

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Buffalo • Toronto
Public Media





Dear Friends:

The year 2020 will go down as one of the most significant in US and Canadian history, and we are proud that Buffalo Toronto Public Media was there for you through it all. We provided trusted, informative reporting on WBFO and WNET PBS about the COVID-19 pandemic, protests, and the historic US presidential election and its aftermath. But we didn't stop there – we also provided opportunities to engage and discuss important issues, such as racial equity and the impact of the pandemic on mental health. WNET Classical was there to provide respite and a sense of normalcy while it kept the most beautiful music ever made on air 24/7 for all. WNET PBS broadcast its trademark variety of programming from educational children's shows to Masterpiece dramas to the performances we couldn't see in person due to the pandemic. The value of public media to our community was significantly elevated this past year.

WNET PBS produced "The Warrior Tradition," a documentary PBS aired nationwide in November 2019, about the history of military service among indigenous people in the United States. Screening events at the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC, and at WNET PBS Studios in Buffalo were engaging and informative. Before the screening event began at our studios, two young Seneca women in traditional dress performed a welcoming ceremony and recited a land acknowledgement, recognizing that the land Buffalo was built on was Seneca Territory. It is beautiful and solemn moments like this that inspire our work every day. We are proud to tell impactful stories and report local and national news that help people all across our region to better understand the world around us, make informed decisions, and collectively contribute to the health of our community.

Next year, you will see a major change in leadership – both on the board of trustees and at the helm of Buffalo Toronto Public Media, as both of us – Joseph McDonald and Donald Boswell – step down. Alphonso O'Neill-White will be our new chair and the new president and CEO will be announced later in 2021.

No matter who leads the station, it is support from you, and other members of this station, that makes it all possible. We thank you for your continued trust and support, and look forward to new and exciting opportunities for enrichment in the year ahead.

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Board Chair

Don Boswell
President and CEO

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On the cover: Julia Anne Cordania of *Buffalo Opera Unlimited* performs during a taped performance in the WNED PBS studios.



PBS Kids characters Daniel Tiger and Clifford the Big Red Dog visit with children at Buffalo's Oishei Children's Hospital.

Thanks to the support of its members and its communities, Buffalo Toronto Public Media is a leading binational public broadcasting organization operating three television stations and three radio stations, all locally programmed. The stations' programs and outreach explore and address interests of the people in the Buffalo and Toronto areas.

WNED PBS

WNED PBS produces original documentaries for local and national audiences. Major productions include "Understanding the Opioid Epidemic," "The Canadian Rockies by Rail," "The War of 1812," and "The Warrior Tradition." Nielsen figures show that WNED PBS ranks consistently among the most-watched PBS member stations in the U.S. during primetime hours.

WNED Create

WNED Create broadcasts the Create content service. This channel presents exceptional how-to programming, featuring series and marathons in cooking, travel, arts and crafts, home improvement, and more.

WNED PBS KIDS

WNED PBS KIDS devotes itself to 24/7 children's programming, broadcast both on its own television channel and as a live stream, which offers an integrated games feature, enabling children to toggle between a PBS KIDS show and learning activities.

WNED Classical

WNED Classical is the area's 24-hour non-commercial classical music service. The station has an extensive music collection, carefully curated to appeal to longtime fans while welcoming newcomers to the genre. The station has long term partnerships with the Grammy award-winning Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra that enrich both organizations and the community.

WBFO

WBFO, Buffalo's NPR station, continues to produce award-winning news broadcasts that make the station one of the best for news coverage in the area, complemented with national and world reporting from NPR and the BBC. Other programming includes "Wait Wait...Don't Tell Me," "Science Friday," and blues music on weekend evenings. WBFO also regularly files reports for NPR.

WBFO JazzWorks

JazzWorks, airing on WBFO HD-2, offers 24/7 jazz music made accessible through streaming or the JazzWorks mobile app.

MISSION

Buffalo Toronto Public Media is a trusted public media resource that enriches its audiences by providing educational, entertaining programming and services, as well as engaging the Western New York and Southern Ontario communities through cultural and civic involvement.

