



LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

January 1–December 31, 2020

“Thanks to WPSU for creating a one-stop spot for election resources and candidate information! Their website has candidate interviews, election news, and more!” — anonymous

“What a lovely program [Our Town: Hollidaysburg]. Thank you, WPSU!” — Melanie

“Thanks, Carolyn Donaldson and WPSU for partnering with our Anti-Hunger Program to distribute educational activity backpacks to local children this week. They were so excited to receive them!” — YMCA of Centre County



WPSU is a valuable part of the central Pennsylvania region’s advancement.

WPSU is a trusted, community-based convener and facilitator for public dialogue, a multi-platform content and information provider, a valued partner, and a connector that helps raise awareness and address local issues.

WPSU-TV delivers online and offline educational resources to students in the classroom and at home.

SERVING

- 1.9 million Pennsylvanians
- 24 counties
- 515,000 households
- 413,000 radio listeners
- 31,500 YouTube subscribers
- 12,000 Facebook followers
- 104 school districts
- 7,000 TV and radio members

LOCAL SERVICE

MEDIA

- WPSU original content
- NPR radio
- PBS television
- PBS KIDS livestream
- 3 WPSU-FM livestreams
- 2 WPSU-TV livestreams
- Weather World streaming

INFORMATION

- WPSU-FM local news
- Emergency alerts
- School closure announcements

EDUCATION

- K–12 television and streaming
- Professional development
- Parent webinars
- Games, videos, and activities
- PBS Learning Media online library
- Internships
- Graduate assistantships

ENGAGEMENT

- Social media engagement
- In-person and virtual events
- Community calendar

LOCAL IMPACT

WPSU’s local services have deep impact in our 24-county service area.

SPEAKING GRIEF

“Very powerful. I wish every person in the country could see this.” — Alicia

LEARNING AT HOME

“As more of our schools move into remote [learning], I am putting up your information on our sites. I am sure our members will appreciate the extra help right now.

Thanks so much for your help.” — Lucy Harlow, communications & regional advocacy coordinator, PSEA Central Region

COVID-19 NEWS COVERAGE

“Well reported update by @WPSU’s @minxianwpsu about Mount Nittany Health’s ability to treat a potential COVID-19 surge in Centre County now that @Penn_State students are here.”

— Curt Chandler, associate teaching professor, Penn State Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications

2020 Local Content and Service Report

In the Community

A LOOK BACK AT 2020

It would not be an overstatement to say that the COVID-19 pandemic shaped so much of what WPSU did in 2020. WPSU staff was challenged by an unprecedented situation that lasted much longer than any of us expected and indelibly changed the way we serve the community.

Parents of schoolchildren had to suddenly become tutors and teachers, many without internet access at home. All but essential businesses were closed, and WPSU staff had to quickly invent ways to work together at a distance. These challenges brought opportunities to experiment with innovative ways to deliver broadcast productions, radio reporting, virtual events, and at-home learning activities.

This year was also exceptionally different as we struggled to seek information and understand the political climate, racial injustice demonstrations, and unemployment and mental health issues brought about by COVID-19 isolation.

Our public media role to central Pennsylvania residents in 2020 was solidly grounded in our roots: delivering factual information, educating lifelong learners through content across platforms, giving voice to multiple perspectives, empowering individuals to achieve their potential, and strengthening social, democratic, and cultural health. We would like to share highlights of our local response to the evolving challenges and community needs brought about by the pandemic.

REPORTING ON COVID-19

As an NPR Member station, WPSU offers a window to the local community, the country, and the world. As the virus became a nationwide pandemic, the WPSU-FM news team posted more than 250 COVID-19-related news stories in 2020, on public radio and social media.



WPSU reporter Min Xian creates a makeshift audio studio during the early weeks of working from home.

WPSU also started an email subscription in July to provide all types of local breaking news. Within two weeks of its launch, nearly 800 people signed up to receive the emails.

