



# Maryland Public Television Major network events & premieres

## PROGRAM PREMIERE HIGHLIGHTS

**October 1969** - *Stories of Maryland - Nightmare's Child* (first broadcast)

**October 1969** - *Our Street*

**February 1970** - *Hodgepodge Lodge*

**July 1970** - *Maryland Weekend*

**November 1970** - *Wall Street Week* (later *Wall Street Week With Louis Rukeyser*)

**June 1972** - *Aviation and Marine Weather* (became *A.M. Weather* in 1978)

**March 1973** - *Consumer Survival Kit*

**February 1974** - *The Critics' Place*

**January 1981** - *You Can Afford College* (became *Ways to Pay for College* in 2015)

**October 1981** - *MotorWeek*

**January 1982** - *State Circle*

**November 1988** - *Outdoors Maryland*

**December 1988** - *Happy New Year, USA*

**September 2001** - *Direct Connection*

**February 2003** - *Business Connection* (became *Your Money & Business* in 2007)

**April 2005** - Chesapeake Bay Week® programming initiative

**September 2007** - *Impressions with Rhea Feikin*

**November 2008** - *America's Veterans: A Musical Tribute*

**December 2009** - *Our Town* series debuts with *Our Town Chestertown*

**January 2011** - *Chesapeake Collectibles*

**January 2013** - *Artworks*

**November 2013** - *Maryland Farm & Harvest*

**May 2016** - *Maryland Vietnam War Stories* (three-part documentary, also national version)

**December 2020** - HBCU Week programming initiative

**October 2021** - *Made in Maryland*

**October 2022** - *Becoming Frederick Douglass & Harriet Tubman: Visions of Freedom*

**September 2025** - *Becoming Thurgood: America's Social Architect*

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## MAJOR EVENTS IN NETWORK HISTORY

**April 29, 1966** - Maryland legislature creates Maryland Educational-Cultural Television Commission to launch public TV in Maryland; Maryland State Department of Education forms Division of Instructional Television (ITV)

**October 1966** - Frederick "Rick" Breitenfeld, Jr., Ph.D., becomes Maryland Center for Public Broadcasting's first executive director (1966-1983)

**May 4, 1967** - Name changes to Maryland Educational-Cultural Broadcasting Commission

**November 7, 1967** - 90<sup>th</sup> U.S. Congress enacts the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967, setting up U.S. public broadcasting, establishing the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and, eventually, the Public Broadcasting Service and National Public Radio

**June 5, 1968** - Groundbreaking for Center's headquarters building and studios; work begins on WMPB (Ch. 67, Owings Mills) transmission tower

**May 2, 1969** - Maryland Educational-Cultural Broadcasting Commission adopts new name, Maryland Public Broadcasting Commission

**August 1969** - Center staff relocates from downtown Baltimore to Owings Mills campus

**October 5, 1969** - WMPB (Ch. 67) begins broadcasting

**October 1969** - Weekday instructional TV begins with first school telecast; ITV launches first production, weekly current events series *News Lab*

**December 1969** - Telecast of *Designing Women* represents first Center-produced program distributed outside Maryland

**April 1970** - First *Auction-On-The-Air* raises \$64,000

**September 1970** - *College of the Air* debuts with nearly 1,000 enrollments

**October 1970** - Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) launched

**March 1971** - WCPB (Ch. 28, Salisbury) begins broadcasting

**January 1972** - ITV Utilization is first in-service teachers' course

**August 1973** - MPT mobile unit debuts at 10-day Maryland State Fair

**September 1973** - ITV begins distribution of content to public TV stations nationwide

**October 1974** - WWPB (Ch.31, Hagerstown) begins broadcasting

**September 1975** - WAPB (later WMPT, Ch. 22, Annapolis) begins broadcasting with five-million-watt output (the nation's most powerful analog station)

**Summer 1976** - First-ever satellite communications project for law school moot court competition

**April 1980** - MPT collaborates with University of Maryland University College to establish the International University Consortium

**January 13, 1981** - MPT Foundation, Inc. is established as the network's fundraising arm

**May 1981** - Maryland ITV's *Terra: Our World* earns George Foster Peabody Award; statewide survey shows 42% of Maryland teachers use MITV product

**January 1983** - Vietnam veteran conference in 16 cities becomes first-ever satellite uplink

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**August 1983** - 40,000 sq. ft. Breitenfeld Wing of headquarters building is dedicated

