

Culture, Heritage, and Place:

HOW MEDIA AMPLIFIES COMMUNITY NARRATIVES



Wyncote Foundation | PUBLIC MEDIA AND JOURNALISM

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CJ WILLIS / SCRIBE VIDEO CENTER



CATV



ATHEA EDWARDS AND FRANK MAGALLANES / HENDAY



GRETIEN CLAUSSING / PHILLYCAM



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ERIC CASH / SCALWAG AND CANOPY ATLANTA

Introduction

This report focuses on the work of media organizations dedicated to local and regional cultural expression and connection. These organizations gather and amplify stories, histories, languages, and artmaking practices that foster authentic narratives rooted in place. They help nourish a humane civic sphere, one that honors and celebrates cultural heritage, diversity of voice, and a sense of place.

Inspiration for this report is drawn from the work of a range of organizations in the Greater Philadelphia region that Wyncote Foundation has supported, and which are briefly profiled on pages 13–15. Examples of organizations based in other communities, profiled in greater detail, came from suggestions by grantmaking peers and grantee partners, or from what we’ve gathered from publications or conferences in the field.

Grantmakers, policymakers, and advocates seeking to build support for local public interest media rightly focus on the essential role of journalism that equips citizens with news and information about politics, education, health, and safety. Given the devastating impact of cutbacks in local newspapers, expanding diverse perspectives and experiences within mainstream reporting—and addressing gaps in local news and information—is essential to helping citizens participate in our democracy.

Wyncote actively supports these goals through its Public Media and Journalism funding strategies. But a focus on essential “public interest information” often overlooks work that fosters personal expression, celebrates cultures of locally distinct communities, or introduces the work of a local community’s artists to broader audiences.

While the organizations profiled are very different in type, our research revealed common themes in the nature of their work.

Narrative change is a longstanding effort for these organizations

Philanthropy is increasingly aware of the need for narrative change, recognizing that too many people find their lives and their futures limited by the dehumanizing, commercialized narratives often prevalent in mainstream media. The good news is that local media organizations are deeply committed to encouraging engaging, nuanced storytelling that reflects diverse cultures and communities. Our examples and the resources at the end of this report offer place-based grantmakers ways to explore supporting this work in their own communities.

Contributions to community vastly exceed financial investment

Most of the organizations profiled here have relatively modest budgets, are thinly staffed, and are supported only irregularly by local philanthropies. Nonetheless, they can attain a broad reach and impact in their communities, and often win awards for excellence and innovation in their fields. Even modest philanthropic support can substantially strengthen these organizations and the scope of their work.



Community empowerment is a recurring theme

Nearly all of the profiled organizations have an underlying goal of empowering local communities to tell their own stories and chart their own destinies. Most have media training and engagement activities that bring people together to help create, interpret, and amplify community stories and perspectives.

Social justice—and racial equity and inclusion—are prominent priorities

While our examples are media organizations of various kinds—from public radio to print publishing to online news to television, film festivals, and sound archives—they all serve to give voice to people and perspectives not often heard in mainstream media. The mission of these organizations is not only to produce media content but also to change society.

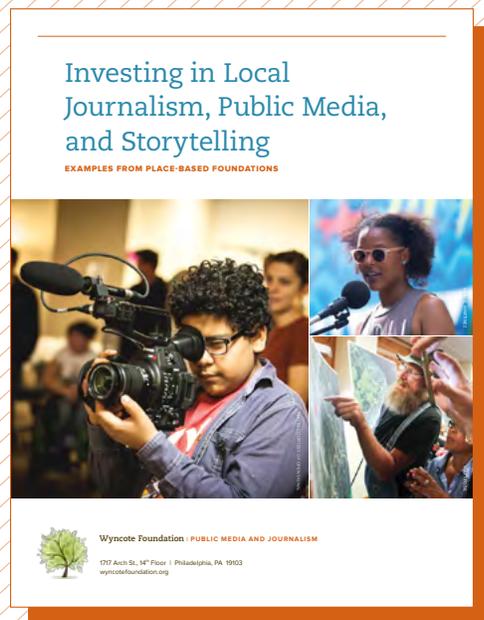
2020 helped these organizations gain recognition

The COVID-19 pandemic and the unfolding of an urgent racial justice movement in the United States combined to make 2020 a critical year for place-based media. During 2020, several of this report's featured organizations were uniquely positioned to reach disadvantaged communities and individuals, with crucial information about public health, to help strengthen community organizing, or to enlist their audiences and participants in larger efforts for social justice.

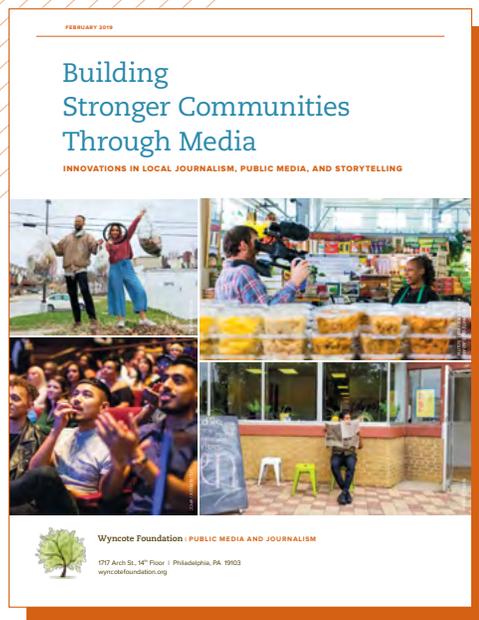
The ultimate aim of this report is to build a stronger case for support for place-specific, culturally based media efforts, programs, and organizations. These organizations provide an essential element of diverse, authentic storytelling within broader local media environments. We hope that the examples we've selected will encourage you to further explore ways to support similar efforts in your own community.