TELLING STORIES FROM THE FIELD

Through our radio program *Take Note*, we also shared real stories of how people were coping with life and work during the pandemic, including features on:

- Rural health care
- Remote learning
- Communication
- Election processes
- Mental health
- 2020 Census
- Penn State remote learning

ADAPTING PRODUCTION FOR WPSU-TV

Working remotely can have its challenges, especially when producing television programming involving guests, multiple cameras, and recording for broadcast.



WPSU producer Anne Danahy hosts a live call-in show from the studio with guests joining via Zoom.

WPSU-TV quickly adapted productions to use video conference technology and socially distanced producers and technical staff through headsets and Zoom to fulfill our promise to produce the following local programming:

- *Conversations Live* (8 episodes)
- *Digging Deeper* (8 episodes)
- *HumIn Focus* (2 episodes)
- *Our Town* (2 episodes)
- *The Investment 2020*

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In the Community

Building Community Collaborations

Allegheny Front
 America Amplified
 Borough of Hollidaysburg
 Centre Region Parks and Recreation
 Eifrig Publishing
 Engagement Scholarship Consortium
 Fred Rogers Center
 Historic Hollidaysburg, Inc.
 Hollidaysburg Area Public Library
 Hollidaysburg Area School District
 Humanities Institute at Penn State
 Jana Marie Foundation
 Keystone Crossroads
 League of Women Voters
 McCourtney Institute for Democracy at Penn State
 OVEE
 PA School Study Council
 PBS KIDS
 Penn State Agricultural Extension Education
 Penn State Center for Science and the Schools
 Penn State College of Education
 Penn State College of Nursing
 Penn State Indigenous Peoples' Student Association
 Penn State Sustainability Institute
 PSEA
 State College Area School District
 StateImpact Pennsylvania
 Student Farm at Penn State
 The Village at Penn State
 YMCA of Centre County/Travelin' Table
 90 business supporters for WPSU-TV and FM

PROVIDING ELECTION RESOURCES

A role of public media is to provide information to create an informed electorate. Begun in 2016, *WPSU Vote* is an interactive website of Pennsylvania and national election resources. In 2020, WPSU posted 49 news stories and six videos and resources to help voters:

- find election dates and events,
- register online to vote and locate polling places,
- learn more about Pennsylvania candidates,
- watch videos about the offices up for election, and
- read news posts about local and Pennsylvania races.

COPING WITH GRIEF

WPSU's *Speaking Grief* initiative is a national public service media project that explores the transformative experience of losing a family member in a grief-avoidant society. Throughout 2020, we engaged local audiences by exploring the many faces of grief through personal stories and experiences. This included seven *Take Note* episodes on WPSU-FM, three *Conversations Live* call-in shows, and daily social media engagements. [Read more on page 4.](#)

ENGAGING FANS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Across WPSU's 12 social media accounts, we continue to attract more fans and followers by creating pages and groups that appeal to diverse audiences.

- Facebook: gained 4,745 fans; 17,265 total page likes
- Twitter: gained 229 followers; 5,397 total followers
- Instagram: gained 5,118 followers; 7,641 total followers
- LinkedIn: 466 total followers

Content areas included PBS and NPR programming, local events, local music, local news, local towns, family learning, science, and resources for Vietnam veterans. Our greatest success was the launch of Facebook and Instagram accounts to support the *Speaking Grief* initiative.

DELIVERING FRESH CONTENT ON DIGITAL PLATFORMS

Videos created by WPSU were viewed 3.1 million times on our YouTube Channel in 2020. We are amazed to see some videos that have been on our channel for years continue to hold value and consistently rank at the top of video views.

- *Pennsylvania Parade: Darlene Chronicles* 1,133,245 views
- *Giant Pumpkins* 1,026,247 views
- *Geospatial Revolution, Episode One* 69,139 views

WPSU is invested in creating more short-form, digital-first content. Top-viewed new digital videos in 2020:

- *Yalda Night (Persian New Year)* 1,908 views
- *Every Day is Saturday at Centre Co. Library* 1,273 views
- *Pennsylvania Treasurer* 1,182 views

SUPPORTING LEARNING AT HOME

Working with the Pennsylvania Department of Education, WPSU and the six other Pennsylvania PBS stations launched *Learning at Home*, combining thousands of PBS learning assets with local weekday educational programming and coordinating activities. [Read more on page 3.](#)

2020 Local Content and Service Report

Stories of Impact

LEARNING AT HOME

FREE ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION

The world as we know it has radically changed, and WPSU recognizes the need to make adjustments to the way children traditionally learn. Whether students are learning at home or in a classroom, we are committed to supporting them, their parents, and their teachers. Pennsylvania PBS (PA PBS) is the collective name for the seven public television organizations in Pennsylvania. In conjunction with PA PBS, WPSU offers quality educational resources, engaging activities, and PBS programming to supplement student learning.

