

WGVU

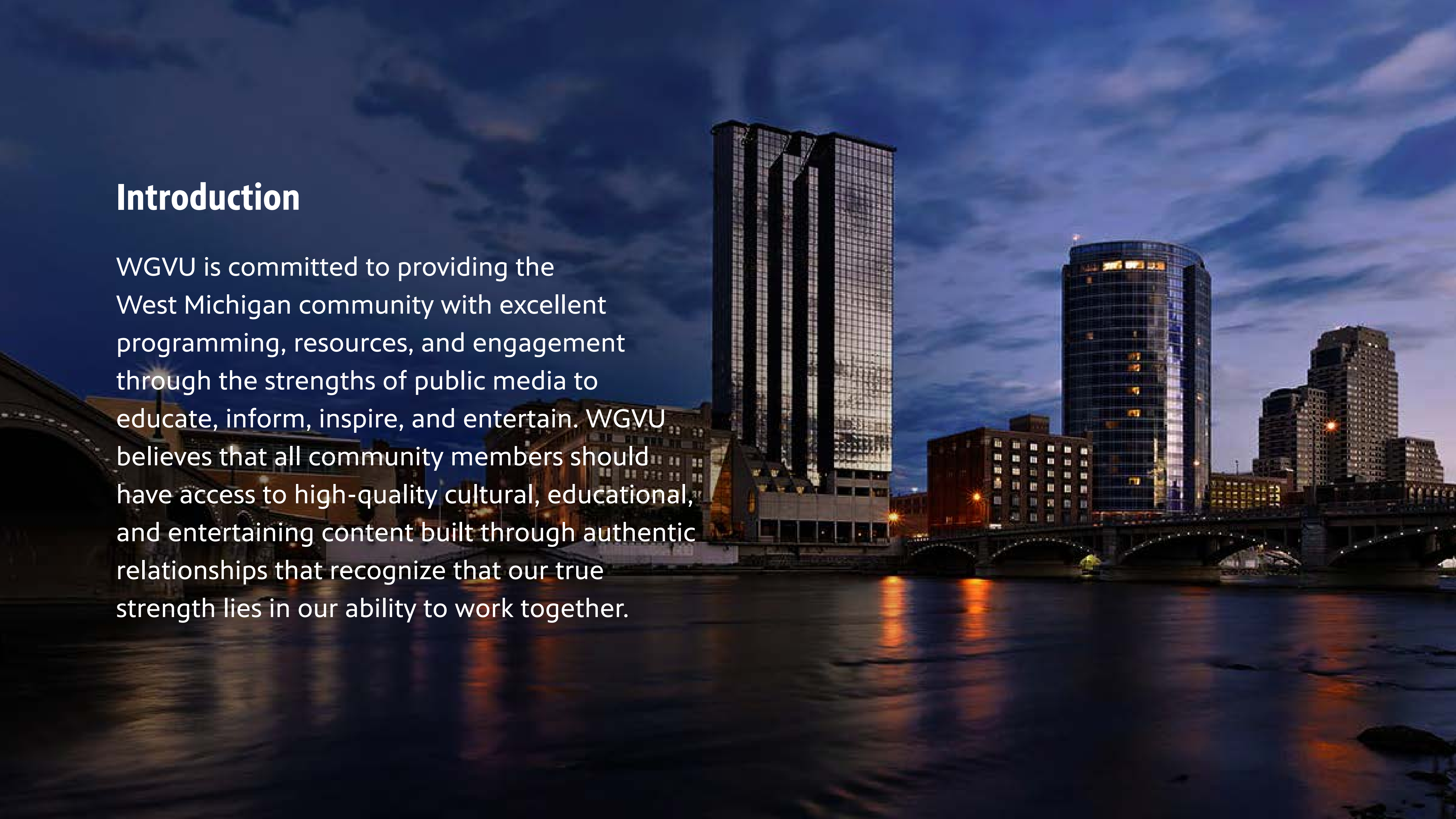
Public Media

WGVU PUBLIC MEDIA CONTENT REPORT 21-22

WGVU is a community source of thought-provoking, inclusive, and engaging media.