EDUCATION

Mental Health in the African American Community event
Warrior Tradition production and screening event
East Lake Meadows screening event
Mental Health Discussion series (virtual)
Let's Talk About Race community education series (virtual)

ENTERTAINMENT

Cruising the Mighty Mississippi
JazzWorks Live! Concert
Kid Fest
Wine Tasting event (virtual)
Tea Tasting event (virtual)

ENGAGEMENT

Community Challenge
Arties ECMC Donation
Our Town Oshawa production and screening event
Character visits at library and Oishei Children's Hospital
State of the Station events (virtual)

CULTURE

Typography of Women art show
Buffalo Center for Arts & Technology art show (virtual)
Buffalo Public Schools Peace Project art show (virtual)
Carson Waterman Art Show
Cooking event with Jack Bishop (virtual)
Bob Ross Paint Nights (virtual)
Conversation with Lidia Bastianich (virtual)

CIVIC INVOLVEMENT

Erie County Executive Candidate Debate
Racial Equity Facebook Live Conversations
Hunger & Hope screening event
Election and health care panel event (virtual)



Noted singer Jazzmeia Horn performs with her group during the JazzWorks Live! event in the WNEP PBS studios.



The Erie County Executive Debate taped live in the WNED PBS studios and moderated by WBFO.



“NPR, PBS, BFO 88.7 are my always reliable go-tos...

**Thank you for in depth reporting and those amazing human interest,
and interviews opening my eyes to a wide world of exposures.**

**So much more substance than I can get on general commercialized
networks. Thank you & bravo for maintaining integrity throughout.”**

- Dawn, Orchard Park

Partnerships Bring Performances to Television



Buffalo Toronto Public Media leveraged its strong partnerships with other cultural organizations in the region to bring classical music, opera, and drama performances to audiences across Western New York and Southern Ontario when seeing them in-person wasn't possible. "BPO Musician Portraits with JoAnn Falletta," "No Child," and "On Stage with Buffalo Opera Unlimited" were produced in WNED PBS studios under strict safety guidelines and broadcast on WNED PBS so our theater- and concert-going community didn't have to give up the whole season of performances during the pandemic.

"BPO Musician Portraits" was a six-part series of 30-minute, intimate concerts, introduced by JoAnn Falletta and featuring performances from principal cellist Roman Mekinulov and pianist Eric Huebner, cellist Feng Hew and violinist Shieh-Jian Tsai, harpist Madeline Olson, and BPO concertmaster Nikki Chooi among others. Viewership for the programs was exceptional, especially in Canada. The series was funded in part by Cindy and Francis Letro, proud supporters of Buffalo Toronto Public Media and The Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra.

A partnership among WNED PBS, Detroit Public Theatre (DPT), Chautauqua Theater Company (CTC), and Detroit Public TV (DPTV), brought two acclaimed solo plays to the small screen in October 2020 — Eric Gutman's autobiographical one-man musical journey, "From Broadway to Obscurity," and Nilaja Sun's stunning exploration of the New York public school system, "No Child...." "No Child.." was funded in part by Cindy and Francis Letro, proud supporters of Buffalo Toronto Public Media and Chautauqua Institution.

Buffalo Opera Unlimited and WNED PBS joined together to present a multi-part series that brought local opera talents to television in 30-minute specials. Each episode of "On Stage with Buffalo Opera Unlimited" focused on a theme of arias with single, dual, and trios of performers who were socially distanced. Funding for "On Stage with Buffalo Opera Unlimited" was provided by The Cullen Foundation, The Cameron and Jane Baird Foundation, New York State Council on the Arts, and members of WNED PBS.

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A member of the BPO performs in the WNED PBS studios.

Making Buffalo Home

Buffalo's history is marked by waves of immigrants from all over the world. Many come as immigrants seeking opportunities. Others come as refugees escaping persecution and violence. To share this story, Buffalo Toronto Public Media produced "Making Buffalo Home," a two-year long in-depth digital engagement initiative, to inform and raise awareness of this topic for our entire community. The project aimed to help the region develop a better understanding of the shared opportunities and challenges we face together as long-time residents and new immigrants and refugees.

This past year, WNED PBS produced two television specials -- "Immigration in a Welcoming City" and "A Refugee's First Year" as part of Making Buffalo Home. "Immigration in a Welcoming City" takes an in depth look at the ways policies in government and housing, language access, and economic development impact immigration to a city. "A Refugee's First Year" looks at the challenges refugees face when resettling in Buffalo, including learning English, finding a job, and feeling a sense of community as they work to make Buffalo their new home.

