



LOCAL CONTENT & SERVICE REPORT

FY 2021

July 1, 2020 — June 30, 2021



Contents



Mississippi is Our Mission



2	Mississippi is Our Mission
3	Contents
4	Executive Summary
5	MPB Board of Directors
6	MPB Digital TV and Radio Coverage Map
7	MPB Radio
8	MPB News
12	MPB Television
14	MPB Education
25	MPB Community Outreach/Engagement
27	MPB Technical Services
30	MPB Partnerships
32	MPB Digital
34	Revenue History FY 2021
34	Revenue Sources FY 2021
35	Operating Expense FY 2021
35	Expenditures by Program 2021
36	MPB Foundation

Executive Summary

Ronnie Agnew
MPB Executive
Director



It was a year of change and innovation. Mississippi Public Broadcasting battled through a year that has been challenging and invigorating. Despite the challenges, the power of creativity came through, and MPB more than solidified its position as an important voice and information source for Mississippi.

MPB has long had a strong commitment to education. When Mississippi’s nearly 500,000 public school children faced an uncertain instructional future due to COVID-19, MPB teamed with the Mississippi Department of Education to offer a solution. Using the power of its statewide reach, and infrastructure with the potential of reaching every household in Mississippi, MPB created a channel that brought state-standard instruction to every household without the need for broadband.

MPB’s Education Department also was awarded a \$1 million Rural Utility Service grant for the purposes of installing cloud-based distance learning technology to replace the current system. MPB’s Digital Education Network finds teachers from well-resourced school districts to teach students in districts that lack certified teachers or have fewer resources.

MPB also maintained its commitment to public safety, providing the pool feed for the state’s media for nearly all of Gov. Tate Reeves’ press conferences during the pandemic.

Our news department partnered with the state health

department to keep citizens informed and abreast about vaccine availability and efficacy. Our success locally resulted in grant-funded opportunities for MPB nationally. The Corporation for Public Broadcasting and NPR, with \$1.3 million in funding, created a news collaborative with MPB and sister stations in New Orleans and Birmingham, Ala.

The national success extended to TV. Two MPB television programs, Mississippi Roads and Fit to Eat, began to air weekly on American Public Television’s Create Channel, which reaches 85 percent of the country.

The agency’s radio department continued to produce more than 20 hours a week of local programming, and added podcasts to the agency’s digital programming. To date, MPB podcasts have been downloaded more than 1.5 million times from all over the country.

Producing content that appeals to audiences will always be MPB’s top priority. The agency continues to create programming that resonates with viewers and listeners. At MPB, the entire staff understands that Mississippi is our mission. Every project undertaken by agency staff is to inform, educate, and entertain the citizens who call Mississippi home. We care a great deal about this mission because it is our home, too.

MPB Board of Directors

The Board of Directors of the Mississippi Authority for Educational Television (MAET) is responsible for the administration, operation, control and supervision of Mississippi Public Broadcasting (MPB). The State Superintendent of Public Education, or designee, serves as an ex-officio member and the boards of the Institutions of Higher Learning and Mississippi Community College Board appoint a member.

The governor appoints four members, two of whom are teachers or principals in elementary and secondary school systems.



David Allen, Chair
Pastoral Associate, St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church



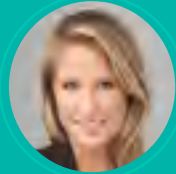
Jeanne Luckey
Owner, JCL LLC



Pete Smith, Vice-chair
Senior Policy Advisor, Mississippi Department of Education Office of Communications & Legal Services



Dr. Shawn Mackey
Deputy Executive Director for Programs and Accountability, Mississippi Community College Board



Whitney Lipscomb
Deputy Attorney General, Mississippi Attorney General’s Office



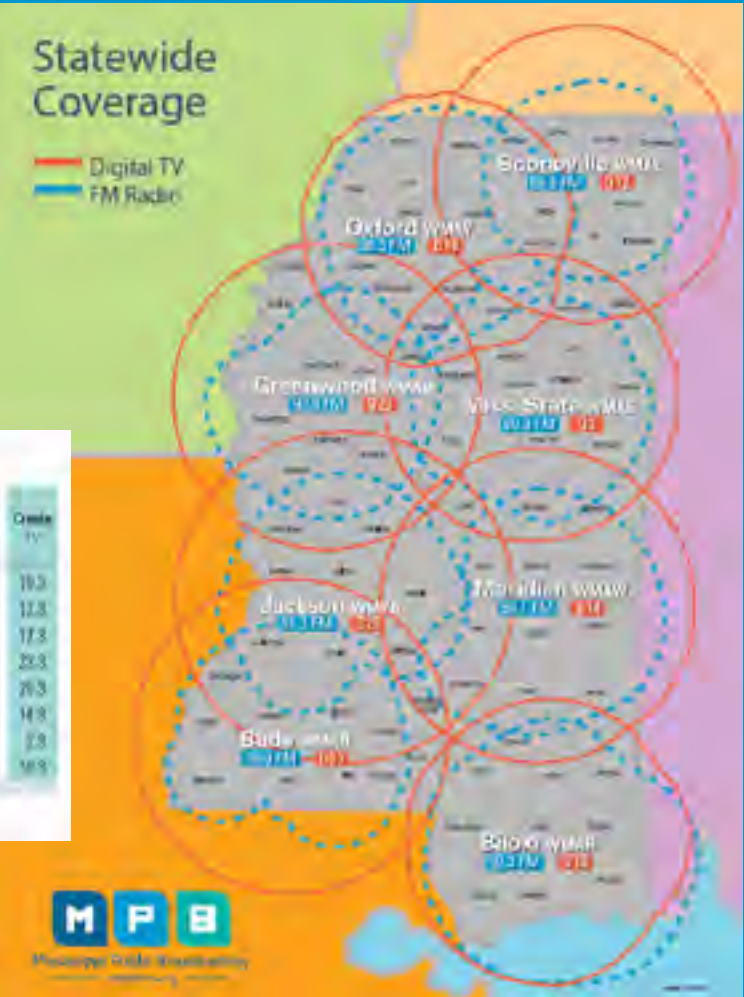
Richard Sawyer
Director of Choirs and the Fine Arts Department Chair, Ocean Springs High School

MPB Digital TV and Radio Coverage Map

MPB’s system reaches all Mississippians at once

MPB’s statewide radio and television broadcasting system is the only one in the state that can reach all Mississippians simultaneously. Our network of **eight 1,000 (+/-) foot transmission towers** makes MPB an essential communication channel for the population, especially in times of emergency.

MPB Channels & Frequencies							
	Class. Radio	Think Radio	Music Radio	KID TV	World Channel	267 PBS KIDS	Qradio TV
WMAH Biloxi	89.3 FM	89.3 FM	89.3 FM	15.1	19.1	19.2	19.3
WMAE Oceanville	89.5 FM	89.5 FM	89.5 FM	12.1	12.5	12.2	12.3
WMAO Bude	89.9 FM	89.9 FM	89.9 FM	17.1	17.3	17.2	17.3
WMAO Greenwood	90.9 FM	90.9 FM	90.9 FM	23.1	23.5	23.2	23.3
WMPN Jackson	91.3 FM	91.3 FM	91.3 FM	25.1	25.5	25.2	25.3
WMAW Meridian	89.1 FM	89.1 FM	89.1 FM	14.1	14.5	14.2	14.3
WMAE Miss. State	89.9 FM	89.9 FM	89.9 FM	2.1	2.5	2.2	2.3
WMAW Oxford/Univ.	90.3 FM	90.3 FM	90.3 FM	18.1	18.5	18.2	18.3