There are 104 school districts in WPSU's service area; our signal reaches 515,000 households across 24 counties. When schools went to remote learning in March, WPSU reprogrammed to instructional TV paired with activities to ensure free over-the-air access to at-home learning resources to support our schools.

WPSU HD

Preschool through 3rd grade	6:30 a.m.–noon
4th through 8th grade	noon–1:00 p.m.
9th through 12th grade	1:00–3:00 p.m.
Preschool through 3rd grade	3:00–5:30 p.m.
4th through 12th grade	5:30 p.m.–midnight

WPSU World

6th through 12th grade	noon–6:00 p.m.
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WPSU 24/7 PBS KIDS

Preschool through 3rd grade	6:00 a.m.–11:30 p.m.
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OFFLINE ACCESS TO LEARNING

Because much of WPSU's service area is in rural areas, we embarked on a new collaboration with Intermediate Units 8, 9, and 10 to reach students who do not have internet access at home. We distributed 450 Raspberry Pi devices, low-cost computers that are about the size of a credit card. The Raspberry Pi device plugs into a computer monitor or TV and uses a standard keyboard and mouse. It mimics an internet experience and allows students to receive lessons from their teachers. WPSU is providing digital resources from PBS Learning Media and experiments from our project *Science-U @ Home*.



WPSU educator Kate taught virtual summer campers about different kinds of insects and where to find them.

VIRTUAL SUMMER CAMP

As life adjusted to the new norms of social distancing, we realized summer was going to be very different. To motivate kids to explore close to home, WPSU created a virtual summer camp. Starting June 29, campers could explore a theme presented across a new video each day for a total of eight weeks. For example, in week one we explored the theme of Oviparous (egg-laying) animals through music, stories, nature walks, animals, and crafts.

Activities were designed for children ages 3 to 8, with family participation in mind. Our goal was to provide activities to keep children active, entertained, and learning about their world all summer.

PBS KIDS BACKPACK DISTRIBUTION

To deliver handouts of TV schedules and activity resources each week to families, WPSU collaborated with summer free lunch programs. The Altoona, Tyrone, and State College school districts and the Centre County YMCA included handouts each week, reaching thousands of families.

Through Pennsylvania Department of Education funding, WPSU was able to create 3,600 "Grab 'n Go Bags" containing school and art supplies. The YMCA's Travelin' Table food bus helped to hand out the backpacks in July.



The Travelin' Table staff distributed 3,600 WPSU PBS KIDS backpacks during their free lunch visits. Photo courtesy YMCA of Centre County.

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Stories of Impact

THE SPEAKING GRIEF INITIATIVE

On January 21, 2020, WPSU launched the *Speaking Grief* initiative, a nationwide multi-platform public media project that explores the experience of losing a family member in a grief-avoidant society.

The initiative validates grief as a normal, healthy part of the human experience rather than a problem that needs to be fixed. It also addresses the role that friends and family play in a person's grief experience, offering guidance on how to show up for people in their darkest moments.

IMPACT

Public Television: Starting in May, the *Speaking Grief* documentary aired in 46 of the top 50 markets across the United States and had a total market coverage of 82%.

WPSU also hosted three national events:

- July 15: screening with a panel discussion
- November 19: Children's Grief Awareness Day screening and panel discussion
- December 16: panel discussion supporting grief over the holidays

Additionally, WPSU collaborating organizations held more than 20 screening events this fall for their local audiences.