The hub for Making Buffalo Home content is its interactive website: wned.org/MakingBuffaloHome. It hosts a series of digital-first videos telling personal stories of immigration, details on community conversations, and Facebook Live panel discussion events. We highlight food traditions and cultural celebrations, showcase WBFO immigration stories, and explore the larger impact on our community.

Making Buffalo Home is funded by Rich Products Corporation and Rich Family Foundation.



Beh Meh is making Buffalo home. Born in Myanmar, she fled to a refugee camp with her family when she was just two years old and was resettled in Kenmore, NY. She is now attending college and working towards her teaching degree.

WBFO: Trusted, Insightful Reporting



Throughout the pandemic and the 2020 elections, audiences turned to WBFO as a credible source for information and news, a calm voice in a chaotic environment, and a trusted advisor to help them navigate complex times.

Soon after the pandemic began, WBFO launched a weekly segment with Dr. Nancy Nielsen, former president of the American Medical Association and Senior Associate Dean for Health Policy at UB's Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, to talk about the latest information about the coronavirus pandemic and answer questions from listeners.

Throughout April and May, WBFO hosted a Facebook Live series focusing on how the pandemic affects mental health. We talked about coping, quarantine, isolation, impact on children and adolescents, and more. The series was part of the radio station's Mental Health Initiative, a two-year project that provides in-depth coverage of mental health issues and builds the mental health literacy of the community. WBFO's Mental Health Initiative is funded by the Patrick P. Lee Foundation.

Life changed forever for those who have lost loved ones to COVID-19 or battled it themselves. "The Toll: Western New York stories of loss and survival in a pandemic" series highlighted the personal impact the pandemic has had on Western New Yorkers. It put faces—and voices—on the COVID-19 crisis through intimate interviews.

YOUR MENTAL HEALTH DURING COVID-19

Thursdays
@ 4 pm

WBFO's Facebook Page



The Toll

WESTERN NEW YORK STORIES OF LOSS AND SURVIVAL IN A PANDEMIC

WNY Conversations About Race

WBFO **n p r**



WBFO reporter Mike Desmond's on-the-spot video of a 75-year old protestor shoved to the ground and seriously injured has had millions of views around the world.

In light of the death of George Floyd and the demonstrations that followed it, WBFO redoubled its efforts on the ongoing Racial Equity Project, launching several series aimed at illuminating inequities in our community. The 5-part series WNY Conversations about Race brought together people with different backgrounds but similar interests to talk about equity, white privilege, systemic racism, and diversity. Inspired by the intimate style of NPR's Story Corps, the discussions featured a Buffalo-area person of color in dialogue with someone who is white.

These larger series and the pandemic didn't slow down WBFO's other news coverage, and on June 4, veteran reporter Mike Desmond was doing just that when he captured a video that has been seen more than 100 million times around the world. Desmond was in Niagara Square as police began to enforce a new curfew following a peaceful protest of police brutality and was filming with his cell phone as officers pushed a 75-year-old protestor who stumbled, fell, and almost immediately started bleeding from his head.



WNED Classical Shines as Escape, Refuge



WNED Classical has always been a refuge of beauty, joy, and relaxation for its listeners, but with the COVID-19 pandemic, that service became even more essential. Listeners turned to WNED Classical to escape from the stress and uncertainty of the pandemic and other major events of the year, and the station and its talented hosts continued to bring listeners beautiful music.

Programs and features such as the Oasis of Sanity, Sacred Classics, and JoAnn's Classical Corner continued, but the station's strong partnership with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra brought listeners a new feature. With in-person performances suspended for the summer, WNED Classical worked with the BPO to broadcast its archive of live concert recordings each week. Among the pieces listeners were able to enjoy were Beethoven's "Eroica" Symphony No. 3, Falla's Ritual Fire Dance, and Mozart's Elvira Madigan.

WNED Classical hosts also launched a blog to provide fans a behind-the-scenes look at how the staff were keeping the station on air during the pandemic and insight into the music they play every day.

"I miss being physically at the radio station studios in Buffalo and the daily interaction with my co-workers," Program Director Mark Michaud wrote in the inaugural blog post. "But it gives me great comfort to know that we're still able to bring you the amazing classical music you expect from WNED Classical every day, thanks to modern technology."



