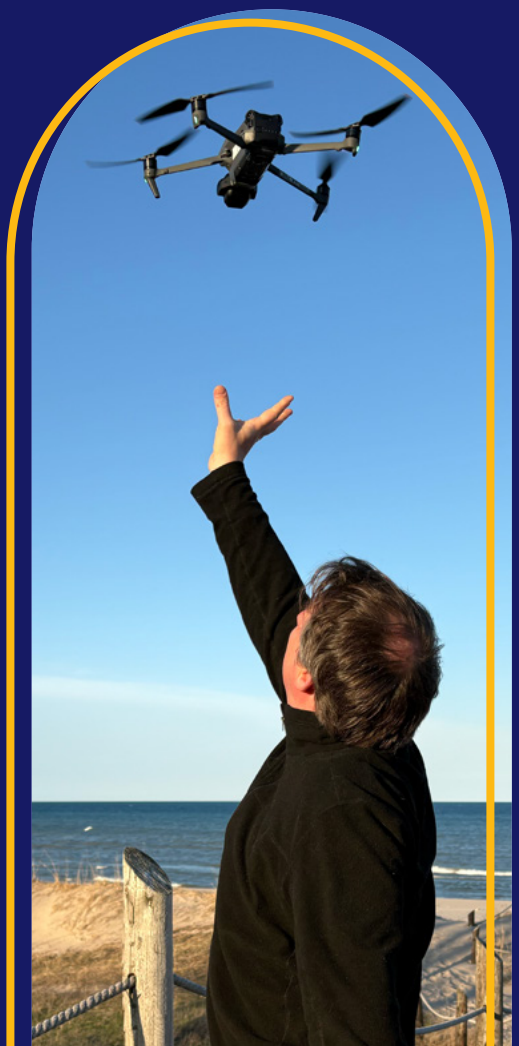
PBS Wisconsin

WISCONSIN PUBLIC RADIO

2025 IMPACT REPORT



KEEPING PUBLIC MEDIA STRONG TOGETHER IN WISCONSIN

Cover images, left to right, top to bottom:

PBS Wisconsin Videographer Lina Soblyte films in Cornucopia for *Wisconsin's Scenic Treasures*.

WPR *Wisconsin Today* Producer Mackenzie Krumme records audio for a story about Belong Wisconsin, a camp in Plymouth for foster children.

PBS Wisconsin *Wisconsin Life* host Angela Fitzgerald filming at the Wisconsin Science Festival

WPR Reporter Joe Schulz conducts an interview at the Wisconsin State Fair in West Allis.

WPR News Editor Jenny Peek records swan songs for a story.

PBS Wisconsin Producer Jeff Pfeiffer captures aerial shots with a drone.

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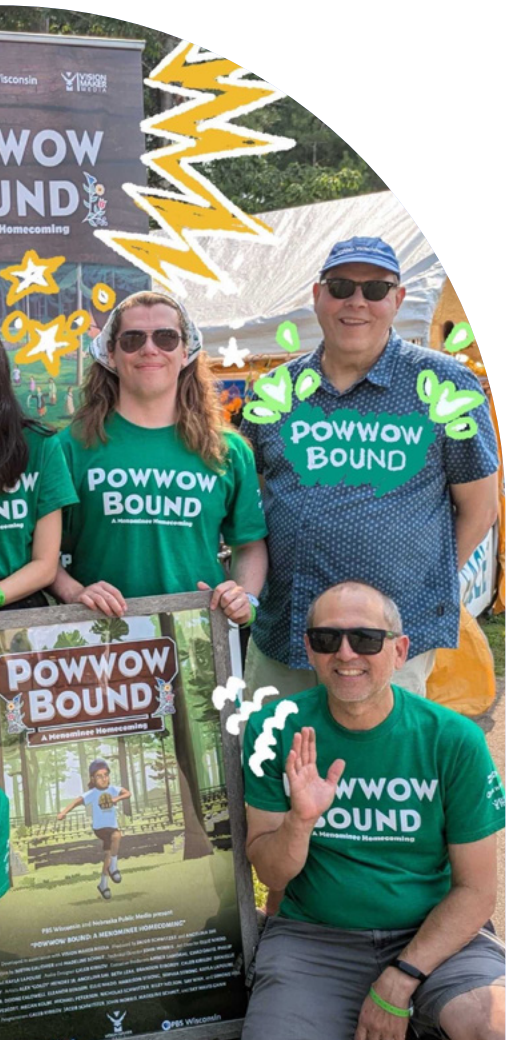

This page, left to right:

The Madison East High School Strings Ensemble performs near a Madison bike path to promote the WPR Music Network.