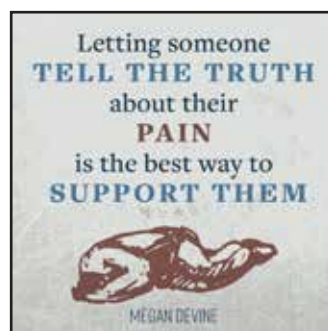
Streaming: During the July 15 event, it was announced that the documentary was available for viewing for a two-week period. This resulted in 56,000 views in that time period. Then, the documentary was released permanently on the website on August 30, coinciding with National Grief Awareness Day. Between August 30 and December 31, the documentary page hosting the video was viewed 21,715 times.

Social Media

Facebook and Instagram are our main channels to engage with those who are grieving and those supporting them.

5,614 followers on Instagram contributed 38,103 likes, comments, and shares.

3,520 fans on Facebook contributed 43,995 likes, comments, and shares.



PRAISE FOR THE DOCUMENTARY

"Thank you for the diversity and inclusion represented in this project, and thank you to the participants for sharing your stories. Well done." — Angie

"Beautifully done. Thank you for this wonderful expression of true emotion and humanity." — Eicrad

"Crying with gratitude. Thank you." — Glenda



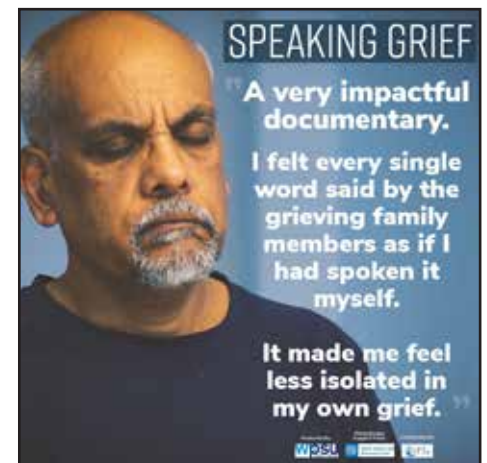
"Pure - vulnerable - authentic conversation!!"
— Jacquelyn

"Such a great documentary. I wish I could make it mandatory for people to watch it."
— Betty Jo

"Thank you for this documentary. I could so relate on so many levels. I was widowed at age 39 and now again 24 years later in 2020. Grief never goes away. One just finds ways to cope with the void in one's heart." — Carol

"What a gift this beautiful documentary is, thank you so much."
— Jessica

"Well done. I cried most the way through - but they were good tears."
— Karen



2020 Local Content and Service Report

Stories of Impact

NEWS AND CURRENT AFFAIRS

THE NEW TOWN SQUARE

Listening to WPSU public radio is more than just catching up with the headlines of the day.

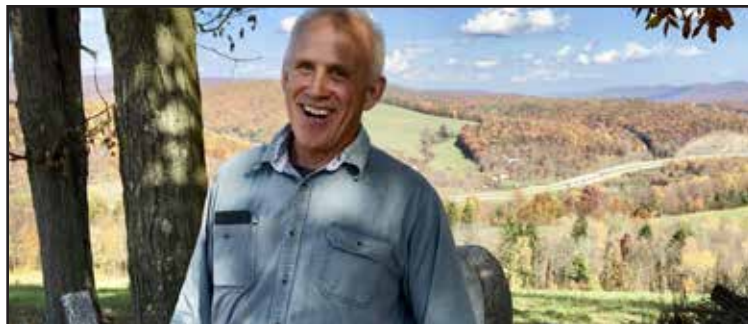
Long ago when the town square was the only place to share news, events, and happenings, people were drawn to it. Living in a community with others was

the route to understanding each other and the world around us.

The town square has changed dramatically, but our need to learn and understand one another has not. We are invested in learning and doing more. In 2020, we believe we proved our value by getting out and talking to the community and telling their stories, tackling contentious issues, and providing a window to the world.



Michael Berkman, Jenna Spinelli, and Chris Beem are the hosts of "Democracy Works," a weekly podcast about building and sustaining a democracy.



Ron Reese, a dairy farmer in Centre County, talked with WPSU's Anne Danahy in October about farming, climate change, and regulations.

