



# 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

**WAMU 88.5**  
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY RADIO

“The things we want to support after we’re gone are all about education, and we consider WAMU to be all about education.”

Helen Poland, on why she and her husband, Art, give to WAMU.

Member, Leadership Circle and 1961 Society



**When I moved home from California to lead WAMU five years ago, I knew our community would help strengthen its public radio station – and you have!**

Just look at the last year. You made it possible for us to relaunch the vibrant local news site *DCist*. And to invite listeners to participate in a podcast training experiment, *The Pod Shop*. And for Kojo Nnamdi to produce a series of special programs during his 20th anniversary year about topics that affect local communities.

We Washingtonians live at the confluence of local, national and international forces, and WAMU’s journalism reflects that. Our daily national show *1A* now reaches about 4 million people via 359 public radio stations. *Guns & America*, WAMU’s 10-station reporting collaboration, is exploring the role of guns in American life and has produced more than 180 stories in cities across the United States.

Locally, WAMU reporters broke dozens of stories that rippled through our culture — from the federal government not paying its utility bill during the government shutdown to coverage of seclusion and restraint practices in Fairfax County schools, which prompted a review and the allocation of \$1 million for reforms.

You will find much more about WAMU’s service and impact on the upcoming pages – all of it made possible by you, our community of supporters, listeners and readers. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "JJ Yore". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

**JJ Yore**  
General Manager

# Kojo 20th Anniversary

# DCist Is Back



**WAMU celebrated the 20th anniversary of *The Kojo Nnamdi Show* with support from Chase, foundations and individuals.**

Over the course of the year, Kojo stepped into surrounding communities, showcasing his role in convening critical conversations that impact the region. He engaged listeners through town halls on the opioid epidemic in Anne Arundel County, Amazon's new headquarters in Northern Virginia, school diversity in Montgomery County and arts and gentrification in the region. He also popped up in unexpected locations including a Lyft car, Eden Center in Virginia, D.C. Superior Court and Chinatown.

The Kojo 20 Celebration capped off a commemorative year with live entertainment, food and newsmakers that honored the region and Kojo, including a conversation with Lonnie G. Bunch III, the newly named secretary of the Smithsonian Institution.



**With the financial support of nearly 1,450 readers, beloved digital news outlet *DCist* relaunched in June 2018 as part of WAMU.**

Known as 'the unofficial homepage of the District,' *DCist's* local news site continues to cover news, culture and curiosities, while expanding WAMU's digital reach.

WAMU listeners can hear the latest *DCist* story on-air, and fans can read the content online at its redesigned website, [dcist.com](http://dcist.com), which garners more than 1 million unique pageviews every month.

*DCist* has broken a number of the city's biggest stories this year, including controversy over dog walking at Howard University and the temporary silencing of go-go music in Shaw.

# Covering the Region

## Families

A WAMU team dedicated three months to reporting on the joys and challenges of raising a family in the Washington area. Many of the stories were inspired by the WAMU community through suggestions made by phone, email and social media.



## Collateral Damage

A multimedia feature captured how police tactics to remove illegal guns from the District's streets led to widespread complaints from residents, alienating many whom the police were trying to protect.



## Arts Chat

DCist and WAMU team up every Thursday for a special broadcast segment on the region's rich cultural character and arts offerings. The weekly conversations cover everything from outdoor music festivals to interactive museums to the global music scene.



## Government Shutdown

With more than 360,000 federal workers living in the D.C. area, a 35-day government shutdown in early 2019 meant a portion of them did not get paid or were paid at a much later date than expected. WAMU reporters followed the shutdown and its effect on the region.



## Seclusion and Restraint

A WAMU investigation revealed hundreds of unreported cases of secluding and restraining students in Fairfax County Public Schools. Following the investigation, officials reviewed these practices and added over \$1 million in funding to address the issue.



# Special Events



## Speaking Freely: 1A and The Daily

A joint event between WAMU and The New York Times sold out 1,200 seats at The Lincoln Theatre in D.C. 1A host Joshua Johnson and *The Daily* host Michael Barbaro joined forces to talk with other journalists about how they keep their composure in a news cycle that never sleeps.

