

2024

Impact Report

WAMU 88.5
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY RADIO

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Dear Friends,

Thank you for making WAMU a part of your day, every day. Because of you, WAMU has been the number one radio station in the Washington media market for the past two years—the only public media station in the country to hold that distinction. That achievement belongs to you, our dedicated listeners and donors, who turn to WAMU for trusted, fact-based journalism and meaningful storytelling that connects us to each other and the world.

This past year has been filled with moments that tested us, inspired us, and brought our region together. You'll find a timeline of stories in the pages ahead that mark those milestones—the tragedies that shook us, like the collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge; the global events that resonated here at home, from the war in Gaza to the shifting political landscape; and the stories that celebrated our region's culture and resilience, like the opening of D.C.'s first Go-Go Museum and the emotional farewell to the National Zoo's beloved pandas.

Through it all, WAMU has been here to help you navigate a complex world with clarity, depth, and heart. Since our first broadcast in 1961, we've been committed to reflecting the voices and experiences of the people who call this region home. That commitment is stronger than ever. We are doubling down on what we do best—audio—because we know that storytelling is at its most powerful when it is personal, immersive, and deeply rooted in our community.

The world moves fast, but WAMU remains a trusted constant. Every day, we strive to provide more than just news—we offer perspective, connection, and understanding.

And at the center of it all is you. Public radio isn't just about programs, hosts, producers, and reporters—it's about the people who listen, engage, and believe in the power of great storytelling. Your support, your curiosity, and your generosity make everything we do possible.

Thank you for being part of this community and for trusting us to tell the stories that matter. We are honored to serve you.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature of the name "Erika".

Erika

A handwritten signature of the name "Michael".

Michael



THE D.C. REGION



WAMU IMPACT | Special Series

The Fight for D.C. Home Rule: Past, Present, and Future

FIFTY YEARS AGO, Washingtonians won a milestone victory—the right to elect their own mayor and city council. The 1973 Home Rule Act was a hard-fought achievement, championed by civil rights leaders, including Martin Luther King, Jr. But it came with compromises. Congress retained control over D.C.'s laws and budget, leaving residents with limited self-governance and no voting representation in the House or Senate. In Q1 2024, WAMU produced a special series—culminating in a special episode of *The Politics Hour* with Kojo Nnamdi—to explore the past and future of home rule, tracing its impact on the District today and examining what's next in the fight for full political rights. Through in-depth reporting and conversations with activists, policymakers, and residents, we ask: Is statehood the only real path forward?

Listen to the entire special series on WAMU.org

OTHER IMPACT COVERAGE

CANADIAN WILDFIRES

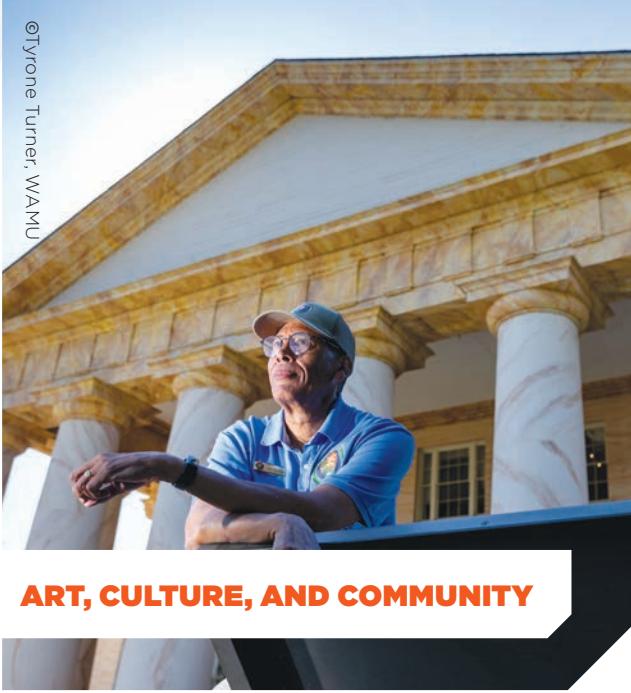
Summer 2023: Smoke from Canada's wildfires made D.C.'s air hazardous, with multiple Code Red days. WAMU examined the smoke's long-term health risks and asked: Is this the region's new normal?

FBI HEADQUARTERS

Fall 2023: The business of governing drives the D.C. region, and the decision to move the FBI headquarters to Maryland made waves. WAMU explored what this means for the region's economy, politics, and future.

CAPITALS/WIZARDS MOVE

Winter 2023: The proposed move of the Washington Wizards and Capitals to Virginia sent shockwaves through the region. WAMU reporters followed the story from its initial proposal to the final decision to keep the teams downtown, examining the political and economic stakes for the entire region.