New Orleans singer-songwriter Joy Clark is one of the many artists featured in PBS Wisconsin's *Mile of Music*.

PBS Wisconsin staff share the new educational video game, *Powwow Bound: A Menominee Homecoming*, at the 57th Annual Menominee Nation Contest Powwow.

Former Wisconsin Poet Laureate Nicholas Gulig narrates PBS Wisconsin's *Welcome Poets*.

WHO WE ARE

Wisconsin's Trusted Source for Insights, Inspiration, and Connection

Every day, PBS Wisconsin and Wisconsin Public Radio (WPR) serve people across our state with trusted journalism and Wisconsin storytelling, educational resources and lifelong learning, music and cultural programming – on air, online, and in person through live events, freely accessible to all and powered by community support.

Rooted in the Wisconsin Idea, the belief that knowledge should improve life for all, we are public media made **by, for, about, and with** the people of Wisconsin. We are a shared civic space where communities come together to learn, listen, and see themselves reflected. We tell Wisconsin's stories like no one else can – locally, authentically, and for everyone.

Together as **Wisconsin Public Media**, we reach every corner of the state through:

- **4 PBS Wisconsin channels on 6 television stations**
- **39 WPR radio stations carrying news and music**
- **8 regional WPR bureaus embedded in communities statewide**
- **Digital streaming, podcasts, and wpr.org – one of public media's top 10 websites**
- **Hundreds of community events, partnerships, and learning experiences each year**

> **"WPR and PBS Wisconsin are the only stations that I listen to or watch to get news that I trust. Especially important now."** *— Audience Comment*

A MESSAGE FROM OUR LEADERS

Wisconsin has led the nation in public media innovation for more than a century. Today, we write with confidence and determination, united by a shared commitment to the people and communities we serve and to Wisconsin Public Media's future.

As board and leadership partners, we are advancing a unified strategy for PBS Wisconsin and WPR, connecting radio, television, digital platforms, and community relationships so more Wisconsinites hear and see themselves in our work.

As the media landscape evolves, our mission remains clear. With your support, trusted local news, lifelong learning, inspiring music, and Wisconsin stories will remain essential. Wisconsin invented public media. We're here to stay, and together, we're building what comes next.

Kyle LaFond,
President,
Friends of PBS Wisconsin

Roy Christianson,
Chair,
Wisconsin Public Radio Association

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Janan Najeeb
Mandy Roberts
Shauna Singh Baldwin
Kathryn Stolp
Dean Teofilo
Eric Tillich
Terry Warfield
Stacy Wigfield

PBS Wisconsin community engagement staff provide PBS KIDS learning activities during a baseball game at the Beloit Sky Carp Stadium.

STATEWIDE REACH AT A GLANCE

583,000+ VIEWERS PER WEEK
PBS Wisconsin Broadcast

280,000+ STREAMS PER WEEK
PBS Wisconsin Digital Platforms

824,000+ STREAMS PER WEEK
PBS KIDS Digital Platforms

347,000+ LISTENERS PER WEEK
WPR Radio Broadcast

30,000+ STREAMS PER WEEK
WPR Digital Platforms

235,000+ USERS PER WEEK
wpr.org

NEWS

Straightforward, Accurate News You Can Trust

From eight bureaus across the state, PBS Wisconsin and WPR deliver the news that Wisconsin residents trust most.

Rural Reporting Partnership

Many rural communities in Wisconsin face growing news deserts with limited or no local journalism. Funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) prior to its defunding, our rural reporting initiative was launched to address this challenge. By building long-term capacity for our news teams, we will conduct in-depth journalistic coverage of the issues most important to our rural communities across the state.

While we continue to grow our team of journalists covering the rural beat, existing reporters expanded their focus on rural issues, supported by our eight regional bureaus. Collaboration with Wisconsin Rural Partners and University of Wisconsin-Madison Extension enabled reporters to attend community forums in Oconto, Richland, Rusk, and Dodge counties, directly shaping coverage. This foundational work is strengthening civic understanding today and building a more responsive rural journalism model for the future.

Top right: *Here & Now* reports on Wisconsin soybean farmers.

