



2023 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



Isabella Ba is the sixth student to receive the annual \$15,000 Rhode Island PBS Foundation Scholarship. Isabella entered Rhode Island College in September of 2023 and is pursuing a major in communications. See her interview on the set of ***A Lively Experiment***.



As part of WSBE's commitment to Rhode Island's culture and robust history, Rhode Island PBS delivered award-winning content aimed at meeting people where they are; on-air, online, and in person. From ***Rhode Island PBS Weekly***, telling the in-depth stories of our diverse community, to ***ART inc.***, highlighting the artists of Rhode Island and southern New England and pushing the boundaries of what we perceive as art, to community events aimed at educating and raising awareness, Rhode Island PBS strove to make a difference in our region.

Rhode Island PBS reached out into the community, telling in-depth stories, hosting workshops and panels, and providing resources to further education and awareness. In partnership with Rhode Island College, Rhode Island PBS hosted a community panel event, ***Our Best Lives***, which focused on the issues facing the transgender community in Rhode Island and southern New England. Education Services continued to provide content and resources supporting teachers, students, and adults trying to further their education through the Rhode Island PBS LearningMedia portal. Rhode Island PBS also provided content digitally, improving access to information and resources.

Rhode Island PBS aimed to spark imagination, explore our history, and reflect the values of our community by telling southern New England's unique stories. ***Rhode Island PBS Weekly*** produced stories exploring Critical Race Theory, Language Deprivation, Media Literacy, and much more. These stories were so impactful, that they were picked up by ***PBS NewsHour***, making us the largest contributor of local content in the country. ***Our Town*** went into our state's small towns, spotlighting stories told by neighbors and friends. ***Ocean State Sessions***, ***ART inc.***, and many other programs explored the arts and culture of Rhode Island and southeastern Massachusetts and brought attention to many artists.

AWARDS:

It was an award-winning year for Rhode Island PBS! In 2023, we are proud to have our community-focused work be honored with three Emmys, two NETA Awards, and six Telly Awards including a Gold People's Choice award!



Rhode Island PBS Weekly took home an Emmy award for their piece **Critical Race Theory**, where David Wright reports on the controversy surrounding critical race theory and the rising concerns about the academic approach to teaching kids about systemic racism in our society. **Rhode Island PBS Weekly** also received two nods from the NETA Awards for the pieces **Media Literacy** and **Language Deprivation**. **Media Literacy** takes a deep dive, asking educators about the role of media literacy in our democracy and what students need to know before consuming media across multiple platforms. **Language Deprivation** explores the complicated path parents must navigate to help their deaf children, and how language deprivation can cause children to fall behind.



ART inc. celebrated the full possibility of the arts, while pulling back the curtain on the process and the product. **Acorns to Becorns** told the story of David Bird, and his passion developing interesting characters and storylines through creatures crafted from acorns, pinecones, and other natural materials that were then photographed in nature with birds, squirrels, and other wildlife. This piece was recognized with an Emmy award and two Telly awards, including a Gold People's Choice award. The show also received three other Telly awards for the pieces **Sea Salt, See Salt, Art Provenance**, and **For the Birds**.

Our Best Lives

Our Best Lives was a station-wide public awareness and community education campaign to produce and distribute essential resources to improve mental health in Rhode Island, specifically in the transgender community. Based on **My Best Life**, a Boston/New England Emmy-nominated **Rhode Island PBS Weekly** segment that premiered in March 2022 and funded with the support of Blue Cross & Blue Shield of RI, this initiative included two additional Weekly segments, a community event, a PBS LearningMedia resource published in English and Spanish, and a professional development webinar. Throughout the project, members of the transgender community were involved as partners, consultants, voiceover talent, and panelists. Throughout the planning and implementation of each component of the project, our staff were proud to have some impact on the community through new and existing relationships. However, we also found that we were learning and improving our own professional practices across the station simultaneously.

