What a privilege it is for me to join WVIA as President & CEO and serve the local NEPA community! Since I arrived here from Kansas City in July, it has been delightful getting to know the talented WVIA staff, our generous family of supporters, and this special region with its interesting history, lovely scenic attractions, and wonderful people.

On behalf of our Board of Directors and members of the WVIA team, we invite you to explore the transformational work we have provided during a time when everything in our lives has been affected in unimaginable ways. This community impact report showcases programming and initiatives that we have been working on in 2020, as well as a preview of what’s to come in 2021.

**HIGHLIGHTS OF 2020 INCLUDE**

- **COVID-19 Pandemic Response.** A variety of special informational initiatives, a *Look for the Helpers* campaign, *Story Time* for children on WVIA’s social channels, *Senior Salutes* on TV, and a special telecast of Scranton Civic Ballet Company’s *The Nutcracker* since the pandemic canceled the traditional live performances.

- **Learning at Home.** When the coronavirus forced schools to close, WVIA reprogrammed the daytime television schedule for students pre-K through grade 12, with coordinated online educational resources for students, teachers, and parents. We’re now exploring **datacasting** to deliver educational content to families lacking internet connectivity.


- **New TV livestreams on wvia.org, the PBS Video app, and YouTube TV, radio livestreams at wvia.org, and on the WVIA App.**

- Exceptional news coverage from PBS and NPR to help us understand the events of this challenging year, from the pandemic to the presidential campaign, election, and post-election drama.

In addition to the fine work of the WVIA staff, we are grateful for the leadership of Chris Norton, Senior Vice President of Community Engagement, who has been with WVIA for more than 20 years. During the first six months of the year, Chris guided the station with a steady hand and led by his mission-based example.

The changes we have seen since the onset of the pandemic have affected how we live and work in profound ways. This report documents a year of strengthening our commitment to serve our community and setting the stage for the greater things to come in the future.

Carla McCabe  
WVIA President and CEO
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WVIA provides many other programs for regional schools and students.

**Artist of the Week** – showcases more than 70 area high school students who excel in Art, Dance, Singing, Theatre, and Music.

**Scholastic Scrimmage** – a quiz bowl game show that features teams from more than 30 high schools. This year's champions: (1st place) Wallenpaupack Area, (2nd) Wyoming Area, (3rd) Selinsgrove Area.

**PBS Kids in the Classroom** – WVIA educators visited over 350 students in 13 districts, distributing free books and conducting lessons with a beloved PBS character.
Learning at Home with WVIA

2020 will go into the history books as the year of the COVID-19 pandemic and a contentious presidential election. But for WVIA, it was a year of adapting to challenges and finding new ways to serve our community.

In March, even though most staff were working from home, WVIA recognized students, teachers, and parents’ needs. With schools closed and many students without internet access, WVIA reprogrammed our main TV channel daytime schedule for Learning at Home. PBS Kids, Nature, Nova, and other programs were selected to align with Pennsylvania curriculum standards, pre-K through grade 12, and wvia.org posted free educational resources coordinated for each program. By working with four intermediate units and dozens of school districts, we broadcast 99 video lessons that include subjects produced by teachers at all grade levels. WVIA staff members and teachers took turns reading Story Time online for children each evening. In June, WVIA aired Senior Salute videos from more than 20 school districts honoring their graduating classes.

Learning at Home continued through the summer and has been extended through the 2020-21 school year. GEERS grant funding through the Pennsylvania Department of Education allowed WVIA and the other six Pennsylvania PBS stations to launch a new service of datacasting, using a portion of the broadcast spectrum to send educational materials to devices in homes without internet access. This brings an alternative to students’ online learning in unwired homes and communities. As long as they can receive a television signal, those students can receive the same lessons via datacasting.

Grant funding enabled WVIA to distribute trauma-informed “Grab and Go bags” to over 6500 students in four intermediate unit catchments. In addition, 250 Raspberry Pi units were distributed throughout our 21-county coverage area to students experiencing problems with connectivity.

Young Writers Contest – Elementary students write and illustrate their own stories that are featured online.

Great Teachers Essay Contest – High school student essays honoring their great teachers are transformed into mini-documentaries posted online.

Conversations in Science – WVIA and Sanofi asked area middle schools to brainstorm, research, and film their own science features for wvia.org.
Broadcast TV

In addition to award-winning PBS Kids educational programs, WVIA is proud to bring our region favorite PBS shows such as *Masterpiece* highlights *Sanditon*, *Beecham House*, *World on Fire*, and *Roadkill*. *Frontline* offered *America’s Great Divide* and *The Choice 2020: Trump vs. Biden*.

WVIA served the community with **294 hours** of locally produced content, including the health information show *Call the Doctor*, two *Conversations for the Common Good* specials, two Congressional candidate debates, a *Corona Crisis* special, *Our Town Moosic*, three programs in our multi-year statewide *Battling Opioids* series, five programs of *VIA Short Takes*, and much more.

