* performances which aired on The Current.
  - Three live performances broadcast on The Current from the Minnesota State Fair.
  - Eleven live performances aired from the Iceland Airwaves Festival.
  - Ten live-streamed and online available concerts of nationally known musicians performing at the Armory, Palace Theatre, Fitzgerald Theatre and First Avenue.
  - Seventy international and national musicians performing at The Current studio.
- The Current features three new associate bloggers working on a wide range of stories and projects for *The Local Current*, an online source for local music coverage, upcoming performances, and in-depth profiles.
  - *“What I love most about writing for The Current is how willing everyone is to let me chase my own ideas. One of the most meaningful stories I covered this spring was the closing of Lee’s Liquor Lounge and the impact it had on the Minneapolis swing dance scene. Even though swing dancing isn’t something we would normally cover, it was good to learn how to tell the story in a way that would make it relevant to our audience and I was proud to help bring new voices to our website.” - Simone Cazares, The Local Current blogger*
- The Current’s Duluth two-year-old signal is an essential part of the local music scene. *The Duluth Local Show* is heard weekly on The Current Duluth and rebroadcast on the Local Current. The show features regional Minnesota performers not otherwise aired on mainstream radio. In FY 19, the Current Duluth collaborated, hosted, and sponsored events such as Bent Paddle’s Festiversary, Lake Ave Live, Duluth Homegrown Music Festival, and The Current Goes to Duluth.

### **All MPR Services:**

- In the fall of FY19, *MPR Connects!* presented the APM Reports podcast *In the Dark*. Chris Worthington and Madeleine Baran participated in events held in Rochester, St. Cloud, Duluth and Baxter, reaching over 800 people. The *In the Dark* podcast topped 53 million total downloads over its two seasons. Season 2 has received national recognition, most notably for bringing to light the Curtis Flowers case which resulted in the U.S. Supreme Court overturning the Flowers conviction.
- MPR’s *Water Main* programs inspired artist Greg Mueller from Lutsen. *“You have brought the issues of water’s preciousness to light and brought inspiration to my studio work.”* The sculpture inspired by *Water Main* is located at the City Center in Mankato.
- In efforts to preserve Minnesota’s history, the MPR Archive researched, digitized, transcribed and published over 2000 stories and related programming which originally aired on *Midday*. These academic, cultural and regional significant items are publicly available on MPR Archive portal.

**Question 6.4:** Please describe any efforts (e.g. programming, production, engagement activities) you have made to investigate and/or meet the needs of minority and other diverse audiences (including, but not limited to, new immigrants, people for whom English is a second language and illiterate adults) during Fiscal Year 2018, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2018. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.

MPR is one of Minnesota's largest cultural organizations as well as a leading news and information source. Our programming fosters dialogue that enriches communities and celebrates the diversity and creativity of our state. MPR recognizes the need to cultivate, learn from, and reflect the audiences we serve.

MPR continues to increase the diversity of our employee population by implementing practices, procedures and organizational systems designed to sustain and maintain staff diversity. MPR's goal is to become a destination for those who share our commitment to a diverse and inclusive culture focused on growth and outcomes.

### MPR News

- Reporters and hosts covered a broad range of topics in FY19 to highlight Minnesota's diverse culture including the following features:
  - *Red Lake language camp rebuilds Ojibwe traditions*, by Bemidji reporter John Enger – a story about Red Lake reservation children learning about native plant medicines and language, and traditional lacrosse.
  - *White Earth hopes food truck puts reservation on the road to better health*, by Moorhead reporter Dan Gunderson – a story about the first of its kind food truck designed to provide vegetables and other fresh foods to tribal members in need.
  - *In their own image: Native American share stories of recovery*, by photojournalist Evan Frost - capturing video of the 40<sup>th</sup> annual Celebration of Sobriety Powwow in Sawyer.
  - *Finally, Minnesota's Ethiopians feel free to visit their homeland*, by reporter Laura Yuen – a story about the impact that the 2018 election of a new Ethiopian prime minister has for Minnesota immigrants.
  - *Mayoral hopefuls embrace Moorhead's growing diversity*, by Moorhead reporter Dan Gunderson – a story about Moorhead voters and the most diverse slate of candidates in history.
  - *Running for office, Muslim women hope voters will see more than faith and gender*, by reporter Riham Feshir – a story about Muslim women bringing their voices to the election process.
  - *Minnesota's racial, ethnic diversity grows even as immigrants slows*, from the *Sahan Journal* and MPR reporter Mukhtar Ibrahim – a story highlighting the findings from the APM Research Lab project, *Roots Beyond Race*, a comprehensive look at race and ethnicity in Minnesota and the U.S.