Learn at Home Initiative, Education

Just one week after schools closed due to the pandemic in March 2020, WNED PBS started broadcasting a “Learn at Home” schedule to support families, educators, and students. The schedule aired 6 am to 6 pm weekdays on WNED PBS KIDS. Blocks of time were dedicated to different age groups, and corresponding educational videos, online resources, and lesson plans were posted on our website at <https://www.wned.org/education-kids/learn-at-home/e/>

For 13 weeks, Buffalo Toronto Public Media’s education staff coordinated with public television stations across the station and country to provide educational programming that met learning standards from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. Programs included standard PBS KIDS programming, such as Wild Kratts and Peg + Cat, as well as “Frank Lloyd Wright’s Buffalo” and “The Warrior Tradition” for older students.

“Education is at the core of our mission,” said Donald K. Boswell, President and CEO of Buffalo Toronto Public Media. “Families and schools on both sides of the border can turn to their public broadcasting station for help providing young people with high quality learning opportunities while we navigate these unprecedented times.”



LEARN AT HOME

Sponsored in part by Community Action Organization of WNY.



The Warrior Tradition

“The Warrior Tradition,” co-produced by WNET PBS and Florentine Films/Hott Productions, Inc., explores the complicated ways the culture and traditions of Native Americans have affected their participation in the United States military and aired nationally on PBS in November 2019. The hour-long documentary tells the stories of Native American warriors from their own points of view – stories of service and pain, of courage and fear.

The Warrior Tradition dispels the old duality of the Noble Savage/helpless victim that has dominated our cultural portrait of Native Americans for more than a century. It’s a more complicated story. Indian warriors have a wide mix of emotions and motives – patriotism, pride, rage, courage, practicality, and spirituality, all mingling with an abiding respect for tribal, familial, and national traditions.

A robust website at pbs.org/warriortradition includes essays expanding on the themes in the documentary, bonus videos, and classroom resources including seven lesson plans for elementary and intermediate school students. Also on the website are four short, digital videos created by Native American filmmakers on the warrior tradition theme.

The Warrior Tradition was made possible by a major grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting: A private corporation funded by the American People. With additional funding by The Arthur Vining Davis Foundations, Independent Health and Arizona Humanities.

THE
**WARRIOR
TRADITION**





“Hardly a day goes by where we don’t watch any of your programs on WNET Buffalo/Toronto.

In order to pull our weight and show our gratitude we periodically donate at your fund drives and my husband has sponsored several episodes of his favourite series, in danger of being cancelled. However, I feel that this does not go far enough and I have therefore made a legacy donation in my estate plan so that future generations have an opportunity to watch and be educated by these excellent programs. “

Edda Caglayan and Mahendra Thacker, Toronto

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LEGACY SOCIETY

The Buffalo Toronto Public Media Legacy Society was established to honor station members and friends who have recognized us with a legacy gift in their estate plan. To date 141 individuals and couples have made a legacy gift to Buffalo Toronto Public Media and nearly 6.8 million has been realized.

These supporters have worked with their advisors to create plans that provide not only for their family and friends, but for philanthropic organizations like ours. We're grateful for their commitment to public media.

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“When it comes to Public Radio, we Buffalonians are truly blessed!

WBFO, with its trusty, award-winning news coverage, and WNED FM, with its wide-ranging, round-the-clock classical programming--these twin pillars of local Public Radio are literally indispensable, both to the community and to us personally. Whether at home or in the car, rarely an hour passes when we are not taking advantage of one of these terrific channels! And the fact that you can listen to them free of charge, all day long, why, it's practically an embarrassment! That's why we're pleased to put our money where our ears are, and always give generously to our friends at Public Radio! We hope that you will, too!”

Grant Golden M.D. and Deborah Goldman



“Thank you for the work you do to bring facts to the public. We trust you as a source of balanced journalism and enjoy your programs and staff. Keep up the good work.”

Margaret, Burlington, ON

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*deceased

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Buffalo Toronto Public Media has been built on a strong foundation of member support. We are grateful that over 2,500 members have the means and motivation to make an annual membership gift at a level in the Leadership Giving Program. These donors enjoy membership benefits—and they're proud to see and hear the power of their investment each and every time they tune in to one of our stations.

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Top notch programs on PBS and would not be watching much TV if it were not for your programs. Thank you for all your services to us... very fortunate to have you in our area as well as in Canada!!

**Esther, North Tonawanda, NY
WNED PBS member**

Love the station and the music. I never listen to any other. I'm a retired organist-choirmaster.

