



South Florida PBS, Inc. Diversity Report – Fiscal Year 2023 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023)

Who We Are

South Florida PBS is an innovative, resilient, and dynamic non-profit public media company. We create compelling local content, as well as nationally and internationally acclaimed content, and aspire to be our region's most trusted resource for information, entertainment, inspiration, and lifelong learning, especially for children.

What We Do

We serve a diverse population of all ages and cultural backgrounds from Key West to the Sebastian Inlet and from the Atlantic Ocean to Lake Okeechobee. Our broadcast and digital platforms offer locally and nationally produced content on WPBT, WXEL, Health Channel, South Florida PBS Kids and Create for approximately 6.5 million viewers in our region.

Throughout our history, we have produced and/or aired a multitude of programs that reflect the diversity of our South Florida communities. The 1970's series, *Qué Pasa USA*, created by WPBT, was the first weekly television program to feature a bi-lingual Hispanic family on public television. More recently, original content produced by South Florida PBS highlights our community's local diversity; programs include *The Florida Keys: 200 Years of Paradise*, *Between the Covers*, *Crossing Overtown*, *Art Loft*, *Singular*, *Birthright*, *On the Town in the Palm Beaches with Frank Licari*, film-maker, and *Hope is Here* to name a few.

Reflecting, respecting and giving voice to community diversity has been a primary tenet of South Florida PBS for over 60 years

The Communities We Serve

When developing our most recent strategic plan South Florida PBS conducted listening sessions to better understand our audiences' concerns and interests. We met with a variety of representatives from the nonprofit, public and private sectors from every community we serve who discussed their communities' needs and how we might offer public media assistance to support and address their challenges and opportunities.

While there were important and distinct issues in each community, there was also a good deal of commonality. At each session, children's education, arts and culture, access to healthcare information and resources, dissemination of unbiased news, sharing of information regarding trusted community services and resources, and civic leadership/engagement were mentioned as

the main and most concerning challenges facing everyone. There was a prevailing desire for acceptance, understanding and kindness woven through every conversation.

We learned from these listening sessions that South Florida PBS is perceived as a trusted source for information. This perception presented a unique opportunity for South Florida PBS to meaningfully engage the greater South Florida community on important issues and use the extraordinary power of media to create a more informed and engaged community.

We plan to utilize this very effective process when updating our strategic plan in 2024.

In addition, we shared our Diversity Statement and Report with our Community Advisory Boards at their October 2022 meetings asking for their feedback regarding our programming efforts with our Diversity Statement in mind. These Boards are comprised of members who demonstrate activity and leadership with business, social or educational organizations and meet three times each year to review the programming goals established by the organization, the services provided by the organization, and the significant programming policy decisions rendered by the organization. The Boards provide feedback and may make recommendations with respect to whether the programming and other policies are meeting the specialized educational, arts and cultural needs of the communities served by the organization. The response from both Boards were very positive. Comments included: “solid document which represents all aspects of the community;” “incredibly thorough;” and “The goal is implemented in the programs we watch on SFPBS every day.”

Our Diversity Statement

Our mission is to enrich, strengthen and empower our diverse communities, especially children and the underserved, through trusted broadcast and digital content, experiential learning, and community engagement on relevant platforms. This mission is supported by our values, our guiding beliefs, that we have defined as Diversity, Creativity, Innovation, Trustworthiness, and Resilience.

We strongly believe in and fully embrace diversity to create and maintain a positive work environment where the similarities and differences of individuals are respected and valued creating an environment where everyone can reach their full potential and maximize their contributions. We embrace our employees’ differences and diversity in all its forms, including – but not limited to – age, ethnicity, family or marital status, gender, gender identity, disability, physical abilities, political affiliation, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and veteran status.

We recognize that a talented and diverse workforce is the key to competitive advantage. Our business success reflects the quality and the skills of our people and our governing Boards.

Our Diversity Goal

Our ongoing goal is to build and support a strong organizational culture of integrity in which all

individuals are valued and treated with dignity and respect. Our efforts will allow our staff and governing board(s) to embrace and sustain our commitment to the communities we serve and to all our viewers at the highest possible level.

South Florida PBS will continue in its practices and policies on Affirmative Action, community initiatives, and content (programming and production) as well as undertake CPB Initiatives to realize this goal.