David Haas

Vice Chair, Wyncote Foundation



Investing in Local Journalism, Public Media, and Storytelling: Examples from Place-Based Foundations, our 2018 report profiling place-based grantmakers that invest in media.
bit.ly/2G9VqIV



Building Stronger Communities Through Media: Innovations in Local Journalism, Public Media, and Storytelling, our 2019 report sharing examples of engaged journalism projects and organizations.
bit.ly/3tent2X



Redefining narratives of place in an online magazine

The online magazine Scalawag uses storytelling and journalism to explore distinctive perspectives and shared causes across the American South. Through commissioned articles on Arts and Culture, Race and Place, and Southern Politics, Scalawag features regional voices and amplifies conversations on racial and social justice.

Launched in 2015 as a quarterly print publication, Scalawag moved online in 2019. This shift has allowed the organization to meet audiences in the online spaces where they congregate and to be responsive in real time as relevant news and discussions unfold. Scalawag's in-person and virtual events further this work, examining published content and offering opportunities for building community.

From hubs in Durham, NC; Birmingham, AL; and Atlanta, GA, Scalawag regularly hires writers based throughout the region, totaling 135 authors in 2019. Challenging dominant narratives related to the South, Scalawag intentionally features BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and low income and working-class perspectives. This commitment also supports a larger goal—to encourage storytelling and journalism as viable career paths for writers from these communities, in particular writers of color—with Scalawag creating a platform for both seasoned writers and emerging voices.

When COVID-19 shutdowns began, Scalawag reached out to community leaders to learn about their constituencies' information needs. Scalawag hosted virtual conversations on topics of immediate concern, including workers' rights and rent strikes during the pandemic, and created toolkits that could be shared broadly. More recently, they hosted a Virtual Jubilee featuring Black Southern poets, offering a chance to focus on joy in the midst of ongoing crises.

Cierra Hinton, Scalawag's executive director-producer, observes that "COVID-19 has really forced us to do more imagining," an orientation that she believes is needed in journalism to better reach and represent local communities. Commenting that the pandemic, calls for racial justice, and social media technologies have all inspired new ways of working, she underscores that with such challenges, "There is opportunity... to do something different," to reach and reflect communities absent from traditional information sources, and "to understand journalism as the service that it is."

SCALAWAG
DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA



ORGANIZATION TYPE:
Independent nonprofit organization

OPERATING BUDGET:
\$354,000 in 2020

KEY FUNDERS:
Community Foundation of
Greater Birmingham
Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation

CONTACT:
Cierra Hinton, Executive Director-
Publisher, cierra@scalawagmagazine.org

LINKS:
Scalawag: scalawagmagazine.org
Nieman Lab Interview with Cierra Hinton:
bit.ly/3mKeNz2
Scalawag Feature: "Reckoning with
White Supremacy": bit.ly/2Q5coCX
Scalawag 2020 Voter Resources &
Coverage: scalawagmagazine.org/vote

Top: A Selma, Alabama solidarity rally after Michael Brown's shooting in 2014, published by Scalawag in September 2015. (Image by Julian Plowden)
Below: University of Georgia geography professor Nik Heynen's student strips the leaves off sugarcane, published by Scalawag in September 2020. (Image by Rinne Allen)



CATV (CHEYENNE AND ARAPAHO TELEVISION)
CONCHO, OKLAHOMA



ORGANIZATION TYPE:
Noncommercial Educational Licensee

OPERATING BUDGET:
\$542,400 in 2019

KEY FUNDERS:
Funded by Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes' gaming proceeds

CONTACT:
Randy Burleson, Director of Operations,
rburleson@cheyenneandrapaho-nsn.gov

LINKS:
Cheyenne and Arapaho TV: catv35.com

Video Archives:
catv35.com/watch_our_videos.html

Station FAQs:
catv35.com/common-questions.html



Reaching Native people with public television programming in their own languages

Founded in 2012, Cheyenne and Arapaho Television (CATV) is the first Native American licensed public television station in the state of Oklahoma, the first affiliate of [FNX First Nations Experience](#), and one of only a handful of such stations in the 50 states. Its mission is to provide programming that will respect, honor, preserve, and uplift the Cheyenne and Arapaho people's cultures, languages, health, and well-being. "Our language is close to dying," says Darren Brown (Cochiti Pueblo/Choctaw), CATV's senior producer. "We are trying our best to teach our Native language via our work."



CATV's most popular program, *Frybread Flats*, is a Telly Award-winning children's show hosted by Raven, an animated character, who introduces Native children to the Cheyenne and Arapaho languages. The station also covers local events and social issues in two-minute segments that air throughout the day. In 2020, CATV focused on producing COVID-19 information for its community, seeking Native doctors who could instill trust and promote the importance of vaccinations.

The station chooses not to seek or receive funding from private foundations, citing lack of staff capacity and the restricted nature of private foundation grants.

As Randy Burleson, CATV's director of operations, describes it, grant restrictions "take us away from doing what we should be doing to educate and inform our tribe." Instead, the station is funded by the tribe's gaming proceeds. The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) was the station's initial funder.

The need to expand its coverage, however, is significant. With 40 federally recognized tribes in Oklahoma and 290,000 residents (eight percent of Oklahoma's population), reaching the state's rural Native communities is a challenge, especially in the eastern part of the state. "Native people want to see themselves presented in a positive fashion," says Brown.

“ Our people love seeing themselves and their relatives on television and [the connection we provide] is something that is difficult to measure.”

*Above, left and right: Senior Producer Darren Brown encourages Native youth to consider video journalism as a career. (Image courtesy of CATV)
Top: Darren Brown (center) and Director of Operations Randy Burleson (right) record Timothy Tate Nevaquaya (Comanche artist and flute maker) for Norman Cultural Connection's documentary, "Spirit Flute: Healing the Heart." (Images courtesy of Norman Cultural Connection)*



HEYDAY
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA



ORGANIZATION TYPE:
Independent nonprofit organization

OPERATING BUDGET:
\$1.8 million in 2019

KEY FUNDERS:
The Campbell Foundation
City of Berkeley Civic Arts Program
Walter & Elise Haas Fund

CONTACT:
Emily Grossman, Development Director,
emily@heydaybooks.com

LINKS:
Heyday: heydaybooks.com

News from Native California:
newsfromnativecalifornia.com

Introductory Video, Produced in 2020:
heydaybooks.com/introduction

Book Trailers and Events:
youtube.com/heydaybooks

Founder Malcolm Margolin:
neh.gov/news/malcolm-margolin

Exploring and expanding histories and ideas about California

Founded by Malcolm Margolin in 1974, Heyday publishes books and a magazine focused on California, and offers events and resources that connect writers, readers, thinkers, and activists. Heyday’s publications include landmark books on California’s natural history; its Native cultures; and its social, cultural, and public affairs. By emphasizing design as well as content, Heyday has established a reputation for substantive and beautiful work.