93%
of viewers surveyed trust *Here & Now*'s news coverage

3,600+
news articles published on pbswisconsin.org and wpr.org

15M+
views of news content on our websites

3,300+
local newscasts aired

PBS Wisconsin

Indigenous Affairs Reporter

Journalist Erica Ayisi joined PBS Wisconsin in late 2024 as part of a partnership project with ICT (formerly *Indian Country Today*) to help fill a critical gap in Indigenous news coverage in Wisconsin. Her reporting centered the priorities of Native communities – from Indigenous language revitalization to federal policy impacts on tribal health and services – fostering accurate representation and increasing visibility in statewide cultural conversations.

Above: Indigenous Affairs Reporter Erica Ayisi interviews Ho-Chunk President Jon Greendeer, pictured here, about University of Wisconsin-Madison's Tribal Educational Promise for Wisconsin's Native students.

Right: PBS Wisconsin News Director and Anchor of *Here & Now* Frederica Freyberg

Digital News Distribution Expansion

News stories published on **pbswisconsin.org** over the year attracted more than 1.3 million views, with audience interest driven particularly by the spring 2025 election. Our news team also launched regular production of short-form vertical videos. These consist of reporter stand-ups providing summaries of *Here & Now* reports and are distributed via social media.

Statewide Election Coverage

Our PBS Wisconsin and WPR News teams delivered trusted nonpartisan journalism throughout 2025, giving audiences the clarity and context they needed to navigate Wisconsin's civic landscape. Coverage included straightforward explanations of ballot questions, in-depth reporting on the spring election – highlighted

by the closely watched Wisconsin Supreme Court race – as well as contests for Superintendent of Public Instruction and local offices across the state. Through timely analysis, thoughtful interviews with candidates and experts, and comprehensive results coverage, our journalists helped people make sense of complex issues, understand what was at stake for their communities, and take part in civic life during a year of heightened public engagement.

> **"Excellent, well-researched, unbiased, factual news."**
>
> *— Audience Comment*

WISCONSIN PUBLIC RADIO

Wisconsin Today

Wisconsin Today explores the people, places, and ideas shaping life through the open exchange of ideas and information. With a presence in Wisconsin communities across the state and a commitment to the highest standards of journalism, *Wisconsin Today* provides the clarity, depth, and connection through a daily radio show, podcast, morning newsletter, and *Wisconsin Weekend*. With depth and clarity, we help audiences stay informed and connected so Wisconsin moves forward together.

Top: WPR Photojournalist Angela Major captures Madison residents voting in the April 2025 election.

Right: WPR *Wisconsin Today* co-host Kate Archer Kent records 7-year-old Kamden Carter in Milwaukee for a story about gospel music.

Upper Midwest Newsroom

WPR News joined public media partners in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota in receiving a nearly $1.2 million grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting to establish the Upper Midwest Newsroom. This regional collaboration will expand local and regional reporting, strengthen editorial capacity, and provide in-depth coverage of issues shaping life across the Upper Midwest. From tribal affairs and agriculture to economic and environmental challenges, coverage will give audiences high-quality, public service journalism on stories relevant to the region.

PBS Wisconsin Education staff and volunteers pose with PBS KIDS books and stuffed animals included in welcome backpacks for refugee children resettling in Wisconsin.

EDUCATION

Supporting Learners Across Wisconsin

We serve learners from early childhood through adulthood, building knowledge, creativity, inspiration, and connection statewide.

919,000+
online visits engaging with PBS Wisconsin Education resources

~5,000
educators engaged in professional learning with PBS Wisconsin Education

91%
of professional learning participants surveyed say they feel "extremely" or "very" supported in their work

From PBS KIDS to Lifelong Learning

For more than a century, PBS Wisconsin and WPR have brought learning to people wherever they are – at home, in classrooms, and in communities across the state. The journey begins with PBS KIDS, where playful stories and memorable characters build early learning skills that help children succeed in school and in life. That foundation continues in the classroom through PBS Wisconsin Education, supporting teachers and students with standards-aligned content designed for educational settings and professional learning that honors Wisconsin educators. From there, our work extends into adulthood through trusted journalism, music, cultural programming, and live events that invite audiences to explore new ideas and perspectives. Together, this work reflects the Wisconsin Idea in action: learning that lasts a lifetime and reaches every corner of the state.