EVENTS:

Rhode Island Report, Live: Celebrating Civic Leadership

May 31, 2023



To celebrate the 100th episode of **Rhode Island Report**, podcast host and political reporter Ed Fitzpatrick and **Story in the Public Square's** Jim Ludes sat down in front of a live audience at Rhode Island PBS studios to discuss the big topics facing the state. Special guests included House Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi, Senate President Dominic Ruggerio and Brown University Professor Wendy Schiller.

Native America Season 2 Screening and Panel

November 29, 2023

Rhode Island PBS held a public screening event at the University of Rhode Island to celebrate the premiere of **Native America** Season 2. To kick off the event, attendees enjoyed a live performance by the Eastern Medicine Singers, followed by an exclusive look at the fourth episode of the series titled "Language is Life."

The episode showcased Native Heroes using every tool to recover, revitalize, and restore their linguistic traditions. After the screening, **Rhode Island PBS Weekly** co-host Pamela Watts moderated a panel discussion featuring members from the Narragansett Tribe and **Native America's** executive producer Gary Glassman and director Daniel Golding.



EVENTS:

Our Town

On a quest to visit all 31 Rhode Island towns, Rhode Island PBS spent time in Little Compton and South Kingstown as the 15th and 16th stops in the **Our Town** docuseries. Residents and friends of both towns became the storytellers and filmmakers, capturing stories they wanted to share in the documentaries.

Our Town: Little Compton

March 7, 2023



Volunteers who submitted footage and were storytellers in **Our Town: Little Compton** were invited to an exclusive screening at the Little Compton Community Center. **Our Town: Little Compton** featured the following stories: *Sakonnet Preservation*, *Sakonnet People*, *The Nature Conservancy*, *Hoo Hollow's Horses*, *Local Artist*, *Historic Cemeteries*, *Community Center*, *Olivia's Rocks*, *Tree Spree*, *Land and Beauty* and *Surf Therapy*.

Our Town: Little Compton was made possible in part by Residential Properties Ltd., Arkins Construction Co., and Lila Delman Real Estate.

Our Town: South Kingstown

September 5, 2023



The timing of **Our Town: South Kingstown** couldn't have been more serendipitous as residents were gearing up to celebrate the town's 300th birthday, and to add to the festivities, Rhode Island PBS held a community screening for the **Our Town** documentary. All South Kingstown residents and anyone interested in **Our Town: South Kingstown** were invited to attend. More than a hundred people registered for the event.

Our Town: South Kingstown featured the following stories: *Wild South Kingstown*, *Friends of the Garden*, *Preserved Land*, *Art Community*, *Hera Gallery*, *Whodunit? A Murder Mystery*, *Wakefield Village*, *New Business*, *Old Vibes*, *Belmont Market*, *Local Flavor*, *Legacy Land*, *Snug at Home*, *Sandy's Shore*, *The Library Past and Present*, *Military Town* and *300th Celebration*.

Our Town: South Kingstown was made possible in part by Belmont Market.

RHODE ISLAND PBS EDUCATION SERVICES

Rhode Island PBS Education Services is a trusted resource for local educators, students, parents, and learners of all ages providing educational programming and resources based on high-quality public media content, centering best practices in digital literacy, and reflecting the values of our diverse community..

Early Childhood

Rhode Island PBS Education Services has supported the Ready To Learn national initiative by establishing community partnerships to create a “Learning Neighborhood” that promotes learning any time, anywhere by equipping educators, parents, and caregivers with high quality resources to promote school readiness in ages 2-8. In 2023, our staff partnered with the [YWCA RI](#) and the [Woonsocket Harris Public Library](#) to offer a series of professional development to educators called “Educator & Community Learning” (ECL) and family engagement workshops called “Family & Community Learning” (FCL). We also participated in a total of 14 family outreach activities and five educator outreach activities. A total of 58 families participated in Ready To Learn training and 300 children participated in Ready To Learn outreach activities.

