



2024

# LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT



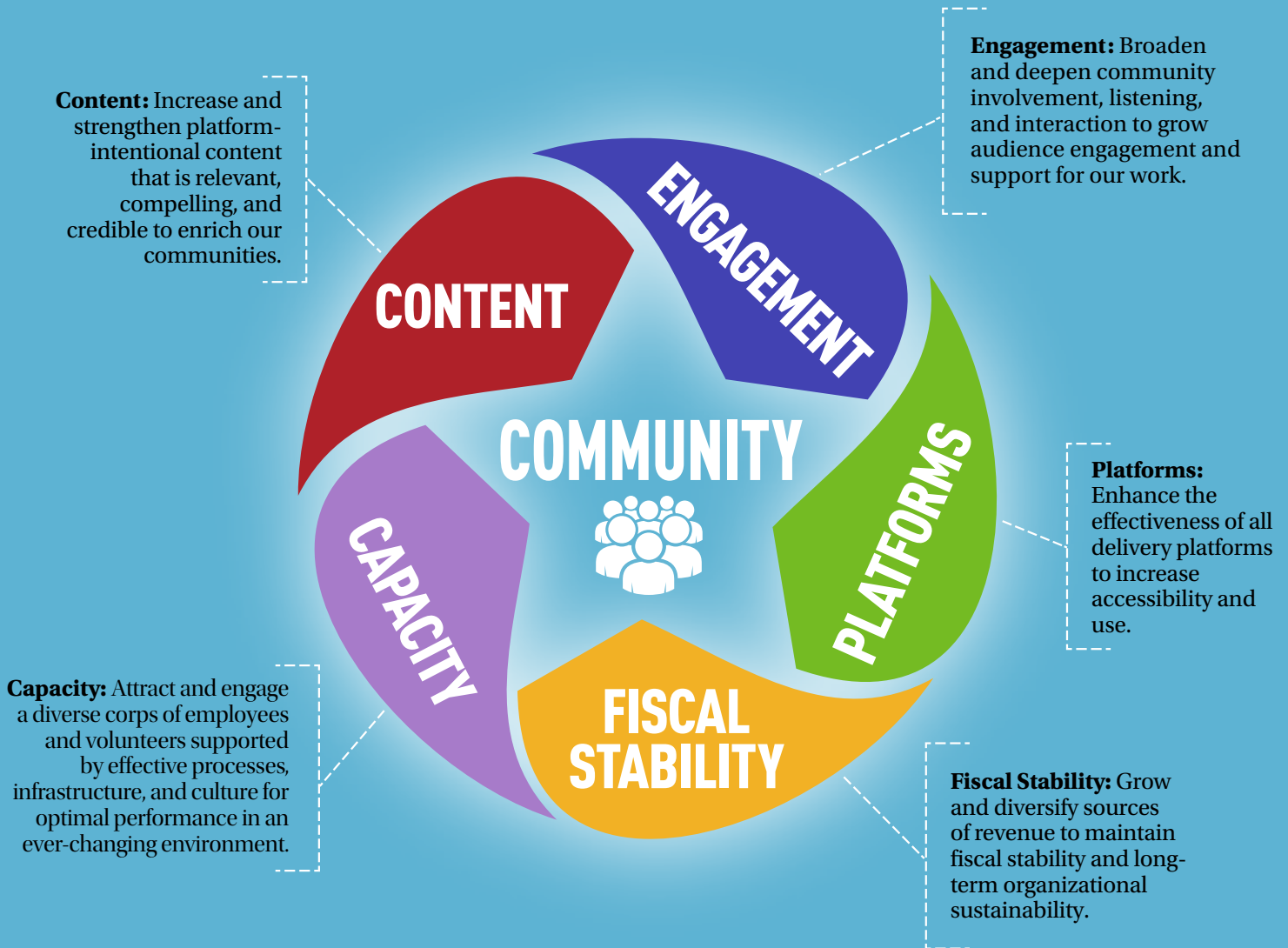
WXXI is the Rochester region's most trusted media partner and independent cinema, committed to serving the community using a wide range of programming and engagement activities.



**WXXI**  
**THE LITTLE | CITY**

# WXXI Strategy Map

WXXI developed and adheres to a strategic direction that guides the organization in the work we do. Those principles are driven by putting the community at the center of everything we do.



## MISSION

WXXI, The Little, and CITY magazine are the essential public media resources that inform, educate, engage, inspire, and strengthen our community.

## VISION

Highly valued and accessible services that enrich our community.

## VALUES

- Commitment to our community
- Respect for our community and ourselves
- Dedication to the value of learning
- Appreciation for innovation and creativity
- Commitment to inclusion and a balance of diverse perspectives
- Superior stewardship and accountability

# News Content

**Content:** Increase and strengthen platform-intentional content that is relevant, compelling, and credible to enrich our communities.

## Investigative and enterprise work

Our top enterprise and investigative work of the past year ranged from deep dives on the troubled state rollout of legalized marijuana and its effect on farmers to the collapse of a heralded redevelopment of a former Kodak spy site (*Kodak Hawkeye Plant pictured right*) into a failed hemp growing operation. We filed more than three dozen open records requests, leading to stories about police overtime, police body-worn camera video that showed the district attorney berating an officer after a speeding violation, and supported a number of other stories.



**SEARCHING FOR CLOSURE** In the first three segments of “Searching for Closure,” which will be an ongoing occasional series, Gino Fanelli and Max Schulte revisited unsolved homicides and explored the complex relationship between surviving family and law enforcement. **For their work, Fanelli and Schulte won a New York State Broadcasters Award for “Best Use of Digital Platforms.”**

## WXXI AND THE ECLIPSE

Rochester was one of the best places to experience the total solar eclipse in 2024 as it was in the path of totality. **WXXI Classical and The Route created special programming** to accompany this historic event, with music about the sun, the moon, the sky, and the stars as day turned to night and back into day again. **WXXI News presented a special live broadcast of Connections** from the roof of the WXXI building, with reporter and listener reactions on the day of the eclipse. And **WXXI covered all aspects of the total solar eclipse** including:

- The best places to view it, traffic predictions, how to photograph it, and the dangers of looking at it without the proper equipment.
- As part of the Inclusion Desk, WXXI also shared a story about how people with disabilities and the blind could experience the event.
- *Connections with Evan Dawson* devoted several shows before the rare celestial occurrence to help listeners learn as much as possible about it.
- And on the day of the actual eclipse, reporters fanned out across the region to talk to people about how they were experiencing it. They shared their stories and photos in a live blog.

# CONNECTIONS

WITH EVAN DAWSON



**Connections continues to span a wide range of issues while allowing the community to drive the discussion. It has become a town square, a place where even difficult conversations can happen. Two highlights of that are recounted below:**

June 27, 2024 held exactly that kind of sensitive but vital discourse. Rochester had seen a massive rise in car thefts over the previous year. Most troubling was the age of the offenders – often teenagers – stealing Kias and Hyundais for social media acclaim. A young man known as “Z” talked about why he decided to join a group that was trying to steal a car in the city. He discussed the mindset that kids have when they joyride at high speeds through dense neighborhoods. He talked about nihilism, and the search for meaning. And he joined county officials in talking about a new program aimed at intervening with kids and making sure they don’t steal a second car, or a third. The power of his words helped humanize what has become a lightning rod issue.

On February 27, 2024, two local obstetrician and gynecologists trusted *Connections* to go public with their concerns about a rapidly changing legal landscape for abortion and reproductive health. The doctors shared their experiences since the Supreme Court’s Dobbs decision overturned Roe v. Wade. They answered questions from listeners about how their work has been impacted. And they described the challenges that their colleagues in other states are facing. This conversation brought listeners inside medical offices, where doctors are dealing with the reality of new laws, not just the hypotheticals.