- *To know what it is to be Korean: Foundation to build cultural center in Ely*, by Duluth reporter Dan Kraker – a story about the community response in Ely to the purchase of a community center to create a Korean Culture Center.
- *In Somali you celebrate Eid, get schooled on fishing*, by Colleagueville reporter Kirsti Marohn and photojournalist Paul Middlestaedt – a story capturing the first moments when Somali youth learned to fish while in St. Cloud to celebrate Eid-Al-Fitr.
- *Passing the torch: Essay contest celebrates the past, present, future of Hmong community*, by digital producer Jiewon Choi – a story highlighting the importance of inclusivity in the Hmong Americans Community between those who were born in the United States as well as those who immigrated here as refugees.
- MPR News host Angela Davis’s discussion of race and how Minnesota can be a tough place for professionals of color and challenges of living and working in Minnesota, a state known for having some of the highest racial disparities in the country.
- MPR News correspondent Marianne Combs’s show about the continuing struggle for transgender rights and protections highlighting the spike of transgender killings in 2018, and the issue of vulnerability for transgender persons of color.
- Host Kerri Miller’s Women of Faith series conversation with the Reverend Emmy Kegler, a queer Christian pastor, about her memoir, "One Coin Found" and what it means to wrestle with one's faith.
- MPR created a voter guide for the 2018 midterm elections and made it available in English, Hmong, Somali and Spanish to offer comprehensive information on candidates and their positions on major issues.
- The MPR News *ChangeMaker* series commemorated Black History Month and featured black Minnesotans who are making history. Each profile explored what it means to be black in Minnesota.

### **Classical MPR (CMPR)**

In FY19, *Class Notes* brought diverse educational music performances and programming into elementary, middle and high schools throughout Minnesota. Examples of performing artists:

- Arouty, a Minnesota-based Haitian dance, music and arts company.
- Gaelynn Lea, a musician and disability activist.
- Siana’s Congo Roots Trio, musicians incorporating African songs and lively rhythms into their music.
- CMPR created a website feature called *Minnesota’s World Stage* to highlight Minnesota’s diverse classical performers from across the state. In FY19 stories included:
  - Composer Yigitcan Eryaman who composed a piece to tackle the experience of Minnesota’s seasons through the senses of a Turkish man.
  - Minnesota’s Soojin Lee celebrating traditional Korean music with the musical instrument gayageum.
  - Indonesian composer Jay Afrikander’s work “*Music of Your Office*” inspired from unintentional office sounds.
- CMPR broadcast the story of Academia Cesar Chavez on *Music with Minnesotans*. The story highlighted the work of executive director Bondo Nyembwe whose mission is to

provide musical instruments for every student at the dual-language charter school located in a largely Hispanic neighborhood in St. Paul. The story is also an MPR digital feature.

- In celebration of Juneteenth, CMPR Host/Producer Garrett McQueen compiled and broadcast 24 pieces by composers of African descent.

### **The Current**

- The Current featured the following outreach efforts:
  - An interview with singer/songwriter J.S. Ondara about leaving Kenya for Minnesota, embracing Bob Dylan's traveling troubadour spirit, and realizing his dreams.
  - *The Local Show* host Andrea Swensson's interview of Sudan-born multidisciplinary artist Dua Saleh tackling issues as gender identity and politics.
  - *The Message*, hosted by Sanni Brown and Sean McPherson, focusing upon classic hip hop and R&B and keeping listeners up to date with tour dates, music news, and in-studio interviews with Minnesota artists.
  - *Radio Heartland* and *The Local Current* strengthening Minnesota's local music scene and creative culture by sustaining the artistic vibrancy and cultural heritage of Minnesota's diverse and changing communities.