Introduction

WGVU is committed to providing the West Michigan community with excellent programming, resources, and engagement through the strengths of public media to educate, inform, inspire, and entertain. WGVU believes that all community members should have access to high-quality cultural, educational, and entertaining content built through authentic relationships that recognize that our true strength lies in our ability to work together.



LOCAL VALUE

WGVU is a trusted provider of educational programming and resources, eye-opening entertainment and documentaries, balanced local news and information services, and home to a variety of experiences to explore the vibrant diversity of the West Michigan Community. WGVU's commitment to its community is evident in its long-standing history of public service. By continuing to produce high-quality content and engaging with its audience, WGVU is helping to ensure that the people of West Michigan have access to the information and resources they need to thrive.

2022 KEY SERVICES

In 2022, WGVU was looking further into our support for our surrounding neighborhoods. We are exploring the cultures and hurdles of West Michigan communities with locally produced series like "*Shaping Narratives: the color out here*" and "*Mi Recipe*," a cultural voyage through the language of food. In addition, WGVU continued to foster the education and health of our community's youth with virtual field trip experiences, weekly newsletters, and a new educational channel.

LOCAL IMPACT

WGVU Public Media covers 22 counties and serves nearly two million people in the West Michigan area. WGVU is actively increasing its reach and accessibility by expanding its radio coverage further West in Kent County and its digital footprint through video streaming and new digital-first content reaching almost 100,000 online every month.

Programming

PBS and NPR National programming excellence is at the heart of what our station does at all levels. The national level of PBS programming is educational, informative, inspiring, and entertaining as it helps West Michigan residents improve their lives. In addition, WGVU strives to provide the highest quality local programming possible through various formats, including news, music, and public affairs; programming for children; community affairs, arts, and culture.

WGVU has always been known as a trusted resource for news in West Michigan communities. With programming from *All Things Considered*, *Morning Edition*, *Washington Week*, *PBS News Hour*, and WGVU's local news programs and reporting. WGVU's *West Michigan Week* and *Newsmakers* are locally produced TV programs that feature various viewpoints and lively discussions beyond the headlines. Including local stories of triumph and discovery to entertainment and competition in West Michigan.

“Thank you for the local reporting on 88.5 fm and the great programming on PBS, especially the Newshour.” - Bradford, Grand Haven

WGVU news is a vital source of critical news coverage for matters related to West Michigan. Coverage of the police-involved death of Patrick Lyoya, the evolving confrontation regarding book bans in school libraries that spurred public discourse surrounding what reading materials kids should have access to, and coverage of the kidnapping plot of Governor Whitmer were all delivered with the utmost experience and care by WGVU reporters.

WGVU continues to ensure that West Michigan has access to the stories that make the headlines and the news that educates and informs. WGVU has also introduced a News Roundup Newsletter that summarizes the biggest headlines from WGVU news weekly. Our Roundup newsletter heralds over 18000 active subscribers and an average open rate of over 60%.

WGVU PBS KIDS looks to educate and inform by providing educational programming, games, and popular children's TV like *Curious George*, *Wild Kratts*, and other PBS KIDS shows. In addition, WGVU directly provides parents with resources for educational games and fun activities. Additionally, local radio series and Podcasts such as *By Leaps and Bounds*, *Muskegon Community Educational Center (MCEC)* podcast, and the radio series *What's in the Toolbox?* provide resources for raising children, helpful information about stay-at-home learning, and local news that directly impacts kids and families.

By Leaps & Bounds

A Closer Look at Early Childhood



Taking national powerhouse programming and extending it into our local community is something WGVU takes great pride. In 2022, regional series and community engagement were created around two major national programs: This American Recipe and Ken Burns Ali.