The Ready To Learn Initiative



Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children

We partnered with the [Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children \(RIA EYC\)](#) to offer programming for families of young children during a week in April.

This was part of a national initiative by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) aiming to focus public attention on the needs of young children and their families and to recognize the early childhood programs and services that meet those needs. Each day of the week has a specific theme which we then paired with Ready To Learn resources and activities. We had a total of 33 families or caregivers and 150 children participate in this programming.

The PBS Educator & Community Learning professional learning series is designed for educators of children ages 3-8. During each three-hour session, educators actively learn and play together with digital and non-digital tools. The goal is to empower educators with the tools, skills and confidence to bring similar media-rich, play-based and learner-centered experiences into their own environments and communities. We had a total of eight educators complete this training.

Family & Community Learning is a model for multi-generational hands-on family engagement designed to support science and literacy development among children and families. This multi-session family engagement event reached 13 families and 28 children in June and 12 families and 21 children in July from Woonsocket, Rhode Island.



Rhode Island PBS presented these resources/events under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The project is funded by a Ready To Learn grant (PR/AWARD No. S295A200004, CFDA No. 84.295A) provided by the U.S. Department of Education to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

RHODE ISLAND PBS EDUCATION SERVICES

Youth Opportunities

Public Media Exploration - Rhode Island PBS Education Services conducted student station tours with a focus on either career exploration in the public media field, or topics related to broadcast journalism, through a digital literacy lens. We partnered with over five different high schools across the state in order to provide students with multiple options for analyzing and evaluating the who, what, where, when, why and how of Rhode Island PBS media creation and distribution.



Student Reader Contest and Kids Reading Across Rhode Island - From February-June 2023, Rhode Island PBS, led by Education Services, partnered with Rhode Island Center for the Book (RI Book) to present a Student Reader Contest to identify a local third-fifth grader who would represent Rhode Island on Season 4 of **CAMP TV**. Along with the winner, nine finalists also received a prize package and were featured on-air in a [Kids Reading Across Rhode Island interstitial](#) for the 2023 selection, *The Aquanaut*, by Dan Santat. Funding was provided by WNET's **CAMP TV**: Season 4 Production and Community Engagement Initiative along

with both participating organizations. Through this project, students were honored at school, featured on-air, met an author, and connected with peers, celebrating reading and creating lasting memories.

Rhode Island PBS Education Services STEM Family Resources - In 2023, we received two grants to distribute STEM family activities throughout the community:

- **PBS SoCal Family Math: *Family Math*** is a research-based, multiplatform, bilingual program that focuses on building math positivity, confidence and knowledge of foundational math skills for families with children ages two to five. Family Math equips parents and caregivers with strategies and resources to facilitate meaningful math experiences at home through playful learning and hands-on activities. We distributed Family Math booklets free of charge at all community events from May to November.
- **WNET Cyberchase Mobile Adventures in STEM:** Rhode Island PBS Education Services encouraged parents to sign up to receive free videos and activities from the PBS KIDS show **Cyberchase** from February - October 2023. This mobile initiative allowed families and children ages five to eight to explore math, science, and the environment through fun games, crafts, and experiments in English or Spanish.

