



2015 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



“My brother John L. Brim was killed in Vietnam in 1967. It is because of this that I am thrilled to see WHRO’s work concerning veterans’ issues and the Wall of Faces project.”

- Judy Brim Crumley, Virginia Beach

WHRO is dedicated to enhancing the lives of citizens in the communities it serves by responding to their needs to be engaged, educated, entertained, and enlightened.



WHRO is a valuable part of Hampton Roads and the eastern region of Virginia:

19 local public school divisions own WHRO.

WHRO provides online educational courses and video streaming services to local students.

WHRO engages the community through its media services and fosters community conversations on important issues.

In 2015, WHRO provided these vital local services:

Created and distributed online course content to our member owners, home school providers, and educational institutions in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Produced award-winning content for television, radio and online that focused on veterans, education, race, arts and culture, and other topics of interest in our community.

WHRO’s local services had a deep impact in Hampton Roads and throughout Eastern Virginia:

WHRO broadcast services reach over 432,000 viewers/listeners per week.

Educators in over 1,900 locations across Virginia accessed over 100,000 searchable, SOL-correlated video segments through WHRO supported video on-demand services for a total of 10 million interactions.



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WHRO Public Media

Long known for its public service mission, WHRO Public Media is the only public broadcasting station in the United States that is owned by 19 public school divisions. Since its founding in 1961, as **Home Room One**, the ownership has established educational programming and services as WHRO's core mission. As WHRO continues its efforts to meet critical challenges faced within the community such as on-time graduation, the needs of veterans and their families, and those in the community who are unemployed and underemployed, the goal is clear: to be an important partner in improving the future for generations to come.

Through its ownership and its outreach, WHRO is a distinctive regional institution that links diverse constituents throughout Eastern Virginia. Whether on radio or TV, in the classroom or online, most Hampton Roads residents are touched in some way by the services that WHRO Public Media offers.

- eMediaVA, a video on-demand service is wholly owned by the WHRO member schools, features nearly 110,000 learning objects, with more added daily, including regionally produced and acquired content from Virginia educational, scientific, and cultural organizations and content from across the nation through PBS Learning Media. eMediaVA is available free of charge to every public, private, and homeschool educator in Virginia through a contract with the Virginia Department of Education and local philanthropic funding and has over 157,071 registered educators.
- Education for older students is at the core of WHRO education. WHRO's Online Course Service developed 22 textbook-independent online high school courses. A seven-week Online Training Methodology course that teaches teachers how to be successful in a K-12 online teaching environment has also been created and delivered. Courses are regularly refreshed to align with current Virginia Standards of Learning, and new courses are always in development. In addition, new eTextbooks are being planned.
- With 12,000 enrollments in 2015, Virtual Virginia, a program of the Virginia Department of Education, features nearly 50 online Advanced Placement, world language, core academic, and elective courses. WHRO is the state operations center and provides hosting, contracting, instructional design services, help desk support, video streaming, and other virtual staffing.
- WHRO's Raising Readers Literacy Van, a cheerful, brightly colored vehicle featuring children's favorite PBS characters, toured throughout our broadcast region. Inside the van, children find age-appropriate books and games. The van made more than 100 visits across the region in 2015.
- Nearly 400 entries were received from aspiring artists and authors in kindergarten through 5th grade for the 21st Annual *PBS KIDS GO! Writers Contest*. Winners and their families celebrated at an awards ceremony and were taped reading their stories for a television show broadcast on WHRO and streamed online.



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- In December 2015, WHRO produced a two-part town hall television series that looked at the challenges many veterans face. The series was a follow-up with the veterans featured in our online series *Veterans Coming Home*. We also had an expert panel that took audience questions and participated in the discussion. The taping was attended by Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe, who joined the panel and unveiled his plan to better address veteran issues in Virginia.
- In partnership with the Virginia Arts Festival, WHRO produced a patriotic hour-long program *Music & Might: An International Military Spectacular*. Highlights include performers from the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, and a total of 1,000 cast members from eight nations sharing their unique culture and pride. More than 30,000 people attended the live shows, and the production was offered free of charge and carried on 121 PBS member stations.
- WHRV's local radio program *HearSay with Cathy Lewis* continues to address concerns of those living in Eastern Virginia. Topics range from local political conversations, civility, and sea-level rise to the lighter topics of local food and the ever-popular garden and pet shows. *HearSay* is broadcast live Monday through Thursday at noon. On Fridays, WHRV broadcasts *Another View* with host Barbara Hamm Lee. This program addresses the concerns of the African American audience and tackles tough topics such as race, diversity, profiling, and health, and ends each month with a popular roundtable discussion.
- In March, WHRO convened a free screening of the Ken Burns series *Cancer: The Emperor of All Maladies*. The event had 14 information booths staffed by local cancer service providers and treatment centers. The screening was followed by a moderated panel discussion of local citizens sharing their stories of living with and surviving cancer.
- WHRO is an American Graduate station. In response to a report from the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service at the University of Virginia emphasizing that youth are not prepared with basic skills to enter the workforce, WHRO began the development of a workplace readiness curriculum starting with five modules. To ensure efficiency of these modules, on January 22, WHRO hosted a meeting with a panel of executives from a cross section of industries that included transportation, manufacturing, retail, hospitality, technology, medical, and small businesses throughout Hampton Roads. The group of experts, known as WHRO's Business Advisory Group, supported the development of the Workplace Readiness Modules by providing feedback on the content of the modules. They also pledged to raise awareness for the value of, and need for, the modules in the community and within specific industries. WHRO has invested in adult education with *SkillsOnline*, offering 4,500 courses in 19 industries.
- WHRO and Landmark Communications collaborated to produce and televise the 8th annual Virginian-Pilot Spelling Bee. Hosted by talk show host Barbara Hamm Lee, sixty-six of Hampton Roads' finest young spellers competed in the live broadcast on our television channel TV15. The event was also streamed live for relatives out of the broadcast area through OVEE.