Our Initiatives

Affirmative Action Plan – South Florida PBS adopted its Affirmative Action Plan in March 1980. This Plan is reviewed and updated annually by our Personnel & Diversity Committee of the Board of Directors. This Committee is responsible, in part, to help institutionalize policies that support equity for all employees and evaluate the effectiveness of ongoing efforts, adapting as needed. Thus, leading to a workplace culture that values and leverages diversity to its fullest potential so that every employee can have a sense of belonging. The most recent update of our Affirmative Action Plan took place at their October 3, 2022 meeting. Our Affirmative Action Plan outlines the organization's commitment to equal employment opportunity for all – from selection and election of officers; to recruitment and hiring of personnel; to promotion and training and/or any other job-related matter.

Employment Related Outreach – Notices and information for all full time – as defined by the FCC - open positions are sent to an extensive list of organizational and educational institutions to educate our communities of career opportunities in public media. In addition, a Human Resources representative attends job fairs (either in person or virtually) on a regular basis to recruit from the communities we serve for career opportunities in public media.

Interns – College and high school students are granted opportunities to intern with South Florida PBS. They are sought from a wide range of educational institutions, which are frequently updated, as we strive to achieve diversity in this opportunity for individuals to obtain applicable knowledge and skills. We placed 11 interns in fiscal year 2023 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023), 14 interns in calendar year 2022, 19 interns in calendar year 2021, 15 in calendar year 2020, and 16 in calendar year 2019.

When the pandemic hit in the Spring of 2020, we already had interns in place. Staff, and those interns and their supervisors, had to pivot as we all began to work remotely. Departments with interns assigned remote projects and work responsibilities and provided mentoring through telecommunications (interns use Zoom and Microsoft Teams to communicate regularly with their supervisor and teams). Since then, we have continued to give interns remote work projects along with field work whenever possible. This virtual/hybrid internship program was an adjustment but has picked up momentum as students and staff alike have become more comfortable working remotely.

Another benefit of this virtual internship program is we now have the ability to tap into a larger pool of students as opposed to focusing on local schools due to our prior in-person requirement. The pandemic gave us the opportunity to work with students nationwide. This new hybrid internship model means, students as well as organizations, won't have the limitations of local and/or regional areas.

South Florida PBS also developed an Autism Internship program in 2016. We worked closely with the University of Miami – Nova Southeastern University Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD) to design a paid internship specifically for individuals with Autism. The program provides an overview of TV production and TV studio operations with the intern working approximately 10 hours a week for an eight-week period. Internship duties for TV production include research, transcription, and social media postings; duties for TV studio production include entering scripts into the teleprompter, studio and field equipment set up and assisting during field shoots.

Since the start of the program in 2016, we have had six Autism Interns. In 2017, we hired one as a Freelance Production Assistant; who was promoted to Freelance Associate Producer in 2022.

In 2019 South Florida PBS won the award for Outstanding Business Partner for hiring individuals with autism and providing training for our staff.

Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, the Autism Internship Program has been put on hold. The nature of remote and/or hybrid work does not provide the framework necessary for this undertaking to be successful.

Board of Directors – The Personnel & Diversity Committee of the Board annually reviews the organization's Affirmative Action Plan, our Diversity Statement and Report as well as various employment statistics regarding hiring, promotions, and separations annually. The Personnel & Diversity Committee also provides a full report to The Board of Directors on an annual basis. The Affirmative Action Plan and our Diversity Statement and Report is also provided to our Nominating & Governance Committee of the Board to help guide them in identifying candidates for nomination to the Board. At their February 16, 2022, meeting the Committee Chair emphasized the need to focus on Board diversity and as a result the Committee developed a plan to identify diverse long term donors already in our database and create a target list of 10 to 20 prospects. The Committee also discussed developing a recruiting strategy for same, and we're pleased to report, in calendar year 2023, we were able to increase our Board's diversity welcoming several new Board members. The Community Advisory Boards also receive a copy of our Diversity Statement and Report each year to help guide them in determining community initiatives and needs, knowing that a thoughtfully cast CAB will help develop television program offerings that explore, celebrate, and consider diverse perspectives.

Content – South Florida PBS prides itself on working with local independent film makers to deliver content that reflects the unique interests of South Florida and the diverse communities we serve. We also curate community-based content, both online and otherwise, that highlights the arts and cultural heritage of South Florida. Our programming includes nationally recognized and

emerging film makers thus lending voice to diverse talent which is a key component of national broadcast series such as Independent Lens and POV.