Heyday’s first book was a quirky, hand-illustrated guide to the natural history of the East Bay that Margolin wrote, typeset, and printed. Not long after, Margolin wrote and published *The Ohlone Way: Indian Life in the San Francisco–Monterey Bay Area*, beginning Heyday’s long-standing collaboration with the state’s Native communities. *News from Native California* launched from Heyday in 1987; today, it is a quarterly magazine incorporating poetry, fiction, and literary nonfiction by Native California writers, amplifying both historic and contemporary viewpoints. Heyday also has published more than 50 books on Native cultures and collected a physical archive of related material.

Now helmed by Steve Wasserman and Gayle Wattawa, Heyday is recognized for multiple strands of work. Books like *Wherever There’s a Fight: How Runaway Slaves, Suffragists, Immigrants, Strikers, and Poets Shaped Civil Liberties in California*, by Elaine Elinson and Stan Yogi, reflect Heyday’s focus on social and political history. That book led to the Fighting for Justice series, centered on California civil rights heroes and written for middle grade readers, aiming to inform and inspire the next generation of engaged citizens.

Heyday connects the community through activities like author readings, panel discussions, and literary luncheons. The COVID-19 pandemic has necessitated new public engagement approaches, such as virtual nature walks to help readers learn plant identification and explore local geology. Each of these online events is drawing hundreds of participants.

Heyday’s work is emblematic of the role that publishers with a community ethos can play in building deeper connections among people and the places they call home. “We are continuing to explore and expand what California means to people” says Emily Grossman, development director, “which hinges on promoting a diversity of voices and connecting with curious readers.” Many local donors and grantmakers have contributed to Heyday’s work, helping make it a beacon for place-based nonprofit publishing in the United States.



Top: The seven muralists who authored *Maestrapeace* celebrate its 2019 launch with Heyday’s art director. Above: Pages from *The California Field Atlas*, written and illustrated by Obi Kaufmann, 2017. (Images courtesy of Heyday)

**DETROIT SOUND
CONSERVANCY**
DETROIT, MICHIGAN



ORGANIZATION TYPE:

Independent nonprofit organization

OPERATING BUDGET:

\$61,000 in 2019

KEY FUNDERS:

CultureSource

Community Foundation for
Southeast Michigan

The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

Michigan Council for Arts and
Cultural Affairs

CONTACT:

Michelle Jahra McKinney, Executive
Director, info@detroitssound.org

LINKS:

Detroit Sound Conservancy:
detroitssound.org

\$100K from Mellon Foundation for
Community-Based Archives:
bit.ly/3tfNPIh

Michelle McKinney: Planning for a
Detroit Sound Legacy: [detroitssound.org/
new-director/press/2020](http://detroitssound.org/new-director/press/2020)

Reviving Detroit's Historic Blue Bird Inn:
[beltmag.com/detroit-blue-bird-inn-
revival-restoration-jazz](http://beltmag.com/detroit-blue-bird-inn-revival-restoration-jazz)

*Left: Melvin Davis and his band
performing on the Blue Bird Inn Stage
in January 2020. Right: "A Great Day
on Tireman," The Blue Bird with Detroit
residents and community partners,
Labor Day 2019. (Images by Iian Tarver,
courtesy of Detroit Sound Conservancy)*

Preserving a region's musical past to inspire its future

The Detroit Sound Conservancy stewards and shares Detroit's rich musical history, combining archival preservation with placekeeping and public programs. Founded in 2012, and today led by executive director Michelle McKinney, DSC enlists musicians, writers, archivists, educators, community leaders, and Detroiters passionate about music to fill substantial gaps in historical narratives and inspire the next generation of the city's music legacy.

Although Detroit is renowned for its musical contributions, McKinney notes that for decades much of this history has been neglected by established cultural and historical institutions. "Those repositories were not collecting the stories of African Americans and people of color," she stresses. "This repository that we are creating as a community really comes out of a need."

Spanning musical genres and eras, DSC's growing collection of approximately 10,000 objects ranges from vinyl records and cassette tapes; to posters and photographs; to oral histories and recordings that preserve Detroit's jazz history. During COVID-19 shutdowns, DSC has continued cataloging the collection, sharing highlights online through audio interviews, videos, and blogs.

In addition to preserving the past, DSC's work is future-facing. DSC recently launched a capital campaign to renovate The Blue Bird Inn, a landmark jazz venue that will be transformed into an archive, museum, and offices, with space for performances, exhibitions, and educational programs. In addition to core constituencies of local musicians and music audiences, DSC plans to collaborate with K-12 schools near its new home on programs aimed at developing musicians and archivists to-be.

Grant funding and Patreon donations have provided vital support, yet the project-oriented nature of much grant funding does not meet the ongoing needs of archival facilities and operations. Recognizing the repeated and streamlined support of DSC's place-based funders, Jonah Raduns-Silverstein, operations director, notes the potential impact of foundations "forming relationships with organizations and then trusting that they are going to do good work."



RADIO BILINGÜE
FRESNO, CALIFORNIA



Engaging Latino communities through Spanish language public radio

Radio Bilingüe was founded in 1976 to serve the Latino community of farm workers and their families in the San Joaquin Valley of California. Conceived by Hugo Morales, the station's founder and executive director, Radio Bilingüe fulfills a need in the region by identifying and serving an audience that had been overlooked. Early in its history, the station was funded primarily by California-based foundations and small individual donations. Today, Radio Bilingüe also receives support from national foundations and government sources.