ART, CULTURE, AND COMMUNITY

WAMU IMPACT | Special Series

The Faces of Our Museums: Inside the World of Docents

WALK INTO ANY MUSEUM, and the first person to welcome you is often a museum guide. These guides—sometimes called docents—are the bridge between visitors and the stories behind the exhibits. Whether volunteers or paid staff, they lead tours, answer questions, and shape the visitor experience in ways that often go unnoticed. WAMU set out to see the museum world through their eyes, shadowing docents across the region to capture the rhythm of their days and give our audience a behind-the-scenes look at their favorite museums—one conversation at a time.

Listen to the entire special series on WAMU.org

OTHER IMPACT COVERAGE

CRICKET IN THE DISTRICT

Summer 2023: Cricket made its mark in the District with the debut of D.C.'s new professional team, the Washington Freedom. WAMU broke down what you need to know to become a fan—from the rules of the game to the team's local impact.

WOMEN IN THE ARTS

Fall 2023: WAMU featured the National Museum of Women in the Arts after it reopened following a two-year renovation—highlighting the work of women and non-binary artists—many being exhibited for the first time.

NEW MUSEUM FOR GO-GO

Winter 2023: As part of WAMU's ongoing 'Voices' series, we profiled the opening of the Go-Go Museum and Café, which celebrates the history and culture of D.C.'s official sound.

D.C. ICON AND BUS RAPPER

Spring 2024: WAMU introduced listeners to Kokamoe, the legendary X2 bus rapper and Southeast D.C. icon. For two decades, he's turned everyday commutes into freestyle performances, earning fans across the city with his quick wit and off-the-dome rhymes.



WEEKLY GET OUT THERE SERIES

Ongoing: Every week, WAMU curates the best things to do across the D.C. region, from must-see events to hidden gems. Whether you're hosting visitors, planning a date night, or celebrating the holiday season at hand, our experts help you make the most of this place we all call home.



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WAMU IMPACT | A 1A Special Series

If You Can Keep It

Ongoing: Each week during one of the most consequential elections in modern history, host Jenn White led discussions that went beyond the campaign drama to focus on the policies, the stakes, and what this election means for our country. Because democracy isn't just about who wins—it's about whether we can keep it.

OTHER IMPACT COVERAGE

HOT JAZZ SATURDAY NIGHT

SWINGING IN THE New Year

Winter 2025: Host Rob Bamberger once again helped you swing into the new year. With the crackle of vintage recordings and the energy of jazz legends, he transported listeners to the Roaring Twenties, the height of the Swing Era, and the golden age of Big Band for a night that was a tribute to the timeless power of jazz.

A BIG BROADCAST SPECIAL

HOW RADIO COVERED D-DAY

Summer 2024: What was it like to hear history unfold over the radio on June 6, 1944? WAMU marked the 80th anniversary of D-Day with a special *Big Broadcast* episode, featuring archival news reports from NBC, CBS, and international correspondents. Host Murray Horwitz took listeners back to the turning point of World War II, including newly uncovered broadcasts capturing the African American community's response.



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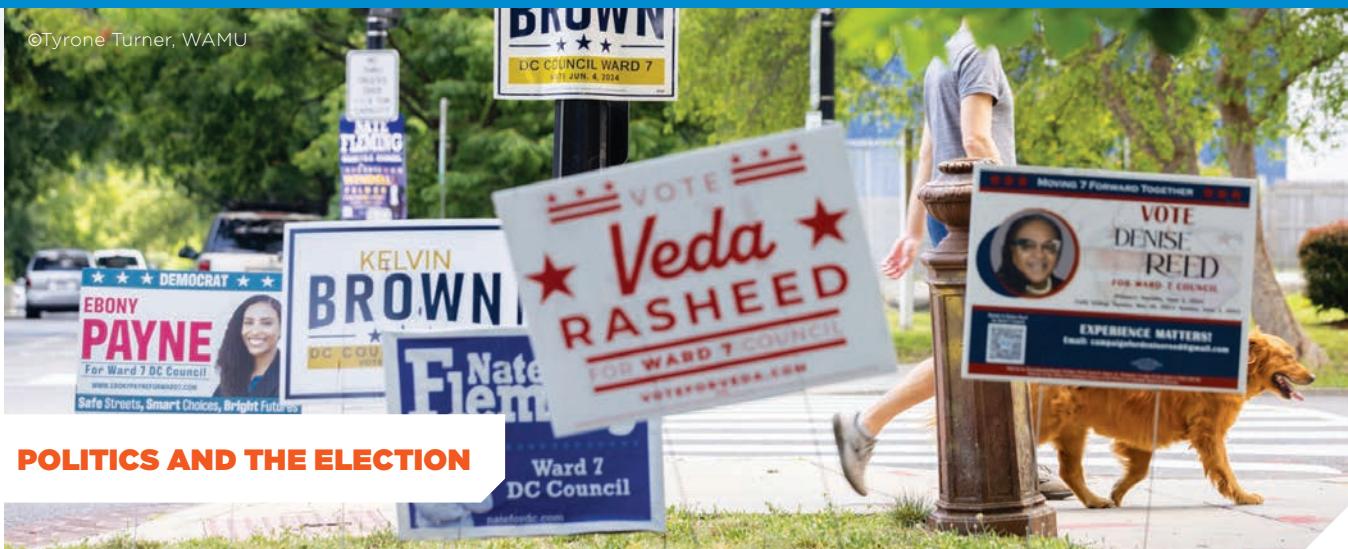
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WAMU IMPACT | A Diane Rehm Special

