

2017 Community Outreach and Service Programs

Narrative from Annual Report to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting

February 22, 2018

The following questions and answers were part of a full grantee report submitted online. Because the CPB's online form is difficult to export in an easily readable format, we are providing the material in this more user-friendly document.

Telling Public Radio's Story

The purpose of this section is to give you an opportunity to tell us and your community about the activities you have engaged in to address community needs by outlining key services provided, and the local value and impact of those services. Please report on activities that occurred in Fiscal Year 2017. Responses may be shared with Congress or the public.

1. Describe your overall goals and approach to address identified community issues, needs, and interests through your station's vital local services, such as multiplatform long and short-form content, digital and in-person engagement, education services, community information, partnership support, and other activities, and audiences you reached or new audiences you engaged.

In addition to fulfilling its mission to provide exceptional 24/7 classical music and cultural programming to Central Texans, KMFA has focused increasingly on strengthening the local arts community by working with them to develop meaningful content and information via broadcast and online, and enhancing the quality of life in our community through engagement with classical music. In 2017, we continued our well-received "Listen Local" broadcasts showcasing local classical music concert broadcasts. This serves not only to expose more listeners to local arts resources, it also connects these resources to those who are housebound or unable to afford tickets.

Our major digital initiative in 2017 was the rollout of a new app that is available for free on both Apple and Android platforms and that allows us to engage younger audiences. Its distinctive features are described in Question 2. In late 2016, the local daily newspaper (Austin American-Statesman) announced it was eliminating its arts and culture desk. During 2017, a new online arts journal was launched by the former arts editor of the newspaper. We have partnered with this project to offer PSAs encouraging listeners to sign up for this free online journal, and our staff are contributing written and audio content. This fulfills the need for in-depth cultural news that had been threatened by the Statesman's action.

At the same time, we have shifted our weekly short-form (90-sec) "Staccato" feature away from being a survey of national music news items, to focusing more strongly on cultural and arts news in the local community. We are also employing a strategy of using community events to draw awareness and listenership. Our research indicates that new listeners are drawn to events they learn about on social media, which enables us to obtain their contact information and send them information about our

broadcast programs. A series of new events were launched in 2017 and are detailed in Question 2. For the fifth year, we produced and sponsored once again an annual musical instrument drive to meet the needs of underserved young music students. This has become a signature event held in partnership with the Hispanic Alliance.

2. Describe key initiatives and the variety of partners with whom you collaborated, including other public media outlets, community nonprofits, government agencies, educational institutions, the business community, teachers and parents, etc. This will illustrate the many ways you're connected across the community and engaged with other important organizations in the area.

In 2017, we launched or expanded the following key initiatives:

A 50th Anniversary Celebration: a free public event held in an East Austin venue (traditionally the non-white area of the city). We collaborated with the City of Austin; Mayor Adler opened the event with a proclamation which he read live over the air. The stereotype of classical music as stuffy and elitist was broken with an audience performance of the William Tell Overture ("Lone Ranger") finale conducted by the Austin Symphony's music director -- on Kazoos! Youth choirs, alt-classical performers, jazz sax quintets and excerpts from a Spanish-language opera about Pancho Villa were presented throughout the afternoon, drawing over 2,000 visitors. More than half this audience was under the age of 40, and the crowd was ethnically diverse. The party will be an annual event held in different parts of the city each year.

We launched a distinctive new mobile app. Rather than simply a way to stream our on-air programs, this new app features a unique "Soundtrack of Austin" feature, in which selected cultural attractions and iconic Austin landmarks are featured along with a piece of music selected by our staff to enhance the visitor experience. A map of the city and information about each venue are included. We took care to include sites in all parts of the city, such as Huston-Tillotson University (a Historically Black institution) so that classical radio is virtually present throughout the community. Each of the destinations featured on the app is promoting it to their visitors, so community awareness of Austin's classical public radio station is enhanced. We collaborated with over 20 venues as well as the Austin Visitors and Convention Bureau to launch this project which has been downloaded by over 2300 users.

We continued our commitment to broadcasts of local classical music performances under the rubric "Listen Local." This is now a monthly series, featuring (at least) one broadcast each month that spotlights an Austin-based concert, live, live-to-tape, or in-studio. For our 50th anniversary, we commissioned a "KMFA Fanfare" by local composer and classical music professor Dan Welcher of the University of Texas. This piece was performed by the Austin Symphony, UT Orchestra, and Round Top (TX) Summer Festival Orchestra, and recorded for future broadcast on the station. This collaboration made numerous audience and community members aware of the proud 50 year history of classical radio in Austin as well as the dynamic evolution of classical music.

A landmark event was one that could hardly have been anticipated: after Hurricane Harvey struck Houston and the Texas Gulf Coast in fall 2017, we created a Harvey resource page on the KMFA web site and announced it on the air. We sponsored a "Harvey Relief" classical concert featuring three local classical organizations (free admission with Harvey donation). During our fall fund drive, we secured a third-party sponsorship to match donations to our drive with meals to the Central Texas Food bank.