Radio Bilingüe made its inaugural broadcast on July 4, 1980, choosing Independence Day as a symbolic date. It called itself *La Voz que Rompió el Silencio* (The Voice That Broke the Silence). That first broadcast, which featured Jose Alfredo Jimenez and Lola Betran, two legends of the Mexican Ranchera music tradition, was a celebration, Morales says. "It articulated unrealized dreams, passions, and sufferings of the workers."

Radio Bilingüe serves a multilingual (Spanish, English, Mixteco, Triqui) Latino audience. Listeners range from low-income, Spanish-speaking rural farmworkers and recent immigrants to more established second- and third-generation Latinos. Radio Bilingüe owns and operates 25 non-commercial FM stations in California and the Southwest, where it is known as "Radio Without Borders" (Radio Sin Fronteras).

Two of Radio Bilingüe's flagship programs—*Línea Abierta*, a daily call-in show, and *Edición Semanaria*, a weekly news magazine—are the only Spanish-language national news and information programs produced for the public broadcasting system. Both programs are aired on over 80 affiliate stations across the U.S., with listenership extending to Northern Mexico. A combined 500,000 listeners across the station network tune in to the 24-hour national satellite service, which includes cultural programming and music showcasing Latino urban, Mexican folk, and Afro-Caribbean traditions.

With COVID-19 affecting Latinos disproportionately, foundations have recognized Radio Bilingüe's invaluable reach. "Community and regional foundations have finally realized that their investments in Radio Bilingüe are gold," Morales says.

“ They see that we can provide information to front line workers and [they] know that we are the only avenue to reach folks in their indigenous languages. We are the trusted messengers.”

ORGANIZATION TYPE:
Independent nonprofit organization

OPERATING BUDGET:
\$2,474,065 in 2019

CONTACT:
Hugo Morales, Founder and Executive Director, hugom@pacbell.net

KEY FUNDERS:
[The California Wellness Foundation](#)
[The Community Foundation of Monterey County](#)
[The James Irvine Foundation](#)

LINKS:
Radio Bilingüe: radiobilingue.org
Programming Schedule: bit.ly/3arZW7t
Livestream: bit.ly/3diqOU4

Radio Bilingüe's Census 2020 Campaign: bit.ly/3sf0C64



Top: Ms. Juana Gómez hosts Radio Bilingüe's La Hora Mixteca program, mixing traditional and contemporary Chilena music from the Mexican states of Oaxaca and Guerrero. (Image courtesy of Radio Bilingüe)
Above: The farmworker community in California's Central Valley, one of Radio Bilingüe's primary audiences. (iStock photo)

CHICAGO SOUTH SIDE FILM FESTIVAL

CHICAGO, IL



ORGANIZATION TYPE:

Independent nonprofit organization

OPERATING BUDGET:

\$35,000 in 2019

KEY FUNDERS:

The Chicago Community Trust

The Field Foundation of Illinois

CONTACT:

Michelle Kennedy, Executive Director,
michelle@filmsforthepeople.com

Showcasing and serving a community through film

The Chicago South Side Film Festival (CSSFF) serves South Side filmmakers and audiences, guided by its dual mission to provide opportunities for filmmakers “to screen their work in their own communities, and to use film as a tool for collective intellectual and community engagement.” Through screenings, training, and events, the festival cultivates a vibrant film community in neighborhoods overlooked by the city’s established film institutions.

Before launching the festival in 2017, Michelle Kennedy, CSSFF founder and executive director, surveyed over 100 film-related events in Chicago, from month-long festivals to screenings at museums. None was on the South Side. Kennedy works to fill this gap, striving “to reflect and celebrate the true diversity of the South Side of Chicago,” with programming and outreach tailored to the South Side’s large African American communities—from young filmmakers to community elders—as well as African immigrant communities and Latino and Asian cultural groups.

For filmmakers, CSSFF develops camaraderie and provides professional opportunities, including film screenings, panel discussions, workshops, and pitch competitions. Noting the racial discrimination experienced by many local filmmakers when submitting to festivals, Kennedy emphasizes CSSFF’s work to provide professional development as well as support systems, underscoring her goal “to create a sense of community for filmmakers on the South Side.”

In response to COVID-19, CSSFF offered filmmakers an online Mental Wellness for Creatives conversation, with a follow-up workshop planned on the safety, financial, and emotional aspects of restarting a filmmaking career as the pandemic wanes. CSSFF is also serving audiences during the pandemic, collaborating with community organizations to arrange online screenings and discussions of films such as Bruce Orenstein’s documentary “The Color Tax: The Origins of the Modern-Day Racial Wealth Gap,” and working with partners to plan a hybrid 2021 festival.

Beyond COVID-19, CSSFF plans to grow year-round programming, expand professional development for emerging filmmakers, and possibly establish its own South Side venue. With these goals in mind, Kennedy celebrates place-based funders who “push boundaries” in supporting film organizations, film projects, and filmmakers—the interconnected community that the festival works to nurture on Chicago’s South Side.



LINKS:

Chicago South Side Film Festival:
southsidefilmfest.org

The *TRiIBE* Article on 2020 Festival:
bit.ly/32es0q8

The *Shame of Chicago* Virtual Film Screenings: southsidefilmfest.org/shame-of-chicago

*Top: 2019 iOne Digital Filmmaker Panel.
Above: 2019 Harper Theater Screening.
(Images courtesy of Chicago South Side Film Festival)*



Amplifying stories that connect rural communities

Appalshop helps Appalachians tell their own stories. The organization grew out of an Eastern Kentucky film workshop, created through a partnership between the U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity and the American Film Institute. Bill Richardson moved to Kentucky to lead the effort in 1969, inspired to use video as a tool for documenting and sharing community perspectives. Appalshop eventually became an independent organization, serving the region through programming that documents and supports local cultures, furthers community creativity, and amplifies Appalachian voices within the region and beyond.

Appalshop programs span media formats, from documentary film to a 24-hour radio station, youth filmmaking training, a record label, a media archive, and news reporting on regional topics including health and the economy. Beyond media, Appalshop produces theater, holds an annual music festival, and creates civic initiatives on topics including solar power, access to reproductive healthcare, and re-imagining the local economy.

