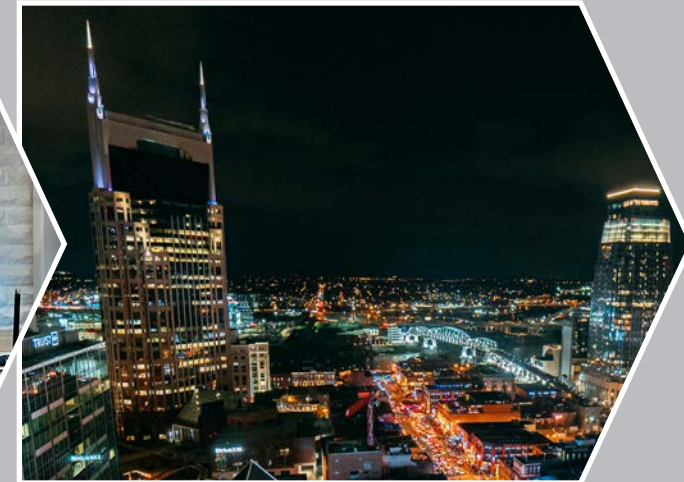


2025 Impact Report



**NASHVILLE
PUBLIC
RADIO**

For more than 60 years, Nashville Public Radio has connected Middle Tennessee communities to each other and the world. Thanks to community support, we are able to deliver nonpartisan journalism, compelling storytelling, civil conversation and music discovery free to the public.

You are our most dependable source of revenue. Without you, we would not be the beacon for reliable information and culture that we are today.

Your dedication has been invaluable to our growth, development and resiliency. In recognition of the success you've helped to make possible, we are pleased to share this report on highlights and accomplishments from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025.

Thank you for all you do for Nashville Public Radio.

wpln



Thank you for your support!

\$6,579,703 donated by



13,692

individuals, corporations & foundations

WPLN Newsroom

The Country in Our Hearts

Led by Reporter Rose Gilbert, WPLN completed its first ever global reporting project: a multimedia exploration of the ties between Nashville's Kurdish community and our sister city of Erbil, Kurdistan. The culminating podcast, *The Country in Our Hearts*, was featured via NPR One and *The World* by PRX, reaching a global audience. The work included extended sections of untranslated Kurdish—highlighting the cultural weight of a language that has, at times, been stigmatized, banned or even criminalized. Supported by oral histories, original Kurdish artwork and community scholars, the project helped preserve cultural memories and deepen civic understanding of one of Nashville's most significant immigrant communities.

Launch of Appalachia + Mid-South Newsroom

In Fall 2024, Nashville Public Radio became a lead station in NPR's Appalachia + Mid-South Newsroom, a collaboration of public media stations in Kentucky, West Virginia and Tennessee that strengthens our reporting and extends our reach. The network helps us track regional patterns and bring that context to local stories, surfacing overlooked narratives across rural and urban communities in the southeast.



Reporting in Iraqi Kurdistan

“Now more than ever, thank you for providing quality journalism to our community.”

– Amy from Brentwood

1,133 radio stories broadcast on 90.3 WPLN

910 web stories published on WPLN.org

Investigative Journalism



Paige Pfleger with Theater of War



WPLN's investigative journalism continues to earn national recognition for its depth and originality. Work by Criminal Justice Reporter Paige Pfleger and Senior Reporter/Producer of Special Projects Meribah Knight was featured on HBO's *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver*. The show highlighted investigations into Knoxville's Richard L. Bean Center and the illegal jailing of youth chronicled in *The Kids of Rutherford County* podcast. This feature underscores how local reporting can surface systemic issues that shape national discourse.

Paige Pfleger attended a **live reading and audience discussion of her story** "In Rural Tennessee, Domestic Violence Victims Face Barriers to Getting Justice. One County Has Transformed Its Approach." The evening was produced in partnership with WNYC and Theater of War.

Listen to the full performance and conversation.

"I get balanced reporting on local and national news and stories from around the world. I trust WPLN to go into depth on tough issues."