We continued our efforts to promote awareness of hate crimes and GLBT issues with a special livestream marking the commercial release of the CD "Considering Matthew Shepard," a music theater piece by Grammy-winning local choral group Conspirare. Written by Craig Hella Johnson, the work uses chorus, soloists, spoken word and visual projections to recount the story of the murder of Matthew Shepard in 1998 in Laramie, Wyoming. He has become an icon in the war against anti-gay bullying and hate crimes. We launched a new program, "Coloring and Classical," a family event featuring classical performers, hands-on art activities for kids, and storytelling at Imagine Art, an East Austin gallery that fosters the creative artwork of the disabled and mentally challenged. This event served to introduce our audiences to these special artists, and provided a multi-sensory experience for the participants.

We are increasing our connections to educational institutions. We are forging a partnership to develop internships with students from the Ann Richards School, a high school for women focusing on developing leadership skills. We have also started a collaboration with Blackshear Fine Arts Academy, an East Austin magnet school serving most African American students. Announcers from KMFA will be visiting the school in 2018 and sharing information about their work in classical radio with the students.

3. What impact did your key initiatives and partnerships have in your community? Describe any known measurable impact, such as increased awareness, learning or understanding about particular issues. Describe indicators of success, such as connecting people to needed resources or strengthening conversational ties across diverse neighborhoods. Did a partner see an increase in requests for related resources? Please include direct feedback from a partner(s) or from a person(s) served.

1. The "Harvey Relief" concert which KMFA sponsored, featuring members of three classical organizations in performance, raised \$30,000 for hurricane relief. 2. Our on-air fund drive initiative for Harvey relief resulted in more than 11,000 meals being donated to the Central Texas Food bank for distribution to the neediest communities. 3. The fifth annual "Fall Into Music" instrument drive for underserved music students secured donations of more than 100 musical instruments, as well as accessories, books and scores. 4. Following our stream of the new CD "Considering Matthew Shepard," the Executive Director of Conspirare, Ann McNair, wrote "We are beyond thankful for your support of the recording and rebroadcasting -- it has come back to us in so many ways and has been an important way to get this work out into the world." McNair shared with us that they received a donation from a listener who lived outside the Austin area following the stream of our CD.

4. Please describe any efforts (e.g. programming, production, engagement activities) you have made to investigate and/or meet the needs of minority and other diverse audiences (including, but not limited to, new immigrants, people for whom English is a second language and illiterate adults) during Fiscal Year 2017, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2018. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.

We continue to maintain a high ratio of minority listeners relative to other classical stations. According to Nielsen, classical radio stations across the country have a mostly white audience with minorities averaging only about 12% of the total. At KMFA, we are indexing higher than this national average; in some books our Black/Hispanic audience measures about 25% of the total. We will be investing in a billboard campaign in 2018 that specifically targets the minority community in East Austin. We attribute

the growth in our Hispanic numbers to our ongoing and consistent outreach with the Hispanic youth and educational community through our instrument drive.

We also continue to offer the English/Spanish bilingual program "Concierto," focusing on the contributions of Hispanic composers, musicians and conductors to the world of music. Because each musical selection is introduced in both English and Spanish, we hope that anyone who listens will find their language skills improved. KMFA served in 2017 as media sponsor of a world premiere of a new opera about Pancho Villa. We broadcast excerpts of the work during our 50th anniversary celebration and featured interviews with the composer, Graham Reynolds. Our programming emphasized our commitment to new compositions as well as to material of interest to the Hispanic audience.

We have expanded and strengthened our relationship with Huston-Tillotson (H-T) University. In 2018 for the first time ever, KMFA will broadcast Huston-Tillotson's Black History Month Concert, and we have made arrangements to make this an annual radio event. The H-T chamber choir performed at the KMFA birthday event early in 2018. We also continue to spotlight music of Black composers and performers not only during Black History Month, but throughout the year. Our assumption is not that minority audiences are only interested in music written or performed by others of their ethnic background. However, we believe that by making our programming more intentionally inclusive, we affirm that this public supported radio station truly belongs to the entire community and that all listeners are important to us.

5. Please assess the impact that your CPB funding had on your ability to serve your community. What were you able to do with your grant that you wouldn't be able to do if you didn't receive it?

Without our CPB Community Service Grant, KMFA's ongoing outreach efforts would be severely limited. We are an independent community licensee with no larger parent organization. The grant enables us to retain an adequate number of staff to serve core functions. This means we have been able to engage in more outreach initiatives: offering musical events in underserved East Austin, hosting and producing the instrument drive for needy music students, and providing public service support for community needs such as the Harvey efforts. Our "Listen Local" broadcasts that specifically increase exposure for local music organizations would also have to be curtailed because CPB supports some of the time involved in planning, pre- and post-production. Without this vital showcase for local talent, KMFA would lose a distinctive aspect of its programming that fosters additional loyalty from our listeners, who understand what an important service we provide.

Additionally, CPB funding makes possible our airing of national programs such as the bilingual "Concierto" which is key to our Hispanic outreach, as well as "Performance Today," which is of great value to the educational institutions of Austin such as the Butler School of Music and Armstrong Community Music School. The CPB grant gives us the increased capacity needed to deliver these programs and services -- making KMFA much more than a service that just plays classical music. It makes us a true community and cultural partner for all of Central Texas.