Community gathering places are central to Appalshop's efforts. In addition to working with over 20 partner organizations to establish a Culture Hub in Whitesburg, Appalshop helps rural communities develop and protect their own local cultural centers. Appalshop uses recordings of events held at these centers, such as participatory story circles, in its own media channels, empowering storytellers and presenting community experiences often lacking in mainstream media.

Appalshop has thus far weathered COVID-19 challenges; however, Mimi Pickering, director of Appalshop's Community Media Initiative, notes that the region has long struggled with limited media funding, with philanthropic dollars generally funneled to urban centers. In response, Appalshop has worked to build a permanent endowment to sustain operations, largely supported by individual donors and national funders, while advocating for donors to allocate more resources to rural communities.

Longer-term, the region faces hard choices regarding its over-reliance on a coal economy at a time when advocates are demanding cleaner fuel. Pickering underscores the pivotal role of media in this context to provide an alternative to combative debates, "to change the public narrative about our future," through encouraging dialogue and showcasing individuals developing local economic alternatives to mining.

APPALSHOP WHITESBURG, KENTUCKY



ORGANIZATION TYPE:
Independent nonprofit organization

PROGRAM BUDGET:
\$2.5 million in 2020

KEY FUNDERS:
Appalachian Impact Fund of the
Foundation for Appalachian Kentucky
Appalshop Production and Education
Fund (endowment)

[Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation](#)

CONTACT:
Alexandra Werner-Winslow,
Communications Director,
alexandra@appalshop.org

LINKS:
Appalshop: appalshop.org

Making Connections News:
makingconnectionsnews.org

Appalshop Archive:
appalshoparchive.org

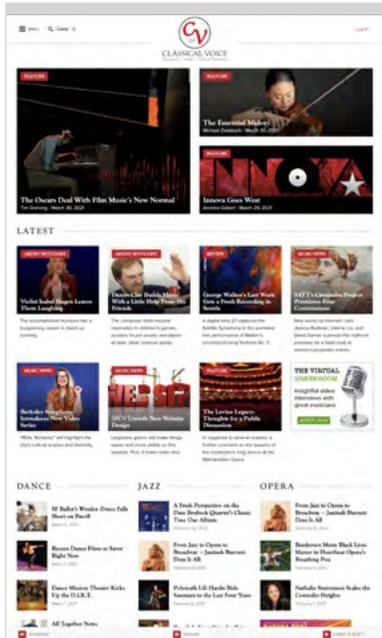
Appalachian Media Institute:
amiappalshop.org

Appalshop Radio, WMMT 88.7:
wmmt.org

Above: Local group performing Shape Note singing on WMMT in 2016. (Image by Mimi Pickering) Below: Appalshop, 2020. (Image by Willa Johnson)



**SAN FRANCISCO
CLASSICAL VOICE
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA**



Top: Bassist Lisa Mezzacappa as featured in SFCV. (Image by Tim Rose)
Above: SFCV's home page.

ORGANIZATION TYPE:
Independent nonprofit organization

OPERATING BUDGET:
\$411,000 in 2018

KEY FUNDERS:
Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation
William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

CONTACT:
Claudia Campazzo, Executive Director,
claudia@sfcv.org

LINKS:
San Francisco Classical Voice: sfcv.org

Stream This! Listings: sfcv.org/article/stream-this

Articles and Features: sfcv.org/news-reviews/features

Connecting musicians and audiences across California

San Francisco Classical Voice (SFCV) is an online news, information, and resource hub for music, musicians, and audiences in California. Robert Commanday, the long-serving classical music critic for the San Francisco Chronicle, founded the organization in 1998 to fill the growing gap in classical music news and reviews in print journalism publications across the state. Commanday and his wife took no salary in the organization's early years, and graduate students were the website's first journalists.

Since then, SFCV has hired staff, developed a roster of paid editors and writers, and expanded its coverage to include jazz, folk, ethnic music, and dance in the Bay Area. More recently, SFCV has added Los Angeles to its coverage area. Pre-pandemic, the site's concert calendar was the most detailed of its kind in the state, including hundreds of smaller arts organizations that would not otherwise have a central way to reach audiences. With COVID-19 shuttering concert halls and performance venues, SFCV now offers robust *Stream This!* listings of the online offerings being created by music organizations and musicians across California.

To serve audiences during the pandemic, and with fewer concert listings, SFCV has commissioned more long-form journalism about arts policy and the economics of arts and culture. These pieces have explored subjects like the benefits of early childhood music education; a critique of the National Endowment for the Arts' funding practices; and the impact of California's AB-5 legislation regulating gig workers on the arts community. SFCV intends to continue and expand this new focus in the coming years.

Beyond news and reviews, SFCV offers free listings for music schools and private music teachers, posts audition information, and provides a centralized list of links to arts venues across the state (with maps and directions).

Visitors to SFCV total about 45,000 per month. For these individuals and the artists who are eager to engage with them, SFCV provides a vital regional resource. Claudia Campazzo, executive director, calls attention to the many arts organizations that count on the website to reach audiences.

“ These small organizations are what makes our arts community distinctive and diverse. It's for them that we do this work.”

Included here is a sample of notable media organizations in Philadelphia whose place-based work inspired this report. While every “place” is different, these are illustrative of the kinds of organizations that can cultivate creative and community expression through media that other place-based funders might find in their own communities. Wyncote funding has supported the work of these five organizations in recent years.

The **Asian Arts Initiative** (AAI) is a multi-disciplinary community arts organization based in Philadelphia’s Chinatown North. AAI’s building serves as a community anchor, with space for peer organizations, community members, artists, exhibitions, performances, and education. Its black box theater doubles as a digital broadcast studio and is available to rent. The central location makes AAI a lively physical hub for the neighborhood. AAI has consistently incorporated media arts in its programming, offering a media artist-in-residence program, producing arts experiences virtually as well as physically, and presenting media artists in its gallery, theater, and public-spaces programming. Through these investments in media capacity, AAI’s media profile is notable, more so than other local arts centers nationally.