Presidential Conversations: Carter in His Own Words

ACROSS 12 CONVERSATIONS, WAMU'S Diane Rehm and President Jimmy Carter explored faith, family, and a lifetime of service. In a special program from late 2024, WAMU brought together their most memorable interviews, offering listeners a rare and intimate portrait of the man beyond the presidency. As the nation continues to reflect on his legacy, this collection serves as a public service—an chance to hear Carter in his own words, sharing his hopes, beliefs, and unwavering commitment to others.

Listen to the entire special series on WAMU.org



POLITICS AND THE ELECTION

WAMU IMPACT |
Your Election 2024 Guide

Going Beyond the Headlines to Bring You Deeper Context

IN A YEAR OF UNPRECEDENTED POLITICAL TWISTS, WAMU delivered essential coverage and in-depth analysis across platforms. From President Biden's withdrawal to an assassination attempt, we aired NPR's special coverage, broke down key moments on *The Politics Hour* with Kojo Nnamdi, explored national stakes on *1A* with Jenn White, and offered historical perspective weekly on Diane Rehm's *On My Mind* podcast. Our newsroom provided deep local reporting, ensuring the D.C. region wasn't just watching history—they understood its impact. That included comprehensive election guides for Maryland, the District, and Northern Virginia, that gave voters the information they needed. WAMU also hosted an election night special and a live call-in show to help our audience make sense of the stakes. With the best of NPR, BBC, and our own journalists, WAMU was there—when history happened and when it mattered most.

OTHER IMPACT COVERAGE

YOUR GO-TO GUIDES

Fall 2024: WAMU's voter guides provided easy-to-navigate information for D.C., Maryland, and Northern Virginia including key races, ballot measures, and voting logistics, ensuring our audience was well-prepared to cast informed ballots.

LISTENING TO VOTERS

Fall 2024: As violence in the Middle East escalated, many Muslim voters in Northern Virginia felt abandoned by both parties. At a WAMU listening session with members of the Dar Alnoor Islamic Center in Manassas, they voiced their frustration and uncertainty about the election. By providing a space for open conversation, WAMU amplified their perspectives, shedding light on the political dilemmas they faced and ensuring their voices were part of the broader electoral discourse. "I will vote. But it is very hard to vote," said Safiya Samman, a Palestinian-American.



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WAMU is grateful for the support of the members of the Leadership Circle who contribute at least \$1,200 annually. This list reflects donations during our fiscal year, July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024.

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WAMU is grateful for the support of employees and employers across our region who participate in these workplace giving and matching programs

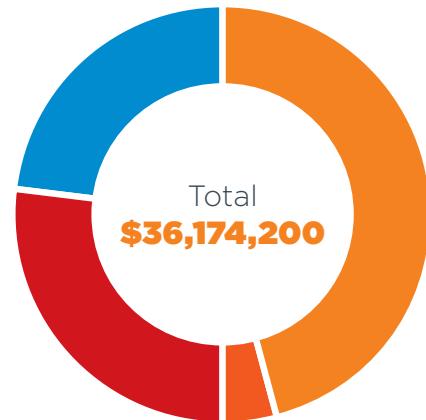
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Revenue & Support

- Contributions \$16,648,632
- Corporation for Public Broadcasting grant.... \$1,554,406
- Corporate Underwriting \$9,685,624
- Other earned revenue* \$8,285,538



Operating Expenses

- Program Services - total \$21,245,824
 - Programming and Production \$15,556,461
 - Broadcasting \$4,821,691
 - Public Information & promotion..... \$867,672
- Support Services - total \$12,613,097
 - Management & General \$5,648,072
 - Fundraising..... \$6,965,025



WAMU - American University fiscal year is 7/1-6/30

(*) other earned revenue includes NPR licensing, facilities rental, donated services from American University and investment income

The 1961 Society

The 1961 Society is a special group of individuals who have included WAMU in their estate plans, ensuring a healthy future for public media in the greater Washington region. We are grateful for their generous and thoughtful legacy.

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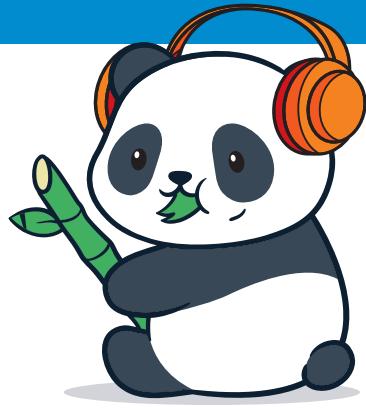
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