**Connections covers an array of local issues from arts and the economy to community affairs. You can listen to daily podcasts of each episode at [WXXINews.org](https://www.WXXINews.org).**

## Regional Impact Reporting

WXXI News reporters broke down the complex reassessment issues roiling towns and neighborhoods, dug into the mismanagement of Monroe County’s plan to raise up neighborhood nonprofits, and put a spotlight on how police too often fail to accommodate the region’s large deaf population.

Mary Karol and Doug Matchett, speak through an interpreter to recount the interactions between their son Scott and the Brighton Police Department.



## WXXI ELECTION HUB

In recent years, WXXI News noticed that audiences were hungry for basic elections information, from school board race rundowns to profiles of very competitive legislative races. We started to see an opportunity to better serve those audiences by centralizing our coverage — putting it all in one spot where anyone could easily find it.

The time was right in 2024. A presidential election had the potential to drown out crucial local contests, so the WXXI News team got to work early in the year planning to launch an “Elections Hub”. It was populated with simple candidate sketches so audiences could see who was running for what and get their backgrounds. There were also brief explainers on some of the topics that were likely to be addressed by candidates to help audiences have a basic frame of reference.

When election campaigns ramp up, the community can turn to our “Election Hub” for in-depth coverage of the races and all the stories that matter most to voters.

That coverage also will include special reports, plus candidate segments from WXXI’s live, daily talk program, “Connections with Evan Dawson.”



# News Content

**Content:** Increase and strengthen platform-intentional content that is relevant, compelling, and credible to enrich our communities.

## Karen DeWitt Retires

Karen DeWitt, Albany bureau chief for WXXI and the New York Public News Network, retired on June 21 after a long and distinguished career in public radio. Her time in Albany spanned six governors and more than a dozen legislatures. Thirty-four years ago, DeWitt was one of few female journalists covering New York state government in Albany. She said she had to develop strategies to make sure her questions were heard above the shouts of her male colleagues.

Although she intends to spend some time traveling and enjoying outdoor activities, DeWitt said she hasn't ruled out a return to journalism. "It's just an idea I'm tooling around with," she said. "Hopefully I'll be over this in six months and will be able to just retire quietly."



## Environmental CONNECTIONS

Hosted by WXXI's Jasmin Singer, *Environmental Connections* explores the climate-related topics affecting Rochestarians and beyond. From the impact of food choices and electrification to the future of rainfall and the choice of whether to have children, this lively talk show doesn't shy away from discussing what matters – and what should – when it comes to environmental preservation. Join Jasmin and her expert panelists as they dive into the depths of these pressing issues, offering insights, solutions, and thought-provoking dialogues that aim to inform and inspire.



*"This new program addressing our local environmental problems is excellent. Ms. Singer the host has done a super job of bringing in the local experts to answer our questions and present good down to earth remedies."*

– John & Jeanne (listeners)

## Racquel Stephen's New Beat

You know WXXI News reporter Racquel Stephen. During the pandemic, that was her voice coming out of your speakers or headphones, keeping you updated about the latest on COVID-19.

And lately, you've been hearing from her about new breast cancer screening guidelines, a new effort to promote awareness of domestic violence in the LGBTQ+ community, and a new sensory regulating space that was part of this year's Lilac Festival.

But recently Stephen approached her editors at WXXI News about expanding her health beat.

"I wanted to tell more community-based stories that we don't hear often, whether it's the Black community, the LGBTQ+ community, marginalized communities," Stephen said during a recent interview with WXXI's Beth Adams. "And, you know, as a Black female reporter, I know a lot of things and I hear a lot of things that should be told."

Stephen's editors agreed, and after some discussions, she became WXXI's health, equity and community reporter.

Stephen urges anyone who sees a story in their community that needs to be told to contact her at [rstephen@wxxi.org](mailto:rstephen@wxxi.org).



# Stories of Community Impact

## 105.9 FM EMERGES

# WXXI

## NEWS

**NOW** 105.9FM

With the acquisition of FM 105.9, WXXI News is now broadcast on a strong and clear FM signal. Programming is no longer affected by the AM signal's required pattern change between sunset and sunrise, which made the signal unavailable for long periods of time in winter. With WXXI News 105.9, we can better serve the Rochester community with local news that matters to the region, as well as national and world news from NPR. With this change, WXXI Classical is now WXXO-FM. WRUR-FM Rochester and WITH-FM Ithaca are now known as The Route, have expanded music programming throughout the day. The Route's presence increased at local events and concerts throughout the region.



The launch of 105.9 is part of WXXI's ongoing investment in local journalism and its news team, which includes more than 20 journalists whose work can be heard on air and read online and in CITY Magazine. The news team provides in-depth reporting on topics that have the greatest impact on Rochester and the Finger Lakes – from education, economic development, and health to the region's robust arts and culture scene. This new FM signal will mean more people will be able to hear those reports and news programming, especially in the evening.



Although WXXI purchased the radio station, basically WXXI purchased the license to transmit on 105.9. WXXI Broadcast & Engineering essentially built a new radio station from the ground up (new transmitter, new antenna, new location). From this new location, with the new equipment the signal reach of 105.9 is significantly improved. The broadcast tower is on Pinnacle Hill in Rochester.

The WXXI-FM 105.9 signal now extends 40 miles in all directions! WXXI News will still be heard on AM 1370, as well as streamed on [WXXINews.org](http://WXXINews.org), and can be accessed on home smart speakers.



# Arts Content

**Content:** Increase and strengthen platform-intentional content that is relevant, compelling, and credible to enrich our communities.



*WXXI Classical presents a film series at The Little, selected by our classical music hosts. Each film exemplifies the power of music in a non-traditional narrative. Films are often preceded by subject-related live music in The Little Café and followed by a live panel discussion after the screening.*



## Ryuichi Sakamoto | Opus

A celebration of an artist's life in the purest sense, *Ryuichi Sakamoto | Opus* is the definitive swan song of one of the world's greatest musicians. In late 2022, as a parting gift, Ryuichi Sakamoto mustered all of his energy to leave us with one final performance: a concert film featuring just him and his piano.

## MAESTRA

Five incredible women from around the world, who are boldly breaking glass ceilings in the male-dominated world of orchestral conducting, take center stage in this documentary.

Hosted by WXXI's Mona Seghatoleslami, the post-film discussion included: film's director Maggie Contreras, Dr. Yunn-Shan Ma (Director of the RIT Philharmonic Orchestra), and Dr. Leah McGray (Conductor of Wind Ensemble and Symphony Orchestra at SUNY Geneseo).

The screening was a partnership with The  Little's One Take Documentary Film Series.

## Choral Singing in America

*Choral Singing in America* beautifully tells a myriad of stories and sounds of American choral singers and leaders—stories that inspire, build community, foster hope, and showcase the tremendous social capital and community building of singing together.

The film was followed by a discussion hosted by WXXI's Brenda Tremblay with: Lee Wright, Eric Townel, Kristy Houston, and Gavin Tremblay.



## CITY LOOKS TO MAKE DEEPER CONNECTIONS TO THE COMMUNITY

- The social and digital presence of CITY continues to grow through collaborations with WXXI's TV department and freelance videographers, garnering CITY's highest-yet metrics viewing numbers on social media.
- CITY was nominated for 5 awards at this year's Alternative Newsmedia Association meeting within the categories: photography, editorial design, cover design, and writing.
- Working with community arts groups and local organizations, CITY created an interactive online arts calendar for the region to use.
- One of CITY's largest areas of growth is the freelance team, which has swelled to nearly 80 talented writers, photographers and videographers. Through this team, CITY is able to tap into demographics that are not regularly represented, which allows us to tell deeper stories within Rochester's diverse communities.
- CITY began instituting monthly themes including the popular 'Food + Beverage' issue, the annual 'Finger Lakes' issue, and the 'Photo CITY' issue, which drew on the past, present and future of Rochester's visual legacy. That issue also featured a cover contest, which drew more than 50 submissions.