But the **signature achievement** of the year was the launch of WVIA’s new multi-platform weekly public affairs series, *Keystone Edition*. Guided by research from The Institute, a group that does economic and applied research and consulting, and by a select Editorial Advisory Panel, *Keystone Edition* guests explore important regional issues in four areas: *Reports* (general community news), *Business*, *Arts*, and *Health*. The live television broadcast is also available online, with excerpts rebroadcast on WVIA radio. The series launched in October with more than **30** episodes planned through June 2021.
Radio

NPR's in-depth news during Morning Edition and All Things Considered, as well as newscasts throughout the day, are important sources of trustworthy information, especially in this year of a public health emergency and a presidential election. WVIA Radio supplements this esteemed national news service with locally hosted music and information to serve the regional audience in various ways.

Keystone Edition is a weekly radio magazine show with interviews and features from several radio hosts, and excerpts from the television public affairs series. ArtScene is a daily interview feature in which host Erika Funke celebrates our region's art events and cultural community. Homegrown Music broadcasts weekly rock, blues, jazz, and singer-songwriter session performances recorded at our studios. Due to the pandemic, most of this year's sessions have been archival. WVIA's All That Jazz is the premier source for jazz in the area. In addition to George Graham's nightly program, WVIA has recorded and broadcast regional jazz festivals. Although the pandemic forced these events to cancel this year, WVIA still aired highlights of last year's Scranton Jazz Festival and the Celebration of the Arts in Delaware Water Gap, PA.

Throughout the year, WVIA Radio's Chiaroscuro channel, one of the world's richest sources of mainstream jazz, continued to play uninterrupted, 24/7 for listeners on WVIA Radio HD3 and around the globe at wvia.org and on the WVIA App.

WVIA has been a respected source of classical music on the radio for more than four decades, celebrating the diverse communities in our region with special programming. Our weekly series, Music from St. Stephen's, spotlights regional artists performing at this Wilkes-Barre church with a world-class organ. To mark the 250th anniversary of the birth of Ludwig van Beethoven, WVIA broadcast highlights from a series of concerts at Bucknell University, including Op. 5, 2 Cello Sonatas, and music for solo piano.


To celebrate National Poetry Month in April, WVIA Radio presented a poem a day recited by students in this region's annual Poetry Out Loud competition. WVIA welcomes the Northeastern Pennsylvania Philharmonic board meetings in the station facilities, and we hosted a chamber music concert, “Lillian's Oboe,” featuring principal oboist Lillian Copeland and pianist Spencer Myer. Since the pandemic curtailed many traditional Fourth of July celebrations, on Independence Day, WVIA broadcast A WVIA American Soundscape, musical favorites for the holiday interspersed with comments from residents on what the Fourth of July means to them.
Digital

WVIA operates three television channels and three radio streams, but in addition to these legacy broadcast platforms, digital distribution is a key factor in WVIA’s audience impact. 2020 was a big year for WVIA Digital. In January, we re-launched the wvia.org website on PBS’ Bento 3.0 platform, with much more content, expanded features, and improved user-friendliness.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, WVIA created a special Coronavirus Resource and Support Page on wvia.org and complemented our on-air Learning at Home educational programming with a wealth of online curriculum resources for students, parents, and teachers on a new WVIA Learning at Home webpage.

As more people access more content online, we launched the WVIA TV livestream on YouTube TV followed by the WVIA TV livestream on wvia.org and the PBS Video App.

For some time, WVIA has been producing content especially for digital distribution, including 10 episodes of Short Takes this year:

**EPISODE 35:** Through the Mask of Noh
**EPISODE 34:** Denison House - Window on The Revolution
**EPISODE 33:** Bill Wennington: Giving Pickleball His All
**EPISODE 32:** Mark Sauerhoff: Art is Not Pristine
**EPISODE 31:** Amilcar Arroyo: Tomatoes, Newspapers, Opportunity
**EPISODE 30:** Creating Conservation Contributors: The Lehman Sanctuary
**EPISODE 29:** Rough & Tumble Steam Tractors
**EPISODE 28:** Electric City Trolley Museum
**EPISODE 27:** Keystone Iron Works: Keeping A Tradition Flowing
**EPISODE 26:** Alan Finn: Police Dog Trainer
Membership

All facets of WVIA's mission—television, radio, and digital content, educational services, and community engagement initiatives— are made possible by support from many generous individuals, civic-minded businesses, philanthropic foundations, educational institutions, and other organizations throughout our region.

We are grateful to all for sharing our vision and supporting our work.

At the close of 2020, WVIA counted more than 14,530 total members, an increase of more than 5.8% over 2019. We are inspired and grateful to see this remarkable growth in support during this year when our public service is more important than ever before.
In a normal year, we hold many special events celebrating membership support, beginning with our popular WVIA Ski Days at Elk Mountain and Ski Sawmill, enjoyed by hundreds of station fans. Again, this year we heard from parents who teach their children to ski at WVIA Ski Days.