Wall of Faces

There are 1,307 names of Virginian Vietnam Vets listed on The Wall. WHRO is proud to spearhead a statewide initiative and engage partners and community individuals to ensure every Virginian listed has a photo. The images will become part of the Wall of Faces—a lasting tribute for the Vietnam Memorial Education Center. Since the launch in November 2015, 50 photos have been found, and the WHRO staff has had the privilege of meeting many of the family members and high school friends of these soldiers.



Odd Squad Camp

This summer, WHRO conducted two Odd Squad Camps that served 40 children in Title 1 areas. In partnership with Titustown Recreation Center and East Ocean View Community Center, WHRO provided an opportunity to create an interactive learning camp for kids in the neighborhood. Each camp engaged K-3rd graders in hands-on PBS KIDS learning activities, games, and other online resources that spanned reading, science, writing, and social studies.



The Scene

WHRO's arts project The Scene, designed to showcase the vibrant and multilayered art scene in Hampton Roads, was a major success. The second season launched in March 2015 and was funded by four city production grants and underwriting by local museums. The series was also broadcast on WHRO television which introduced the initiative to a new audience. The Scene was awarded a Bronze Telly as well as an award from the Virginia Association of Broadcasters for best Community Engagement Project.





Race: Let's Talk About It

Opinion polls show a growing divide when it comes to issues of race in this country. This growing separation is a strong indicator that conversations about race are needed more now than ever before. In an effort to help facilitate these conversations, WHRO launched a new initiative called Race: Let's Talk About It. Our goal is to offer a safe space for civil and thoughtful discussions about race and its impact on society from a historical, academic, and sociological perspective. Topics in 2015 were The Flag is Down, Now What? and Privilege, Power and Difference. Two additional town halls are planned for 2016.

Reach in the Community:

Quarterly broadcasts on *Another View* are dedicated to open conversations concerning race, and each program is followed up with a community town hall. The town hall events are streamed via OVEE, which has been instrumental in reaching audiences beyond our region. Each event has been booked to capacity.

Partnerships:

Virginia Wesleyan's Center for the Study of Religious Freedom & The Fort Monroe Authority

Impact and Community Feedback:

Through broadcast and community events, WHRO has started an important dialogue with the public regarding race and has provided a safe place for civil discussion. This initiative will continue in 2016.



"Last night's town hall was fabulous, a real gift to the community. Thank you so much for this service to all of us, and to a hurting world."

Connie Jones

"I enjoyed attending your recent town hall event. Several members of my congregation also were there and are very enthusiastic about future events and how we might help."

Rev. Charlie Dieterich



“I grew up in a family where we couldn’t afford cable. Bill Nye and other WHRO shows led me to a career in science education! Thanks for all you do.”
– Aubrey Hall, Chincoteague, VA

Nearly 200 student teams of three to five students participated in the 30th annual WHRO Great Computer Challenge competition at Old Dominion University.

In 2015 WHRO was awarded 3 NETA awards, 4 Telly awards, and 8 Virginia Association of Broadcasters awards, the most of any Virginia station for 3 consecutive years.

WHRO’s website has over 1,200 unique page visits a day and 449,231 unique visits annually and had 1,952,538 podcast downloads in 2015.



WHRO staff conducted 117 early childhood training sessions across the region that reached more than 3,300 families. Nearly 4,000 books were also distributed to those most in need.

WHRO not only provides our community the high-quality education and entertainment that are hallmarks of a public media station, we also engage viewers, listeners, educators, and students with a variety of significant outreach programs. We give them venues to respond to our programming and to the world around them in meaningful ways, allowing them to be heard and exchange ideas. Born out of a belief more than fifty years ago that media could be used to enrich and inspire, WHRO has continued to explore every new technology to expand that belief.