**Elaine, Buffalo, NY
WNED Classical member**

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

*giving*BACK
*looking*FORWARD

Since launching our *Giving Back, Looking Forward Capital Campaign*, Buffalo Toronto Public Media has been humbled by the support of our community. Producing and broadcasting an array of high-quality programs is our mission and it is our generous supporters who make that possible.

The following companies, foundations, and individuals have made contributions to this Capital Campaign. We're grateful for their commitment to public media.

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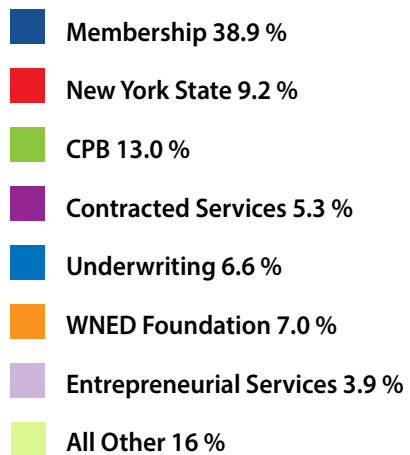
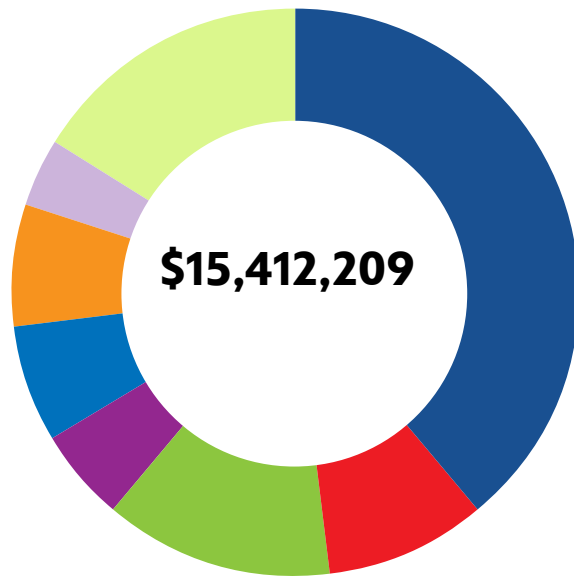
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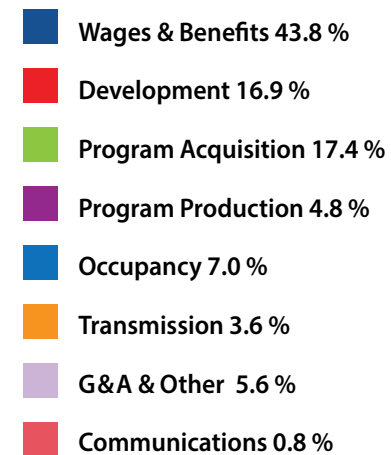
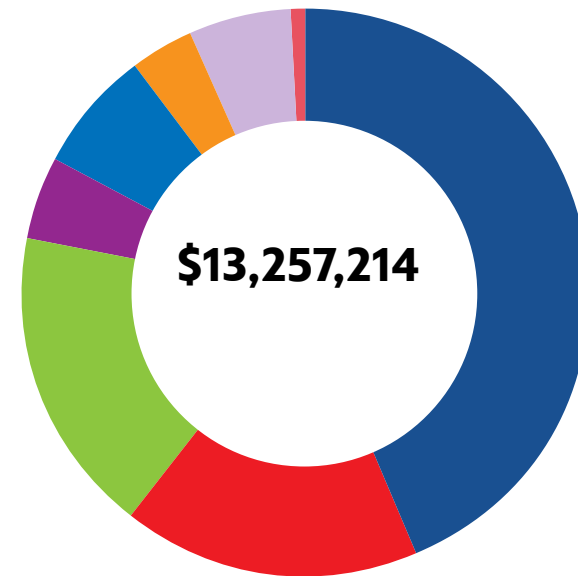
Buffalo Toronto Public Media Operating Revenue

July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020



Buffalo Toronto Public Media Operating Expenses

July 1, 2019 - June 30, 2020





Thank heavens
for Buffalo Toronto
Public Media. We are
so grateful to have
beautiful music, as
well as enlightened,
in-depth reporting
and interviews. Keep
up the great work!

Maria, East Aurora, NY
WNED Classical member

Buffalo•Toronto Public Media



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