One of CITY's strongest efforts for 2023-24 was community engagement. In addition to frequent attendance at arts and culture events, the magazine produced more than a dozen CITY-sponsored events, which allowed for connection with readers in a meaningful way. These events included our annual Best Of party; listening sessions with arts leaders; community organizer workshops; educational panels; and the newly established 'CITY Socials,' where we celebrated new issue drops, mingled over food and drinks, shared story ideas and connected with our growing team of contributors and readers.







Other *Indie Lens Pop-Up* screenings included partnerships with WXXI's Move to Include initiative which promotes disability inclusion, representation, and accessibility:

- **Matter of Mind: My Parkinson's**
- **The Tuba Thieves**

*Indie Lens Pop-Up* is a film series that brings people together for screenings and community-driven conversations. Featuring *Independent Lens* documentaries seen on WXXI-TV and WXXI-WORLD, the series has local Q&A panel discussions after each film. Presented by WXXI Education and The Little, *Indie Len Pop-Ups* this year included:

**A Town Called Victoria:** A Texas town is thrown into the national spotlight when a local mosque erupts in flames.

**Free Chol Soo Lee:** The rollercoaster life story of Chol Soo Lee, a Korean immigrant wrongfully convicted of murder.

**Storming Caesar's Palace:** In a fight for guaranteed income, Ruby Duncan and other equality activists organized a massive protest that shut down Caesars Palace.

**Love in the Time of Fentanyl:** As fentanyl deaths in Vancouver rose, a supervised drug injection site employing active and former drug users, opened its doors.

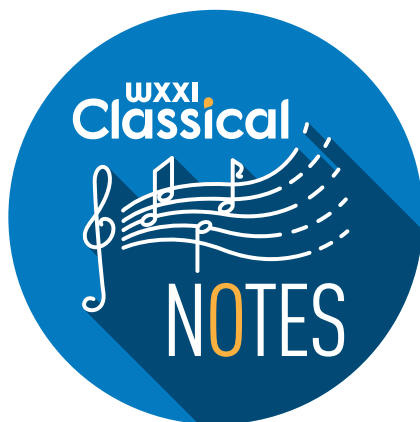
**Breaking the News:** A group of women and LGBTQ+ journalists launched a digital news startup whose work elevates the voices often left out of the American story. In advance of the screening, *Connections with Evan Dawson* discussed this lack of representation with guests experienced in how it specifically affects the Rochester community.

## Pipedreams Live! Rochester

WXXI Classical partnered with host Michael Barone for a series of *Pipedreams* concerts over three days in November. The performers were students and faculty from the Eastman School of Music and members of the Rochester Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. The concerts took place at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, The United Church of Canandaigua, and Christ Church (pictured right). The concerts were recorded by WXXI and will be featured in upcoming national broadcasts.

*Pipedreams* remains the only nationally-distributed weekly radio program exploring the art of the pipe organ. Host and senior executive producer Michael Barone has been recognized nationally for his outstanding contributions to the world of organ music.

*Pipedreams* previously visited Rochester in 2009 & 2016.



In addition to daily, locally-hosted classical music programming, WXXI Classical continued to offer regular productions of *With Heart and Voice*, *Performance Upstate*, *Rochester Philharmonic*, and *Live from Hochstein*. Additionally, WXXI's nationally syndicated holiday programming included *Christmas with Madrigalia*, *A Rochester Festival of Lessons and Carols*, and *The Seven Principles of Kwanzaa*.

**WXXI Classical continues to expand diversity of voices by increasing the number of works by performers and composers of color, women, and LGBTQ+ musicians. Since 2020, pieces by women increased 53% and those by persons of color 29%.**

Classical Library digitization project continues with nearly 13,000 of the 29,000 CD collection having been digitized. Simultaneously we are developing a system that will integrate the database and digitized files for playback on air.

# Arts Content

**Content:** Increase and strengthen platform-intentional content that is relevant, compelling, and credible to enrich our communities.

## WXXI Partnering with Local Filmmakers

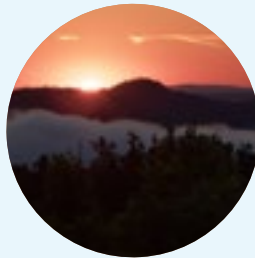
WXXI renewed efforts to partner with local filmmakers, and in doing so, was able to bring more locally produced content to our broadcast television channels for our community to enjoy. Local filmmakers receive the benefit of having their film showcased on the station that our community knows and trusts to present quality content.



**RIT SHORTS** WXXI curated three short films by Rochester Institute of Technology students as the first episode of *RIT Shorts*. The films had a united subject matter – local sports. The next in the series will be “musicals”.  
**2,297 viewers for the premiere**



**STILL STANDING: THE BARNS OF J.T. WELLS & SONS** Viewers learned about the history of a local barn builder that patented a truss system in 1889 that created soaring, open interior storage spaces for hay.  
**10,859 viewers for the premiere**



**APPALACHIA HEART** This film told the intimate stories of people in two rural communities in Eastern Kentucky whose lives have been affected by the opioid crisis, yet humanized through art.  
**1,426 viewers for the premiere**



**RINGSIDE STORIES** This documentary, shot in Rochester – *Ringside Stories: The Heart and Hustle of Pro Wrestling* – gave an inside glimpse behind the spectacle that is Professional Wrestling.  
**2,388 viewers for the premiere**

## THE LITTLE CONCERT SERIES | PRESENTED BY THE ROUTE & THE LITTLE THEATRE

THE LITTLE

THE ROUTE

Aside from free nightly concerts in the Little Café, the Little Theatre continued its popular Little Concert Series with performances this past year that brought crowds of music-lovers into the historic Theatre. Presented by The Route.



### ZAHYIA

With a unique blend of soul, rock, hip-hop, and funk, Zahyia kept the Little Theatre audience moving with exhilarating music moments. This local singer/songwriter has dedicated her life to changing the narratives of living as an African American woman.



### WATKINS AND THE RAPIERS

The greatest Little holiday tradition of them all was back! Watkins and the Rapiers returned to The Little for their truly one-of-a-kind extravaganza. Watkins revisits and adds to their vast holiday repertoire of original songs every December for their annual Christmas show.



### HANNA PK

Hanna PK is a pianist, and soulful vocalist who plays a wide variety of the blues & swing, old school folk, and boogie-woogie. Frequently filling the Little Café, the larger concert audience loved the heartfelt, honest performance she brought to the grand Little Theatre 1 stage.



The **Hochstein at High Falls** lunchtime summer concert series, co-presented by The Route, returned to Rochester's High Falls District. Eight **free weekly community concerts** featured a variety of local artists with styles ranging from Latin jazz, blues, and Americana to rock, folk, and bossa nova.

# Stories of Community Impact

## MOVE TO INCLUDE



## MOVE TO INCLUDE



### MUSIC TO INCLUDE

WXXI Classical created a series of vignettes called "Music to Include." The series introduced listeners to musicians with disabilities, including Valerie Capers (pictured), an African American pianist who is blind; Evelyn Glennie, Scottish percussionist who is deaf; David Helfgott, Australian pianist with schizoaffective disorder; Molly Joyce, American composer with an impaired left hand; Maurice Ravel, French composer with Alzheimer's disease; and Nick van Bloss, British pianist with Tourette Syndrome.

### New 5-year funding from Golisano Foundation

The Golisano Foundation awarded WXXI a five-year grant totaling \$1.65 million in support of the continuation and expansion of the Move to Include initiative. This grant will enable WXXI to continue and strengthen Move to Include content and productions including documentaries, primetime/children's TV programming, and special events. It will also support the multi-platform reporting of WXXI News' *Inclusion Desk*.