MPB Radio

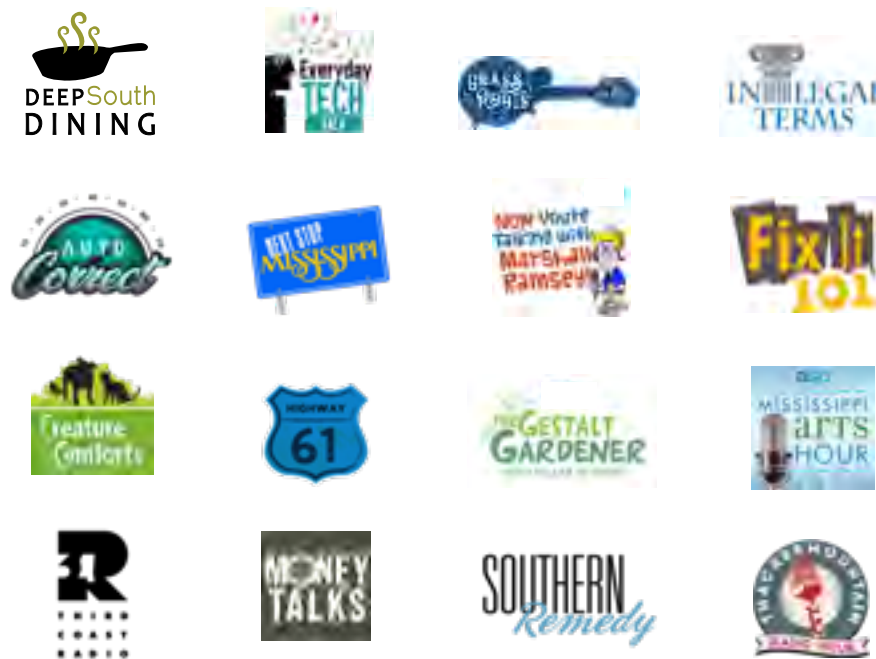
MPB’s Radio signal extends across the entire state of Mississippi and beyond state borders. MPB Radio is comprised of MPB Music Radio and MPB Think Radio.

MPB Music Radio airs music from a variety of genres, including jazz and classical. The **top three shows** on MPB Think Radio for Fiscal Year 2021 are **Gestalt Gardener, Southern Remedy: “General Health” and “Women.”**

Every weekday, MPB News broadcasts eight newscasts on MPB Radio dedicated to Mississippi stories. MPB podcasts, which are edited versions of the live MPB Radio programs, attracted thousands of additional listeners this year. More than **1.5 million MPB podcasts** were downloaded.

MPB Think Radio programs focus on local financial literacy, health, education and in-state travel. Five different Southern Remedy programs air weekdays at 11 a.m. Monday through Friday, respectively, they are Southern Remedy: “Healthy & Fit,” “Relatively Speaking,” “General Health,” “Kids and Teens,” and “Women.”

MPB Think Radio’s local weekly shows for Fiscal Year 2021 were:



Dr. Mary McLeod in radio studio



Fix It 101

MPB News

MPB News is a trusted source of fact-based journalism throughout Mississippi. Our team of reporters, producers and hosts continue to fulfill MPB's mission of providing statewide news and public affairs programs on both radio and television.

We explore some of the more critical issues in our state and region including government and politics, health care, education, criminal justice as well as issues of race, equity and inclusion.

MPB News airs **five hours** of Mississippi and **regional news each weekday**, which includes **six daily newscasts**. *Mississippi Edition* is our **30-minute news** and public affairs program that airs **each weekday** morning.

Throughout the coronavirus pandemic, MPB News has been providing the latest information and updates about the virus and its impact on Mississippi. In August 2020, we produced a live hour-long special *@ISSUE: The Coronavirus Crisis*, featuring a one-on-one conversation with State Health Officer, Dr. Thomas Dobbs about the coronavirus pandemic. MPB News Senior Reporter, Desare Frazier, hosted the program and asked Dr. Dobbs questions along with live viewer call-in questions.



Prior to the November 3 general election, MPB News talked with election commissioners and county circuit clerks' offices on relevant procedures for voting and what to expect at the polls. Mississippi also had three ballot initiatives in which we helped to inform the public about, including the new state flag, changing the constitutional provision around the election of the governor, and legalizing medical marijuana. In each case we explored the history behind these issues through produced audio stories and extensive digital elements.

In October, MPB produced a live **@ISSUE** television special titled **"Mississippi's Debate over Legalizing Medical Marijuana."** Voters heard arguments for and against the medical marijuana issue. Phone lines were open for viewers and listeners to call in and ask questions to experts on both sides of the debate.

MPB News is **one of six** news operations across the state **selected by Microsoft** to help bolster local news coverage. The focus of the initiative is to work in partnership with local community foundations to support newsrooms and journalists as they use the latest tools and technologies to tell stories. Through our collaboration, MPB News has produced a series on diabetes in Mississippi and examined the issue of Medicaid expansion in the state.

MPB news reporters continue to be **called upon by NPR** to file stories **for national broadcast**. Over the past fiscal year, stories included the instillation of Mississippi's new flag and February's winter storm that caused widespread power outages, water shortages and iced-over streets and highways.

MPB stories that aired nationally on NPR

- January 12, 2021-Mississippi flies a new flag without Confederate emblem by Desare Frazier
- February 19, 2021-Winter weather exacts tough toll on Mississippi by Kobee Vance
- February 21, 2021-Parts of Mississippi under boil water advisory following cold snap
- March 4, 2021- Mississippi has no mask mandate or enough vaccines and some still have no water by Kobee Vance
- March 6, 2021- After crippling winter storm, recovery neglects underserved Mississippians by Shalina Chatlani
- March 8, 2021-Low-income areas hit hard when storm wreaked havoc on Mississippi by Shalina Chatlani
- March 12, 2021-Jackson, Mississippi residents enter fourth week of water crisis



Through a **six-part series** on *Mississippi Edition* and a 30-minute @ISSUE television special, MPB News **raised awareness** of the long history of **voter disenfranchisement** in Mississippi and examined some of the states voting laws, which are among the most restrictive in the nation. Our series called ***Your Vote, Your Voice*** also looked at the importance of registering to vote, losing the right to vote and the lingering barriers many voters continue to face.

We talked with political experts and officials, as well as community activists and academics on broader issues related to voting, democracy, and the following topics:

- Who votes in Mississippi?
- Absentee voting
- Barriers to voting
- Census/redistricting in Mississippi

The six-part series aired on *Mississippi Edition* from April 19-21.

We also produced a special 30-minute @ISSUE that aired on MPB Television, Friday, April 23. Our political analysts took a closer look at early voting and how the Census and redistricting will impact Mississippi.

We produced *Your Vote, Your Voice* in partnership with a grant from the Mississippi Humanities Council.



The MPB news team was the recipient of **three regional Edward R. Murrow awards**. These awards honor outstanding journalism throughout the country.

Hard News

Nursing homes close doors during Coronavirus pandemic by Kobbie Vance

Feature Reporting

College grads prepare for virtual ceremonies during coronavirus pandemic by Ashley Norwood

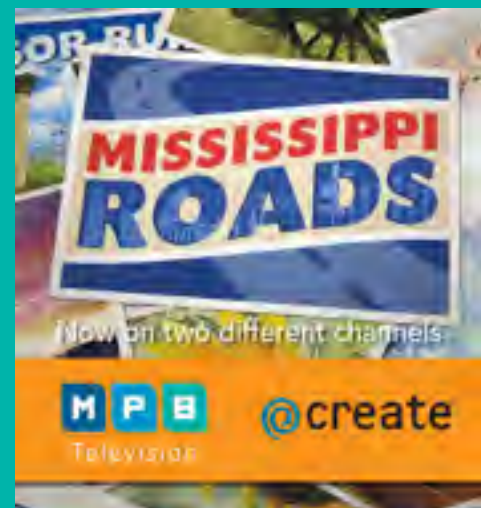
Digital

Survivors remember the shootings at Jackson State University by Ashley Norwood

MPB News was also the recipient of **five first-place Mississippi Association of Broadcasters awards** for excellence in broadcast journalism.



