



2019 Community Outreach and Service Programs

Narrative from Annual Report to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting
February 20, 2020

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 2019. 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.**

KMFA takes the view that as a classical music station we must reach out tirelessly to our growing local community to develop relevant programs and engage new audiences. We challenge the notion that classical music is elitist by offering programs that are fun and accessible. We look for organizations with whom we have not partnered before to see if we can expand our community alliances. For 53 years, we have provided a virtual listening space in times of loss and celebration, providing solace and inspiration as well as cultural information to our community. During the past year, responding to the sale of our longtime rented space, we embarked on a transformative building project, and are constructing a new purpose-built radio station where the community will also be able to engage with local classical radio in person. We are scheduled to move to the new building in August 2020. While engaged in this major initiative, we have also continued our longstanding community services during 2019, among them the following:

- * We produce at least once per month, our well-received "Listen Local" broadcasts, showcasing local classical music concert broadcasts. This broadens community access and awareness of local arts organizations, and connects these resources to those who are housebound or unable to afford tickets.

- * For the seventh straight year, we sponsored and promoted an annual musical instrument drive to meet the needs of underserved young music students. This has become a signature event held in partnership with Austin Soundwaves, a youth orchestra serving minority and economically challenged students who do not otherwise have access to private musical study. Our partnership has resulted in nearly 1,000 instruments being donated for schools across the Austin area.
- 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 2019 we engaged in the following major initiatives and collaborations:

1. We hired a Director of Creative Learning. As noted above, KMFA has construction of a new building underway. The new building is seated between an economically challenged middle school and a low- income senior community. It will include an interactive education gallery as well as performance studio. Our new Director of Creative Learning has begun partnerships with the Austin ISD Eastside Memorial Vertical Team, a cluster of 8 schools serving the historically minority area of Austin where our station will be located. KMFA hosted a table at "Harvest Fest," an Eastside annual school festival and community information fair. We partnered with the Armstrong Community Music School to provide free ukulele lessons at Harvest Fest and we also handed out information about the new building, invited teachers to sign up for K-12 activity newsletters, and gave away tickets to classical music concerts at the University of Texas. In our new building we will routinely offer STEAM learning experiences for the K-12 community.
2. Annual Birthday Social: This has become a popular way for us to celebrate our founding (53 years ago) in an informal way that reaches new audiences. We staged a four-hour party in East Austin with free admission and refreshments and performances by area classical organizations. We featured a performance by the Huston-Tillotson Chamber Choir (Austin's historically black university), and DJ Mel, a noted African American DJ, who included classical selections in his varied and diverse set.
3. We announced a new partnership with Austin Soundwaves, a youth orchestra serving underserved area schools. One of its members, Draylen Mason, was a 17-year-old gifted bass player who was killed in March 2018 in an explosion during the Austin Package Bombings targeting minority victims. In his honor, KMFA will name its new performance room the Draylen Mason Music Studio, and will sponsor and present an annual concert by the Draylen Mason Fellows, a group of

high school musicians who will develop projects addressing the role of music in effecting social justice. The announcement in fall 2019 was attended by the Mayor of Austin, who spoke at the event, as well as members of Draylen Mason's family, and was covered extensively by local media outlets. This reinforced the important ways in which a classical public station can support a diverse community.

4. Launched a partnership with HAAM, the Health Alliance for Austin Musicians. We are now airing PSAs on a regular basis about HAAM, notifying working musicians that they can avail themselves of the free health and wellness services offered by this nonprofit.
5. In response to an Austin American Statesman (daily newspaper of record) article about needy families at the holidays, KMFA partnered with Caritas of Austin and Austin Soundwaves to provide two violins for a pair of young girls from a refugee family. The delivery of the violins to the happy girls was covered by the Statesman, further illustrating KMFA's role as a community connector.
6. The Statesman also published an op-ed piece by KMFA's General Manager, "Classical Music Isn't Dying" -- which discussed the importance of stations like KMFA as the first experience of classical music for many listeners, and which also noted the role of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting in making media accessible to all.
7. Collaborated with Tapestry, a local women's choir, and the League of Women Voters to promote a concert celebrating the centennial of passage of the 19th Amendment to the US Constitution. The sold-out event included a voter registration table and music by and about women for over 400 audience members. KMFA featured an interview with the director of Tapestry in its public affairs program "Classical Austin."
8. 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. Concerts are as diverse as a Black History Month performance, traditional grand opera, and the jazz-based "A Charlie Brown Christmas." This year we added the Austin Symphony Young Composers Concert, a competitive event featuring original works by young composers performed by Austin's professional symphony orchestra.
9. Collaborated with the Austin ISD to present "Music Memory," a broadcast tied to the annual music memorization curriculum of the school district. KMFA played recordings of the works that would be featured in the annual Music Memory competition so that students could become more familiar with them.