### Bringing Move to Include Nationwide

Following up on the successful national pilot of Move to Include in 2019, we have now grown to 10 partner stations throughout the US: WCNY, WFYI, WGCU, WKAR, WPBS, PBS Kansas, Oregon Public Broadcasting, Iowa PBS, and ThinkTV (Dayton). The effort continues as the next cohort onboarding and training workshop has been scheduled.

### Community Events

Move to Include held 5 community events which brought 600 attendees:

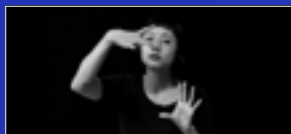
- *Deconstructing Ableism* webinar with nationally recognized disability rights advocate, Imani Barberin
- National sponsor of *Between the Lines: A Poetry Reading and Performance* Virtual Event in partnership with PBS' *POV*.



- *All You Hear is Noise* screening at The Little. Part of Dialogue on Disability, in partnership with One Take Film Series and Special Olympics.



- *Matter of Mind: My Parkinson's* screening at The Little. Part of the *Indie Lens Pop-Up* series, in partnership with WXXI Education, Rochester Parkinson's Network, the Parkinson's Foundation, and UR Medicine.



- *The Tuba Thieves* screening at the Little Theatre. Part of the *Indie Lens Pop-Up* series, in partnership with WXXI Education and Deaf Refugee Advocacy.

All the screenings included a panel discussion with community leaders and/or film creators.



### Continued Efforts to Provide Disability Access and Support

- Collaboration with PBS DEI to improve access for the Blind and Low Vision community
- Expanding the library of MTI content on the PBS app
- Completion of a revised Station Playbook and Production Playbook



### Move to Include Recognition:

- Received a "Serving New York" Award from the New York State Broadcaster Association (September 2023)
- Received Starbridge's "Community Champion" Award (October 2023)
- Included in *POV's* Station Resource Guide for their film, "Is There Anybody Out There?" (June 2024)

# Education Content

**Content:** Increase and strengthen platform-intentional content that is relevant, compelling, and credible to enrich our communities.

## Rochester is Ready To Learn with WXXI!

As part of our Rochester Learning Neighborhood Partnership, WXXI and its community partners coordinate caregiver, family, and educator experiences to provide a set of touchpoints to support a child's early learning experiences. They range from family workshops to community events to professional development training. **In the past year, WXXI reached 5,449 children, families, and educators in the City of Rochester through 99 early learning experiences.**



At the New York State level, WXXI continues to extend the use of Ready To Learn and PBS KIDS resources through station and state collaborations. WXXI has been expanding its coordination with state-level early childhood and education organizations to maximize impact, access, and integration of PBS KIDS resources. **Throughout the past year, we have reached and engaged with 4,518 children, families, and educators through 42 early learning experiences.**



Leap INTO The LOOP!

One of the most exciting Ready To Learn highlights of the past year was the opportunity for WXXI's early learning team to develop a brand-new PBS KIDS engagement model, called **LEAP into the Loop**. WXXI worked alongside national PBS KIDS staff and advisors to design a flexible engagement model using PBS KIDS *Lyla in the Loop*. The team then had the opportunity to train over 100 Ready To Learn colleagues from other stations across the country at a national meeting in St. Louis, Missouri in May. All the Ready To Learn stations will be required to pilot this new engagement resource in the coming year.

## The Ready To Learn Initiative

WXXI's ongoing Ready To Learn efforts are focused on supporting families in the City of Rochester. With collaborative community events, resource-sharing, professional trainings, and family engagement opportunities, WXXI and our partners are working together as a "Learning Neighborhood Partnership". A Learning Neighborhood Partnership is a group of partners, including a local PBS station, focused on the early learning needs of children and their families - at home, in the neighborhood, and within local systems and spaces. WXXI and our partners collaboratively work to create playful learning opportunities that celebrate children, empower caregivers, and make connections between learning spaces.

In addition to our local Ready To Learn efforts, WXXI is also the lead public media station in the state for the New York State Ready To Learn Initiative. In this strategic statewide work, WXXI partners with state-level organizations and agencies that support early learning - from childcare organizations, out-of-school providers, health and human services, advocacy groups, and professional associations - to find ways to integrate high-quality educational resources from PBS KIDS. Some of the notable state-level partners include New York State Education Department, New York State Council on Children & Families, Parent Training and Information Center, Best Buddies, NYS Office of Cultural Education, NYS PBS Stations, and New York Association for the Education of Young Children.



The contents of WXXI were developed under a grant from the Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government. The project is funded by a Ready To Learn grant [PR/Award No. S295A200004, CFDA No. 84.295A] provided by the Department of Education to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. PBS KIDS and the PBS KIDS Logo are trademarks owned by Public Broadcasting Service. Used with permission.

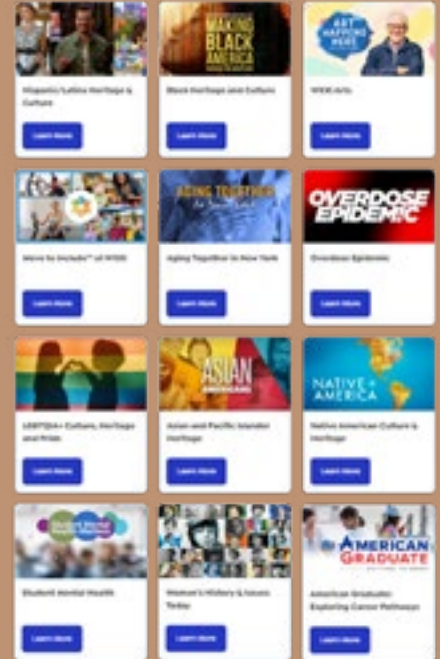
PBS LearningMedia offers FREE educational resources for PreK-12 educators and students. Designed for educators, it is vetted and curated to support classroom educational needs by quality public media content producers. The library houses all manner of media, including videos, images, audio, interactive materials, and supporting resources such as discussion guides and lesson plans. **WXXI Education created 108 instructional lists on WXXI.org/education to help educators find resources tied to their curriculum in PBS Learning Media.**

PBS Learning Media usage by regional educators in the 2023-24 school year: **336.8K** Total Video Streams **2.1M** Total Viewing Time in Minutes

In 2023-24 WXXI-contributed collections received significant traffic in New York State

WXXI Collections	Pageviews
Journeys Through the Finger Lakes	47,500
60 Second Science	41,600
I Can Be What?!	17,700
Move To Include Collections	10,200
<b>Totals</b>	<b>117,000</b>

**CURATED TOPIC COLLECTIONS**  
WXXI Education creates and curates content across our platforms to reach diverse audiences in our region. For those who seek to strengthen communities, solve problems, and improve our world, we provide thematic collections of media as an essential and trusted connector — listening and responding to our audiences, sparking dialogue, and fostering understanding.



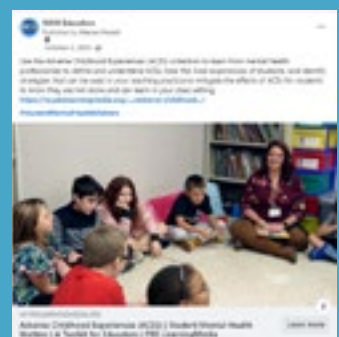
# Student Mental Health Matters

The New York State Public Media Student Mental Health Matters is a New York State Education Department funded initiative that allowed the NYS public media stations to help address the issues of mental health by supporting educators in the classroom. **WXXI Education created a robust web site to access on-demand programming** ► educational resources, a PBS LearningMedia Toolkit, WXXI News stories and *Connections* podcasts, plus resources updated on a regular basis and shared in monthly e-newsletters.