### **Additional MPR efforts**

- MPR attempted to reach minorities and other diverse populations with the following efforts:
  - *The Truth and Transformation: Changing Racial Narratives in Media*, the first-of-its-kind conference designed to help journalists challenge their own biases and amplify community solutions for narrative change featuring first-hand stories from people of color and community members who have been impacted by narrative patterns such as under-representation, exaggerated negative representation, and limited positive associations.
  - APM Research Lab survey of 250 Minnesota media members. Results pointed to an eye-opening portrait of how -- and how much -- media professionals think about race and racial narratives in local media coverage. It raised important questions about the media's readiness to report responsibly on Indigenous people and communities of color.
  - MPR's Inclusion Councils, employee-led Employee Resource Groups (ERG) connecting staff, the organization, and the community to create a welcoming and inclusive workplace. FY19 examples include:
    - Millennial ERG's series of conversations about Financial Wellness.
    - Equalizers ERG's celebration of Pride with internal and external events celebrating diversity.
    - The People of Color ERG's first annual Internal Community Building lunch to welcome new employees.

- Culture’s Club ERG’s celebration of the end of the holy month of Ramadan with MPR employees.

**FY20 Diversity and Inclusion plans:**

- MPR is planning an Indigenous Listening & Learning Experience. Its objective is to challenge assumptions, understand personal implicit bias, and to gain a deeper understanding of the indigenous culture and the significance of places like Fort Snelling, Pilot Knob, and Wakan Tipi. The experience will feature four parts:
  - Minnesota Humanities Center’s *Bdote* land tour attended by MPR staff.
  - A viewing of the Minnesota Humanities Center’s *Why Treaties Matter Exhibit* by MPR staff.
  - A community listening session.
  - MPR leaders community meetings with Indigenous Influencers.
- In the Spring of FY20, MPR will hold community listening sessions with people of color living in rural Minnesota including the communities of Cass Lake, Hibbing, Winona, and Worthington. MPR intends to foster conversations about attitudes on race, racism, and identity and to identify community priority issues, examine perceptions of the media, and the election process.

**Question 6.5:** Please assess the impact that your CPB funding had on your ability to serve your community. What were you able to do with your grant that you wouldn't be able to do if you didn't receive it?

Minnesota Public Radio has served listeners for over fifty years with the mission to enrich minds, nourish spirits, expand perspectives and assist our audiences in strengthening communities. Financial support from CPB allows MPR to leverage other sources of funding such as State of Minnesota Legacy funding, institutional and educational sponsorship, foundation support, business underwriting and memberships.

In today’s volatile media environment, audiences have higher expectations for their media experiences. People are consuming more content by using more platforms and devices. Thanks to support from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, Minnesota Public Radio and its three services—MPR News, Classical MPR and The Current — reach millions of people throughout the state and nation with not only radio services, but also on-demand, digital, social and mobile services.

MPR provides vital and essential public service such as:

- Providing live severe weather updates and daily weather reports.
- Serving as the backbone and technological infrastructure for Minnesota’s Emergency Alert System and the AMBER Alert System.

- [Distributing Radio Talking Books](#), a closed-circuit reading network produced by Minnesota State Services for the Blind, on a special subcarrier of MPR stations to visually impaired persons in Minnesota.

While MPR invests in programming, talent, and innovation, it also invests heavily in the infrastructure and maintenance of 46 network stations and 41 translators. MPR's radio signals reach 95% of the population of Minnesota, ensuring that listeners, regardless of income or location, have access to news and information as well as arts, culture and music programming. In FY19, MPR engineers traveled over 85 thousand miles to repair, replace, and maintain towers, transmitters and equipment throughout the state. CPB support is essential as it helps MPR create new opportunities to pioneer, experiment and expand the audience experience.