STATE IMPACT PENNSYLVANIA

Four Pennsylvania public radio stations share stories on-air and online about Pennsylvania's energy industry and the economy. Since WPSU joined *StateImpact* in 2020, WPSU reporter Anne Danahy published nine stories.



Mirya R. Holman, Tulane University, talked about the role of sheriffs at polling places in some states.

DEMOCRACY WORKS

The *Democracy Works* podcast seeks to answer the question of what it means to live in a democracy by examining different aspects of democratic life — from voting to criminal justice to the free press. In a partnership between the McCourtney Institute and WPSU, 41 episodes were produced in 2020.



Darryl Watts cast his ballot in Clairton, Pennsylvania. He said he thinks about the environment when he votes. (Andy Kubis for Allegheny Front)

ALLEGHENY FRONT

Allegheny Front is an environmental reporting outlet covering issues in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and West Virginia. WPSU contributed to a story about the influence of environmental issues on voting.



Brendan Bittle, 25, believed the future was on the line in 2020. The environment, health care, and the economy all played a part in his vote. (Dani Fresh for Keystone Crossroads)

AMERICA AMPLIFIED ELECTION 2020

America Amplified creates local, regional, and national journalism using community engagement to inform and strengthen reporting. WPSU reporter Min Xian followed stories that community members identified as deserving of more coverage in McKean County, Pennsylvania.

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Stories of Impact

WPSU DIVERSITY SCREENINGS WITH DISCUSSION

As Long As We Dance: The New Faces of an Ancient People

The Infiltrators

PBS KIDS Talk About Race and Racism

Trailblazers: Women’s Fight for the Vote

Art and Belonging

An American Ascent

N. Scott Momaday: Words from a Bear

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

A TIME FOR CHANGE

Public media grapples with the same issues of implicit bias and systemic racism that exist nationwide. The anguish being felt right now in cities around the country compels us to learn, grow, and change our education and outreach at a local level to further our mission of public service.

As a PBS and NPR station, we provide access to thought-provoking content to encourage open and meaningful conversations that help us to understand one another and make societal changes.



On “Digging Deeper,” Penn State President Eric Barron and guests talk about how the Black Lives Matter movement is manifesting on college campuses and what work needs to be done in higher education to address systemic racism.



Penn State hosted a three-part virtual roundtable titled “Toward Racial Equity at Penn State: Social Difference, Social Equity, and Social Change.” The stream was produced by WPSU.



“Take Note” talked with Tehama Lopez Bunyasi and Candis Watts Smith, co-authors of “Stay Woke: A People’s Guide to Making all Black Lives Matter.” Their book looks at the history of structural racism in the U.S. and gives people information and tools to become anti-racists.



WPSU-FM covered local protests, including the Penn State student Justice for Black Lives march Sunday, June 7, in State College, Pennsylvania.

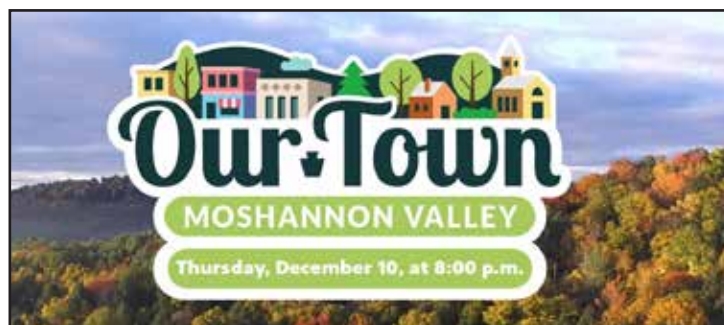
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Community Feedback

OUR TOWN SERIES (BROADCAST)

“Every aspect of ‘Our Town Hollidaysburg’ was well done. Loved the photos, videos, and of course, the people. Can you believe I said ‘Blow Your Mind’? I never speak like that. Oh, well. It was a pleasure working with you all.” — Marie, Hollidaysburg volunteer storyteller

“There are some great stories and wonderful history of the Moshannon Valley area! I encourage everyone to tune in.” — Dr. John W. Zesinger



CONVERSATIONS LIVE (BROADCAST/SOCIAL MEDIA)