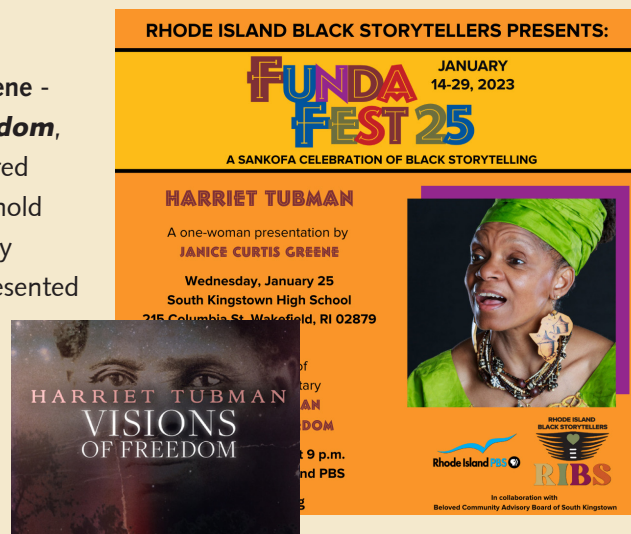


Internships - We had two department interns who provided invaluable time and input to all Education Services summer initiatives. One intern was a rising college junior who has previous involvement with the station as a summer 2022 station intern and a Rhode Island PBS Scholarship recipient. Our other intern came from a collaboration with [Prepare RI](#), an initiative that prepares rising high school juniors and seniors with career skills and real-world experiences.

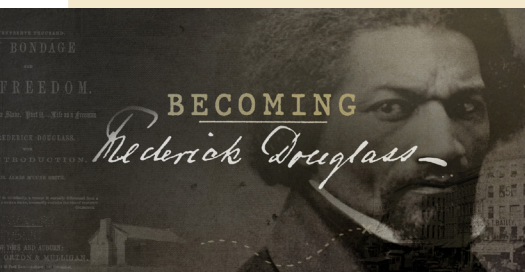
RHODE ISLAND PBS EDUCATION SERVICES

Community Engagement

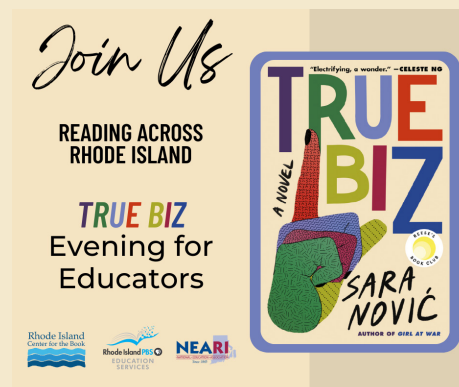
- Harriet Tubman: A One Woman Presentation by Janice Curtis Greene** - To promote the documentary **Harriet Tubman: Visions of Freedom**, distributed by Maryland Public Television, Rhode Island PBS partnered with the non-profit organization Rhode Island Black Storytellers to hold a community event in January. The event featured a performance by storyteller Janice Curtis Greene, who portrayed Harriet Tubman. Presented as part of Rhode Island Black Storytellers' Funda Fest 25, the event was held at South Kingstown High School and was open to students, families, and community members. More than one hundred people attended the performance, which ended with a Q&A with Janice Curtis Greene.



- Becoming Frederick Douglass: Screening & Discussion** - In collaboration with the non-profit organization Stages of Freedom, Rhode Island PBS presented the Becoming Frederick Douglass: Screening & Discussion event in February. The event promoted the documentary **Becoming Frederick Douglass**, distributed by Maryland Public Television, and gave community members the opportunity to learn about Douglass' connections to Rhode Island. Local poet Marlon Carey kicked off the event with his poem "What to Me is the 4th of July." His performance was followed by a 30-minute excerpt from the documentary, **Rhode Island PBS Weekly's** Frederick Douglass segment **First Steps to Freedom**, and a presentation by Stages of Freedom. More than one hundred people attended the event, both virtually and in-person.



- Reading Across Rhode Island 2023** - True Biz Evening for Educators and Book Discussion Leaders - Rhode Island PBS, in collaboration with the [Rhode Island Center for the Book](#), sponsors Reading Across Rhode Island, a multi-month event that provides statewide shared reading opportunities for the general audience and K-12 students. As part of the 2023 event, Rhode Island PBS hosted the True Biz Evening for Educators and Book Discussion Leaders live webinar on February 28, in collaboration with the Rhode Island Center for the Book, [NEA RI](#), and the Reading Across Rhode Island Education Committee, to provide educators, librarians, and book discussion leaders across the state with topics and strategies to engage readers with the book and its themes. The webinar hosted over fifty attendees, and educators received professional development certificates for their attendance.