MPB Television



Instead of being slowed by the pandemic, MPB's Television production team was inspired to develop an innovative and community-focused response. Working with the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE), MPB Television produced **400** half-hour **teaching segments** in our studio, bringing classroom instruction to every TV and internet connection in the state. These lessons were featured on our fifth channel, MPB Classroom TV, a new channel created expressly to address the needs of children kept out of the classroom by COVID-19. We also continued our service as the media **pool-feed** for **Gov. Tate Reeves'** pandemic-related press conferences, which aired almost **daily** for several months.

MPB original programs were presented to national audiences in Fiscal Year 2021. Two regular series – **Mississippi Roads** and **Fit to Eat** – were acquired for national broadcast by the CREATE channel, and our country music documentary, **Meet Carl Jackson**, was broadcast nationally by PBS. We also began work on **Mind in the Making**, a one-hour program on early child development which will reach national audiences in 2022.

While production of some of our regular series was slowed by the pandemic, we continued to film segments for the upcoming seasons of **Mississippi Roads**, **Fit to Eat** and **Conversations**. During the Legislative session, a new, socially-distanced set was built for our news program, **@ISSUE**, so Mississippi's only statewide, in-depth TV coverage was unimpeded.

Other new productions included:

- **"Experience the Mississippi State Capitol,"** a half-hour program about the history and architectural grandeur of this landmark, narrated by Walt Grayson
- **"The Voter's Handbook,"** a series of interstitials on voting produced in association with the Mississippi Humanities Council
- A **Conversations** special called **"The VA, A Place to Call Home,"** hosted by Marshall Ramsey, profiling veterans living in our state's VA homes
- **"MPB Celebrates 50 Years,"** telling the proud story of our history in TV, radio, news, education and civic engagement
- **"Poetry Out Loud,"** the annual recitation competition produced in collaboration with the Mississippi Arts Commission
- The **Governor's State of the State Address**, presented live as it is each January
- **"Mississippi College's Festival of Lights,"** this time a compilation from past years' holiday choir performances was broadcast since COVID-19 prevented a 2020 edition

We also dipped into our vault, presenting another great season of MPB Classics that profiled our state's literary, artistic and cultural treasures. And we brought back by popular demand some of our more recent productions like:

- **"Bluesmen,"** one of our most popular music series ever
- **"Homefront to Battlefront: Mississippi in World War II,"** featuring interviews with Mississippians who served
- **"Mississippi's Free State of Jones,"** the true story that inspired the Hollywood blockbuster
- **"35 Million Years Down the Chickasawhay,"** a canoe trip into Mississippi's geological history
- **"Dutch Wings Over Jackson,"** telling the story of Dutch fighter pilots who trained in Mississippi during World War II
- **"William Winter: The Toughest Job in Mississippi,"** on the proud legacy of Gov. Winter
- **"Mississippians in Vietnam: A Shared Experience,"** with captivating interviews from Mississippi veterans

And we continued to cultivate our partnerships with other Mississippi institutions and independent producers, bringing our viewers such programs as:

- **"Palate to Palette,"** the hugely popular series with Robert St. John and Wyatt Waters
- **"Simple Livin',"** produced by the television department at Mississippi State University
- **"The Prentiss Institute: Looking Back, Moving Ahead,"** a tribute to the historically black educational institution
- **"Charley Pride: Star of Hope,"** a tribute to one of Mississippi's greatest music stars, from the Community Foundation for Northwest Mississippi
- **"Fertile Ground,"** a disturbing and inspiring documentary about the problem of food insecurity in our agriculturally rich state
- **"Mississippi Outdoors,"** the popular series produced by the Mississippi Department of Wildlife Fisheries and Parks
- **"Farmweek,"** the weekly staple produced by the Mississippi State Extension Service

As we emerge from the shadow of COVID-19, MPB is poised for an even bigger year of great television production in 2022.



MPB Education

The MPB Education Department is a robust, boots-on-the-ground provider of services, resources and information. MPB Education offers a variety of rigorous programs both face-to-face and virtually. Services that focus on parents, children, and their families top the list of initiatives. The hands-on, consistent nurturing approach allows the team to get to know those we serve and dedicate consistent time to programs that have a lasting impact.

MPB Education seeks to serve as many Mississippians as possible and to be a support to other agencies offering similar services or that seek a complement to their programs. MPB Education believes in the success of engaging partnerships. The department offers **teacher and parent workshops, workforce development programs**, the **Ed Said** health initiative for children, **distance learning, continuing education** courses for educators and much more. Some of these services are in conjunction with PBS, which is the most trusted education platform in the world.



Mississippi Education Connection (4,580 downloads)

This special radio show launched after schools were forced to close due to COVID-19. The goal of the show was to provide timely, relevant educational information to parents, students, teachers, and the community at large. MPB Education Director Tara Y. Wren, Ph.D. co-hosted the weekly show with MPB Think Radio's host Michelle McAdoo. Guests included Dr. Carey Wright, Dr. Andrea Mayfield, representatives from PBS, MDE, and other educational institutions, parents, and students. We also used the platform to highlight MPB Education programs and services. Topics included everything from homeschooling, distance learning, and the importance of healthy eating to workforce development. Twenty-six shows aired by Sept. 25, 2020. Mississippi Education Connection became a podcast called Chalkboard Ch@t.



Chalkboard Ch@t (3,720 downloads)

Launched Nov. 13, 2020, this podcast provides up-to-date resources for teachers, parents, guardians, students, and education enthusiasts. Each episode features experts and interesting guests shedding light on various topics relevant to the world of education. Hosted by Germaine Flood, along with Co-Host Tara Y. Wren, Ph.D., Chalkboard Ch@t is informative, interactive, and fun. Guests included employees of MDE, teachers, counselors, students, businesses, non-profits, and organizations across the state of Mississippi.

Mississippi Department of Education Partnership

MPB partnered with MDE to develop content and schedules for the new MPB Classroom TV channel which launched Oct. 5, 2020, to help provide at-home instructional support for students, particularly those in rural areas, with limited or no internet access. Nearly **400 instructional videos** have been recorded in the MPB Television studio.

At the start of the pandemic, MPB worked with MDE representatives to realign the daytime MPB Television schedule to support at-home learning. The schedule was sent to MDE weekly and posted on its digital sites. MDE expressed great appreciation for the realignment of our daytime television programming to help support students' at-home learning.



The relationship and collaboration with MDE have been presented in several ways:

- Dr. Carey Wright, state superintendent of education, and several staffers have been guests on Mississippi Education Connection.
- MPB **provided content for weekly e-Blast** that goes out to districts across the state.
- **Training for teachers** on various MPB/PBS platforms.
- Collaboration on the creation of **two e-Learning courses** focusing on virtual learning.
- Worked together to launch the **new instructional TV channel**, MPB Classroom TV.

Digital Footprint

Currently, MPB Education has more than **2,235 likes** and **2,407 Facebook followers**. MPB Education’s Instagram audience now has **525 followers** and **97 Twitter followers**. Planned messaging and audience engagement help to maintain consistent and increasing engagement to these relatively new sites. Since the last annual report, we have gained an additional **2,796 followers** across all social media platforms.

MPB Education Website

In addition to including our ongoing programs and services, several web pages have been significant during the pandemic:

- **MPB Classroom TV** website was launched in partnership with MDE, and supported by the AT&T Foundation. This page includes lessons around early childhood, health, wellness, math, science, literacy, language arts, music, art, and social studies. The Move to Learn Initiative is also included on the MPB Classroom TV webpage.
- **MPB At-Home Learning** features many resources for teachers, students, and parents and is updated frequently with resources related to world events and health awareness. We also created a more targeted page for the summer - **Summer Learning Resources**.
- A webpage has been created and launched to focus on families with children who have special needs. This page includes a variety of resources.