Ken Burns Ali: WGVU created three pieces of content around Ken Burns where we built on the core values that Ali held close, highlighted in the documentary. WGVU initiated a virtual conversation with Muhamad Ali's daughter Jamillah Ali Joyce where the audience gets the opportunity to have a glimpse of what Ali was like as a father. Alongside our one-hour conversation with Jamillah, we created two 40-minute pieces in partnership with the Boys and Girls Club of West Michigan that explores Ali's fight with Parkinson's and provides a more profound understanding of his six core principles.

The Great American Recipe: This program offered WGVU an entirely different opportunity while using a universal language of food. WGVU created a local called *Mi Recipe* program that also dealt with cuisine, but instead of creating a competition, we celebrated the vibrancy of our community through different recipes. Over two days, we filmed six guests from various organizations in West Michigan doing work in the community around food, specifically food equity and insecurity. These guest chefs created fantastic cultural dishes for us and discussed important issues that our communities face daily. Our experience in the Spectrum Health Lifestyle Medicine Teaching Kitchen was one of a kind and something we will all carry with us going forward as we think about food culture and issues.

WGVU's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion continued through 2022 and into the future. In 2022 WGVU continued its A WGVU initiative in partnership with the W.K. Kellogg Foundation called *Mutually Inclusive*. Using on-air programs and community events to explore issues of inclusion and equity through reliable reporting.

Powerful Women: Let's Talk proudly celebrated female leaders in our community through radio, podcasts, and now a TV program. Guest on powerful women this year included; Leslie Fields-Cruz, the executive director of Black Public Media; Paula Kerger, President and CEO of PBS; and Claire Babineaux-Fontenot, Chief Executive Officer of Feeding America. Additionally, through Straight Talk on Health and Family Health Matters, WGVU highlights health issues in diverse populations.

“We’ve loved WGVU since your “Here’s to Your Health” program alerted us to our 12-year-old son’s diabetes! This was 40 years ago.” - Jack, Holland

As a follow-up to 2021's program *Shaping Narratives*, we had a virtual follow-up conversation where Alice Lyn, creator and host of Color Out Here, converses with James Edward Mills, nationally known author, journalist, and media producer around outdoor exploration recreation, and Alexis Hermiz, the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, to discuss the work they are doing to amplify Black historical narratives in our national parks and explore opportunities to more effectively share the narratives of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color in our national parks and the outdoors, moving forward.





WGVU is proud to be a part of the West Michigan community. Our dedication to diversity extends to the celebration of culture and society through a variety of WGVU programs.

Our radio programs like *Mid-Day West Michigan* and *The Morning Show* share the highlights, happenings, and critical issues in West Michigan. The Morning Show celebrated 20 years on the air in 2022, and host Shelley Irwin was recognized as one of the 50 most influential women in West Michigan.

While another program explores the different affinity communities within the West Michigan area, *Grand Valley Sports Report* gives you a weekly recap of the country's best division 2 athletic program. In addition, the digital series *Michigan Experience* also gives you a peek into secret treasures in your backyard. At the same time, *Kalamazoo's Lively Arts* explore the eclectic and unique art scene in Kalamazoo.

The arts are a pillar of Public Media, and that's no different at WGVU. WGVU brought the arts to homes all across West Michigan. The aforementioned *Kalamazoo Lively Arts (KLA)* is part of a partnership with the Gilmore Foundation in Kalamazoo. *KLA*, as it is referred explores a rich community of artists, musicians, and performers in the Kalamazoo metro area. Like the national program *American Masters*. While another program, *Pocket Sketching with Kath Macaulay*, follows the steps of painting classics similar to *The Joy of Painting*. *Pocket Sketching* teaches the audience how to go outside and capture the natural world through sketching before returning to the studio to finish landscape pieces in watercolor.



WGVU also provides a stage for our audience to experience the arts through their ears. National programs like *Great Performances*, *Live from Lincoln Center*, and *Austin City Limits* set the stage for our local celebration of music. In late 2021 WGVU returned to Hope College for a holiday choral performance of *Hope College Vespers*, which has become a West Michigan tradition that epitomizes the grandeur of the Christmas season.