RHODE ISLAND PBS EDUCATION SERVICES

Community Engagement (cont'd)

Providence College (PC) Co-Facilitation - We co-facilitated two courses part of the Providence College [Master's In Urban Teaching](#) program in the Spring and Fall 2023 semesters (EDU 665 & EDU 667). During this co-facilitation, students examined original Rhode Island PBS LearningMedia content and created lesson plans and activities to accompany them. Under the guidance of the Education Services team, students received feedback on their ideas, and gave a final presentation at the end of the semester to share their work - some projects have been published on PBS LearningMedia.



In 2023, we participated in numerous pre-existing community events as volunteers to build community partnerships and relationships. This included:

- **[Courageous RI Community Conversations](#)** - Courageous RI hosted community conversations on a wide range of topics focused on media literacy, active listening, kindness and compassion, and community engagement. We participated both in these bi-weekly conversations as attendees and facilitators from March-July.
- **[Blackstone Valley Community Action Program \(BVCAP\) Events:](#)**
 1. **Trunk or Treat (October)** - BVCAP invited Education Services staff to participate in their annual Trunk or Treat event for the families who participate in their Parents as Teachers program and neighborhood families. We brought our PBS themed car and handed out family math books, PBS merchandise, and candy.
 2. **Holiday Dinner (December)** - BVCAP invited Education Services to their annual Holiday Dinner for their Parents as Teachers families. This dinner consisted of food donated by local businesses and food prepared by BVCAP staff while our staff brought dessert and helped to serve food.
 3. **Community Wrapping (December)** - BVCAP partners with a local toy store Henry's Bear Park in Providence to offer gift wrapping during the holiday season in exchange for donations to fund gifts for children in their Parents as Teachers program. Our staff helped to wrap gifts to support this fundraiser.
- **[Progreso Latino Food Pantry \(December\)](#)** - Progreso Latino has a weekly food pantry open for the Central Falls community. Our staff was invited to the last food pantry opening of the year to support by passing out hot chocolate to families waiting outside in line to enter the food pantry.



RHODE ISLAND PBS EDUCATION SERVICES

For The Educators

Throughout 2023, Rhode Island PBS LearningMedia reached over 23,500 users with about 40,000 pageviews! We also published 35 new, original resources this year, bringing us to a cumulative total of 109 individual resources:

- In partnership with Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island, our team adapted segments from ***Rhode Island PBS Weekly*** for instructional use on PBS LearningMedia that focus on bringing awareness to mental health needs in our community in February. The resources below were developed in collaboration with [Rhode Island Student Assistance Services](#), and are aligned with National Health Education Standards. (Grades 9-12)
 - [Addictive Algorithms](#)
 - [Breaking Point](#)
 - [My Best Life](#)
- [The Stephano: The True Story of Shakespeare's Shipwreck collection](#) explores the connection of filmmaker Andrew Giles Buckley's ancestor to the potential inspiration of William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* through art, language and history. Six total resources were published to create this collection, three each in March and October. (Grades 9-12)
- [The Paws for a Minute collection](#) features a range of animals housed at the Roger Williams Park Zoo in Providence, Rhode Island. Each video profiles a specific animal and showcases its physical and adaptive traits and behaviors. We added six new resources to this collection, three each in April and October. (Grades PreK-2)
- [The X Factor: Women in New England Politics collection](#) celebrates New England women in local and national politics. Through twelve resources, learn about the successes and challenges experienced throughout twelve women's political careers. (Grades 6-12)
- [The Chasing Silver: The Story of Gorham collection](#) on PBS LearningMedia, eight resources released in November, uses the story of Gorham Manufacturing Company as a microcosm representing larger issues in American history, from the wealth inequality of the Gilded Age to the fight for women's rights and fair labor practices of the 20th century. Content for this collection was adapted from the original Rhode Island PBS documentary, ***Chasing Silver: The Story of Gorham***. (Grades 9-12)



RHODE ISLAND PBS EDUCATION SERVICES

For The Educators (cont'd)

PBS Digital Innovator All-Star - Central Falls High School teacher, David Upegui, PhD, began his first year of engagement and implementation as a PBS Digital Innovator All-Star. In his first year, Dr. Upegui published his first national [PBS LearningMedia resource](#), and was highlighted in many different station initiatives, such as: an interview on [Rhode Island PBS Weekly](#) and the [Rhode Island Report podcast](#); in addition to recognition at our annual station fundraiser event, Uncorked! He will continue his work into 2024.