Promote the Vote

October 2020, MPB Education partnered with the Secretary of State **Promote the Vote** program. Promote the Vote is a comprehensive K-12 voter education program that consists of a statewide mock election, an essay contest, and an art contest. The theme was “The Future of My Vote.” MPB Education hosted a social media contest for the mock election. The winners of this competition were Crystal Springs Middle School, Hawkins Elementary Smart School, and Pearl Upper Elementary School.

Mississippi Beautiful Day

The department celebrated “Mississippi Beautiful Day” May 10, 2021 with a virtual presentation. “Mississippi Beautiful Day” is a day that recognizes all things beautiful about the 82 counties of Mississippi from the culinary arts to music, to personalities and so much more. Students and many other residents across the state submitted poems, artwork and videos demonstrating what makes Mississippi Beautiful.

Summer Learning Family Fun Days

The theme of this year’s event was, PowerUp! Full STEAM Ahead! The focus of this event, held virtually June 21-23, was science, technology, engineering, arts, and math. Community Gardens across Mississippi, NASA, Mississippi Natural Science Museum, Ed Said, Mississippi Department of Education, and teaching artist Althea Jerome participated in this three-day event. This event was streamed live on MPB Education’s Facebook page, posted on the MPB Education website, and MPB Education Classroom Television YouTube page. This event reached **1,824** people on Facebook and **453** views on the MPB Classroom TV’s YouTube page.





Workforce Development

Nearly **300 attendees** joined Workforce Wednesday Workshops. The first **Virtual Workforce Wednesday** webinar was held August 19, 2020, with **31 participants**. Our guest speaker was Pam Confer, a professional speaker, business consultant, and public relations guru. Confer shared the importance of mastering soft skills.

- **September 16, 2020**, Workforce Wednesday webinar speaker Amber Parker discussed the Refill Jackson initiative which trains individuals for career opportunities. **Number of attendees: 37**
- **October 21, 2020**, speakers were Laura Ring, Mississippi Department of Employment Security, Bill Renick, Three Rivers PDD & Dr. Jay Allen, Itawamba Community College. They discussed the ReSkill Mississippi initiative. **Number of attendees: 25**
- **November 18, 2020**, Workforce Wednesday speaker was Dr. Mangle Shanks, Mississippi State Coordinator Building Healthy Military Communities (BHMC). Dr. Shanks discussed how her organization benefits veterans, military personnel, and their families in the community. **Number of attendees 25**
- **February 2021**, kicked off a three-month series focused on virtual self-presentation that helped businesses, employees, and employers transition into meeting virtually.
- **February 17, 2021, "Confessions of a Word Nerd"** presented by MPB's Executive Assistant Claudia Singletary. Singletary highlighted how to sound your best by teaching some grammar tips and tricks. **Number of attendees: 40**
- **March 17, 2021, "How Are You Showing Up Lately?"** presented by Coretta Frazier, Professional Management Solutions. Frazier presented "How to Improve Your Brand on Zoom," focusing on best practices such as proper equipment, etiquette, dress code, and virtual meeting features to incorporate to ensure that individuals are professionally representing an employer's brand in virtual meetings. **Number of attendees: 28 attendees**

- **April 21, 2021, "Please Wear Pants to Work,"** presented by Rita Brent. This workshop concluded our three-month series focused on virtual self-presentation. Brent used her creative comical touch to address the importance of being professional, common dos and don'ts, and provided a list of essential items to have during virtual meetings that help make it a success. **Number of Attendees: 54**
- **May 19, 2021, "Customer Service Still Matters"** was presented by Mark Arancibia, General Manager of the Jackson Convention Complex. Arancibia explained the essential knowledge of the hospitality industry, its purpose, values, and mission while presenting the golden rules of customer service that enhance a successful experience at any business. **Number of Attendees: 17**
- **June 16, 2021, "Getting Back to Work in Mississippi"** was presented by Mary Powers, Workforce Director with Central Miss. Planning and Development District. Powers addressed the status of the workforce in Mississippi, including unemployment trends and data, how to get people back to work, how employers handle individuals who refuse to return to work, options they have, and provided available resources for employers to assist with hiring and training workers. **Number of Attendees: 30**

MPB Kids Club

- MPB Kids Club currently has **2018 members**.
- Members receive birthday cards in the mail, electronic newsletters, and a personal birthday announcement displayed on MPB television.
- MPB Kids Club Virtual Birthday Party was hosted via Zoom on November 21, 2020. Children listened to messages from the Mississippi Braves, Mississippi Emergency Management Agency, The Kratt Brothers, Ed Said, and actively completed arts and crafts, as well as received prizes in the mail.



Ed Said

- July 2020 – December 2020, Ed Said hosted Winning Wednesdays on Ed Said's Facebook page. Ed Said held a drawing once each month. Participants had to follow Ed Said's Facebook page and share the contest post. The contest engaged **850 people** with a reach of **3,257 people**.
- April 10, 2021, Ed Said hosted Ed Said in Concert! 2021 Virtual Edition in partnership with Parents and Kids Magazine. The goal of this event was to promote Ed Said, healthy eating to children in Mississippi, and add new followers.

Through the **EdNet Program**, MPB distributed wireless hot spot devices throughout the state: **748 Childcare Centers**, Pre-k, grade schools, community colleges, universities, public libraries, education staff, and non-profit education partners all received devices.



Mississippi e-Learning for Educators

The Mississippi e-Learning for Educators program provides online professional development for Mississippi teachers. Courses are designed and taught by certified educators. **46 courses** were offered. A total of **3,309 CEUs** were issued to more than **1,103 educators** in Mississippi.

As teachers were forced into virtual teaching environments due to the COVID-19 pandemic, two new classes were developed to help teachers transition to this new way of teaching.

- How to Teach in a Virtual Learning Environment
- Learning Challenges in a Virtual Environment

Digital Education Network (DEN)

This is an ongoing partnership with Delta State University, in which instructors teach students across the state through a virtual network system. Schools depend on the DEN to provide courses for their students when there is not a certified teacher available in particular subjects. This is particularly important to the schools that have graduating seniors in need of specific classes to graduate.

Last fiscal year, DEN teachers taught **25-course** sections **daily** and reached **487 students**.

The DEN received a **million-dollar Rural Utilities Services (RUS) Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grant** from USDA to update DEN infrastructure. This will create stronger, more efficient networks and allow MPB to serve more schools. This upgrade will also allow us to serve students in out-of-school situations. Classes will never have to be disrupted and students can continue learning from home through the network.

MPB was also awarded a **\$200,000 grant** from the **Phil Hardin Foundation** to implement the DEN network in school districts in Lauderdale County and surrounding areas. Fulfillment was halted for a while by the pandemic, but implementation efforts have resumed.