Our recent efforts to produce programs that reflect the diversity of the South Florida communities we serve included: Our ***Your South Florida*** series produced programs on topics related to diverse populations with *Beyond Pride* which looked at the biggest issues facing South Florida LGBTQ+ communities and aired in August 2022; *Black Men & Mental Health* a special edition of ***Your South Florida*** in which Darius V. Daughtry, Founder & Artistic Director of Art Prevails Project, led a panel discussion on the issues impacting the mental health of Black men which aired in February 2023; *Hiring on the Spectrum* in which we met the people creating job opportunities for young adults on the spectrum, while changing the way people view neurodivergence in the workplace which aired in April 2023; and, *Voices of Pride*, in which we lifted up the voices of South Florida's LGBTQ+ communities and heard their lived experiences and explored local resources for those in need of support which aired in June 2023.

Digital-First Content included Your Story segments – *Exploring One of the Largest LGBTQ+ Archives and Libraries in the U.S.* which posted and aired on **Your South Florida** in August 2022; *Photographing Boca Raton's Oldest Neighborhood (Pearl City)* which was posted in January 2023; *Celebrating Diverse Children's Books at Rohi's Readery in West Palm Beach* which was posted in March 2023; *Poetry Inspires at Our Voices: Festival of Words in Fort Lauderdale* which was posted in May 2023; *Meet 101-Year-Old Miamian Mercedes Garcia* which was posted in May 2023, and *Meeting 101-Year-Old Doctor Gladys Lopez* which was posted in June 2023.

Other productions/co-productions highlighting the diverse communities of South Florida included *Birthright*, which follows two electro-funk musicians on their first trip to Cuba where these first-generation Americans are forced to confront their identities and the differing opinions of their loved ones and each other which aired in June 2023; *Crossing Overton*, an examination of the integral role Miami played in the national civil rights movement and the long narrative of racial conflict that still resonates in the national conversation which aired in April 2023 and *The Florida Keys: 200 Years of Paradise* which explored the often-overlooked history of Black contribution to the development of the Keys and the legacy of pioneers such as Sandy Cornish, a former slave who built Key West's most successful farm in the 19th century and became a prominent civil leader which aired in January 2023.

Both our *Caribbean Heritage* segment of **On the Town in The Palm Beaches** which aired in June 2022 and the Digital-First Your Story segment – *Minorities in Shark Sciences (MISS) is Making Waves* which was posted in June 2022, were nominated for an Emmy Award in the newly created categories Diversity/Equity/Inclusion – Short Form and Diversity/Equity/Inclusion – Long Form by the regional Suncoast National Association of Television Arts and Sciences for 2022. *Minorities in Shark Sciences* won the Emmy award for Diversity/Equity/Inclusion in short form content in December 2022 and was a significant validation of South Florida PBS' commitment to these goals.

Community engagement is an important complement to our programs as it allows us the opportunity to interact with our diverse audience through in-person events. These take the form of screening events in which we share excerpts of our programs and use them as a springboard to engage in meaningful conversation with a panel of expert guests, producers of the program and our live audience.

Some of the screening events which were held in Fiscal Year 2023 included: *Filmmaker “Open Dialogues: Black Voices/Black Stories,”* the premiere episode of season five, in January 2023; *On the Town: Around the World*, which guided guests through the rich international heritage of the Palm Beaches via a combination of the arts, cuisine and the rich multicultural history in February 2023; *Crossing Overtown*, which explored Miami’s unique role in the national civil rights movement throughout the 20th century and detailed how the legacy of Jim Crow America would eventually lead to the nation’s only Black Precinct and Colored Courtroom in the historic Village of Overtown in April 2023, and *Southern Storytellers* where we featured a diverse cast of local storytellers who took the stage to share their own unique stories in June 2023.

Additionally, to reflect the diversity of our communities, we produce promos which celebrate and illustrate the diversity of the communities we serve throughout the year with specific messaging and images (i.e., Black History Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, Pride Month, etc.). One of our most notable promos produced and which first aired in 2022, *Beacon of Hope*, won a Bronze medal class Anthem Award from the International Academy of Digital Arts & Sciences in the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion category as Best Local Awareness Program.

Training – We continue our commitment to a workplace free from any form of discrimination and/or harassment and conduct mandatory sexual harassment and discrimination training annually. Currently this annual training is done through an online compliance training company which provides us with the ability to track staff’s progress and ensure 100% participation. Each online course is comprised of bite-sized episodes featuring interactive videos that challenge employees to decide on the best approach to difficult, realistic work situations illustrating the different types of behavior that constitute harassment and sexual harassment; how to identify a “hostile work environment” and “quid pro quo” as defined by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), as well as what is and is not appropriate behavior under the current standard, retaliation, and protected characteristics. The course also provides information on the corporation’s Workplace Respect and Complaint Procedures policies. The most recent training was conducted in April 2023.