Our commitment to Jazz and Blues exemplifies WGVU's passion for music. WGVU proudly touts more hours of Jazz and Blues than any other station in West Michigan, with over 70 hours played each week. Music programming is a mainstay for WGVU and it provides an opportunity to partner with other Jazz organizations and festivals in West Michigan.

WGVU Education

WGVU Education is committed to helping teachers find suitable media and resources for their classrooms and families in West Michigan.

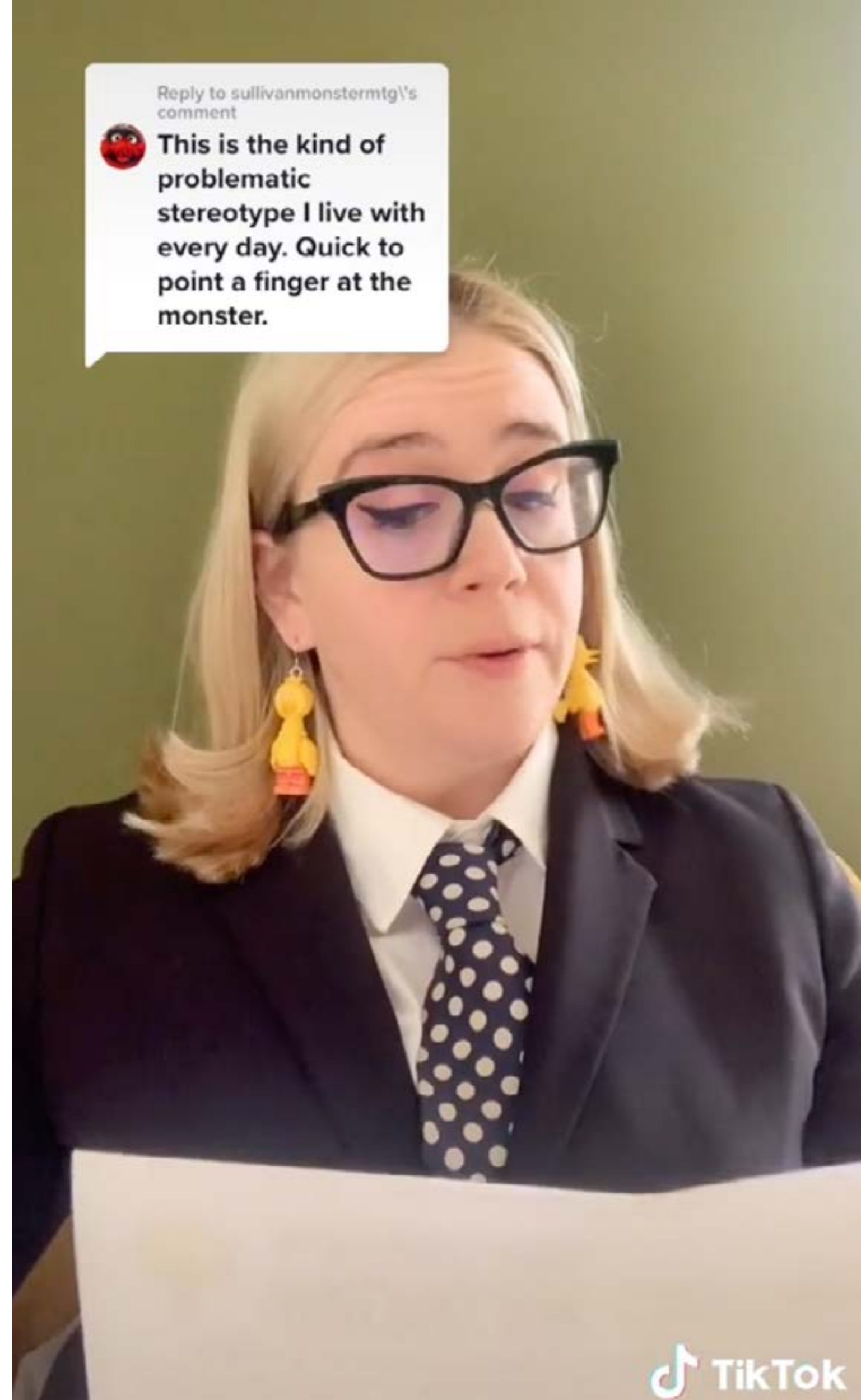
The education team focuses on various delivery methods to engage students, families, and educators with program-related resources. From public television programs to libraries and resources for educators, WGVU education provides vetted choices that work.