– Joan from Nashville

Paige Pfleger at the news desk



ACROSS ALL STATIONS

137,532 monthly livestream listeners

572,036 annual podcast downloads

339,624 monthly radio listeners



WNXP

Nashville's Music Experience



Lucy Dacus performs at the Frist Art Museum for WNXP Insiders

Lucy Dacus at The Frist

Ahead of her two sold out shows at Ryman Auditorium, WNXP and the Frist Art Museum teamed up for An Evening with Lucy Dacus, an exclusive event for WNXP Insiders. **WNXP Insider** is a new membership level that grants you first access to concert pre-sales, member-exclusive events, special sessions and more!

Backyard Sessions

WNXP celebrated its first full season of Backyard Sessions, a rooftop concert series curated by WXNP and hosted at the downtown Bobby Hotel. Five free concerts in 2024 attracted a combined 2,400 attendees, with each drawing near-capacity crowds for performances by PawPaw Rod, Dehd, Jalen Ngonda and others.



Backyard Sessions featuring Dehd with Friko

WNXP Instagram Engagement

1.9M total accounts reached
124,595 audience interactions
354% growth over last year

“We listen to WNXP every day and are exposed to so much new music. We see the DJs out and about and say thank you for being our friends. Giving is more important now than ever.”

— Annie from Nashville

Music Journalism



Piper Payne from “The Operator”

Nashville Public Radio’s **Music Citizens** podcast spotlights behind-the-scenes heroes of Nashville’s music industry. Two new episodes launched this year: “The Operator” explored the local and international vinyl industry through Piper Payne, founder of Physical Music Products, whose small-batch manufacturing contrasts with the global vinyl boom; and “The Tuner” profiled master piano tuner Brent Arledge, whose precise work shapes the sound of Nashville’s most iconic venues and GRAMMY Award-winning studio recordings. We celebrated both episodes with a listening event at Vinyl Tap where guests received a special-edition pressing of the podcast on vinyl.



Brent Arledge from “The Tuner”

“Continually impressed with the breadth of artists selected by the staff, the in-studio performances and concert series. Truly don’t know what I’d do without this station and all of the wonderful DJs sharing music and commentary. I haven’t changed my dial in years. Keep fighting the good fight and I’ll be there listening. Xoxo.” — Eleonore from Nashville

This Is Nashville



NEXT AGE

This Is Nashville launched the new series NEXT AGE, featuring conversations about longevity and reframing aging in a way that benefits all of us, no matter where we are in life.



Khalil Ekolona



Blake Farmer

A New Host for WPLN's Daily Community Forum

In April 2025, Nashville Public Radio bid a fond farewell to *This Is Nashville's* inaugural host, Khalil Ekolona, after more than 550 episodes and thousands of guests. As his successor, we appointed award-winning reporter and WPLN alumnus Blake Farmer. A Nashville native, Blake brings 16 years of experience at WPLN in positions ranging from News Director to Senior Health Care Reporter.

Ask the Mayor

We continued our popular monthly Ask the Mayor segment, a one-of-a-kind opportunity for Nashville residents to call Mayor Freddie O'Connell directly with their questions and comments.

1,533
community
voices aired

"I am a quintessential NPR kid. I've listened to WPLN and NPR since I was a little girl sitting with my sister in the back seat while my mom drove. I still listen to NPR every day on my way to work. And, as I continue to build my own roots and family here in Nashville, WPLN programming like This Is Nashville has become so important to me. I'm so excited that I can afford to give my support to keep these programs going." – Savannah from Madison

In the Community



Supermajority LIVE at The Belcourt

In September, the community gathered at the Belcourt Theatre to enjoy a live conversation about *Supermajority*, a WPLN podcast that follows Covenant School moms as they try to change hearts and minds at the Tennessee legislature.



Kai Ryssdal

In November, Nashville Public Radio board members and major donors joined a special evening with Kai Ryssdal, host of American Public Media's *Marketplace*. We are grateful to AllianceBernstein for hosting us in their beautiful space.



Producers' Circle Breakfast

In January, Producers' Circle members convened at Thistle Farms for "New Year, New Stories," a breakfast event where members of the WPLN Newsroom and WNXF music team shared a peak behind the curtain.



Steve Swenson Retirement Party

In May, Nashville Public Radio celebrated the retirement of CEO Steve Swenson, after a decades-long career working in news and radio. During his six-year tenure with Nashville Public Radio, Steve led us through the launch of *This Is Nashville*, 91.ONE WNXF and other visionary initiatives that have brought us closer to the community.