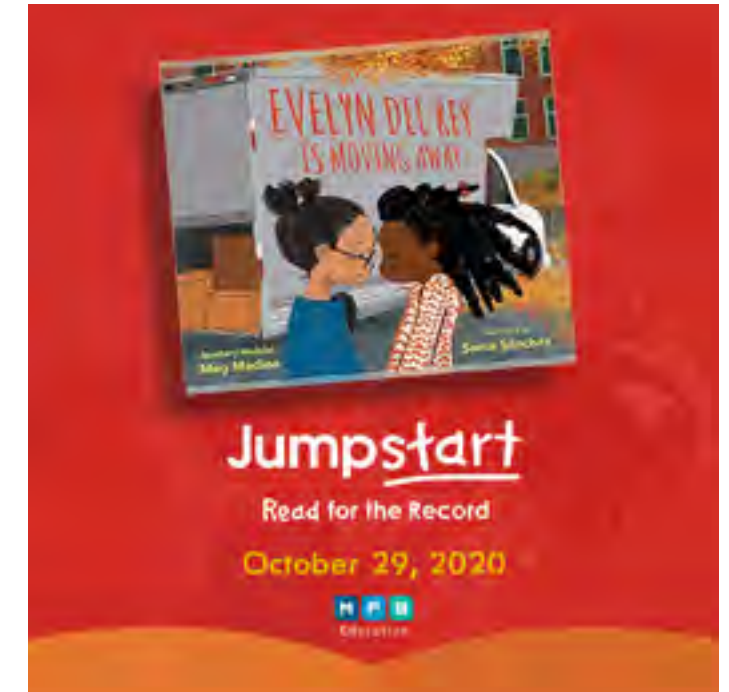
Early Childhood

MPB Education is accustomed to hosting face-to-face programs. When the pandemic struck, we were able to transition to virtual programs with ease. As a result, participation in some programs was lower than in previous years; yet surprisingly higher with other virtual programs, gaining new audience members from around the globe. In addition, MPB Education provide services to early childhood teachers and admins by offering continuing education hours for early childhood educators through standing approval with MDE.

Read for the Record, October 29, 2020

This annual event brings together millions of adults and children around the world each year to read the same book on the same day to raise awareness about the critical importance of literacy and access to high-quality books. MPB provided at least one copy of ***Evelyn Del Ray is Moving Away*** to at least one underperforming school district in all **82 counties**. **155 copies** were provided to Jackson Public Schools to share with students PreK to third grade. Readings of the book impacted over **34,000 students across the state**.

Partners included Medgar Evers Library, Springboard to Opportunities, Dawson Elementary, Fannie Lou Hamer Library, Jackson State University, Mississippi Association of Educators (MAE), and Mississippi Federation of Women's Club.





Dr. Seuss' Birthday Celebration - NEA's Read Across America (March 2, 2021)

We invited parents, daycare centers, and headstart facilities across the state to join us virtually in the annual celebration of Dr. Seuss's Birthday. The book, *Oh, The Things You Can Think!* was read and participants enjoyed engaging activities and an energizing performance by a special guest, The Cat in the Hat. Exactly **198 parents and centers** registered for the event and more than **4,000 children participated**.

Rotarians

Rotarians supported classrooms with MPB's computational thinking preschool project. Participating schools were located in Lexington and Jackson Public Schools. The program thrives on the volunteerism of local Rotary Clubs in the state of Mississippi who share their love of reading with preschool students in their areas. The project impacted a total of **57 students**.

Workshops and trainings for parents and teachers

Parents Are Teachers Too (PATT) (February 2021)

PATT is a new early childhood parent support initiative that focuses on families learning together. It provides parents of early learners with practical teaching tools, and examples and strategies for working with their children at home. The overall goals are to emphasize that parents are their children's first, and most important teachers, and to provide resources to help accelerate learning for children in Pre-K through third grade.

Parents had to attend six hour-long sessions where they enjoyed hands-on activities, modeled how to engage their children at home, and had many productive conversations. Parents learned from the content provided and from each other.

This initiative has a train-the-trainer structure. Facilitators were trained across the state who were teachers, social workers, business owners, and other community leaders. **250 parents** participated in the first year which **impacted** over **340 children in 22 counties**.



PBS EdCamp (November 2020)

PBS Ed Camp provide educators who work with children in schools, childcare centers, Head Start, or homes with space to share, collaborate, and learn from each other. Participants learned about PBS KIDS resources that support social and emotional development, math, and literacy skills. They connected with other educators to learn new tips and best practices. There was a total of **23 participants** from various childcare centers.

Sesame Street in Communities (March 2021-April 2021)

MPB was **one of 10** public media stations to receive a **Sesame Street in Communities grant**. It provided tools and resources to caregivers in rural areas who may not regularly engage with their local PBS station. **509** early childhood **educators** participated in the training.

Inventing Tomorrow (April 20, 2021)

Through a grant opportunity, this **Teacher Town Hall** event focused on STEM education approaches to environmental issues, using Inventing Tomorrow's innovative educational toolkits, including curriculum materials and hands-on activities for **grades 4-12**. This was a virtual event with **46 participants**.

The Way I Feel – Preschool Teacher Social Emotional Workshop (June 12, 2021)

This workshop's goal is to assist teachers in developing lessons to address emotional and behavioral self-regulation. It provided strategies and activities that help teachers encourage students to express their emotions safely and appropriately.

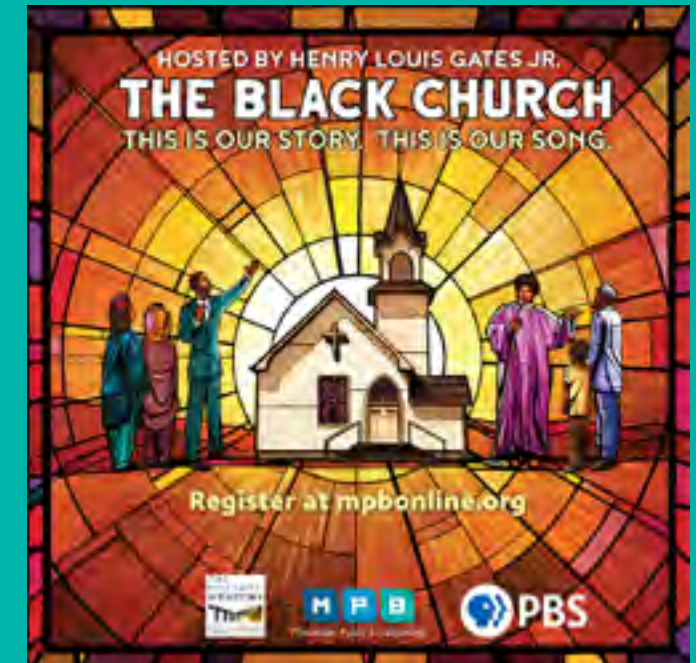
Community Engagement

The Black Church: This is Our Story, This is Our Song

MPB in partnership with Two Mississippi Museums – Mississippi Civil Rights Museum and the Museum of Mississippi History – held a virtual panel discussion and screening of the PBS documentary, “The Black Church: This is Our Story, This is Our Song” Feb. 9, 2021.

MPB's virtual event included a screener of the documentary, songs from HBCU choirs representing Jackson State University and Rust College, door prizes and the panel discussion. Nearly **200 people attended** the event.

Panelists for the event were Bishop Ronnie Crudup of New Horizon Church International, Rev. C.J. Rhodes of Mt. Helm Baptist Church, Pamela Junior, director of Two Mississippi Museums; and Lannie Spann McBride, music minister, retired educator and composer. The leaders shared a more local perspective of the church's impact today. Former MPB radio producer Rita Brent moderated the discussion.





Mysteries of Mental Illness

MPB was joined by some of the state’s top mental health leaders for a free virtual screening of the PBS documentary, “Mysteries of Mental Illness” June 29, 2021. The event included a live panel discussion reviewing conditions and treatments surrounding mental health. All **47 attendees** were able to ask questions and join the discussion during the virtual event.

Desare Frazier, MPB senior news reporter, moderated the discussion. State mental health leaders and panelists included:

- Dr. Joy Hogge – Families as Allies
- Dr. Susan Buttross – University of Mississippi Medical Center
- Wendy Bailey – Mississippi Department of Mental Health
- Sitaniel Wimbley – NAMI Mississippi

MPB Technical Services

A large network of equipment maintained by a team of experienced and skilled men and women provides the broadcast for MPB programs.