In 2022, WGVU used various platforms to deliver educational programming and materials to students, families, and educators in West Michigan. Our education team created and curated an entire website, including lesson plans, national educational programming, educational podcasts, and radio series organized by grade and subject. The WGVU education website also includes a blog that provides power topics around education to inform our community on educational news from West Michigan.

Over the last few years, WGVU education has continued to develop and produce engaging and informative podcasts focused on education. The radio series and Podcast *By Leaps and Bounds* examine questions and information for parents on essential topics, including programs that benefit children and families, how communities approach early childhood education and investments in high-quality early childhood care. In addition, The *What's in the Toolbox* radio segment on *The Morning Show* serves to elevate and share new educational resources.

Additionally, WGVU Education created a Program with First Steps Kent called *Equity Talks*, which seeks to dismantle structural racism and improve the outcomes for people of color. This video series provides tools to guide future educators and parents when discussing race and bias.

With the prevalence of social media in today's landscape, WGVU education utilized Twitter and TikTok. One WGVU's Educational TikTok's even received a direct reply from Sully the Monster directly.





WGVU education engages directly with the community. They are interacting with all of West Michigan's county Intermediate school districts to learn what resources our community educators need most. Our station is actively participating in school events such as Reading is Fun in Muskegon, Kent Great Start Collaborative Books, Blocks and balls event, Garfield Park's Story Time in the Park, and Harrison Park's Back to School Night to provide resources directly to students, educators, and families. WGVU education also includes training on Public Media resources from PBS and NPR for students at Grand Valley State's College of Education and Community Innovation.

Our dedication to education includes creating new learning experiences for all learners in our community. WGVU is a proud carrier of the Michigan Learning Channel, a statewide public television partnership offering instructional content to support the education of students and to provide alternative resources for families and teachers.

A new locally produced program named *Wimee's Word*, Wimee is a fun, lovable robot that inspires kids to learn through creativity. Kids join Wimee and friends for wacky wordplay, silly songs, and playful conversation in an interactive show.

We also created an interactive field trip that celebrates Earth Day and the beauty of our planet. Additionally, we partnered with area libraries to have librarians read stories to children who were impacted by covid-19.



It's also a priority for WGVU to celebrate the creativity and dedication of educators and students. The WGVU Cool Teacher program goes directly into classrooms to celebrate students' favorite teachers and how they make learning fun. The classroom is treated with a particular party and is recognized on-air as a Cool Teacher class.

The WGVU Innovation Challenge asks children to explore their creativity and ingenuity by offering a selection of prompts based on STE (A).M. Students submit stories, poetry, visual and performing art pieces, and inventions.

Students and Teachers recognized in these two programs are honored and celebrated at the end of the year during the Education Celebration. The Education Celebration in 2022 brought just over 100 students, teachers, and families to the Lake Michigan Credit Union Ballpark for a movie at the ballpark, PBS Kids mascots, food and beverages, and a brief recognition ceremony.

WGVU Community Engagement

In 2022 WGVU continued its commitment to our community through direct interaction. We value meeting the members who keep Public Media in West Michigan and connecting with partners and organizations. WGVU is committed to providing programming and resources and being an active member and supporter of the people and organizations in West Michigan.

WGVU participated in many partner events in 2022, ranging from family events to fun community events that celebrate the shared values between WGVU and our partners. For example, the station brought the fun of an interactive quiz show to the Grand Rapids festival of the arts by providing attendees with a *Wait Wait, Don't tell Me...* quiz where they could win an NPR t-shirt. The activity was such a hit that we ran out of t-shirts by the end of the second day of a three-day event.