WYNCOTE FOUNDATION
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA



ORGANIZATIONS:

Asian Arts Initiative
asianartsinitiative.org

Media In Neighborhoods Group
ming-media.com

PhillyCAM
phillycam.org

Scribe Video Center
scribe.org

WURD-FM
wurdradio.com

Left: Artists Jeffrey Cheung, Gabriel Ramirez, and Alex Shen install a capsule exhibit at the Pearl Street Gallery. (Image by Zsa Zsa Dali) Right: Khari Johnson-Ricks installs a mural as part of the Unity at the Initiative exhibition. (Image by Bianca Chun)





Top left: Members of Freedom Theatre Precious Places filming in Lower North Philadelphia. Top right: The James Shuler Memorial Boxing Gym Precious Places group filming in West Philadelphia. (Images by CJ Willis for Scribe Video Center)

During the COVID-19 pandemic, AAI produced a multi-site, multimedia, visual arts exhibition and “at home experience” featuring the work of queer artist and skater Jeffrey Cheung and their UNITY initiative. The multi-week event spanned disciplines and both virtual and physical platforms, aiming to “expand diverse representations of queer and trans bodies of color, and to protect a creative community whose ‘2020 troubles’ are compounded by under-representation and outright injustices.” Wyncote has provided organizational support to AAI over the past decade.

SHOOTERS: Narrative Shift is a digital media training program founded by El Sawyer and Jon Kaufman to help people who have been incarcerated return to and re-engage with their communities. It grew out of Jon and El’s award-winning film company Media In Neighborhoods Group (MING), and now stands as a separate nonprofit organization. Participants learn in-demand digital media skills, creating a pathway to employment while learning to create and share personal and community stories. SHOOTERS uses media literacy and media creation to assist participants on their journey of self-transformation, and supports them as they face the pitfalls of their re-entry process.

PhillyCAM is a community media center that provides locally produced media content for cable television, FM radio, and online. It offers equipment, studio space, workshops and intensives for youth and adults, and opportunities for broadcast distribution on public access cable television channels and the Low Power FM station WPPM that enable local makers to reach local audiences directly. PhillyCAM’s work reflects a core value that all people can be media creators, not just consumers.

Beyond training in skills like recording, editing, and post-production, PhillyCAM creates avenues for public participation in newsgathering and community documentation projects. For example, the Community News Street Team receives training to cover community events in local neighborhoods, and through the Street Team, local organizations can request event coverage. Wyncote provides operational support for PhillyCAM and has made additional grants for special programs.



Radio host Dennis Link interviews a guest for the local politics program Hall Monitor in the WPPM radio station studio at PhillyCAM. (Image by Vanessa Maria Graber)

Scribe Video Center was founded by filmmaker Louis Massiah in 1982 to provide access to tools and knowledge that empower community members and artists at all levels of experience to tell their own stories. Through programs like Precious Places Community History Project, helping neighborhoods create documentaries about the history of their public spaces; or the Community Visions program, supporting local nonprofits in creating documentaries about their work; Scribe provides multiple access points that together make its bustling West Philadelphia Center a magnet for both artists and community members.

Wyncote’s funding over the years has supported both general operations and the Philadelphia Independent Media Fund, a program that provides small grants for makers beginning or finishing projects.



WURD-FM is the only African American owned radio station in Pennsylvania and one of few such independent commercial stations in the U.S. WURD provides news, talk, and conversation about local politics, public affairs, community news, and arts, all offered from a Black perspective. Serving Philadelphia’s majority-Black population, WURD provides an essential hub for dialogue and engagement, and a platform for the discussion and development of public policy on behalf of the Black community. Pre-pandemic, WURD presented live events such as resource fairs, panel discussions, and social activities that offered opportunities for networking, learning, and discussion. WURD plans to resume these when the pandemic abates. WURD is expanding its digital programming through its WURD app, social media, and online WURD TV. It recently launched ecoWURD, a multimedia journalism project exploring the intersection of race, income, health, and the environment; and Lively-HOOD, an initiative to address the high unemployment and poverty rates in Philadelphia’s Black community.

Wyncote and other grantmakers have invested in WURD’s journalism capacity and community engagement events. This reflects the growing recognition among media funders that such support can advance BIPOC-led media across organizational forms and ownership structures.



Top left: Image courtesy of WURD. Top right: Community news reporters Rossi Brooks and Monica Robinson interview Councilwoman Helen Gym for PhillyCAM Voices. (Image by Gretjen Clausing) Above: Members of PhillyCAM Latinx in the Green Screen Studio. (Image by Laura Deutch)

About Wyncote Foundation

Wyncote, a family foundation formed in 2009 with funds from the Otto and Phoebe Haas Charitable Trusts at the direction of John C. Haas, pursues a range of disparate grantmaking interests. David Haas, vice chair, leads Wyncote’s Public Media and Journalism Program. While focusing principally on the Philadelphia region and the state of Pennsylvania, Wyncote actively participates in field development efforts throughout the broader public media and journalism sectors in the U.S.

In its local and regional media grantmaking, Wyncote has always taken an ecosystem approach, combining a strong commitment to accountability journalism with support for a range of community information needs and resources, including many examples of creative storytelling and other narrative forms. Alongside anchor institutions such as libraries, parks, colleges and universities, cultural organizations, and the local press, Wyncote sees media as a crucial component of the public square, and advocates for cultural organizations’ inclusion as stewards and architects of a community’s memory, identity, and vision through their multifaceted media offerings.



