Winter 2022
Volume 16, Issue 1

The PBS Western Reserve President’s Report is published for the Northeastern Educational Television of Ohio Inc. Board of Directors, major funders of the station and other community members interested in the organization’s activities.

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Civil rights documentary premieres on PBS Western Reserve

TRAINING FOR FREEDOM is a new documentary that premiered exclusively on PBS Western Reserve on Monday, Feb. 14. It captures the transformational story of how idealistic college students and Black activists came together in Oxford, Ohio, to find their humanity and the common ground to fight as one in the freedom struggle that would define a nation and alter the course of history.

The half-hour production weaves intimate personal stories from participants and local residents with critical historical analysis from noted historians and scholars. It explores how people from dramatically different worlds broke down barriers of race, class and gender to organize the most comprehensive campaign of the civil rights movement.

In the summer of 1964, volunteers and trainers for the Mississippi Freedom Summer Campaign descended upon the small town of Oxford to attend a week-long orientation held on the grounds of the Western College for Women.

Situated against the peaceful backdrop of the remote, pastoral campus, volunteers learned how to register Black voters; teach basic math, literacy and Black history erased from the segregated public schools; and stay alive using nonviolent disobedience tactics and hard learned rules for survival in the Jim Crow South.

Additional air dates for TRAINING FOR FREEDOM are Sunday, Feb. 20, at 7:30 PM and Monday, Feb. 21, at 5 PM. The production is also available on demand at https://video.westernreservepublicmedia.org.

Panel discussion to follow TRAINING FOR FREEDOM premiere

On Sunday, Feb. 20, at 7:30 PM, PBS Western Reserve will hold a virtual event that includes an encore presentation of TRAINING FOR FREEDOM followed by a panel discussion on civil rights. The virtual event will be hosted by Ben Holbert, mayor of Woodmere Village. It can be accessed at PBSWesternReserve.org.

Panelists for the prerecorded discussion include:
• Nishani Frazier, associate professor, Department of American Studies and History, University of Kansas
• Bruce Watson, author of the book Freedom Summer
• James Brown, president, NAACP Youngstown chapter
Programming & Local Productions (cont’d.)

Production Department advancements continue

Upgrades continue to the technical infrastructure of the Production Department as work progresses on a new production control room and studio. The control room is outfitted with the latest production control video switcher and digital audio console, along with additional equipment such as graphics software, teleprompter and intercom, among other equipment. It was recently used to produce pledge announcements featuring President and CEO Trina Cutter, which are now airing.

Plans proceed for premieres of new local productions

Several new local productions will be coming soon to PBS Western Reserve. MONUMENTAL DEVOTION: THE MCKINLEY NATIONAL MEMORIAL will premiere in May. WHEN THE CIRCUS CAME TO BRADY LAKE examines the mob takeover of a national circus, the activities during the stay in winter quarters in 1944-1945, interesting characters in the mix and the result of the mob-circus relationship. OHIO AND ERIE CANAL focuses on the important history of the canalway that was constructed beginning in the 1820s. Premiere dates for the latter two productions are yet to be set.

WNEO-WEAO videotapes found at Kent State University

The Kent State University Teleproductions Department recently uncovered more than 130 archived one-inch tape reels with hours of footage from WNEO-WEAO productions that date as far back as the 1980s. The footage is currently being transferred to a digital format for long-term archive purposes by VideoDub International in Cleveland.

Local programs offered for national distribution

PBS Western Reserve has offered four productions created in partnership with us to the American Public Television Exchange program for national distribution consideration. The programs are NICK CAVE: SUMMIT LAKE HEARD; BLACK COLLEGE FOOTBALL HALL OF FAME: JOURNEY TO CANTON; LINES BROKEN: THE STORY OF MARION MOTLEY; and TRAINING FOR FREEDOM.