> **"As a young person who grew up watching and loving PBS, it is so wonderful to know that now, as a Youth Services Librarian, PBS Wisconsin Education is there to help me navigate new territories in providing educational resources for the next generation."**
>
> *— Abigail Ott, Shorewood Public Library*

PBS Wisconsin Education

Education is central to our mission. PBS Wisconsin Education supports early learners through PBS KIDS resources for families and childcare settings, then builds on that foundation with free, standards-aligned media and professional learning for educators and students across classrooms, libraries, and virtual learning environments.

The Look Back: America@250

PBS Wisconsin Education's *The Look Back* is a series developed for students in grades 4-6, exploring Wisconsin's historical eras through artifacts. With support from PBS LearningMedia and the Kern Family Foundation, two new *The Look Back* episodes explore Revolutionary-era stories through a local lens as part of the broader America@250 initiative (see p. 13). The episodes focus on two key Revolutionary artifacts – a British peace medal given to a Menominee Chief in 1778 and a portrait of George Washington.

Wisconsin Biographies: Georgia O'Keeffe

PBS Wisconsin Education's popular *Wisconsin Biographies* series designed for grades 3-6 shares the stories of people who made Wisconsin history. Wisconsin native Georgia O'Keeffe joined the collection this year. Known for her paintings of flowers, buildings, bones, and landscapes, her story models determination and creativity. O'Keeffe not only changed American art but also showed future generations that it is possible to succeed by staying true to your vision.

Whoopensocker

PBS Wisconsin Education launched *Whoopensocker*, an educational resource collection for upper elementary learners that provides an on-ramp to writing through theater-inspired games and group brainstorming.

Whoopensocker was first developed as a six-week teaching artist residency by Erica Halverson, a professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Education. Halverson teamed up with PBS Wisconsin Education to make a multimedia version of the program that's accessible to educators around the state.

Top right: Animation of American modernist artist, Georgia O'Keeffe, from PBS Wisconsin Education's *Wisconsin Biographies*

Bottom right: In *Whoopensocker*, students build storytelling skills through engaging, theater-based activities.

WISCONSIN PUBLIC RADIO

WPR News & Music

WPR's news, music, conversation, and entertainment programs support lifelong learning by helping audiences explore ideas, culture, and civic life well beyond their school years. Reaching listeners across Wisconsin and around the world on 39 stations and two networks – WPR News and WPR Music – we inform and inspire audiences through trusted journalism and cultural programming grounded in the open exchange of ideas.

The Larry Meiller Show

The Larry Meiller Show has been a staple on WPR since 1967 and is among our most

listened-to programs. The live weekday call-in show connects Wisconsinites through thoughtful conversation on topics that shape everyday life, from gardening and the environment to home improvement, consumer issues, and local issues. Larry and his hundreds of annual guests and callers create a welcoming space for curiosity, connection, and trusted advice. In 2025, we celebrated Larry's remarkable career as he announced his upcoming retirement after 58 years with WPR, honoring his lasting impact on generations of listeners.

Chapter A Day

One of WPR's most popular programs, *Chapter A Day*, has been part of our programming since 1931, sharing daily readings from classic and contemporary books. The program invites audiences to slow down and savor one chapter at a time, read aloud by a rotating cast of skilled narrators. With its steady presence across decades, *Chapter A Day* continues as a quiet, enduring tradition for generations of Wisconsin listeners.

Above: Larry Meiller greets audience members after a live broadcast of *The Larry Meiller Show* on location at Seven Acre Dairy in Paoli.

Below: Members of the Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestra's advanced ensembles perform on WPR's *Midday Classics* with Norman Gilliland.

> ***The Larry Meiller Show* has brought wisdom, tools, and joy to me for many years. Thanks for the fascinating and meaningful programming."**
>
> *— Audience Comment*

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION screening event at the AL. Ringling Theatre in Baraboo

EVENTS & ENGAGEMENT

Where Communities Connect and Belong

PBS Wisconsin and WPR bring our content to life through community events statewide, bringing people together to connect, engage, celebrate, and learn.

America@250

In advance of America's 250th anniversary, PBS Wisconsin and WPR engaged communities across the state in meaningful conversations about history, democracy, and civic life through the America@250 initiative (A@250).

With support from WETA, A@250 features national PBS programming, including THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION, a six-part documentary directed by Ken Burns, Sarah Botstein, and David Schmidt that explores the nation's founding struggle. The initiative also includes locally produced PBS Wisconsin resources, including educational resources and a statewide educator institute supported by PBS LearningMedia.