4,251 attendees at **26** community events organized by Nashville Public Radio

Awards & Recognitions



Education Writers Association

News (Large Newsroom) Winner

Aliyya Swaby & Paige Pfleger, ProPublica & WPLN News

Series of stories: “Crackdown on Student Threats:

Tennessee’s Harsh Punishment of Kids”

Judge Comment: “These articles are a masterclass in how to persist when official data and cooperation are scant to nonexistent.”



Edward R. Murrow Regional Awards

Feature Reporting

“How This Camp for Kids Who Stutter Builds

Confidence and Connections”

by Alexis Marshall

News Documentary

Music Citizens episode 2: “The Operator”

by Justin Barney, Jason Moon Wilkins, Emily Siner



Public Media Journalists Association Awards

Interview Program 1st place

This is Nashville: “Profile: Pat Boone”

produced by Tasha A.F. Lemley

Art Feature 1st place

“Jackie Shane Gets Her Due”

by Jewly Hight

Supermajority accolades



New York Festivals®

Radio Awards, Gold medal

Narrative/Documentary Podcast



National Headliner Awards, 1st place

Digital civic/political affairs podcast



National Press Foundation, 1st place

Reporting on Women in

Politics Award

Judge Comment: “This series is a tour de force of in-depth reporting—sensitive, unsparing and grippingly told. It’s a morality play about women’s activism and citizens’ political participation, with national implications that are well explained but not overplayed. The human impact of the political process and the stakes of local lawmaking are vividly laid out, with devastating results.”



New Yorker’s Top Podcasts of 2024, top 10 placement



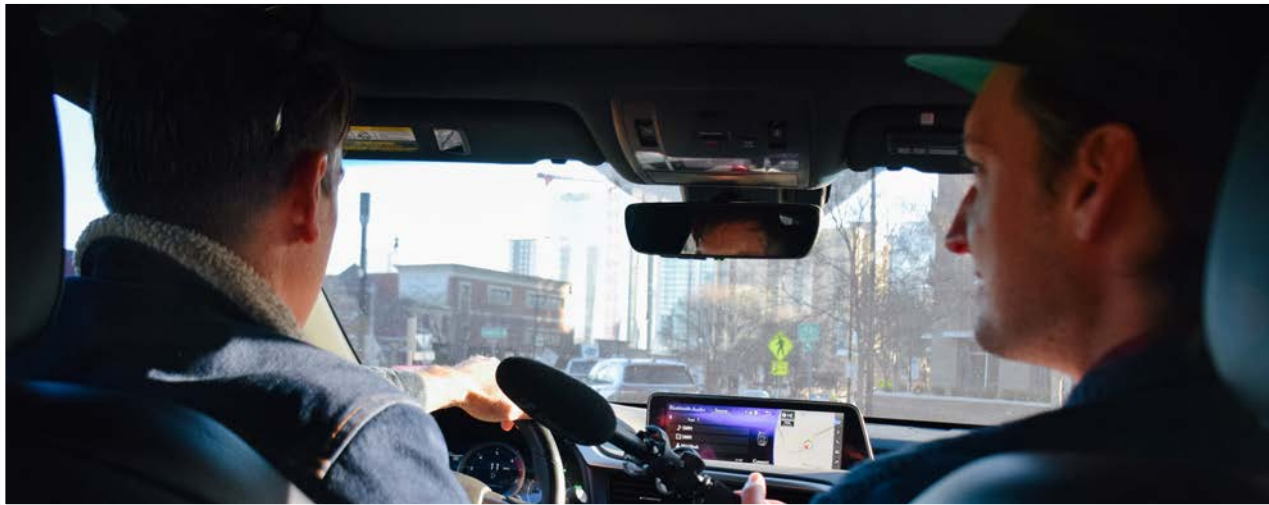
Peabody Award finalist



66

WPLN stories aired nationally via NPR

*Your support makes possible
the unique brand of storytelling
from Nashville Public Radio.*



*Thank you for your dedication to our mission!
We look forward to the future.*



**NASHVILLE
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