CPB Annual Initiatives Met

South Florida PBS has undertaken the following CPB suggested initiatives:

Diversity training for management and appropriate staff – South Florida PBS has conducted mandatory sexual harassment and discrimination training for all staff, including management,

since 2018. This mandatory training was last conducted in April 2023 with 100% staff participation.

Include individuals representing the diverse groups served by Grantee for internships – South Florida PBS’ internship program provides students with an opportunity to combine world experience and professional development to enhance their formal education. We provide practical world experience to balance the students’ theoretical training and allow students to meet and learn from professionals in their field and develop a network of contacts. For fiscal year 2023 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023) we utilized 11 interns of which 9% were white, 64% were Hispanic, and 27% were black. In calendar year 2022 we utilized 14 interns of whom 21.5% were white, 57% were Hispanic and 21.5% were black. In calendar year 2021, we utilized 19 interns of whom 37% were white, 47% were Hispanic and 16% black. In calendar year 2020, we utilized 15 interns of whom 53% were white, 20% were Hispanic and 27% were black. In calendar year 2019, we utilized 16 interns of whom 38% were white, 44% were Hispanic and 18% were black.

Participate in minority or other diversity job fairs – South Florida PBS participated in the Diversity & Inclusion Virtual Job Fair held through CareerEo Virtual Events on December 8, 2022. This job fair was open to diverse students & alumni from colleges and universities throughout the U.S.

Goals for the Upcoming Year

Continue to meet and exceed all FCC equal opportunity (EEO) policies and rules for broadcasters.

Continue to produce programs that reflect the diversity of the South Florida communities we serve. Thus far upcoming projects include:

We plan to present the award-winning film, *A New Dawn*, for Hispanic Heritage Month. Through a variety of interviews, this documentary describes the lives of Cubans departing and arriving in the United States as they fled the Castro Regime in the 1960’s and 1970’s. In addition, we will present a series of short films, entitled *Fantastical Speculations: Selections from the Third Horizon Film Festival*, which features stories focused on the Caribbean. Finally, SFPBS is in production on a new music special, entitled *Soundwaves at the Bandshell*, which will feature a selection of local artists performing music from around the globe at the historic Miami Beach Bandshell.

Community engagement plans include:

In October, South Florida PBS is partnering with the Palm Beach Latin Quarter to screen an episode of *Alma’s Way* at Belvedere Elementary School from 6 to 8 PM. The screening will be hosted by South Florida PBS’ Education Director, Penny Bernath, and Alma (character) who

will be leading approximately 200 children through fun, engaging and cultural activities following the screening of the episode.

Also in October, South Florida PBS' *Health Channel* will launch a disability awareness initiative to bring attention to the millions of Americans who live with mobility limitations. From individuals, veterans, or seniors with disabilities to their families and caregivers, together we can raise awareness. A curated library of resources, found on the *Health Channel's* website, offers information aimed at dismantling barriers linked to disability, mobility, and access and offers housing solutions, inclusive employers, and valuable tips for healthy living. Promotions for this initiative will take place on social media and feature partners through short videos. Additionally, a screening of an episode of *Hope is Here* followed by a discussion forum will take place online to offer support and education on attaining independence while living with a disability.

Continue to increase awareness of SFPBS' mission while reflecting the diversity of our communities by creating diverse promos to be used throughout the year instead of specific promos that are only used to promote heritage months (i.e., Black History Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, Pride Month, etc.).

Continue work on our initiatives as outlined above.

Continue to meet CPB Annual initiatives, as outlined above.

What We Have Learned During These Challenging Times

Like every organization, South Florida PBS was challenged by COVID-19, but with these challenges opportunities arose to serve our communities in innovative and strategic ways. We used technology to pivot from traditional and standard ways of creating and delivering valued content and resources, especially for educators and children, to creating and delivering valued digital content, health and educational resources, experiential learning opportunities and virtual community engagement on a multitude of platforms such as digital, social media and broadcast channels so that even during those times of restrictions, we could bring our audiences a textured and thorough understanding of our diverse communities and our world.

In conclusion, South Florida PBS is committed to using its power as a public media force to promote equity and inclusion by designing and creating content that is reflective of and accessible to the diverse communities we serve as well as developing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion resources with and for our employees.