WEDU PBS, serving the 16 counties of West Central Florida, exists to serve the public good and to aid in the creation of an informed citizenry. Through quality programming provided on multiple platforms and community outreach, WEDU fulfills the needs of individuals for education, information, and culture enabling people and communities to connect, to grow, and to lead more fulfilling lives. WEDU provides quality multimedia content and community outreach to our audience. Our mission is to educate, explore, and engage to inspire a lifetime of learning and discovery.

WEDU PBS provides informative, enlightening, locally-based public affairs and educational programming which serve audiences not served by commercial stations in our market. Programs such as Florida This Week; Up Close with Cathy Unruh; Suncoast Business Forum; WEDU Arts Plus; WEDU Quest; That’s All I’m Saying with Ernest Hooper, as well as a collection of specials, documentaries, and town hall meetings all have focused on in-depth coverage of local subjects and current community issues.

For more than 60 years, WEDU has not only been an advocate and provider of educational services and resources for all ages on-air, but WEDU also goes beyond the broadcast with in-person and virtual community events throughout 16 counties in West Central Florida. WEDU’s vision is to be a trusted and essential media resource of diverse storytelling that promotes lifelong learning and community engagement.
WEDU PBS broadcasts Public Square: The Future of Education

The COVID-19 pandemic caused unprecedented disruption to education, as schools shut down and children and educators were thrust into a digital learning environment. The pandemic heightened awareness of a wide digital divide and access inequities to technology. It affected the social and mental well-being of students in untold ways. And it forced parents and caregivers to the frontlines of education as makeshift teachers, emphasizing the vital role of schools in our community. WEDU addressed impacts both in and out of the classroom and heard from families, educators and experts about takeaways from the pandemic, and how the lessons learned will shape the future of education. From outreach strategies to digital learning resources to homeschooling, WEDU explored ideas for support, interventions and different instructional environments to ensure the success of our most precious assets, our children.

WEDU PBS presents Community Cinema programs

Through a partnership with Independent Lens, WEDU featured screenings of four films in 2021. The virtual film screenings were free to the public and addressed themes such as the fate of American working women in the early 1970s, the Black Arts Movement of the late 1960s, underlying biases in the technology world, and pressing social issues of our time—police brutality, the opioid crisis, gun violence, and mass incarceration. Each film was followed by a speaker or panel discussion where the audience was invited to participate in the Q&A. The films screened were: 9to5, Mr. SOUL!, Coded Bias, and Philly DA.

WEDU PBS hosts Can We Talk: A Conversation About Antisemitism

On September 23, WEDU broadcast a community conversation about Antisemitism. Hosted by award-winning PBS journalist Ray Suarez, the program amplified voices from across the spectrum on antisemitism and the alarming rise of hate incidents in our own backyard. Featuring ordinary citizens, Rabbis, law enforcement, students and community leaders, Can We Talk? spotlighted the unique challenges faced by the Jewish community. This program helped foster awareness and broker conversation on how our communities can work together to eradicate hate.
**WEDU PBS continues At Home Learning program to support teachers, students, and families**

WEDU At-Home Learning program began in March 2020 in response to school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic and continued support throughout 2021. The program provided quality distance learning resources consisting of weekly broadcast of PBS programming for students in grades PK-12, along with companion lesson plans from PBS LearningMedia that were available for download online.

**WEDU PBS hosts Be My Neighbor Day**

From June to August 2021, through a unique partnership with the Glazer Children's Museum and the Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood: A Grr-ific Exhibit, WEDU invited children to enter the world of Daniel Tiger and friends. The exhibit, based on the award-winning program from PBS KIDS allowed guests to walk the paths and hear the sounds of Daniel's world as they encountered the meaning of empathy, gratitude, sharing, and diversity in an environment of creative and interactive play. Children and families visiting the Daniel Tiger exhibit during Hillsborough County Free Tuesdays received a WEDU Daniel Tiger Caring Neighbor Kit as part of Be My Neighbor Day. 2,000 kits were distributed to low-income families through the partnership with Glazer Children's Museum. Feeding Tampa Bay, a local non-profit created to fight area food insecurity also was onsite to provide free food boxes to families.

**WEDU PBS presents Poetry Competition and Film Screening**

WEDU partnered with a local boxing gym in Ybor City to host Muhammad Ali “The Greatest” Poetry Slam on August 13. The event featured a preview screening of the *Muhammad Ali* documentary by Ken Burns. Seven spoken word artists competed in poetry and a panel of sports champions discussed the film and the influences of Ali.

**PARTNERSHIPS:**

WEDU partnered with a Signature Punch Training Center and GrowHouse, a collective of local poets and artists.
WEDU BE More Unstoppable Broadcast

Reach in the Community
WEDU PBS has been shining a light on nonprofit organizations in the region for over 16 years to recognize the dramatic efforts being made to meet community needs. The "WEDU Be More Unstoppable" broadcast and multimedia project aired on February 25, and saluted over 50 local nonprofits and promoted their accomplishments by sharing stories about the challenges they faced during a difficult year. Viewers had the opportunity to live chat with featured nonprofits that helped keep our community connected over the last extraordinary year.

PARTNERSHIPS:
WEDU partnered with a variety of organizations on this event including nonprofits and corporate partners including: Tampa General Hospital, Nielsen, Florida Blue, United Medical Academy, DuPont Registry, The Bank of Tampa, the Tampa Bay Times and others.

“WEDU deserves a round of applause for last night’s airing of Be More Unstoppable. Thank you for showcasing area nonprofits, especially as they stepped up during the COVID-19 pandemic. I so appreciate that WEDU would highlight area warriors, fighting for those who might otherwise be ignored – the homeless, the disadvantaged and the children.”
– Polly Stannard, volunteer, The Arc Tampa Bay

About WEDU PBS: WEDU is West Central Florida’s PBS station reaching 16 counties through media platforms including on-air programming and online experiences that broaden horizons, transport and transform and open gateways to new ideas and new worlds. Financially supported by the community, the organization offers a wealth of award-winning inspirational, educational and enlightening content over a variety of multi-media platforms including: television programming, station website, wedu.org and social media platforms, monthly member magazine Premiere, educational outreach activities and special events. WEDU’s focus on the local community has resulted in the station being regarded as a beacon of trust for adults and children of every walk of life no matter their age, ethnicity or socio-economic status. WEDU is a treasured community resource; a window to the world for the homebound and a vital educational source for the youngest members of society. WEDU prides itself on its position in the Tampa Bay community and surrounding areas as a leader, partner, informed citizen and a member of PBS, the most trusted institution in America (M&RR, January 2021). For more information, program schedules or to support WEDU visit wedu.org; WEDU Public Media or call (813) 254-9338.