APT Exchange chooses programming from both public television stations and independent producers through a voting system conducted with affiliated stations' programmers. If a minimum vote count is met, a program is accepted for nationwide distribution. We should know in the next few months whether the productions have been accepted.
Community Outreach

FREE WILL

Free will-writing service offered to station members
PBS Western Reserve has partnered with FreeWill to help our members get a smart start to 2022 by using a free estate planning tool. Using FreeWill’s self-help online resources, members can write their will at no personal cost and get peace of mind for the year ahead. Go to FreeWill.com/PBSWR to get started.

Milk Street station virtual cooking class held
Forty-two participants joined PBS Western Reserve on Tuesday, Jan. 11, for a cook-along class taught by Rosemary Gill, director of education at Milk Street Cooking School, where they learned about spices and how to make their own spice blend.

Gill chatted about “all things food” and answered cooking questions from participants. Attendees received a thank-you email 24 hours after the event that included links to the recipes, a spice blending handout, a free online spice course from Milk Street Cooking School and tune-in information for CHRISTOPHER KIMBALL’S MILK STREET TELEVISION on PBS Western Reserve.

Educational Services

First Best Practices webinar offered
The first webinar in PBS Western Reserve’s Best Practices in the Classroom series, “Closing the Pandemic Learning Gap in Ohio’s Schools,” was broadcast live and virtually in January. The webinar focused on how elementary schools are addressing the learning gap created by the pandemic.

The project, funded through BEMC in collaboration with the Ohio Department of Education, also features podcasts that augment the webinar.

All webinars and podcasts will be available on the project website, https://www.PBSWesternReserve.org/closing-the-pandemic-learning-gap.

Power of Digital Storytelling course begins
Fred Barrett, emerging media learning and development manager, has opened an online course, “Digital Content Training, The Start of Your Digital Storytelling Journey.” The course consists of six modules focusing on subjects such as WordPress basics, writing for the web and audio/video podcasting. It can be found on the Teachable.com platform at https://pbs-western-reserve-school.teachable.com.

Teacher training provided
From December through March, 14 professional development courses—both self-paced and live virtual—will be held. Several online courses are also being held. The professional development schedules for spring and summer will be released in late February.

Early learning initiatives begin
Ohio Ready to Learn training and the United Way of the Mahoning Valley Early Learning STEM training for caregivers is underway. Twelve training sessions have been held virtually for 180 family child-care providers throughout the state. Three new early-learning promotional spots were produced and are now available for broadcast by Ohio public television stations.
Fred Barrett presents podcast; is competition judge

In December, Fred Barrett, emerging media learning and development manager, gave a presentation on podcasting and career perspectives to Career and Technical Education students at Warren County Schools Career Center. Barrett also served as a judge for the Ohio Business Professionals Association Region 8 competition, held at Kent State University Tuscarawas. Barrett served as a judge for graphics and promotions categories.

Stephanie Virgallito earns master’s degree

In December 2021, Stephanie Virgallito, digital marketing and community engagement specialist, earned her master’s degree in professional communication with a concentration in marketing from Youngstown State University.

Staff News

Kimberly Holm completes content marketing training

Kimberly Holm, chief marketing officer, recently completed Content Marketing Institute’s CMI University, the content marketing industry’s premier online education and training program.

Jeff Good is member of advisory group

Chief Education Technology Officer Jeff Good recently participated in an advisory group meeting for the Interactive Multimedia program at the Trumbull County Career Tech Center. The program is run by former PBS digital innovator Kris Doran and prepares high school students for interactive multimedia careers.

Good presents at tech conference

Jeff Good gave a presentation on the work of Ohio educational technology agencies at the Ohio Department of Education’s Tech Coordinators Conference, held virtually in November. More than 200 tech coordinators participated.

Ryan Donchess is competition judge

Production Manager Ryan Donchess was a judge for the Ohio Business Professionals Association Region 11 competition for the Trumbull Career and Technical Center on Jan. 21. Donchess judged entries in the Digital Media, Video Production Team and Broadcast News Production Team categories.

Randy Lipscomb completes trainings

Account Executive Randy Lipscomb completed the PBS Corporate Support Performance Initiative training program, which is a required prerequisite in preparation for related in-person training. He also attended a one-day sales training called “Rising Above,” presented by the Ohio Association of Broadcasters on Jan 27.