The RF Network and Field Service Engineers maintain the **eight digital TV** (DTV) and **hybrid digital FM** (HDFM) radio stations, along with one DTV translator providing coverage to majority of the state. The **eight stations** have **antenna towers** ranging from approximately **600 to 1,500 feet** in height that are required by the FAA to have lighting systems to be visible to aircraft.

The broadcast signals are made up of **five DTV channels** (HD Main, PBS Kids, Create and one audio only Think Radio or Music Radio channel selectable through the secondary audio program) and **four HDFM channels** (one conventional FM with two digital channels, Think Radio and Music Radio and a special channel for the Radio Reading Service for the blind).

Our broadcast network continues to provide the only available resource for transmitting emergency alert and preparedness information to every citizen in Mississippi at the same time. The towers also host communications equipment for the National Weather Service to provide Mississippians with accurate and timely weather alerts and awareness information, communications equipment for federal law enforcement throughout the state and upgraded equipment for a new digital communications tool for first responders. Mississippi has invested millions of dollars in constructing and maintaining this infrastructure. Ongoing maintenance and upgrades of the towers continue to be a priority for MPB.



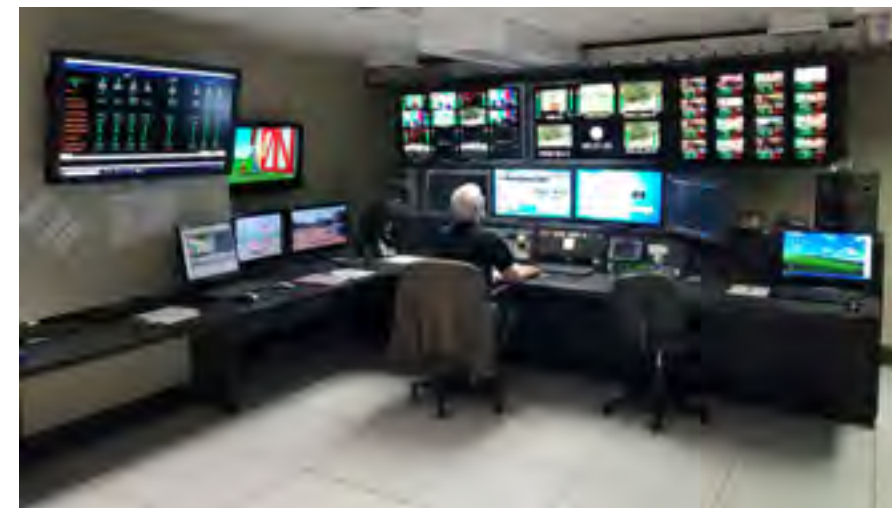
The eight DTV/HDFM stations are connected by **12 microwave radio** sites covering more than **550 miles**. Each microwave site has a tower in the **300-foot range** with lighting at night to be visible to aircraft.

What's new

- In January, MPB was asked to lease space to DSLBYAIR on the McHenry Tower site (WMAH) to fill the gap with internet connections for the Stone County School System.
- All the current field technician vehicles have been outfitted with winches, power inverters, tow straps and other equipment that will allow the field technicians to be more prepared in emergency situations.
- For security and safety purposes, cameras have been installed at the eight main transmitter sites to provide 24-hour monitoring of the facilities.
- The new translator for Columbia (W29EY-D) has been installed to help alleviate signal coverage issues in the Hattiesburg area.
- Satellite links were placed at the eight main transmitter sites for use as audio and transport stream backup during emergency periods.
- AT&T has completed their installation of equipment for the Emergency Responders Network at Raymond (WMPN).
- Tower lights have been relamped at Raymond (WMPN), and new LED lighting is planned for the near future.
- The contract for the Booneville Repack was awarded to TSG. The bid came in just under \$812,000. The project should be completed the first part of 2022. A structural analysis and design drawings were completed to identify the required maintenance and repairs needed to bring the tower up to current standards.
- The generator at Pinola microwave site was replaced due to catastrophic damage in April of 2021.
- Two older A/C units were replaced, and load tested at McHenry (WMAH).
- One A/C unit has been replaced and load tested at Bude (WMAU).
- New confidence monitoring equipment has been installed at all eight main transmitter sites. This will provide a better solution to monitor the transport stream for any issues.



- MPB is now a part of the Hurricane Warning Network for coastal areas and has installed the Hurricane Warning System at McHenry (WMAH) and Bude (WMAU). This system provides early warning and ongoing information during significant weather events.
- MPB was awarded \$2 million dollars in CAPEX funds to do tower upgrades and maintenance. A structural analysis and design drawings will be completed to identify the required maintenance and repairs needed to bring the tower up to current standards. These funds have been allotted to WMAH and WMAU projects.



MPB Partnerships

link Mississippians and Mississippi businesses

MPB Television

- MPB Television presented several productions that have become annual traditions.
- In January, MPB aired the Governor's State of the State Address live from the Capitol. MPB provided the pool feed for all other TV stations covering the event.
- In February, MPB Television and MPB Think Radio broadcast live the Governor's Arts Awards, produced in association with the Mississippi Arts Commission.
- In February, MPB Television, working again with the MAC, presented the "Poetry Out Loud" recitation competition that aired in April.
- "Far East, Deep South," a moving documentary by Baldwin Chiu about tracing his family's immigration story from China to the Mississippi Delta.



MPB Think Radio

- Southern Remedy (x5).....University of Mississippi Medical Center (Also a MPB Television partner)
- Mississippi MomentsUSM Center for Oral History
- Rural Voices RadioMississippi Writing/Thinking Institute
- In Legal TermsUniversity of Mississippi School of Law
- Creature Comforts.....Mississippi Museum of Natural Science Foundation
- Next Stop, MississippiMississippi Development Authority (Visit Mississippi)
- Thacker Mountain Radio.....Thacker Mountain Radio Hour
- Highway 61.....Center for the Study of Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi
- Mississippi Arts Hour.....Mississippi Arts Commission
- Write On, Mississippi!.....Mississippi Book Festival
- Evening Jazz.....WJSU/JSU
- Governor's Arts Awards.....Mississippi Arts Commission

MPB Education

- Mississippi Arts Commission: Althea Jerome, Summer Learning Family Fun Days
- Parents and Kids Magazine: Ed Said in Concert! 2021 Virtual Edition
- Mississippi Department of Education: At-Home learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, MPB Classroom TV, Read for the Record
- Rotary International District 6820: Computational Thinking program in daycare centers
- Stennis Space Center/NASA: Children's events
- Mississippi Secretary of State: Promote the Vote
- Mississippi Women's Federation: Read for the Record
- Pam Confer: Mississippi Beautiful Day Celebration
- Mississippi Natural Science Museum: Children's events
- Mississippi Braves: Children's events
- Mississippi Emergency Management Agency: Children's events
- EdNet

MPB Digital

MPB Digital Division is responsible for the agency's digital strategy on all social and web platforms. This includes strategic distribution of local, national and world content as it pertains to MPB, PBS and/or other media partners.

Duties also include design and maintenance of the agency website - MPBOnline.org – which is dynamic and engaging for visitors and offers a plethora of multimedia content, blogs and videos from MPB, PBS and NPR, as well as other partners.

MPB uses multiple social media platforms including Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, Pinterest, YouTube, LinkedIn and Instagram to engage with current and potential audiences.

Coronavirus Resources/Vaccine

During the second year of the coronavirus pandemic, MPB continued to maintain a Coronavirus Resources webpage to inform and educate Mississippians about the virus. Content included live video streams from Gov. Tate Reeves, Mississippi State Department of Health State Officer Dr. Thomas Dobbs, Mississippi Emergency Management Agency Director Stephen McCraney, and other state officials. This [resource page](#) has been visited more than **93,000 times** since inception.

By the numbers

MPB attained **754,000 page views** at MPBOnline.org and **reached 319,816** users, with **316,824 new users**.