IMPACT: WXXI conducted a social media campaign to reach local educators in fall of 2023 to inform them of the **Student Mental Health Matters** web page and the toolkit. Those five posts on Facebook totaled:

**CAMPAIGN IMPRESSIONS: 489,203**      **REACH: 213,080**      **ENGAGEMENT: 11,717**



# EASTMAN *at* 100 A CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION



Filmed over the course of three years, *Eastman at 100* follows individual students throughout their academic year, offering a firsthand look at their transformational experiences. Eastman's story is told through interviews with professors, administrators, staff, partners, and high-profile alumni.



A world-premiere screening was held at the Little Theatre.

A co-production of:

**WXXI**



**EASTMAN**  
SCHOOL OF MUSIC  
UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER

- DISTRIBUTED NATIONALLY
- EMMY NOMINATION

SUPPORT FOR THIS DOCUMENTARY WAS PROVIDED BY DAWN F. LIPSON



# FANTASTIC NEW YORK :Boldt Castle

Built in 1900, by George Charles Boldt for his wife, Louise Augusta Kehre. At 43,793 square feet, the castle is recognized as one of the largest historic houses in the United States. Standing on its own spectacular island estate in Alexandria Bay, Boldt Castle was built as a Valentine's Day present from George to his beloved wife - but it was left unfinished when Louise tragically died months before its completion and George Boldt never stepped foot on the island again.

Viewers experienced the majesty of Boldt Castle, a turn-of-the-century castle rivaling those of Europe, built on the St. Lawrence River, in the heart of the 1000 Islands.

Fresh off of producing the award-winning documentary, *Journeys Through the Finger Lakes*, WXXI producers and hosts Jason Milton and Katie Epner dug deeper into the lore to divulge the enduring stories that embody the unique personality of Boldt Castle in WXXI's *Fantastic New York: Boldt Castle*.

DISTRIBUTED TO  
PUBLIC TELEVISION  
STATIONS ACROSS  
NEW YORK STATE

# Stories of Community Impact

## WXXI'S DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, ACCESSIBILITY AND BELONGING INITIATIVE

WXXI, CITY, and The Little Theatre recognize and value diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and belonging in everything we do. A diverse workforce, management team, governing body, and community partners contribute to our knowledge and understanding of our organization and the communities we serve. Diversity strengthens us and enhances our ability to deliver content and services that attract, grow, and engage audiences.

We are better when we celebrate, support, and include everyone.

### DIVERSITY EFFORTS FROM WXXI CLASSICAL

WXXI Classical continued to expand and further define its classical collection to broaden the voices represented. In addition to women and musicians of African descent, new categories include LGBTQ+, Disability, Pacific Islander, Indigenous, and Asian Heritage. In the past year, the presentation of music from these categories has continued to increase.

WXXI continued its partnership with the Gateways Music Festival, as the media sponsor for the October Chamber Music Festival. We were present at concerts by the Gateways Brass Collective and the Gateways Chamber Players, along with a screening of the film *Chevalier* based on the life of French-Caribbean musician Joseph Bologne, Chevalier de Saint-Georges.

The **DEIAB Newsletter** is sent to all WXXI staff, Board of Trustees, Trustee Council, and the Community Advisory Board. It is a look forward to our programming on air, on screen, online and in print – as well as DEIAB activities, events, and trainings in the community. The newsletter also provides opportunities for additional learning, reading, and viewing.

### STATE OF BLACK ROCHESTER

In addition to its scheduled films, the Little Theatre also rents out its facility to community filmmakers and organizations. **This past year,**

the "State of Black Rochester" video premiere and discussion was held by the Rochester Area Community Foundation in The Little's Theatre 1. After a year of collecting powerful narratives from Black Rochesterians across the community, the RACF chose The Little as the spot to unveil this extraordinary video, produced and directed by local filmmaker Rashaad Parker.



### KEARSTIN BROWN CONCERT

WXXI FM 91.5 signed on the air in 1974, and as part of our 50th Anniversary celebration, WXXI Classical presented Kearstin Brown and Friends in Concert at Asbury First United Methodist Church, featuring the renowned soprano (and WXXI Classical host) with performers from the Black Students Union at Eastman:

**"When I moved to Rochester, almost ten years ago, I quickly found a home at WXXI Classical.**

**The enthusiasm of listener support I encountered while on air and out in the community taught me that WXXI Classical was a home to many others as well."**

- *Kearstin Brown*



# The Little Theatre

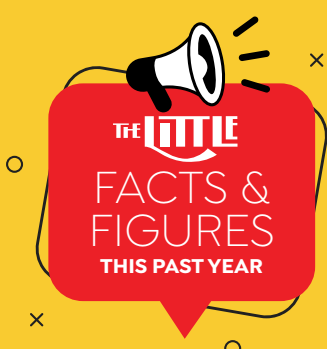
**Barbenheimer** It's not often The Little's two top-grossing movies of the year are released on the exact same day, but "Barbenheimer" (a.k.a. "Barbie" and "Oppenheimer") was truly a cinematic phenomenon we haven't seen before. Greta Gerwig's pop culture dominating "Barbie" and Christopher Nolan's Oscar-winning triumph "Oppenheimer" both opened Thursday, July 20, 2023, and were each treated with "The Little Experience," meaning The Little went beyond simply showing the movies in a traditional format. Nolan's epic biopic was projected on 35mm film— a rare treat for moviegoers and a big reason it was a must-see at The Little. "Barbie" screened as part of the High Falls Women in Film Series, which included a post-screening Q&A with Michelle Parnett-Dwyer, the Strong Museum of Play's Curator of Dolls and Toys, plus filmmaker Amy Adrion.







It also gave us an excellent opportunity to deck The Little in pink (not to mention, keep both a Barbie Dream House and Barbie convertible in the theatre as fun decorations for moviegoers).

◀ **Joywave** Rochester's indie music darlings, Joywave, debuted their short film "Permanent Pleasure" and hosted an album listening party on the eve of releasing their fifth studio album (which is also named "Permanent Pleasure"). It provided a rare chance for fans to have an intimate evening with their favorite band.

**HUNDREDS OF BEAVERS** Picture this: A line that stretches down East Avenue on a chilly February night. The doors to The Little open, and the buzz on the sidewalk is instantaneous. The people who walk out into the crowd are treated like rock stars – people cheer, ask for selfies, and unleash positively giddy guffaws. But these rock star people aren't quite people. Not exactly. They're beavers! Well, technically people in beaver costumes, but on this night, they were absolutely beavers. This was the scene during The Little's debut, and sold out, screening of "Hundreds of Beavers" – a new black-and-white silent film inspired by Looney Tunes and chaos.



-  **28,544**  
Number of popcorns sold  
(up from 19,581 last year!)
-  **81,377**  
Number of tickets sold  
(up from 54,518 last year!)
-  Most-ordered Cafe item was the **Tuscan Chicken Panini**  
(over 1,565 were sold!)

-  **The most-attended films were:**
  - Barbie
  - Oppenheimer
  - Poor Things
  - American Fiction
  - The Holdovers



**More than 259 different films** screened at The Little this past year!







# LITTLE THEATRE DAY



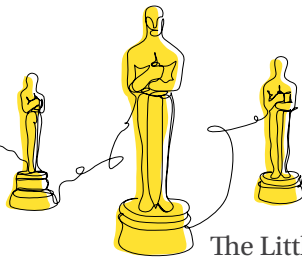
In 2017, June 12th was proclaimed "Little Theatre Day" in Rochester to celebrate its newly renovated marquee.

This made it the perfect day to celebrate The Little's illustrious Art Deco history. Little Theatre Day this year featured free member movies, cake, an ice cream truck, staff introductions before films, and more!