“‘Conversations Live Children’s Grief’ was so well presented! Thanks, Melody!” — Tina

“Thanks for your professional approach and your ease in taking us through the process. Thanks to the staff for making this go through like clockwork and for your kind and thoughtful matter. Thanks to my co-panelists for bringing joy, enthusiasm, and expertise to the moment. Take good care and be well.” — Kevin Carter, Uplift Philly



WORLD KITCHEN (DIGITAL)

“What a great way to spend a rainy afternoon!! Just finished a WPSU cooking class with my Mom! Persian Baklava. Loved the Zoom format so we could hear questions and see other participants.” — April

“These have been wonderful programs — thank you so very much!” — anonymous



FINDING YOUR ROOTS: THE SEEDLINGS (DIGITAL)

“Reviewing for use with our middle school teachers as part of the inheritance of traits series. We are working through the implementation of the new science standards.” — Sue Campbell, Livingston Union School District, California

“I am THRILLED about doing a boot camp to introduce my proteges to genealogy research.” — Ladiner Blaylock, NC Mentor Me, Life Coaching Solutions



WEBINARS FOR EDUCATORS (DIGITAL)

“This [Simple Interactions] workshop helped with sharing resources with educators as a reminder that it’s not always just about the content, but the connections.” — webinar attendee

“[Empathy in the Classroom] helped me personally to remember that my well-intentioned words do not always reflect empathy, so I need to be more aware of that.” — webinar attendee

The longer I live, the more convinced I am that the important moments of life rarely happen
center stage ...

... what truly nourishes our hearts and changes our being are most often far from **the spotlight.**

Fred Rogers’ Speech (1997) for the Association of Oncology Social Work

2020 Local Content and Service Report

Community Feedback

WPSU Facebook fans are the first to see our short digital stories highlighting the arts, culture, science, and activities in central Pennsylvania. WPSU staff, interns, and graduate assistants created 53 digital shorts in 2020.

LIFE ON THE LOG

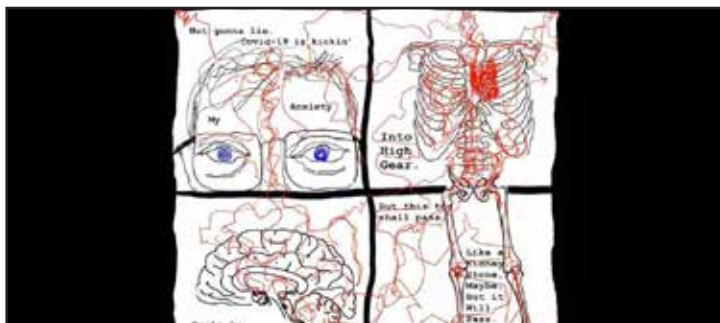
"Fabulous! Indeed we love watching 'The Log.' Thanks for showcasing an amazing and caring man. Congratulations, Robert Bush, Sr." — Dena

"I do so enjoy your videos. I am in Niagara on the Lake. I will think after watching your tv segment you will have more viewers." — DK



BILL DOAN: ART AND ANXIETY

"Many thanks to WPSU for creating this amazing video on the life and work of ADRI Director, William J. Doan. From drawing to meditating, to the joys of becoming a grandfather, to sage advice offered to recent Penn State graduates, this three-minute piece packs a lot in. Just beautiful!" — Penn State Art and Design Research Incubator



THE ALLY POPPER TRAIN WRECK OF 1914

"Very nice and impressive! Glad [Larry Kokoskie] got to do this." — Sussie

"The place this was filmed was behind my home when I lived in Chester Hill Philipsburg. There still is evidence of the train parts history." — Ron



METRONOME FROM HOME

"Thanks so much for doing this Molly, Rene, and WPSU!" — Christine

"Great playing and great show, 'Metronome.'" — Mara

"I'm glad this show is continuing its run! Great, local music." — Mark



EVERY DAY IS CATURDAY AT CENTRE COUNTY LIBRARY

"Awesomeness! Do you make the costumes yourself?" — Michele

"Hey, I know that lady AND that cat! Awesome job, Super Shaff!" — Ricky