The initiative launched with a major community screening of THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION at the historic Al. Ringling Theatre in Baraboo, drawing more than 325 participants, and the announcement of 25 mini-grants for A@250 Community Conversations. In 2026, these efforts will be activated through locally led community events supported by those mini-grants, alongside the distribution of conversation guides and clips as well as facilitation training.

44,000+
event attendees at

200+
events hosted across the state in

65
communities

4M+
engagements on social media

Funder credit: Corporate funding for THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION was provided by Bank of America. Major funding was provided by The Better Angels Society and its members Jeannie and Jonathan Lavine with the Crimson Lion Foundation; and the Blavatnik Family Foundation. Major funding was also provided by David M. Rubenstein; The Robert D. and Patricia E. Kern Family Foundation; Lilly Endowment Inc.; and the following Better Angels Society members: Eric and Wendy Schmidt; Stephen A. Schwarzman; and Kenneth C. Griffin with Griffin Catalyst. Additional support for THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION was provided by: The Arthur Vining Davis Foundations; The Pew Charitable Trusts; Gilbert S. Omenn and Martha A. Darling; Park Foundation; and the following Better Angels Society members: Gilchrist and Amy Berg; Perry and Donna Golkin; The Michelson Foundation; Jacqueline B. Mars; Kissick Family Foundation; Diane and Hal Brierley; John H. N. Fisher and Jennifer Caldwell; John and Catherine Debs; The Fullerton Family Charitable Fund; Philip I. Kent; Gail Elden; Deborah and Jon Dawson; David and Susan Kreisman; The McCloskey Family Charitable Trust; Becky and Jim Morgan; Carol and Ned Spieker; Mark A. Tracy; and Paul and Shelley Whyte. THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION was made possible, in part, with support from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

PBS Wisconsin

Garden & Green Living Expo

PBS Wisconsin continued its tradition of bringing people together through two of the state's signature expos. Celebrating its 33rd year, the Garden & Green Living Expo welcomed nearly 13,000 attendees for three days of free educational presentations, hands-on learning, and inspiration around gardening, local foods, and sustainability.

Great Wisconsin Quilt Show

The 21st-annual Great Wisconsin Quilt Show drew more than 18,200 attendees and showcased more than 650 quilts. Through the Quilt to Give service project, participants created and donated more than 100 quilts to support refugee children resettling across Wisconsin.

Top: Participants in the Great Wisconsin Quilt Show first annual fashion show. *Dynae Allice Photography*

Right: Interviewing an attendee at the screening event of the Independent Lens film *We Want the Funk!*

Funk It Up with PBS Wisconsin

Supported by ITVS, this event transformed a preview of the Independent Lens film *We Want the Funk!* into a vibrant community celebration of Black culture, music, and history in Madison. Through partnerships with local artists and dancers, the free event and connected social media campaign engaged new audiences and reinforced public media's role as a welcoming cultural convener.

Latinx History Series

PBS Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Latinx History Collective partnered to share the diverse histories of two Latinx families across the state in a digital video series, which had more than 100,0000 impressions across social media platforms. Supported by Latino Public Broadcasting and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the series spotlighted stories of migration, tradition, community leadership, and cultural identity, inviting audiences to see Wisconsin history in a broader, more inclusive light.

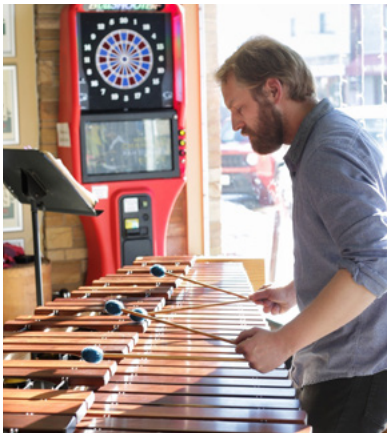
University Place Live Recording & Simulcast

PBS Wisconsin collaborated with the WPR bureau in Superior to expand access to scholarship with a live, two-location recording and simulcast of *University Place*. Dr. Katrina Phillips discussed Red Cliff Ojibwe history while audiences in Madison and Superior participated together, demonstrating new ways public media can connect communities statewide.