Wyncote Foundation
PUBLIC MEDIA AND JOURNALISM

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wyncotefoundation.org

RESOURCES FOR PLACE-BASED FOUNDATIONS INTERESTED IN FUNDING MEDIA

TOOLS AND GUIDES:

- *Alliance for Community Media's Community Media Directory*: This nationwide directory enables users to search for community media organizations by location (city, state, or ZIP code) or by name.
allcommunitymedia.org/ACM/Directory/Community_Media_Directory.aspx
- *Foundation Maps for Media Funding*: A data visualization tool created by the Foundation Center in partnership with Media Impact Funders enables users to scan the global funding landscape, analyze funder and nonprofit networks, and increase knowledge of media funding.
maps.foundationcenter.org/?acct=media
- *Impact Field Guide*: This 2019 guide by Doc Society shares case studies, strategic and logistical planning frameworks, and assessment methods aimed at helping filmmakers think about ways their film can reach, engage, and activate audiences.
impactguide.org
- *Indigenous Film/Media Arts Festivals*: The imagineNATIVE Film and Media Arts Festival has gathered a list of Indigenous film and media arts festivals across Canada, the United States, and Central and South America.
imaginative.org/other-festivals
- *Making a New Reality Toolkit*: Building on the report *Making a New Reality*, authored by Kamal Sinclair and commissioned by the Ford Foundation's JustFilms program, this 2020 toolkit created by Jessica Clark and Carrie McLaren offers resources for making emerging media, such as virtual reality and social media projects, more diverse, equitable, and inclusive.
makinganewreality.org/making-a-new-reality-a-toolkit-for-inclusive-media-futures-a3bdc0e68f20
- *Media Arts Resource List*: Compiled by the National Endowment for the Arts, this non-comprehensive list includes service organizations, professional networks, arts agencies, public media entities, media arts organizations, and other media resources.
arts.gov/sites/default/files/NEA-Media-Arts-Resources-List-March2020.pdf
- *Prometheus Radio Project*: In support of their mission to advance "participatory radio as a tool for social justice organizing and a voice for community expression," Prometheus' website features videos and guides on the logistics of starting and running radio programming, with an emphasis on Low Power FM.
prometheusradio.org
- *New York Media Arts Map*: A project of the New York State Council on the Arts' (NYSCA) Electronic Media & Film Program, the map identifies art and technology projects and activity across the state supported by NYSCA, and provides an example of media mapping that could be adopted in other regions.
nymediaartsmap.org
- *Science of Story Building: What Research and Scholarship Tell Us About Good Stories*: This compilation of research and best practices by the University of Florida College of Journalism and Communications, in partnership with the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, dives into what scientific research reveals about the qualities and elements that make stories compelling.
medium.com/science-of-story-building

FUNDING REPORTS AND STUDIES:

- *Decoding Media Impact: Insights, Advice & Recommendations*: This 2020 report published by Media Impact Funders shares insights gathered from their past seven years delving into media impact assessment and serves as a "practical resource for funders who want to understand where to start."
mediaimpactfunders.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/MIF-Guide-Digital-FNL.pdf
- *Pennies for Progress*: In this report, the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy analyzes 11 years of Foundation Center data from 2003–08 to determine how foundations adapted to support underserved communities during waves of economic hardship. They found that support for disadvantaged communities grew by just 15 percent. Funding support for long-term change did not increase at all.

The report proposes guidelines for how foundations can best support under-served sectors of society.

ncrp.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Pennies-for-Progress-highres.pdf

- *Philanthropy's Rural Blindspot*: This feature from the Spring 2021 issue of the Stanford Social Innovation Review explores foundations' tendencies to overlook distressed rural communities, and advocates for grantmakers to adjust their strategies.
ssir.org/articles/entry/philanthropys_rural_blind_spot

TREND REPORTS:

- *Centering the Picture: The role of race & ethnicity in cultural engagement in the U.S.*: This 2020 report by Slover Linett examines data from *Culture + Community in a Time of Crisis*, a national survey on arts and culture participation conducted in collaboration with LaPlaca Cohen as part of a special edition of their Culture Track series on audience trends. The study analyzes data gathered before the killing of George Floyd through the lens of race and ethnicity and in the context of nationwide calls for racial justice and systemic change, centering the insights, participation, and needs of underrepresented communities.
sloverlinett.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Centering-the-Picture-full-report-CCTC-Wave-1-findings.pdf
- *Philanthropy and Digital Civil Society: Blueprint 2020, The Annual Industry Forecast*: Issued annually by principal author Lucy Bernholz, director of the Digital Civil Society Lab and senior researcher at Stanford PACS, the blueprint presents key trends in digital civil society from the perspective of the philanthropic sector.
pacscenter.stanford.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Blueprint-2020-FINAL-DIGITAL.pdf
- *Collective Wisdom: Co-Creating Media within Communities, across Disciplines, and with Algorithms*: A 2019 study led by the Co-Creation Studio at MIT's Open Documentary Lab examines practices, challenges, and learnings related to media creation beyond single-authorship frameworks.
wip.mitpress.mit.edu/collectivewisdom

- *Community Ties: Understanding what Attaches People to the Place Where They Live*: This 2020 report was commissioned by the Knight Foundation and prepared by the Urban Institute to examine national trends and local examples of attachments to place expressed by Americans living in urbanized and metro areas.

knightfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Community-Ties-Final-pg.pdf

RESPONDING TO CRISES:

- *On the Frontlines: Nonprofits Led by People of Color Confront COVID-19 and Structural Racism*: This 2020 report by the Building Movement Project examines how the overlapping crises of COVID-19 and systemic racism are impacting nonprofits led by people of color and provides recommendations for strengthening these organizations, leaders, and communities.
buildingmovement.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/On-the-Frontlines-COVID-Leaders-of-Color-Final-10.2.20.pdf
- *Diving into Racial Equity: The MAP Fund's Exploration*: Written by Vanessa Whang for Animating Democracy, a program of Americans for the Arts, this 2019 report describes the MAP Fund's efforts to align its grant practices with its priority on racial equity, analyzing steps taken, challenges, and lessons learned.
americansforthearts.org/sites/default/files/MAPFund_R3_Final_hi.pdf

INITIATIVES TO LEARN MORE ABOUT:

- *Community Media*: This program of Cultural Survival supports Indigenous, community-controlled media through funding; a Central American Indigenous Community Media Alliance; women's media training; youth media fellowships; Indigenous community radio networks; and policy advocacy.
culturalsurvival.org/programs/community-media
- *FNX | First Nations Experience*: This national broadcast television network is dedicated exclusively to Native American and World Indigenous content. Founded by the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians and the San