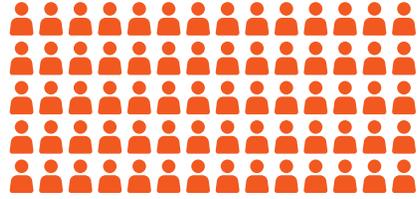


## The Big Broadcast Film Screening

Murray Horwitz of WAMU's *The Big Broadcast* hosted a film screening of the 1932 musical comedy of the same name at the AFI Silver Theatre and Cultural Center in Silver Spring. WAMU supporters had the opportunity to hear a discussion with NPR's Susan Stamberg and engage in a Q&A session.

# The Year at a Glance

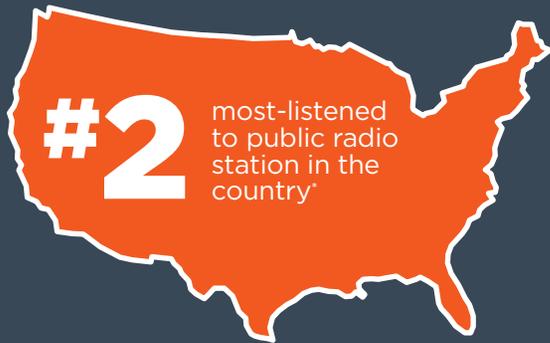
**~70K**  
members



**~4K**  
local and regional  
stories published  
on [wamu.org](http://wamu.org) and  
[dcist.com](http://dcist.com)



**541**  
applications to  
participate in  
The Pod Shop



**~900K** weekly  
listeners\*\*

**87%** of listeners are  
highly loyal\*\*\*



**20**  
years  
of The Kojo  
Nnamdi Show



**~4M** DCist readers  
over the course  
of the year



**43%**  
revenue from  
member supporters



**2,224**  
vehicles donated  
to WAMU



**40**  
opportunities to  
connect at events



**4,900+**  
hours of volunteer  
dedication



**+23%**  
increase in  
mobile visitors  
to [wamu.org](http://wamu.org)



**+10.6%**  
increase of in-market  
visitors to [wamu.org](http://wamu.org)



**359**  
public radio  
stations  
broadcasting 1A



**~4M**  
weekly 1A  
listeners across  
the country

\*Top 50 Markets, Nielsen Audio PPM Public Radio Subscribers, P6+ AQH Metro Share, Fall 2018 PPM eRanks, produced by RRC from Copyright Nielsen Audio 2018. \*\*Washington, DC, Baltimore and Salisbury, MD Metros; Weekly Cumulative P12+, Mon-Sun 6a-Mid, Fall 2018 National Regional Database Report produced by RRC from Copyright Nielsen Audio 2018.

\*\*\* 87% of the station's weekly listening comes from listeners who spend more time with WAMU than any other station in the DC metro. Washington, DC Metro, % AQH P1 P6+, Monday-Sunday 6a-Mid, July 2018 PPM through May 2019 PPM averaged, Copyright Nielsen Audio 2018.

# National Offerings



## 1A Across America

1A embarked on a collaborative effort with six public media stations to bring more local and regional perspectives into the national conversation leading up to the 2020 general elections. The six partner stations are KUNC in Greeley, Colorado; Houston Public Media; Michigan Public Radio; Minnesota Public Radio, KMUW in Wichita, Kansas; and WBHM in Birmingham, Alabama.

1A *Across America* has visited communities across the U.S. to host live events. In Houston the team explored Latino voting trends and civic participation at a bilingual town hall and in Colorado industry workers and residents who live near drilling sites discussed the community impact of new oil and gas development.

## GUNS & AMERICA

A PUBLIC MEDIA COLLABORATION

## Guns & America

WAMU is midway through a 30-month, 10-station national reporting collaborative focused on the role of guns in American life. Funded by a \$5.3 million grant from The Kendeda Fund, the inaugural cohort of Audion Fellows has produced multi-platform content ranging from a radio story on a group

of District children struggling with the trauma of losing one of their own, to a video chronicling a father-daughter hunting trip, to the Instagram-first series 'After March For Our Lives,' to a special radio broadcast in partnership with 1A about the 20th anniversary of the Columbine High School shooting.