WISCONSIN PUBLIC RADIO

Classical Music Day

The Second Annual WPR Classical Music Day drew nearly 500 people to Milwaukee's Bradley Symphony Center in October. As part of WPR's partnership with the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, the event showcased over 160 young musicians from southeastern Wisconsin. *Drivetime Classics* host Jason Heilman guided the audience through performances by student ensembles on the historic stage. The concert was recorded and broadcast statewide in February 2026.



Top right: Celebrating youth musicians at Classical Music Day in Milwaukee

Above: A member of North Wind Ensemble plays at a Pint-Sized Concert at Rhinelander Brewing.

Right: Bach to Pop Strings performs a Pint-Sized Concert at Honest Dog Books in Bayfield.

Pint-Sized Concert Series

WPR partners with the Milwaukee Art Museum to feature WPR's Pint-Sized Concerts at its popular "Thursday Nights at MAM" series, expanding our reach to new and younger audiences. Launched in early 2025, Pint-Sized Concerts highlight local musicians in local venues, blending classical music with familiar favorites and underscoring how WPR can support and enrich cultural life in local communities.

Wisconsin Road Trip Live in Appleton

To celebrate WPR News' Summer Road Trip Series, we gathered the community at Poplar Hall in Appleton in August. WPR's Bridgit Bowden hosted a lively conversation with more than 100 attendees sharing stories and connecting around Northeast Wisconsin travel.

Leader in Digital Engagement

WPR's website is among the top ten most-visited public radio websites, with more than 235,000 weekly active users. This is higher than many sites in larger markets, including WNYC in New York and WBEZ in Chicago. In May 2025, the daily WPR News email newsletter shifted to curated editorial content, and subscriptions have increased 40 percent to more than 13,700.

PBS Wisconsin *Wisconsin Life* host Angela Fitzgerald tours the grounds of Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin.

ARTS, CULTURE & WISCONSIN VOICES

Celebrating Creativity and Connection

We showcase music, arts, and storytelling that honor Wisconsin voices, foster creativity, and bring communities together through performances, conversations, and stories in place.

Wisconsin Life

A collaboration between PBS Wisconsin and WPR, *Wisconsin Life* entered its 12th season, continuing to celebrate the people, places, and cultures that make Wisconsin unique. The series traveled across the state to share stories of creativity, history, nature, and community – from Wisconsin's oldest state park in St. Croix Falls to iconic destinations like Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin, whimsical Bookworm Gardens, and more. New episodes premiered on PBS Wisconsin and WPR and streamed weekly, offering viewers a richly textured portrait of life in Wisconsin that deepens connection and understanding statewide.

94%

overall quality rating by audiences surveyed for PBS Wisconsin-made programs

4,000+

hours delivered of locally-produced PBS Wisconsin and WPR News & Talk programming

1,000+

local artists featured on WPR Music

150+

Wisconsinites' unique stories featured on *Wisconsin Life*

PBS Wisconsin

Powwow Bound: A Menominee Homecoming

Co-produced by PBS Wisconsin and Nebraska Public Media, *Powwow Bound: A Menominee Homecoming* offers a 3D narrative-driven adventure into Menominee culture. Players guide teenager "DJ" through the annual contest powwow, helping her family honor their ancestors. Developed with extensive Menominee representation, the game provides an authentic, immersive way for students and the public to experience contemporary Indigenous traditions and storytelling.

Bucky!

Bucky! whimsically explores the history of Bucky Badger, his cultural impact on Wisconsin, and his rise to something larger than just a mascot. Narrated by comedian Charlie Berens, Bucky's story is told through interviews by those who donned the Bucky costume, the families of his creators, and incredible footage from the past that has not been seen publicly in decades. Through screenings and preview events, more than 1,150 people gathered in theaters, community spaces, alumni venues, and senior living communities to experience the documentary together.

Welcome Poets

PBS Wisconsin's limited digital series *Welcome Poets* explores the lives, work, and legacies of two Wisconsin poets with strong ties to Fort Atkinson. In the series' six episodes, the life and work of the late poet Lorine Niedecker are celebrated through the personal reflections of 2023-2024 Wisconsin Poet Laureate Nicholas Gulig as he examines the people, places, and influences that have shaped his own life as a poet.

La Crosse Symphony Orchestra's Midnight in Paris

PBS Wisconsin and WPR partnered to record the La Crosse Symphony Orchestra's "Midnight in Paris" concert. Featuring acclaimed violinist Rachel Barton Pine and Maestro Alexander Platt, the production captured the season finale at the Viterbo Fine Arts Center. This collaboration preserved a significant cultural moment, making the performance accessible to audiences beyond the concert hall.