Our big spring and summer events at Knoebel’s Amusement Resort and Montage Mountain Waterpark were not possible this year due to the pandemic. Instead, we organized the WVIA Family Fun Walk-Run as a virtual event, in which 27 participants completed any 5k course of their choice at any time during August. It was not a competition but a celebration of exercise for a good cause at a time when many of us felt homebound.

The highlight of our fundraising year was a wonderful partnership with Weis Markets to support the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank. On Giving Tuesday, December 1, when many organizations were fundraising, WVIA focused on a critical need in our community: the alarming rise in food insecurity. After several weeks of pre-promotion, WVIA’s Giving Tuesday Fundraising was all about Foodraising, as donations to WVIA were matched by Weis Markets, which donated $35,000 worth of groceries to the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank to supply food pantries and more than 1,000 agencies throughout 27 counties. The food pantries have seen a 50% increase in need during this pandemic and economic downturn. WVIA’s campaign on radio and television, email, and social media was a huge success, yielding 490 contributions, greatly exceeding its goal, and drawing enthusiastic appreciation from those fighting food insecurity on the front line.

“Thank you for this wonderful endeavor. You helped us place hunger and food security front and center for the viewing public, and they are responding with profound generosity.”

Joe Arthur, Executive Director, Central Pennsylvania Food Bank
Community Outreach

WVIA’s plan for a busy year of community engagement events was off to a good start before the COVID-19 pandemic forced a shutdown in March. In January, we held three free community screenings previewing the new PBS Masterpiece series Sanditon, including presentations by English faculty about Jane Austen. In February, we hosted a screening of the cooking and culture show No Passport Required followed by a reception featuring Delicious Desserts from area food service establishments and a culinary school, wrapping up our online project mapping “Cultural Treasures of the Region” nominated by viewers. We observed Black History Month by presenting a local historian who identified Underground Railway locations in the area before a screening of Harriet, the story of Harriet Tubman.

Over the summer, we gave away complete DVD sets of the Ken Burns documentary National Parks: America’s Best Idea to promote the broadcast series. In September, we introduced WVIA’s new President and CEO, Carla McCabe, with a community preview screening of coming attractions, a virtual screening, and a Q&A session. WVIA convened a Diversity Task Force from the board of directors and participated in numerous webinars and virtual discussions on issues of diversity, equity, inclusion, and racial justice organized by the Scranton Area Community Foundation, Scranton Martin Luther King Commission, Greater Wilkes-Barre Chamber of Commerce DEI Committee, and several public media organizations. WVIA partnered with the Scranton Civic Ballet to broadcast its annual production of The Nutcracker since the pandemic made a performance before a live audience impossible.

VENUES AND PARTNERS

Dietrich Theater, Tunkhannock
Campus Theatre, Lewisburg
Pocono Cinema and Cultural Center, East Stroudsburg
Berwick Theater and Center for Community Arts, Berwick
Bloomsburg University
East Stroudsburg University
University of Scranton
Bucknell University
Agora Cyber Charter School
Waverly Community House
WVIA Coming Attractions

PBS opened 2021 by celebrating the 50th anniversary of Masterpiece, featuring an endearing new adaptation of All Creatures Great and Small in January and February. [www.pbs.org/wgbh/masterpiece/clips/all-creatures-great-and-small-preview](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/masterpiece/clips/all-creatures-great-and-small-preview)

**Keystone Edition,** WVIA’s new multi-platform weekly series, explores important, timely stories in regional public affairs, business, the arts, and health Thursday nights on WVIA TV. Upcoming topics include the state of our region, new health initiatives, regional workforce and jobs, the arts, and Black History month, mental health, and more. [www.wvia.org/tv/keystone-edition](http://www.wvia.org/tv/keystone-edition)

**The Black Church: This Is Our Story, This Is Our Song.** Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. explores the history of this uniquely American institution and its significant impact on our culture, February 16 and 23.

Three special highlights are on the way for April. WVIA celebrates Jazz Appreciation Month with a huge ensemble of radio and television programs, including local productions, specials throughout the month on the Chiaroscuro Channel, a new biographical documentary of bebop pioneer Charlie Parker from his birthplace, Kansas City. Oliver Sacks: His Own Life is a portrait of the acclaimed neurologist and author whose work inspired the film Awakenings and who did much of his writing near our region. The next blockbuster from director Ken Burns and Lynn Novick is a biography of the turbulent life of one of America’s most influential authors, Hemingway, on April 5, 6, and 7.

For updates throughout the year, visit [www.wvia.org](http://www.wvia.org) or sign up for our regular e-newsletter, or download the WVIA app. We hope you agree that our dedication to public service in 2020 sets the stage for even greater public media service in years to come. As always, thank you for your support which makes it all possible.
WVIA Mission
WVIA educates, inspires, entertains, and fosters citizenship, diverse cultures, and perspectives to nurture community.

WVIA Vision
A joyful, engaged, well-informed, compassionate community via public media.

TO DONATE VISIT: wvia.org/donate
PBS is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization.

The official registration and financial information of Northeastern Pennsylvania Educational Television Association may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Northeastern Pennsylvania Educational Television Association does business as WVIA.