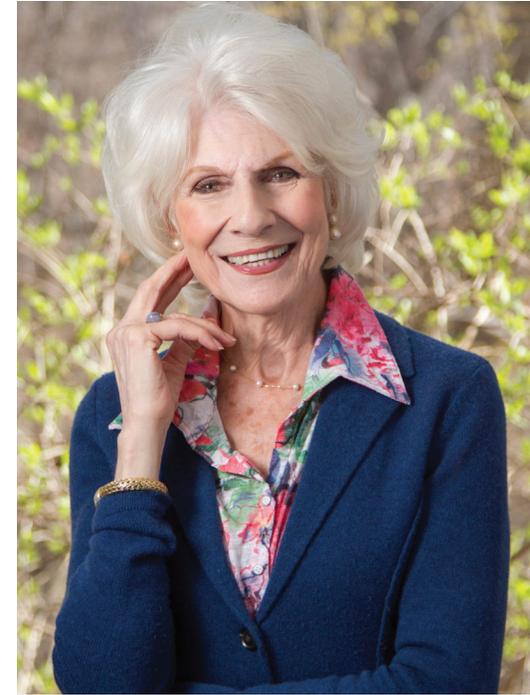
Since launching, *Guns & America* has produced more than 180 stories heard and seen on WAMU, NPR, 1A and other public media stations around the country. The project has continued to build a new cohort of public media journalists by providing workshops and monthly seminars on topics such as audio journalism, solutions journalism and reporting on trauma.

# Podcasts

## On My Mind

Diane Rehm's podcast, *On My Mind*, doubled to two episodes a week and now averages 10,000 downloads a day.

She brought listeners conversations with newsmakers, writers, artists and thinkers in a tumultuous political year. Her guests have included Sally Field, Ashley Judd, Barbara Kingsolver, Doris Kearns Goodwin, John Kerry and James Clapper.



## What's With Washington

Building on the success of the popular "What's With Washington" stories on air, WAMU launched a *What's With Washington* podcast, delivering answers to Washingtonians' most baffling questions. Each episode centers on one listener question about the region and goes on a journey to find the answer.

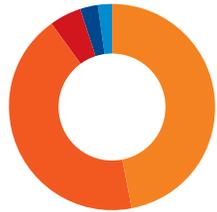


## The Pod Shop

Eight emerging local podcasters trained with WAMU for three months to produce their own original podcast pilots. WAMU will launch full seasons of two of the projects in the next year — *Dish City*, exploring city change through D.C.'s iconic foods, and *Dating While Gray*, about people 50 and older seeking that special someone.

# Station Financials

American University and WAMU's fiscal year changed to better coincide with both AU and WAMU's business cycle. The new fiscal year is July 1, 2018, to June 30, 2019. The report below covers 14 months, from the beginning of our prior fiscal year of May 1, 2018, to June 30, 2019.



## Revenue

Corporate Underwriting	47%	\$ 18,190,828
Membership/Development/Events	43%	16,593,306
NPR	5%	2,008,788
Federal Funding (CPB)	3%	1,201,540
Other Income	2%	692,701
In Kind Contributions	0%	186,119
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<b>\$38,873,282</b>



## Expense

Content/Programming	33%	\$ 12,229,441
Membership/Development/Underwriting	28%	10,456,941
Occupancy & Support Costs	17%	6,210,216
Technology	9%	3,349,656
Management & General Expenses	8%	2,770,272
Marketing & Communications	5%	1,770,067
<b>Total Expense</b>		<b>\$36,786,594</b>
<b>Surplus</b>		<b>\$2,086,689</b>

Complete audited financial statements can be viewed at [wamu.org/reports](http://wamu.org/reports).