Top: Bucky Badger takes center stage in the PBS Wisconsin documentary, *Bucky!*

Above: Former Wisconsin Poet Laureate Nicholas Gulig in *Welcome Poets*

WISCONSIN PUBLIC RADIO

To the Best of Our Knowledge

As *To the Best of Our Knowledge* completed its 35-year run in fall 2025, the American Archive of Public Broadcasting announced that the complete archives of the Peabody Award-winning program will be preserved. The collection is now available online through the national archive, which is a collaboration of the Library of Congress and GBH.

Zorba Paster On Your Health

In 2025, we also aired the final episode of *Zorba Paster On Your Health*. The nationally-syndicated show, featuring Dr. Zorba Paster sharing health and fitness advice, concluded its 33-year run in September. Dr. Zorba Paster will continue to be a guest on other WPR programs.

Above: *Midday Classics* host Norman Gilliland welcomes musicians from the Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestra for a live performance.

WPR Classical Music

Midday Classics features in-studio musician visits and interviews; *Wisconsin Classical* highlights weekly performances by Wisconsin ensembles and soloists; and *Classics By Request* fills Saturday mornings with listener-curated selections and themed shows.

The Road to Higher Ground

On this weekly program, host and producer Dr. Jonathan Øverby explores music as a gateway to understanding cultures worldwide. Drawing on years of travel, research, and collaboration with musicians across continents, the program offers an inclusive listening experience featuring music that is ancient and modern, local and global, familiar and newly discovered.

Simply Folk

Simply Folk is WPR's weekly folk music program featuring traditional and contemporary Americana, bluegrass, acoustic blues, Celtic, Nordic, and related styles. Hosted by Síle Shigley, the show also highlights Wisconsin artists and listener selections.

> **"WPR Music is as great as it gets. I've always had classical music in my life and searched for the most eclectic and excellent in classical radio. So impressed!"**
>
> *— WPR Music listener from Eau Claire*

2025 AWARDS & RECOGNITION

PBS WISCONSIN HIGHLIGHTS

45
TOTAL AWARDS

PBS Wisconsin earned multiple industry awards recognizing the impact of its visual storytelling and public-service journalism. Notably, the station received the National Educational Telecommunications Association's Overall Excellence in Innovation award at the 57th Public Media Awards. Additional honors celebrated documentaries on Wisconsin's history and places, in-depth *Here & Now* reporting, and *Wisconsin Life* features highlighting local culture, communities, and small businesses.

WPR HIGHLIGHTS

In 2025, WPR received numerous industry awards recognizing journalism produced in 2024 that combined deep reporting with strong storytelling. Honored work ranged from thoughtful examinations of Wisconsin communities in transition to compelling historical and science-based features, as well as intimate reporting on mental health and family life. Together, the awards reflect WPR's commitment to nuanced, human-centered journalism across all our platforms.

A full list of both PBS Wisconsin and WPR awards won are available at wpr.org/awards

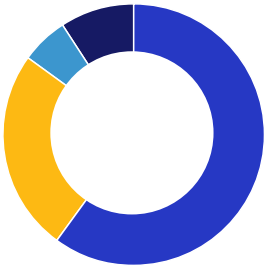
FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

Fiscal Year 2025 (July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025)

The loss of federal funding following the defunding of the CPB presents a significant challenge, resulting in a $6 million annual reduction for PBS Wisconsin and WPR beginning in Fiscal Year 2026 (not reflected in these charts). In response, members across both services have stepped up, reaching an all-time high in contributors of nearly 130,000.

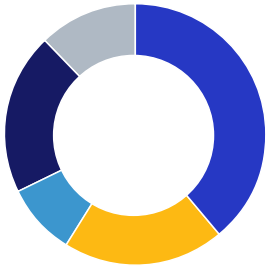
In Fiscal Year 2025, strong financial outcomes were driven by impressive fundraising results and rigorous fiscal management. Both Friends of PBS Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Public Radio Association (WPRA) experienced significant increases in contributions and membership growth. Nearly 70 percent of every dollar raised supports programming, broadcast, and educational and community outreach services. With combined endowment* payments totaling more than $1.3 million in FY2025, together we can ensure the long-term sustainability of the valuable services we provide to Wisconsin.