2024 MARKS THE LITTLE'S 95TH ANNIVERSARY! CELEBRATIONS WILL INCLUDE SPECIAL EVENTS AND WE'LL BE SCREENING A FILM FROM EACH DECADE OF THE THEATRE'S YEARS.

From February to July 2024, the Little Theatre presented a "mixtape" series of films celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Hip-Hop. Featuring narrative and documentary films, plus post-screening conversations. The series debuted with "Krush Groove"— a 1985 drama based on the inception of the Def Jam Recordings label — plus a panel discussion featuring a number of Rochester-based DJs and radio hosts.



## THE LITTLE OSCAR MOVIE TRIVIA PARTY

The Little saw its largest audience yet for the annual Oscar Movie Trivia Party. The crowd enjoyed movie-related food (Anatomy of a Falafel, etc.), challenging and sometimes silly trivia questions, plus fans were able to watch the entire Academy Awards live on the big screen.



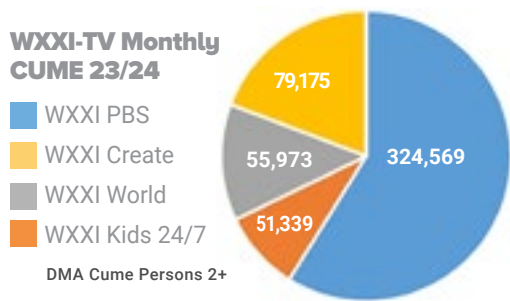
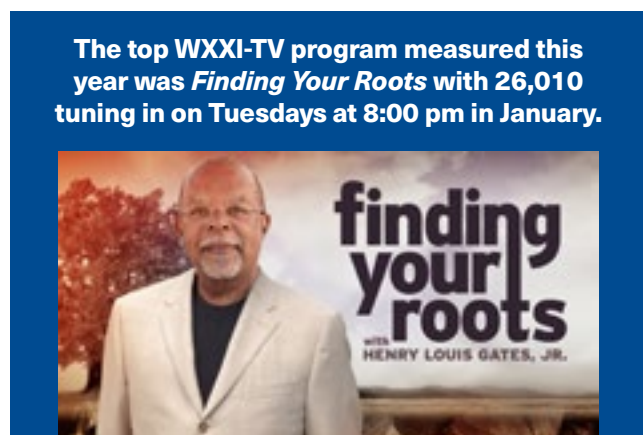
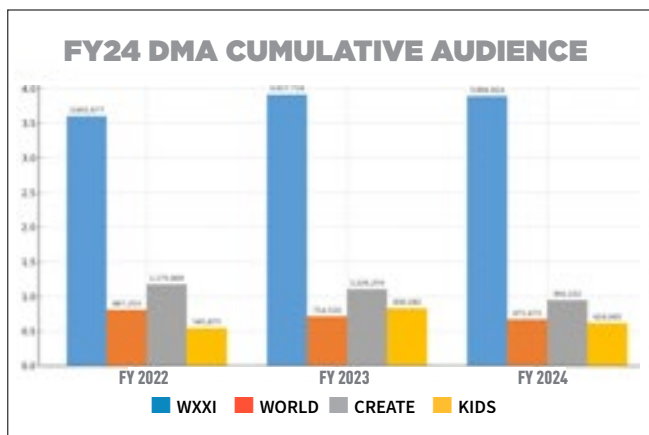
Indie Lens Pop-Up (from PBS's *Independent Lens*) is a series that brings people together for film screenings and community-driven conversations. One of the films this year, *Razing Liberty Square*, featured a local panel discussing climate gentrification, particularly in communities of color.

**ROCHESTER TEEN FILM FESTIVAL** While The Little screens movies from directors all over the world, it also hosts short films from talented teens. The Rochester Teen Film Festival (presented in collaboration with WXXI) is a juried media competition honoring the work of urban, suburban, and rural teen filmmakers, providing them an opportunity to participate in a film festival. "Fly or Die: The Sequel" by Kyshawn White of Greece Arcadia High School won the Philip Seymour Hoffman Best of Festival Award this past year. [Watch his film here](#) ▶



# AUDIENCE & ENGAGEMENT

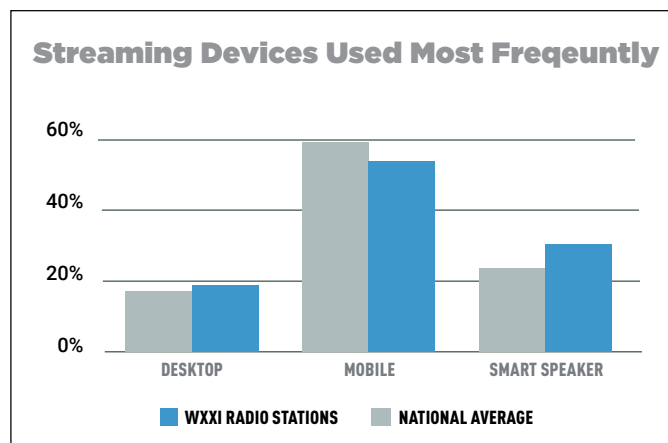
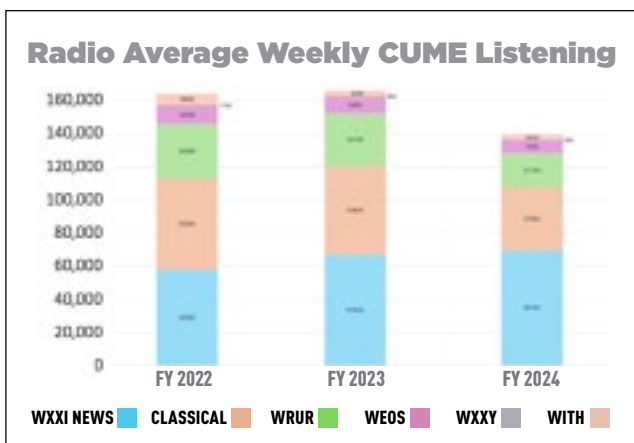
**Television Audience** When comparing cumulative audience (CUME) in FY24 with that of FY23, viewership is down slightly from last year. However, viewership is up as compared to FY22. Despite the ever-changing landscape of how viewers are choosing to consume their video, this shows that a traditional television audience is still strong. WXXI Create still remains our most-second-watched channel, besting both WXXI World and WXXI Kids 24/7.



**All four TV Channels are now streaming live!**

You can now stream all four WXXI television channels (our flagship PBS station, the World Channel, Create, and WXXI Kids 24/7) for free from the WXXI.org web site or on the WXXI App.

**Radio Audience** Overall weekly station listening has dropped a bit over the past three years, except for WXXI News which has seen the largest recent increase. The major change though, has been a shift to listening via streams as opposed to traditional radio. Streaming using a mobile device has become the most common method locally.



# ONLINE & SOCIAL MEDIA AUDIENCE

**Online & Social Media** Social media interactions and engagement continue to increase, particularly on Facebook and Instagram with growing numbers of followers and engagements. WXXI has a significant following on X (formerly Twitter) but nationally X continues to lose followers at a rate of 5% in 2024, which parallels WXXI's X accounts. WXXI's launch of a new interactive website in January 2024 has gained significant traffic including continued growth on all organizational websites.

NOTE: WXXI's numbers are combined statistics for radio, television, and news websites.