The organization Linc Up's event Rock The Block comes together to celebrate the vibrant community of Madison square in Grand Rapids. The event consists a block party where thousands of people in the neighborhood engage with community organizations, enjoy fabulous food and music and celebrate reaching together as a community.

WGVU partnered with Linc Up and the poetry group Diatribe to support the 49507 Project. The *49507 Project* started as an intentional public art installation that hired black and brown artists to create murals in the Burton Heights and Madison Square neighborhoods. The success of the art installation led to an educational program that helped students recognize why their communities look the way they do.





Family-related events directly created and organized by WGVU serve the purpose of providing families an opportunity to have experiences at a lower price so that they can enjoy a day of exploration and fun they may otherwise not be able to. WGVU's KidsDay at the Zoo is one of these events. KidsDay lowers the cost of admission for everyone in the community. In addition to providing the excitement of seeing and interacting with the animals at Grand Rapids John Ball Zoo, it also brings together dozens of partnering organizations to create a fair-like atmosphere of education activities and the excitement of PBS Kids Mascots. WGVU's KidsDay at the Zoo, on average, has 8-11 thousand attendees.

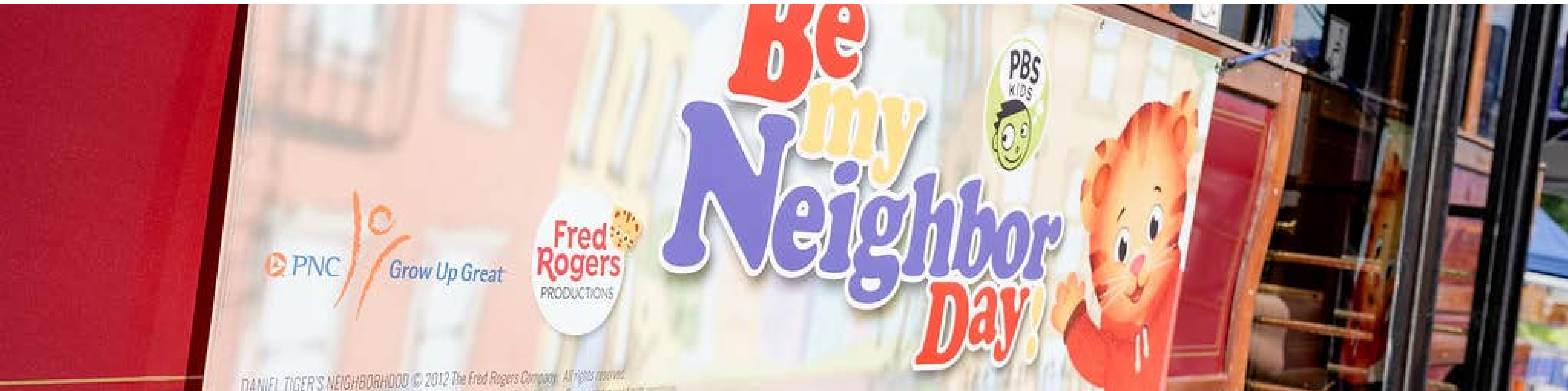
"I just wanted to call to express gratitude for the event that you put on today at the zoo. It was just such a blessing and gift to our family to be able to have a day at the zoo for such a much lower cost. So, thank you so much for doing that." -Anna