Bernardino Community College District in 2011, today the network is owned and operated by KVCR-PBS San Bernardino and is carried by 22 affiliate stations in 14 states.

fnx.org/about

- *frank Gathering*: Part of the University of Florida Center for Public Interest Communities, *frank* supports media for social change and social interest communications through research, insights, and news centered around an annual conference. Presentations from past years are gathered on its website.
frankgathering.org
- *Andrew W. Mellon Foundation: Humanities in Place*: This new initiative supports a fuller, more complex telling of American histories and lived experiences by deepening the range of how and where our stories are told and by bringing a wider variety of voices into the public dialogue. The Foundation is working with media, historic and memorial spaces, didactic museums and other institutions, and conveners of public experiences—including the digital or ephemeral—to expand the public expression of the histories that have made us and the values we hold.
mellon.org/programs/humanities-place
- *Sundance Institute's Indigenous Program*: Through fellowships and its Native Filmmakers Lab, Sundance seeks out and supports Indigenous artists.
sundance.org/programs/indigenous-program
- *Working Films' Rural Cinema*: This program trains rural leaders to use film as a resource for their work, seeking to increase community engagement and shift culture through documentaries.
workingfilms.org/projects/rural-cinema

REPORTS BY GRANTMAKING ORGANIZATIONS:

- *Field Foundation*: The Foundation commissioned a “Local Media and Storytelling White Paper” and developed a grantmaking program in Media and Storytelling in response to its findings.
fieldfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Media-Storytelling-white-paper.pdf
 - *Democracy Fund*: This series of reports, released in 2018/2019, on the role of media by and for diverse communities in the United States, seeks to listen to media makers of color and identify opportunities to support their work. The series includes:
 - American Indian Media Today:
democracyfund.org/idea/american-indian-media-today
 - African American Media Today:
democracyfund.org/idea/african-american-media-today
 - Hispanic Media Today:
democracyfund.org/idea/hispanic-media-today
 - *Ford Foundation*: The Foundation commissioned “Beyond Inclusion: The Critical Role of People of Color in the US Documentary Ecosystem” (2020), researched and written by Sahar Driver, PhD, to inform funding strategies for organizations led by and serving filmmakers of color.
fordfoundation.org/work/learning/research-reports/beyond-inclusion
- ## SUBSCRIBE TO INTERESTING NEWSLETTERS FROM THESE ORGANIZATIONS:
- *Indie Lit Update*: The Community of Literary Magazines and Presses’ bimonthly e-newsletter features independent literary news and highlights small presses and literary magazines.
clmp.org

- *Media Impact Funders*: Monthly email newsletters and the AIM (Assessing Impact of Media) Bulletin share news, trends, and announcements of webinars and events.

mediainpactfunders.org

- *National Federation of Community Broadcasters*: Monthly and weekly email newsletters highlight industry news, innovative programming, and conversations on community media strategy.

nfc.org/newsletter

- *Native Public Media*: Subscribe to keep up-to-date on NPM's work to expand and strengthen Native media and for highlights from their network of 57 Native radio stations and four television stations.

nativepublicmedia.org

ORGANIZATIONS TO FOLLOW:

- *The Alliance for Media Arts and Culture*

www.thealliance.media

- *Association of Independents in Radio*

airmedia.org

- *IDFA Doc Lab*

idfa.nl/en/info/about-idfa-doclab

- *National Multicultural Alliance (formerly National Minority Consortia)*

nmcalliance.org

- *Third Coast International Audio Festival*

thirdcoastfestival.org

- *Women Make Movies*

wmm.com

Special thanks to the organizations we profiled and to the dedicated staff members who took time to talk to us and collaborate on this report.

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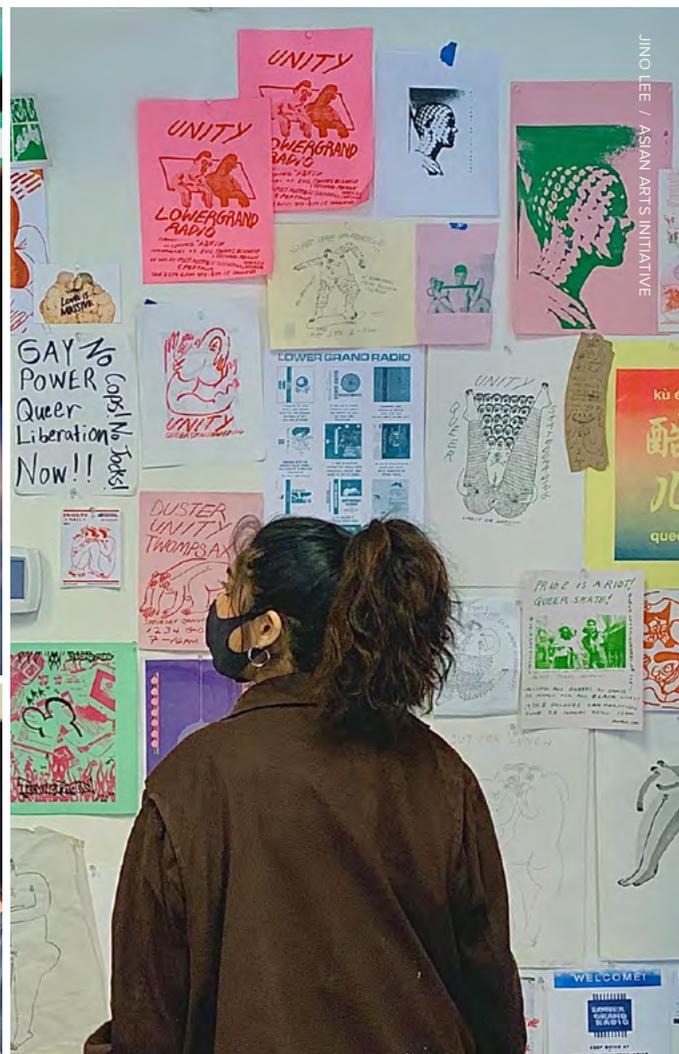
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