10. Collaborated with the SXSW Music Festival and local new music group Golden Hornet to sponsor, promote and host the Austin Composers Showcase. This event is held in a downtown jazz club during the hugely popular festival, and exposes 4 to 5 local composers to the audiences and agents who come to SXSW. This event helps foster appreciation of new classical music in an unusual venue and attracts many young listeners.

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.

KMFA's impact as a connector and strengthener of the local Austin cultural scene is one of our key strengths. Here are a few examples.

1. The Director of Austin Soundwaves Youth Orchestra, Patrick Slevin, has partnered with KMFA for seven instrument drives for underserved music students, which have garnered over 1,000 donations. In 2019 he wrote to us saying "We sincerely value the relationship we have fostered with KMFA. One of our purposes is to expose youth and their families to various kinds of music, and KMFA is a pillar of diverse music programming in Austin."
2. Because of our commitment to local programming, KMFA regularly plays recordings of local artists. In 2019, we received feedback from the Managing Director of Conspirare (a Grammy-winning choral ensemble based in Austin) stating that one of her patrons had written to say she first heard of Conspirare on KMFA and now has three of the group's CDs. The Managing Director went on to say, "Thank you for all the ways KMFA supports the music we create and for helping people discover us!"
3. Graham Reynolds, film composer and artistic director of Golden Hornet, produces the Composers Showcase in partnership with KMFA during the SXSW Festival. Following this year's showcase, he wrote "With their Listen Local programs KMFA has spotlighted concert performances in Austin's burgeoning classical community, and interviewed its members. It's helping turn the scene around."
4. The Director of HAAM has shared with us that as soon as we began running public service announcements to our audiences, they began receiving calls from classical musicians -- a group they had not been reaching as easily as the rock and band musicians.

5. At the same time, we hear regularly from our audience of 90,000+ listeners per week, reminding us that we are providing not only enjoyment, but also stress relief and emotional balance to our community. One such listener wrote, "KMFA gives a peace and serenity to my day in the busy lives we all lead. Currently, I am going through a not so great part of my life (bad work environment, breakup from long term relationship) and often feel like it's the end of the world. Y'all were playing one of my favorite pieces by Dvorak on air and it simply reminded me that I am part of something, much much bigger and there are better days to come. Thank you KMFA for bringing some light into my life and giving me something to be grateful for within my everyday routine."
- 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 2019, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2020. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.**
1. In 2019, we hired our second young Latino announcer, having hired one also in 2018. Thus, two of our six on-air talents are Latino, which aligns well with the large Hispanic population of Austin. It is unusual to find a classical announcer of Hispanic origin in a major daypart and KMFA is excited about leading in this area.
 2. We also continue to carry the bilingual syndicated program "Concierto," which introduces and back-announces each musical work in English and Spanish.
 3. Our New Music Mixer 2019, a monthly engagement event that features working young composers in our community, featured two women composers, one non-binary composer, one Black and two Latinx artists, thus representing very well the diversity of Austin's creative culture. The first artist of 2020 was also a woman.
 4. The under-representation of women in the classical music field is a source of national discussion and concern. To address this, KMFA has added a new syndicated program, "Feminine Fusion," which features the work exclusively of female composers and artists. Our programmers also air a concentrated amount of music by women composers during Women's History Month in March, and we will do so again in 2020.
 5. Our public affairs program "Classical Austin" featured this year an interview for Black History Month with Artina McCain, an African American pianist and teacher who curates an annual Black History Month concert for the Austin Chamber

Music Center. Her long interview featured discussion of the living Black composers whose work would be performed.

6. In 2019, KMFA's Listen Local series featured an in-studio performance by the Thalea Quartet, currently in residence as the Young Professional String Quartet at the University of Texas Butler School of Music. Thalea is notable in the classical music world for its diversity: two women and two men, each of a different ethnicity. They performed a wide range of pieces which reflected their diversity and the concert was recorded with a live studio audience and later broadcast. Since many young people do not expect to "see themselves" in a classical music environment, it was important to showcase this outstanding group.
 7. The coming year (2020) will be a game-changer for KMFA's efforts to meet the needs of minority audiences. In our new building, we will be positioned to serve a diverse neighborhood with few cultural resources. Through planned school visits, creative learning programs, free concerts for senior citizens, and free family days, we will be able to serve an entirely new portion of our community and introduce young underserved students to possible musical and radio careers. We have already received a grant from the St. David's Foundation, an Austin Foundation concerned with social welfare, to pilot an inter-generational community program this fall which will bring together senior citizens and minority middle schoolers who will work together to produce content about music, which KMFA will broadcast. We look forward to reporting on these outcomes next year.
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. Our planned educational activities in our soon-to-open new home would be severely curtailed, and with them our ability to help change the lives of the underserved communities near our new location. Hosting and producing the instrument drive for needy music students, and providing fellowships and broadcasts in honor of the late Draylen Mason, are among the projects that would be diminished. Our "Listen Local" broadcasts that increase exposure for local music organizations would also have to be severely curtailed because 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. Without CPB funding, we would be a one-way broadcasting channel, not fully connected and engaged in important dialogue with the community we are here to serve.