**November 1983** - Stephen H. Kimatian becomes second CEO

**October 5, 1984** - Maryland Center for Public Broadcasting becomes Maryland Public Television

**July 1985** - MPT begins broadcasting in stereo

**September 1986** - First national primetime Emmy® for *Wolf Trap Presents The Kirov: Swan Lake*

**October 1986** - Raymond K. K. Ho becomes third CEO

**July 1987** - WGPT (Ch. 36, Oakland) and WFPT (Ch. 62, Frederick) begin broadcasting

**October 1987** - Maryland ITV's *Constancia's Choice* earns prestigious Ollie Award at American Children's Television Festival

**June 1993** - Bob The Vid Tech (actor Robert W. Heck) debuts as on-air children's TV host (at the time, the only PBS station to have a host for a kids program)

**June 1995** - MPT launches Ready To Learn educational outreach to preschoolers

**Summer 1995** - Launch of *mpt.org*, the station's first website

**October 1995** - Archie Buffkins named interim president, succeeding Raymond K.K. Ho

**May 1996** - First-ever national daytime Emmy® for *In Julia's Kitchen with Master Chefs*

**October 1996** - Robert J. Shuman becomes fourth CEO

**October 1998** - MPT granted independent salary authority

**June 1999** - MPT Foundation, Inc. establishes first endowment fund

**October 1999** - MPT stages first of four annual Backyard Bash community events

**May 30, 2000** - MPT begins digital broadcasting

**September 2002** - *Thinkport* team earns first-ever national Emmy® for community service spots

**March 2003** - Launch of *Thinkport* educational website

**April 2005** - First annual Chesapeake Bay Week®

**August 20, 2007** - MPT introduces new Spanish language channel V-me

**January 3, 2008** - MPT launches YouTube presence

**May 2008** - \$1 million Irene and Edward H. Kaplan gift establishes New Initiatives Fund

**June 12, 2009** - MPT broadcasts in digital-only format; analog signals are discontinued

**January 1, 2010** - MPT2 debuts as secondary channel

**May 2010** - MPT launches Walk of Fame to recognize outstanding on-air talent

**July 1, 2011** - Larry D. Unger becomes fifth CEO

**July 13, 2012** - *Star-Spangled Sailabration*, commemoration of 200th anniversary of War of 1812, two-hour live broadcast

**September 2012** - Start of four-year *MPT Salutes Vietnam Veterans* project, largest in station history

**December 2012** - MPT begins "sustaining member" program

**October 2013** - MPT inaugurates Alumni Honor Wall to recognize distinguished former employees

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**September 13, 2014** - *Star-Spangled Spectacular: Bicentennial of Our National Anthem*, two-hour production, broadcasts live on *Great Performances* (production of MPT, Dick Clark Productions, THIRTEEN Productions LLC for WNET)

**January 3, 2016** - Launch of MPT app and MPT Passport

**June 2016** - Four-year Vietnam project wraps up with LZ Maryland weekend event

**2017** - Creation of Maryland State Ad Agency, division of MPT

**January 20, 2017** - MPT broadcasts four separate channels with the addition of PBS KIDS and NHK WORLD-JAPAN

**October 4, 2019** - Opening of 50th anniversary exhibit at Hornbake Library Gallery, University of MD

**October 2019** - Groundbreaking for the expansion of MPT's major production studio (Studio A)

**January 2020** - MPT joins other PBS member stations on YouTube TV

**April 2020** - "At-Home Learning" initiative launches, supporting educators and families during the coronavirus pandemic

**June 2020** - "Standing Against Racism: Fostering Unity Through Dialogue" initiative launches to deliver on-air programs, outreach activities, and educational resources to stimulate dialogue on racial issues

**December 2020** - Launch of annual HBCU Week programming initiative

**June 24, 2021** - MPT launches ATSC 3.0 (a.k.a. NextGen TV), becoming one of five Baltimore area broadcasters to adopt the new transmission standard

**October 2021** - MPT broadcasts live coverage of the inaugural Maryland 5 Star at Fair Hill

**April 28, 2022** - Staff, together with state and industry officials, perform ribbon-cutting for the grand opening of The Irene and Edward H. Kaplan Production Studio (former Studio A)

**2022** - Primary and general election gubernatorial debates are first productions in the Kaplan Studio

**October 2022** - *Harriet Tubman: Visions of Freedom* (10/4) and *Becoming Frederick Douglass* (10/11) documentaries have national PBS primetime premieres

**June 2023** - Launch of the Center for Maryland History Films

**August 2023** - Local HBCU Week programming initiative begins national expansion with HBCU Week NOW, a public media partnership

**November 2024** - Launch of Maryland Center for Media Literacy & Education, successor to MPT's long-standing Education Division

**July 1, 2025** - Steven J. Schupak becomes sixth CEO

**September 9, 2025** - *Becoming Thurgood: America's Social Architect* premieres nationwide in primetime on PBS

(MPT Communications, FY 2025)

# Maryland Public Television

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