Rhode Island PBS Education Services Professional Learning Workshops - We hosted two Professional Learning opportunities in 2023:

- **1st Rhode Island PBS Media Literacy cohort** - Each month, we met virtually with a group of educators across the state to support their certification journey to becoming a PBS Media Literacy Educator, a rigorous process that involves actively evaluating and building up one's own media literacy skills. We had two successful certifications!
- **PBS LearningMedia Workshops** - We hosted four workshops where educators and community stakeholders explored what PBS LearningMedia had to offer, specifically highlighting locally-produced content, and best practices for using media in the classroom.



AWARD-WINNING LOCAL CONTENT



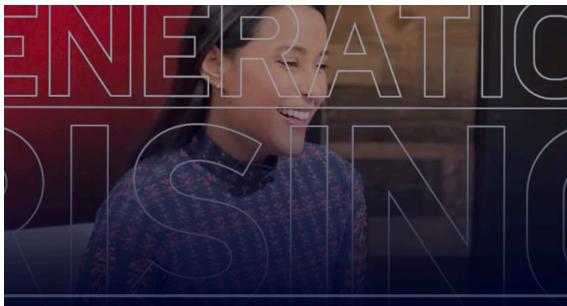
Ocean State Sessions, a Rhode Island PBS Original series, is back for season three in July with more of Rhode Island's up and coming musicians.

This season, **Ocean State Sessions** came from Big Nice Studio in Lincoln, RI., featuring an eclectic catalog of music from New England musicians, followed by intimate interviews where the songwriters share their insights into the local music scene and the creative inspiration behind their music.

Each episode of **Ocean State Sessions** went beyond the broadcast, providing extended interviews and exclusive insights found on our website and our YouTube channel. [Enjoy the series On Demand here.](#)

ART inc. is a digital series and a half-hour magazine-style broadcast exploring the art around us, from the traditional – music, performance, visual arts – to unexpected discoveries: the art of the tea ceremony, the art of grieving, and the art of creating a prosthetic eye. Through dynamic footage and narrative storytelling, **ART inc.** explores the full possibility of the arts: the diversity of who creates it and why, where art can take us, and why it takes us there.

ART inc. airs Monday at 7:30 p.m. [Enjoy the series On Demand here.](#)



Generation Rising focuses on the inequities that people of color, including women, African Americans, Indigenous, Asian, Hispanic and LGBTQIA+ communities face throughout Rhode Island. Community leaders, journalists and academics offer their expertise and opinions on how they are pushing society toward change. Season 1 was 24 episodes, each highlighting a different aspect of these important issues facing Rhode Island and southern New England.

Generation Rising airs Friday at 7:30 p.m. [Enjoy the series On Demand here.](#)

For more than 30 years, **A Lively Experiment** has provided insight and analysis of the week's local and national political events. Asking the hard questions and shaking out the answers in spirited, fast-paced debate, a rotating panel of journalists and opinion leaders, economists and political scientists, elected officials and pundits dig deep into the local issues that affect Rhode Islanders.

A Lively Experiment airs Friday at 7 p.m. [Enjoy the series On Demand here.](#)



STORIES FROM INDEPENDENT VOICES IN OUR COMMUNITY

Rhode Island PBS has a longstanding tradition of giving a platform to independent voices in our community. In 2023, these following productions brought light to Portuguese culture in New England, took us behind the scenes of local museums and introduced us to new friends.