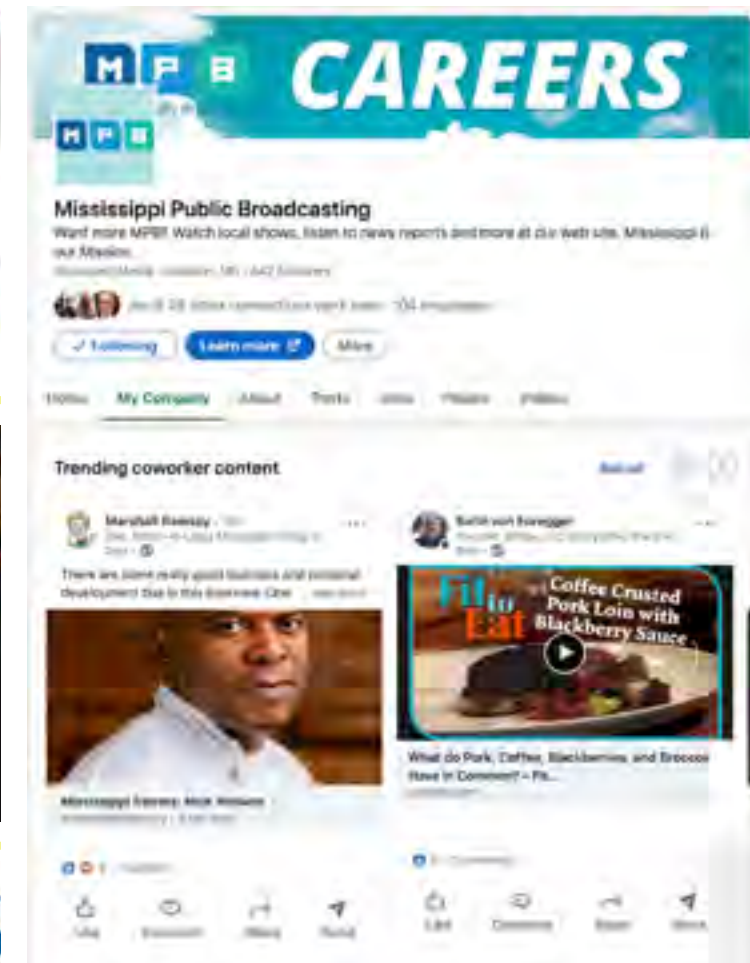
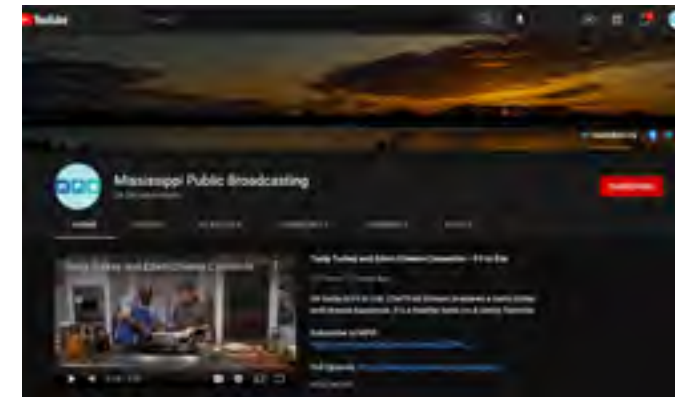
The MPB Public Media app increased users and now has more than **455,800 sessions**.

An increase in MPB's social media accounts was noted, with more than **19,000 (1,000 increase) followers** on Twitter, more than **31,000 (5,000 increase) fans** on Facebook, and **38,000 subscribers** on YouTube, an **increase of 21,000**.

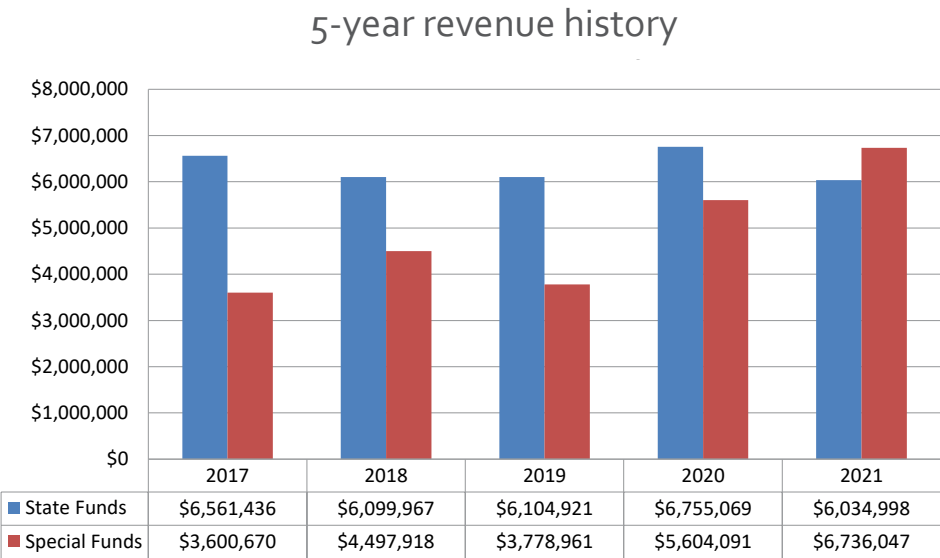
MPB Livestreaming

In March 2021, watching live MPB Television from anywhere became extra convenient with MPB Livestreaming available on MPB's website, mpbonline.org. Whether on a cell phone or computer, viewers can watch MPB programming as it happens. Those with smart TVs can cast live programming from their computer, phone or tablet to their TVs – perfect if you've cut the cord to cable television services.

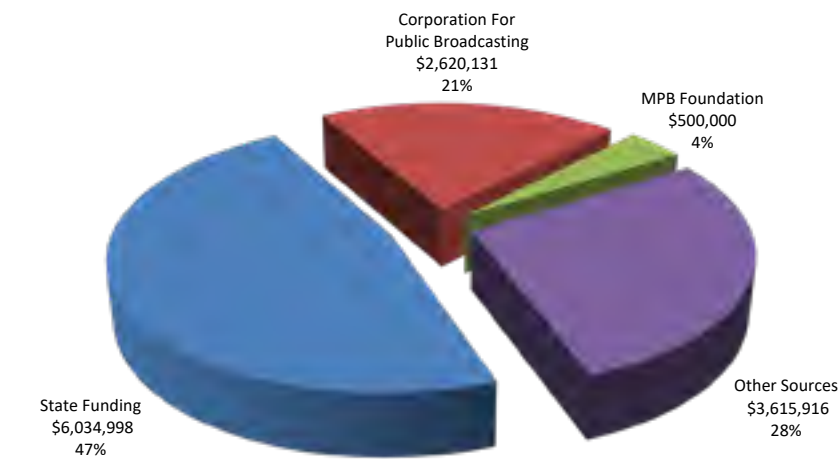
MPB Livestreaming is also available on the PBS Video app.