# Tower Improvements

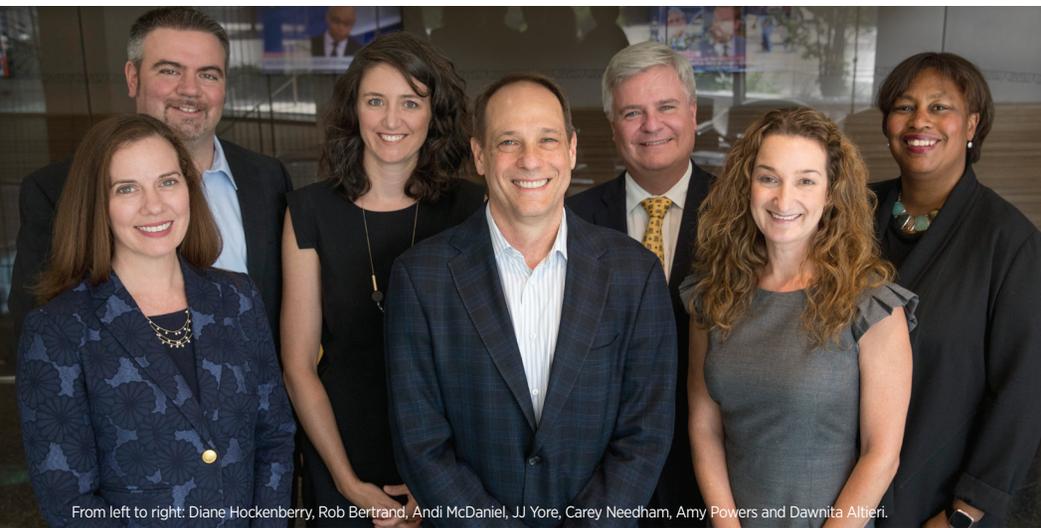
**Thanks in part to a generous \$1.2 million bequest from a Virginia public school teacher, WAMU will be able to improve the coverage area and consistency of WAMU's FM broadcast signal.**

The new antenna will be installed atop the 419-foot tower on American University's campus in September 2019. When work is complete, listeners within WAMU's coverage area, especially in areas outside of Washington, will experience better reception and less interference.

These signal improvements will also benefit other radio stations in the area that rent space on the tower, providing an additional source of revenue for WAMU.



# Leading WAMU



From left to right: Diane Hockenberry, Rob Bertrand, Andi McDaniel, JJ Yore, Carey Needham, Amy Powers and Dawnita Altieri.

## Leadership Team

JJ Yore, General Manager  
Carey Needham, Associate General Manager  
Andi McDaniel, Senior Director of Content and News  
Rob Bertrand, Senior Director of Technology  
Diane Hockenberry, Senior Director of Marketing and Engagement  
Amy Powers, Senior Director of Corporate Sponsorship\*  
Dawnita Altieri, Chief of Staff

## Community Council

Eugene Sofer, Chair	Christy Gavitt	Manuel Ochoa
Navroz Gandhi, Vice Chair	Kumera Genet	Stan Soloway
Huda Asfour	Nakeisha Neal Jones	Susan Weiss
David Bradley	Sojin Kim	Donna MP Wilson
Don Britton	Avis Thomas Lester	
Maura Brophy	Michelle A. Manatt	<b>Ex Officio</b>
Lucinda Crabtree	Alexis Moreno	Peter Tannenwald
C.C. Gachet	David A. Nemazie	Matthew McCormick

\*Corporate sponsorship represented by Market Engineuity.

# Thank You

All the initiatives highlighted in this report would not have been possible without the generosity of our donors, volunteers, corporate sponsors and community partners.

A list of Leadership Circle members can be viewed at [wamu.org/donors](https://wamu.org/donors).

A list of corporate sponsors can be viewed at [wamu.org/corporate-sponsors](https://wamu.org/corporate-sponsors).

Due to space limitations, we regrettably cannot list all those who contributed to WAMU last fiscal year. We are incredibly grateful for your generous support. Thank you!

## Contact Us

### Visit

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### Write

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Washington, DC 20016-8082

### Call

202-885-1200

### Email

[leadershipcircle@wamu.org](mailto:leadershipcircle@wamu.org)

### Donate

[wamu.org/donate](https://wamu.org/donate)

[wamu.org](https://wamu.org)





**Pictured on cover:** Batalá Washington perform at the Kojo Roadshow on how gentrification affects the arts in D.C.

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