VISITS/SESSIONS	WXXI	CITY	THE LITTLE
FY23	3,532,148	388,267	386,969
FY24	4,286,805	474,661	534,274
Change FY23 to FY24	+21%	+22%	+38%

PAGEVIEWS	WXXI	CITY	THE LITTLE
FY23	4,463,840	571,709	917,627
FY 24	5,649,786	861,548	1,149,420
Change FY23 to FY24	+27%	+51%	+25%

UNIQUE USERS	WXXI	CITY	THE LITTLE
FY23	1,755,517	294,834	215,524
FY 24	2,574,999	348,947	280,971
Change FY23 to FY24	+47%	+18%	+30%

SOCIAL (WXXI+LITTLE+CITY)	FACEBOOK	TWITTER/X	INSTAGRAM
FY23	106,491	199,566	60,078
FY24	113,723	190,679	68,547
Change FY23 to FY24	+6.8%	-4.5%	+14%



## WXXI APP USAGE CONTINUES TO RISE

TOTAL SESSIONS OF 30 MINUTES OR MORE: **18% INCREASE**  
 AVERAGE TIME SPENT PER SESSIONS EVEN SAW AN **UPTICK**  
**FROM 56 MINUTES TO 57 MINUTES FROM FY23 TO FY24**

# Fiscal Stability

**Fiscal Stability:** Grow and diversify sources of revenue to maintain fiscal stability and long-term organizational sustainability.

## Development: FY24 By The Numbers

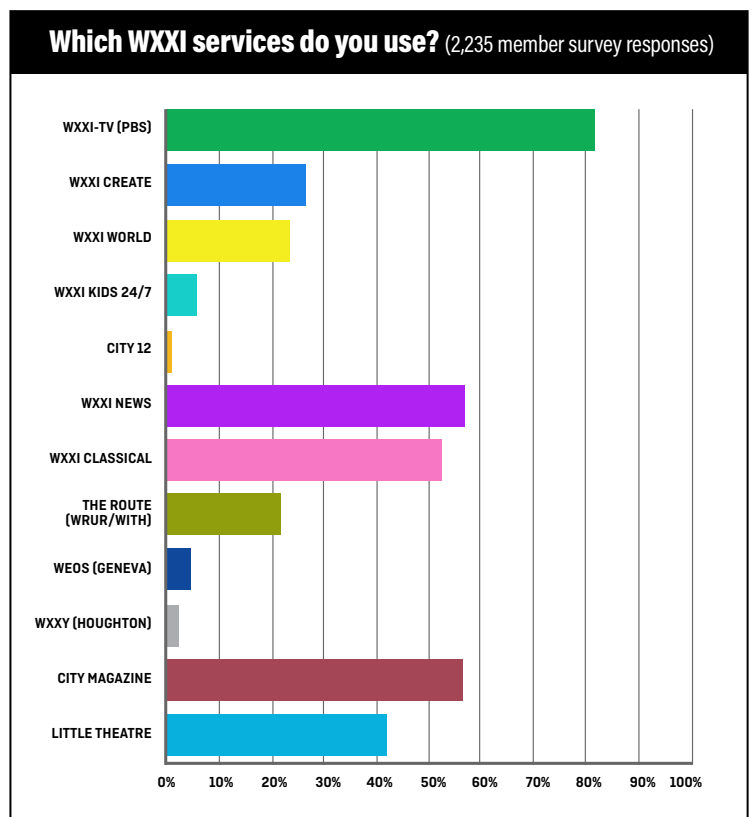
Fiscal year 2024 (FY24) saw upward trends in all aspects of WXXI's fiscal stability. Membership revenue was up by over 5% with the number of total members increasing by 4%. FY24 also brought 15% more new members joining our ranks than the previous year. Over half of these new members joined as sustainers, members whose monthly gifts help WXXI to budget for the coming months with a steady stream of income. This marked a significant change from the years where pledge drives and the end of the calendar years saw dramatic increases in revenue over other months. Though these occurrences still represent times of increased revenue for the station, 37% of membership revenue comes from sustainers.

**Restricted gifts from Leadership Circle donors remained strong this year, as well as generous gifts to support such projects as RPO broadcasts on WXXI Classical, a memorial gift to create a teen leadership program in our Education department and significant grants to our Journalism Initiative. In addition, WXXI received over \$1.2 million in support from 20 Legacy Society members, some of whom had declared their inclusion of WXXI in their estate plans in the past and others who surprised us with their posthumous generosity.**

Fun events throughout the year helped engage our sustaining members and ensure continued support. The members who participated in *Rick Steves Virtual Wine Tasting* sent rave reviews and we're hoping to participate in a similar event this coming year. Those who joined us at the Little Theatre for the premiere of *All Creatures Great and Small* had a wonderful time as well. While we reach out to members regularly with news about community events, we're excited to report that more members have been taking advantage of WXXI in their homes with WXXI Passport on the PBS App, our most popular member benefit. Activations increased 21% in FY24 and we saw a 25% increase in programs streamed on Passport as well. This marks an important increase because members who use Passport are more likely to renew their support of WXXI than those who do not.

Promising data was revealed this past year from a member survey that was completed by over 2,200 members. Not only did this survey help us better understand which services our members are using and how they are using them, but it has helped guide our fundraising strategy for the coming year. Some of the most notable findings from the member survey showed:

- The average WXXI member **uses 3 of our services**
- **66% of WXXI members** watch WXXI television and listen to one of our radio stations
- **56% of WXXI Members** report reading CITY magazine
- **42% of members** report visiting The Little in the last year
- Members who say that WXXI News is their most important service are **15% more likely to listen** on our new FM 105.9 signal than on AM 1370





## Corporate Sponsorship

Contributions from our underwriters and advertisers make what we do every day possible. A strong tradition of support from small businesses, corporations, and nonprofits has helped build WXXI Public Media into the valued media organization it is today. Like our members and CITY Champions, our sponsors believe in our mission. In the 2024 fiscal year, they showed that support by funding a range of activities including The Little’s So Fetch! series (NY Kitchen, Laughing Gull Chocolate), WXXI TV’s *All Creatures Great and Small* (Cloverwood Senior Living), WXXI News’ *Connections with Evan Dawson* (Bob Johnson Family of Dealerships), the multi-platform *Environmental Connections* (GreenSpark Solar), CITY’s robust e-newsletter marketing opportunities, and general support for the activities highlighted throughout this report.

Through print, digital, broadcast, and experiential marketing, our team created opportunities for our sponsors to connect with our engaged audiences. Newly introduced options included video pre-roll sponsorships on streamed television programming, additional series sponsorships at The Little, and sponsorship opportunities within CITY’s suite of email newsletters.

Through media sponsorships, WXXI/Little/CITY supported a range of area nonprofits and cultural groups working to strengthen the region through their community-focused events. The past year featured partnerships with dozens of organizations, including the YWCA, Gateways Music Festival, MAG’s Clothesline Arts Festival, the City of Rochester’s MWBE Forum, and PathStone’s Provok’ng Thought, just to name a few.