Maria's Portuguese Table Season 2

April 2023

Complementing her book, *Azorean Cooking: From My Table to Yours*, Maria Lawton blends her love of Portuguese food, traditions and culture in the award-winning series ***Maria's Portuguese Table***. From Cape Cod to Boston and the central islands of the Azorean archipelago, the highly anticipated second season explored the Portuguese immigrant experience and featured Portuguese businesses and restaurants right in New England.



Treasures Inside the Museum Season 4

October 2023

Treasures Inside the Museum steps into the back rooms of more than a dozen museums throughout southern New England, delving into their treasured collections and uncovering pieces that often remain hidden away. In Season 4 of the series, thirteen museums were featured, including the Providence Art Club, the Attleboro Area Industrial Museum, Newport's Chateau-sur-Mer and St Ann Arts and Cultural Center – known as the “Sistine Chapel of North America.”



Pollywog Pond

July 2023

Based on the award-nominated video game, ***Pollywog Pond*** is an early learning series that teaches emotional and interpersonal skills and highlights the importance of environmental stewardship. In three half-hour episodes, viewers met ‘live’ puppets Waddle, Weep, Derb and Berb, who introduced them to the wonders of their home Pollywog Pond. Featuring original songs, puzzles and lessons on how to protect our planet, ***Pollywog Pond*** gave Rhode Island PBS the opportunity to introduce new children's programming to the community.



RHODE ISLAND PBS WEEKLY

It was a busy year for **Rhode Island PBS Weekly**. Since launching in 2020, this small team of enormously talented journalists have produced more than 250 unique local and regional stories on a variety of issues, including the environment, education, healthcare, local business, the immigrant experience, history, youth perspectives, and political commentary.



On-camera correspondents Pamela Watts and Michelle San Miguel are consummate news professionals who bring objectivity, in-depth research and a genuine warmth to each of their stories. They, and the entire **Rhode Island PBS Weekly** team, are committed to presenting balanced, diverse voices and perspectives on stories that matter to Rhode Island, southern New England and beyond.

This year, **Rhode Island PBS Weekly** continued its strong partnership with PBS's premier and highly regarded newscast, **PBS NewsHour**, contributing more regional stories than any other PBS affiliate in the country. Senior Executive Producer & Senior Vice President, Sara Just, reflected on the partnership, "At PBS NewsHour, we look for opportunities to bring some of the best local public media journalism to a wider national audience. We have been grateful to Rhode Island PBS Weekly for consistently delivering meaningful, beautifully told stories that we have been proud to present on PBS NewsHour. We welcome the opportunity to partner with RIPBS in bringing more stories from the country's smallest state to a national audience."

Rhode Island PBS Weekly airs Sunday at 7:30 p.m., and encores the following Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. [Stream episodes On Demand here.](#)



I support PBS because they have such great quality content on so many different topics on so many levels you don't see anywhere else. Love this channel for years! I give you a thumbs up!

— Ariana R.,
East Greenwich, RI

I not only support it because of the great programming I like, I support it because it's good for the local community. Things like the children's programs, cooking and other shows that teach us, local history shows, on and on.

— Leonard M.,
Coventry, RI

LETTERS, EMAIL AND PHONE MESSAGES FROM OUR VIEWERS

I support Rhode Island PBS because PBS has been a critical and meaningful part of my entire life. In my more than 40 years roaming this planet, it's been a constant source of news, entertainment, and joy. We as a country would be immeasurably poorer without public broadcasting. Thank you for what you do.

Daniel B.,
Providence, RI

I recently moved to Rhode Island from NYC. I really enjoy your programming, especially *Rhode Island PBS Weekly* and *Our Town*. These programs have broadened my appreciation of my new home state. Intrigued by a segment on *RI PBS Weekly* about a wonderful tap dancer, Brian Jones, I decided to join his tap class. You've enriched my life, so I feel I need to support the station.

— Claudette M.,
Wakefield, RI