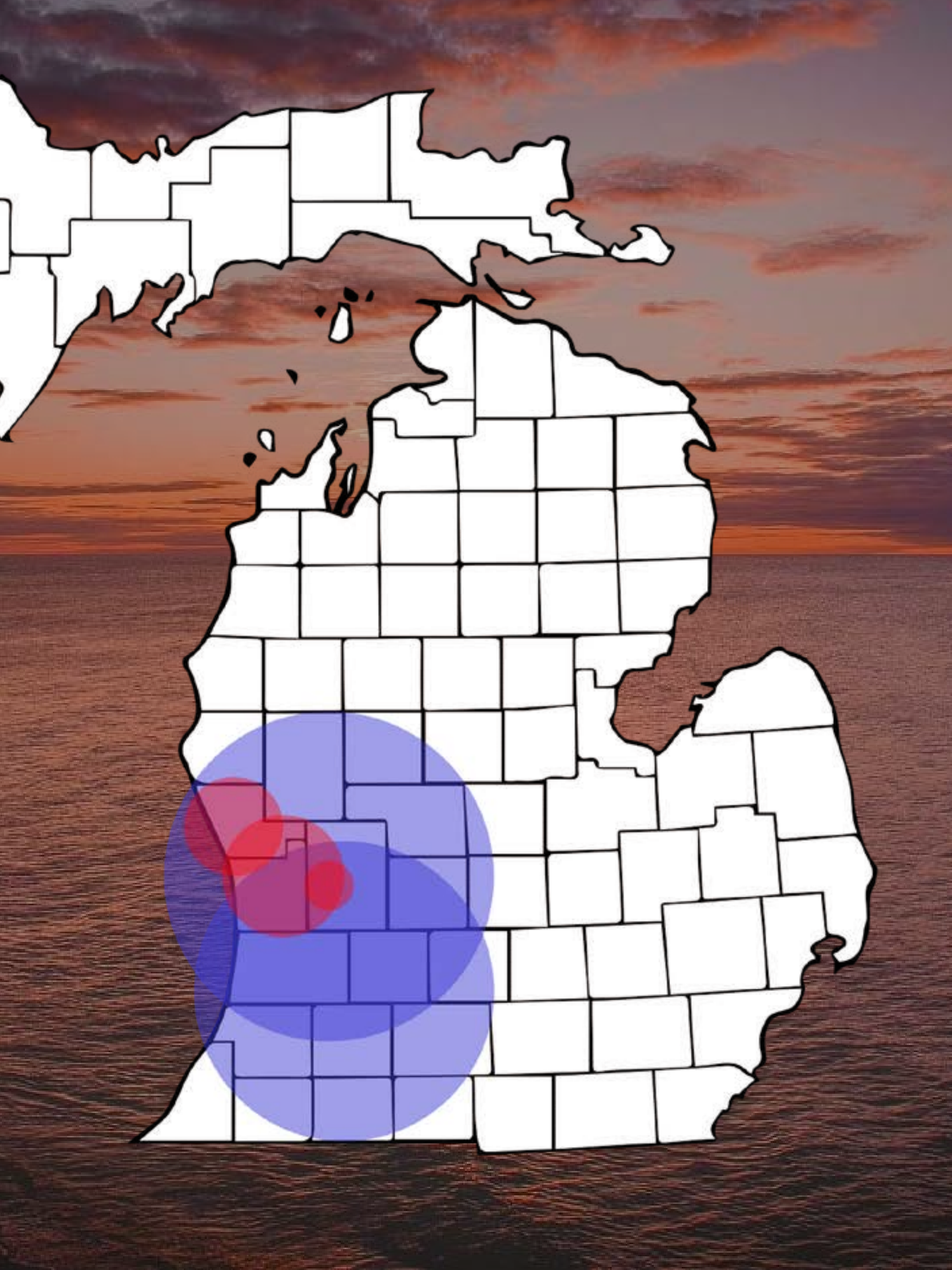
In 2022 WGVU again provided Fred Rogers Company and PNC Banks Be My Neighbor Day in West Michigan. With many schools still doing virtual and distanced learning in the fall of 2021, the WGVU Be My Neighbor Day looked a little different this year. WGVU visited local YMCA's, Head Start locations, and local schools in a Daniel Tiger like Trolley with Daniel himself in tow. WGVU and its partners provided 1,500 bags that included activities, stickers, crayons, education resources, fun Daniel Tigers ears, and a Daniel Tiger Book of their very own. Alongside our location visits, WGVU also incorporated a virtual component via a website packed with sing-alongs, stories, and a letter from where they could send a kind email to friends, families, and neighbors.