Revenue Sources



- Corporation for Public Broadcasting 9%
- Community Support 60%
- State Support 25%
- Other 6%

Expenses



- Programming & Production 39%
- Broadcasting 20%
- Program Information 9%
- Fundraising 20%
- Administration 12%

*Endowment payments to PBS Wisconsin and WPR

**Elimination of federal CPB funding will be reflected in FY2026 financials.

Your support keeps public media strong and accessible for everyone.

For detailed financial information, please visit
pbswisconsin.org/financials and **wpr.org/financials.**

THANK YOU

We are honored to acknowledge the nearly 130,000 donors who supported PBS Wisconsin and WPR during the 2025 fiscal year. The following pages highlight leadership donors and businesses who made gifts to support our daily work, funded special projects, or designated future gifts to grow our endowment.

PBS Wisconsin

● = Donor to both PBS Wisconsin and WPR in FY25

$1,000,000+ Lifetime Giving

Monroe E. & Sandra L. Trout
Wooden Nickel Fund

Leadership Circles

The Executive Producers Circle and Producers Circle recognize those at our highest levels of philanthropy. We also gratefully honor those in the Directors Circle, whose annual gifts of $1,000 or more elevate our mission.

$25,000-$999,999

- Dr. Henry A. Anderson
- Dr. Annette Beyer-Mears in memory of Howard & Nelle Weiss
- Lau & Bea Christensen
- C.L.M. Park Foundation & Lois J. Brager
- A.C.V. & Mary Elston Family
- The Fidler Family in memory of Dean Fidler
- W. Jerome Frautschi & Pleasant T. Rowland
- Virginia Graves & Peter Tropman
- Barbara Hoffman
- JEK Foundation Inc.
- Robert J. Lenz
- Chuck & Barb Merry
- Mary E. Nikolay
- William & Priscilla Oswald
- Mary & Lowell Peterson
- Pat Powers & Tom Wolfe
- Roots & Wings Foundation
- Mary Lang Sollinger
- Paul & Coe Williams
- Anonymous (4)

$10,000-$24,999

- Fernando & Carla Alvarado
- Rima D. & Michael Apple
- Francis A. & Georgia F. Ariens Fund
- Diane Ballweg
- Bitzer Family Legacy Fund
- Catherine Bloomer
- Sandy Bobrowitz
- Lynn S. & Charles M. Brown
- Charles & Ann Cedergren
- Richard & Nancy Christiansen
- Clan Donald Pipes & Drums of Northeast Wisconsin
- Joyce Clark Knutson
- Robert & Mary Cole
- Geoffrey Crowley & Kelly Lanpheer-Crowley
- Culver's Foundation
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LOOKING AHEAD

2026 Priorities

"Looking ahead to 2026, Wisconsin Public Radio is focused on meeting a clear community need: audiences want more local content. Our journalists live and work across Wisconsin, and they deliver stories rooted in the communities we serve."
— Sarah Ashworth, Director of WPR

In 2026, Wisconsin Public Media will continue building a strong, unified future rooted in trust, service, and community partnership. We will strengthen independent, statewide journalism that helps Wisconsinites understand the issues shaping their lives and communities. We will deepen collaboration across PBS Wisconsin and WPR, leveraging our broadcast and digital platforms and community connections to tell Wisconsin stories with greater reach and impact. We will expand freely accessible educational resources that support lifelong learning and civic understanding. And we will grow sustainable, community-powered support to ensure public media remains a reliable, essential service for every corner of Wisconsin, today and for generations to come.

"Trust is at the center of everything we do. It is our responsibility to earn it every day. Nine out of ten respondents to our 2025 community survey said they saw PBS Wisconsin as trustworthy. That both affirms our mission and challenges us to ask why that's not ten out of ten."
— Jon Miskowski, Director of PBS Wisconsin

Land Acknowledgment Statement

PBS Wisconsin and WPR broadcast to the homelands of 12 Native American nations and their people. We acknowledge their resilience, ingenuity, contributions, and inherent sovereignty. And we remain committed to collaboration with these nations to ensure the public media landscape includes these stories and perspectives now and in the future. Learn more at **pbswisconsin.org/land** and **wpr.org/land**.

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PBS Wisconsin and Wisconsin Public Radio (WPR) are services of UW-Madison's Wisconsin Public Media division and the Educational Communications Board. Together, they serve communities statewide through trusted journalism and Wisconsin storytelling, music and cultural programming, lifelong learning, and educational resources – on air, online, and in person through live events, freely accessible to all and powered by community support.

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