## SAMPLING OF MEDIA SPONSORSHIP PARTNERS

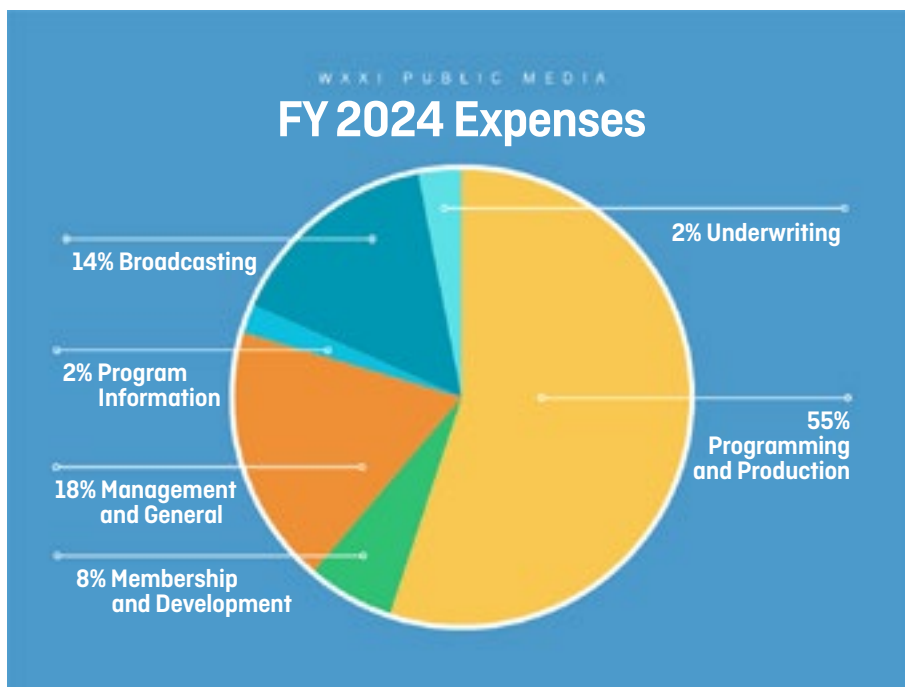
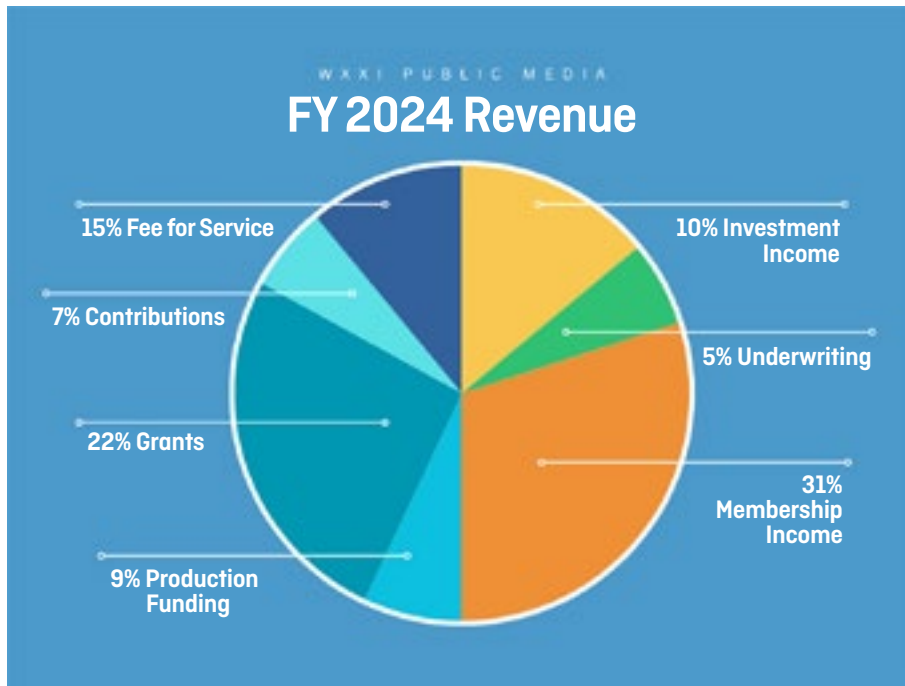
WXXI has long been considered the preferred media partner in our region. These varied partnerships help to both raise the visibility of partnering organizations’ efforts as well as solidify WXXI’s investment in our community. Here are just *some* of those partnerships:



# Fiscal Stability

**Fiscal Stability:** Grow and diversify sources of revenue to maintain fiscal stability and long-term organizational sustainability.

**Financial Effectiveness and Fiscal Stability** Beyond managing a balanced budget that supports its organizational mission, WXXI looks to grow traditional revenue sources, create new revenue opportunities, and maintain operational effectiveness and superior stewardship.



FY2024

## SPECIAL INVESTMENT PROJECT

### Radio Tower Work

The four towers at WXXI-AM were replaced due to structural issues. This project included repairing the ground radials, installing new tuning huts, and a new tower lighting system.

More of WXXI's Public Files including the complete Audited Financial statements and 990 Tax Forms are available at [wxxi.org](http://wxxi.org)

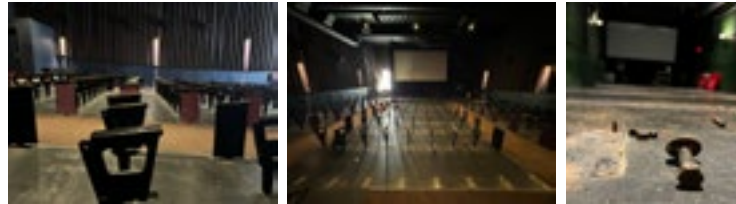
# WXXI Platforms

**Platforms:** Enhance the effectiveness of all delivery platforms to increase accessibility.



## HVAC, New Seats, & Improved Accessibility at The Little

This year The Little made multiple renovations to help improve accessibility and comfort for our guests. In 2024, The Little updated seats in Theatres 3 and 4, and modernized the HVAC systems throughout the entire facility. A hearing loop was added to Theatre 3 so all Little auditoriums now have hearing loops. This loop is a wire that circles the room, and is connected to a sound system. The loop transmits sound electromagnetically and that signal is picked up by the telecoil in hearing aids.



## Studio Upgrades

The audio system upgrades at WXXI, WRUR, and WEOS have enabled better audio quality and allowed for a more robust, streamlined process for airing programming, whether recorded, from NPR, or a live-hosted program from the studio. It also allows us to program live hosted shows remotely, should there be a need to do so. The upgrades replaced aging infrastructure and have enabled a more collaborative studio access for future live programming.

# Capacity

**Capacity:** Attract and engage a diverse corps of employees and volunteers supported by effective processes, infrastructure, and culture for optimal performance in an ever-changing environment.

## Management Training

Enhanced management training was undertaken this past year. HR Works facilitated these trainings to over 30 employees in leadership roles. The training focussed on a mix of essential management skills and management issues.

## Wellness Committee

WXXI established its new Wellness Committee, staffed by employees across all departments. The committee established five pillars for their work: Fitness and Physical Activity, Nutrition and Food, Mental Wellness and Mindfulness, Sustainability, and Community. The Committee established new initiatives including providing free fresh fruit every week, installing a fresh food vending machine, weekly yoga classes, and joining Foodlink's Fresh Picks Program.

## Board of Trustees

The WXXI Board of Trustees continues to expand the diversity of its members.

- 58% of the Trustees represent the African American, Asian, or Latinx communities.
  - 35% of Board Members are under 50 years old.
- The Board Development Committee is actively engaged in recruiting for diversity in age, culture, gender identity, and geography.



## Alette Jordan Named The Little's New Executive Director

Rochester's historic East End cinema got a new leader in August 2023. Alette Jordan, previously the Director of Development and Community Engagement at The Hochstein School in Rochester, NY, joined The Little team as its Executive Director. Jordan is the first person to serve as Executive Director of The Little since the parent-subsidary relationship with WXXI began in 2012.



*"The Little is an iconic cultural Rochester institution! I'm thrilled to be working with such a creative and amazing team as we celebrate 95 years of this historic Theatre."*

2024  
**LOCAL  
CONTENT  
AND  
SERVICE  
REPORT**

**WXXI**

**WXXI Public  
Media**

280 State Street  
Rochester, NY 14614  
585.258.0200  
wxxi.org

**WXXI Services**

WXXI-TV PBS  
WXXI WORLD  
WXXI CREATE  
WXXI KIDS 24/7  
CITY12 ROCHESTER  
WXXI NEWS & NPR  
WXXI CLASSICAL  
THE ROUTE / WRUR 88.5  
THE ROUTE / WITH 90.1 ITHACA  
WXXY 90.3 HOUGHTON  
WEOS 89.7 GENEVA  
LITTLE THEATRE  
CITY MAGAZINE