Hands-on community engagement only sometimes takes the form of events. Some of the work we are proudest of is volunteer work in the community and fostering students' professional experience of our thirty-plus annual student colleagues from colleges and universities across West Michigan.

In the spring of 2022, WGVU staff volunteered with our partner Our Kitchen Table to weed and plant a community garden in the Burton Heights neighborhood. As a result, we are providing fresh vegetables to an area of our community that historically has been considered a food desert.

One of our most important partners in community engagement and impact is the community itself. In 2022 the community showed its ongoing solid support for WGVU. WGVU is grateful for the financial stability that our community provides. Community support is a generational value, as proved by the over 1900 new and returning members in 2022. That support also has a direct impact on children in West Michigan. For example, donations from WGVU's Giving Tuesday campaign partnership allowed the station to provide 1,000 books to children in our community to fight childhood illiteracy.





Coverage and Accessibility

As a media company, we know the only way to increase access and visibility is to spread out our reach. So this year, we've been focusing on improving our broadcast power and digital footprint, ensuring everyone in West Michigan has access high-quality programming and resources.

WGVU has expanded its coverage and accessibility with FM radio, digital platforms, and a new CMS system. In 2022 WGVU increased its reach with a new broadcast translator for our FM signal, improving coverage for over 200,000 people on the east side of Kent County. We also increased our priority on digital services as the media landscape continues to provide content on multiple platforms. WGVU created a new digital strategy for delivering and evaluating content in a digital space to ensure that we are tailoring our offerings to niche communities within our audience. Additionally, we migrated our news and information webpage to a new CMS system (named GROVE) provided by NPR that allows us to provide local and national news in a new, more user-friendly layout.

WGVU is a place where everyone belongs. We have made great strides to include all community members, but we can do more. In addition to ensuring that we are creating and broadcasting content in multiple formats to meet the needs of all members, we've also focused on making our content more accessible to members of our community with limited English language proficiency or those who may benefit from closed captions. In 2022 WGVU installed a new master control system for our TV broadcast. One impactful aspect that immediately impacts the community with this new system is the ability to multicast in English and Spanish.

Support from the community

WGVU Public Media, PBS, and NPR West Michigan offer high-quality programming to the entire community. The community support and commitment shown by the member organizations and individuals are a testament to our role in education, inspiration, and creating a better world. When people are involved, things happen. Our listeners have demonstrated their commitment to public media with financial support, volunteerism, and continued loyalty.

“Thanks for the fantastic news [on WGVU FM]! It’s my best way to keep informed on the state and local news. I also love getting to hear about all of the local events that keep this city so great!” - Stephen, Grand Rapids

“We watch WGVU PBS television more than any other station for episodes of Nature, POV, American Experience, Frontline, Nova, Ask This Old House, As Time Goes By, and the Saturday cooking shows to name a few. The quality and variety is unsurpassed!” - Rob, Hastings

“When my daughter was born, we had no money for daycare, so she was loved and cared for by unskilled family members. This is wonderful, but almost all of her first educational experiences were through very important shows like Sesame Street, Daniel Tiger, Dinosaur Train and Wild Kratts. It eased my mind to know that this option was there for her. Now that I have the means, I want to make sure it stays around for others like us.” - Julie, Conklin

“While we give on a regular basis, I just wanted to toss in a little amount as the Presentation of Queen Elizabeth’s funeral was the very best of all networks and was very tastefully narrated by two people who had great historic knowledge of the what makes up the traditions and proceedings, Also, the Ken Burns new series is a brilliant presentation of atrocities perpetrated here in the United States and of course other nations around the world. It reminds us these atrocities can occur again, if we are not diligent to protect our Democracy and accepting peoples of all cultures.” - Ptolemy, Grandville

I have enjoyed decades of WGVU programming, and it continues for my children and their children. Your service was a lifeline during the pandemic. THANK YOU
- Judith, Kalamazoo

Love Shelley Irwin and the Morning Show, as well as all the local news!
- Mary Ann, Grand Rapids