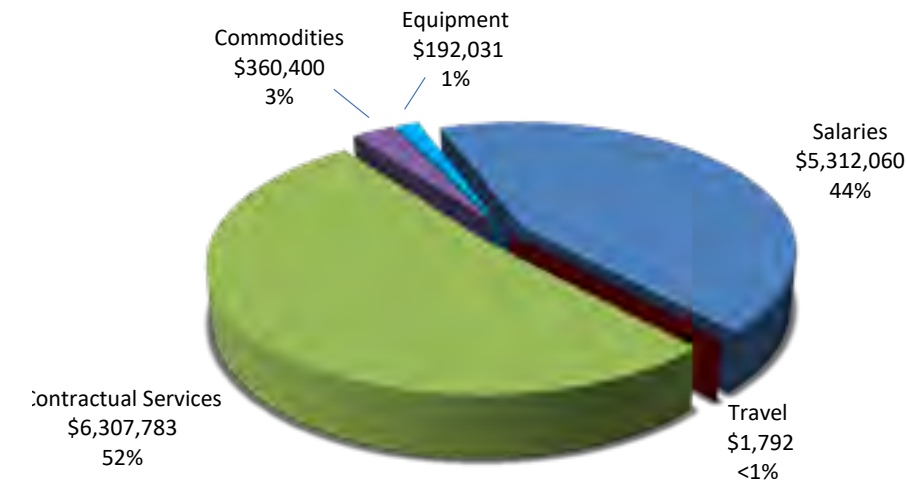
Revenue History FY 2021



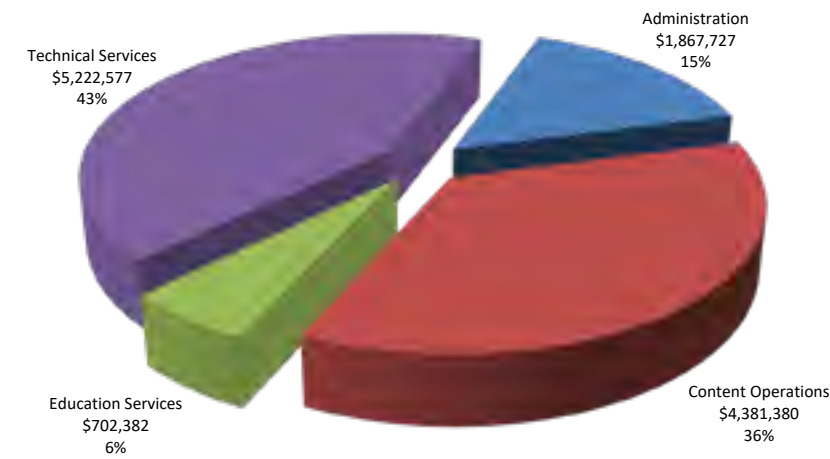
Revenue Sources FY 2021



Operating Expenses FY 2021



Expenditures by Program 2021



MPB Foundation

The MPB Foundation supports and advances the mission of Mississippi Public Broadcasting. Donor members from across the state and region provide gifts that support MPB's excellent radio, television and education programming. The Foundation is a tax-exempt 501 (c)(3) organization, and donations to the Foundation are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

MPB Foundation Board members are listed below:



Don B. Cannada (Board Chair)
Barksdale Management Corporation



Ronnie Agnew (ex-officio)
*Executive Director
Mississippi Public Broadcasting*



David Allen (ex-officio)
*Chairman of MPB Board
Retired Pastoral Associate,
St. John the Evangelist Church*



Cissy Foote Ankla
Principal, Museum Concepts



Dave Bush (Development Com. Chair)
Philanthropist and Community Volunteer



John C. Hardy (CIMA, CPWA, AIF, CEPA)
President, Hardy Reed, LLC



Grace P. Lee,
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*Founder, Retired President
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Andrew Mallinson
Multicraft International



Nora Frances McRae
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Finney Moore
Community Volunteer



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Priester Law Firm, PLLC



Brian Pugh, PhD
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George B. Ready
Law Office of George B. Ready



Paul M. Rocconi, MD
*Vice Chairman, Board of Trustees,
the Library of Hattiesburg, Petal,
and Forrest County*



Jon Turner (Treasurer)
BKD, LLP retired partner

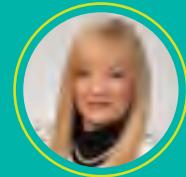


Lynn Wilkins
*University of Mississippi
Music Department*



Rhea Williams-Bishop, PhD
*The Kellogg Foundation
Director, Mississippi and New Orleans*

MPB Foundation Staff



Angela Crossley Ferraez
Executive Director



Debra Kassoff
Director of Member Engagement



Jaime Lowe
Development Assistant



Bill Ellison
Member Relations



The coronavirus pandemic was raging by the time Fiscal Year 2021 began. By July 2020, MPB Foundation had already begun reaching out to our members to check on how folks were weathering the storm. Our membership spans the spectrum of Mississippians and we spoke with some who were managing comfortably as well as many more who were struggling with lost employment and income. Even as we offered sustainers the opportunity to maintain their membership while temporarily suspending payments in order to survive the crisis, MPB Foundation was incredibly fortunate in that so many members' income was unaffected. Like many other organizations with a public service mission, we witnessed an outpouring of generosity and appreciation from those who could afford it, in support of both MPB's invaluable work as a reliable news source during a time of crisis and in acknowledgment of the increased importance of MPB's quality entertainment.

It was also not lost on us that our transition to a new, state-of-the-art database system and a data-driven membership marketing plan in the second half of FY 2020 was perfectly timed. Thanks to the tremendous upgrade in tools and strategy that this change represented, our membership actually grew throughout FY 2021.

Ultimately, the fact that we had a good year during what is universally acknowledged as one of the worst years the world has witnessed in living memory, from a public health and economic perspective, is thanks to the tremendous spirit of the people of Mississippi. We can never thank our members enough.

Of course, all of our usual avenues for saying thank you were taken from us this year. As for everyone else, Fiscal Year 2021 was the year of cancellations, from our Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon and the hot breakfast we've customarily provided on MPB's Day at the Capitol, to on-site screening receptions and coffees with major donors. With much of the rest of the world, we lived and worked behind closed doors and sought out ways to gather online.

And so, along with many other organizations and individuals around the globe, we discovered new ways of connecting with our audiences that will not likely disappear with the end of the pandemic. In October 2020, in advance of MPB streaming its vintage original series *Tomes and Talismans*, which made it available in its entirety for the first time since its original

broadcast and VHS issues, MPB Foundation offered fans a sneak preview. We shared, on OVEE, the first two episodes of *Tomes*, followed by a panel discussion featuring three of the series' actors, two of whom had appeared in the program as children. Dozens of attendees generated hundreds of comments in a lively text-based exchange. MPB's Communications team kept the chat active by dropping trivia challenges and door prize offers throughout the evening.

During these changing times we have sought out creative new revenue sources for the present while looking to build a successful future. The most significant of these was our partnership with FreeWill to offer audiences a free, online bequest tool that enables users to easily create their own legal will. The tool also invites users to consider the opportunity to include MPB Foundation or any other charitable organization in their plans. In this way, MPB has received word of a number of new planned gifts.

We launched FreeWill in August of 2020 during National Make-A-Will Month, and continued to promote the bequest tool strategically, at particularly opportune moments during the year.

Spring fever took hold after a year of uncertainty, isolation, and loss, and here at MPB Foundation we found the perfect antidote: a state-wide tour of outdoor events with Felder Rushing and his mobile garden-truck. We scheduled 11 events over the course of one month between mid-April and mid-May, hitting (in order) Hattiesburg, Pascagoula, Long Beach, Oxford, Southaven, Columbus, Tupelo, Natchez, Vicksburg, Cleveland and Jackson. Every Friday morning throughout the month Felder and his producer, Java Chatman, broadcast on location with a live audience, and every event featured complimentary hot coffee and other refreshments alongside Felder and his granny's concrete chicken.

Events like these not only build relationships and goodwill with our audience, they also enable us to get the word out about how essential listener and viewer support is to the vitality of Mississippi Public Broadcasting. We invited attendees who were not already members to take a program guide, to browse our selection of MPB-branded gear and apparel, and to consider becoming a member. We received additional donations from some members and collected email addresses from nearly everyone we met along the way. It was a sweet close to an anxious, hard, but ultimately successful year.



Watch and Listen Anywhere. Anytime.

Download the free MPB
Public Media app.

Connect with us @MPBonline
on social platforms.



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