While our world sees a rise in misinformation and a decline in local news, Colorado Public Radio stands out as a beacon of truth and hope. Our newsroom continues to grow, bringing more diverse stories to Coloradans who rely on us for trustworthy, factual information. CPR is striving to become Colorado’s home for news, and we couldn’t do it without talented staff, dedicated board members and strong support from our donors and sponsors. Thank you for your role in supporting CPR.

CPR is now the largest locally owned statewide news organization in Colorado and the fifth largest public radio newsroom in the nation. One of the defining aspects of our service is that it’s all freely accessible to everyone, every day. This access is crucial to our vision to reach all Coloradans.

And, it’s not just about news. CPR Classical has seen historic listening numbers this year, Indie 102.3 has expanded to even more signals in Colorado, and our podcasts and events feed people’s curiosity and keep them coming back for more.

Thank you for making CPR your home for informational, inspiring and entertaining content. We are proud to have your support.

Sincerely,
Stewart Vanderwilt

As my time on Colorado Public Radio’s board of directors has come to a close, I am confident I’m leaving it in good hands. I am proud to pass the baton to former vice-chair Brad Greenwald. In my two years as chair, I witnessed the organization excel at its mission, providing Coloradans with life-saving information and music to get through the hard times.

I’ve seen a large increase in output — stories, podcasts, events, playlists and more. And in turn, I’ve seen my fellow Coloradans reinforce their commitment to public media with gifts and donations to fuel this service. And as CPR has grown, our board has grown to be more reflective of the state we serve.

Thank you to the board members, thank you to Stewart Vanderwilt and the staff, thank you to the donors, and thank you to everyone who has turned on the radio or read an article and learned something new because of CPR.

Sincerely,
Philip Johnson

Board of Directors
Fiscal Year 2022
Philip Johnson, Chair
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Stewart Vanderwilt, Ex Officio

OUR MISSION:
To deliver meaningful news, music and cultural experiences to everyone in Colorado using the power of the human voice in all its forms.

OUR VISION:
To inform, inspire and entertain all Coloradans.

OUR VALUES:
Our values inspire, inform and guide our everyday actions. Learn more at cpr.org.
Creative
Respectful
Curious
Ethical
Inclusive
CPR NEWS

CPR’s journalists work hard to bring fact-based, trustworthy and illuminating stories to listeners and readers in Colorado and beyond. CPR News reporters, editors and producers cover a diverse and ever-expanding array of beats and are often recognized for their work with industry awards. Below is just a sample of stories from the last fiscal year.

INVESTIGATIONS
Investigative Reporter Ben Markus won the First Amendment Award from the Society of Professional Journalists Top of the Rockies for his efforts sifting through thousands of pages of open records and data in telling stories about Colorado’s response to COVID-19 and the weak record of the state in investigating the cause of human-started wildfires.

CLIMATE
CPR News’ climate and environment team is focused on reporting on this existential threat in a way that provides solutions and actionable information to readers. Miguel Otárola won a Covering Climate Now Journalism Award for his story about people living in wildfire paths who vastly underestimate their risk.

HEALTH
Health reporting has become a literal lifeline for readers during the pandemic. John Daley won a Regional Edward R. Murrow Award in 2022 for a story about an activist in Denver working hard to get Latinos vaccinated.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS
Our public affairs reporters cover all aspects of government through the lens of what’s affecting Coloradans at a city, statewide and national level. Washington, D.C. reporter Caitlyn Kim and photographer Hart Van Denburg followed a Colorado National Guard unit to an exercise in Estonia in May.

HUMAN INTEREST STORIES
CPR News’ reporters scour the state for stories that will pique listeners’ interest and create memorable driveway moments. Two award-winning examples this year were Vic Velas’s story about a small town’s football field of dreams and Stina Sieg’s story about a World War II veteran reunited with a lost bracelet decades later.

RACE, DIVERSITY & EQUITY
CPR expanded its coverage in 2022 with the hiring of a reporter specifically dedicated to race, diversity and equity, Elaine Tassy. One of her early stories for CPR News was a conversation with women who run a prison radio station.

JUSTICE
In August 2021, Reporter Allison Sherry interviewed Sheneen McClain, the mother of Elijah McClain, who was killed by police in Aurora in 2019. The story earned Sherry a Gracie Award from the Alliance for Women in Media Foundation.

HOUSING/ECONOMY
Colorado’s affordability is a frequent topic for our reporters. Southern Colorado Reporter Dan Boyce won a Regional Edward R. Murrow Award for his story about a man who bought land in Park County but can’t afford to build on it.

PHOTOGRAPHY
When the Marshall Fire broke out in Boulder County, photographer Hart Van Denburg was on the scene, providing images that were seen around the world, as coverage was picked up by media outlets including the LA Times, The Guardian, Forbes and more.

“CPR does a nice job of covering local, state, national and world news in a format that is non-intimidating and enriching. I feel like I have a better understanding of current events that I need to be aware of after I have listened to CPR.” - Kari from Lakewood

"When we set up our family foundation, we knew CPR would be one of our first gifts. It just didn’t feel right to gain so much but not support. We hope [our gift] inspires others to support like we have and continues to provide unparalleled news coverage." - Mike & Heather Miller

"TOP: Editor Megan Verlee captures a quote from Senator John Hickenlooper (Hart Van Denburg/CPR). Reporter Elaine Tassy hosts a roundtable on race and education in a CPR studio (Kevin J. Beaty/Denverite). MIDDLE: Visuals Editor Hart Van Denburg demonstrates how to get the perfect angle (Allison Sherry/CPR). BOTTOM: Reporter Caitlyn Kim interviews a member of the Colorado National Guard in Estonia (Hart Van Denburg/CPR); Andrew Kenney talks with ride-share drivers at Denver International Airport (Hart Van Denburg/CPR)."
In late August and early September 2021, Colorado Matters embarked on a road trip to visit and report from different parts of the state. “Colorado Matters: On the Road Again” featured stories with people the team met in:

- The Arkansas Valley, at the state’s oldest continuous fair.
- Colorado Springs, with a comprehensive look at the transition to renewable energy as the landmark Martin Drake power plant burned its last pile of coal.
- Fort Morgan, to highlight a unique dual language immersion program that’s building long-lasting, bilingual relationships.
- Grand Junction, meeting a woman who moved from the Front Range to telework.
- The Four Corners, where they explored a cultural reckoning for Fort Lewis College and the unique history of a heritage apple orchard.
- The San Luis Valley, to visit one of the state’s oldest churches starting one of the largest adobe construction projects in the world, and potato farmers fighting to export their crops.

KRCC reporters brought important stories from Southern Colorado to listeners in our state and beyond. Reporter Shanna Lewis’s story about the 80th anniversary of Camp Amache reached a national audience on NPR.

In the spring of 2022, Kyle Harris reported a number of stories about affordability in Denver focused on families. Years-long waitlists, tuition as expensive as a mortgage and pandemic closures: Denver is in a childcare crisis. Kyle’s series explored the problem from multiple perspectives.

Denverite’s Kevin J. Beaty has been writing stories, capturing photos, creating googly-eye gifs and generally delighting thousands of readers for the past six years. At this year’s Society of Professional Journalists Top of the Rockies Awards, Denverite took home five first-place awards, and four of those went to Kevin. The awards demonstrate the versatility that make Kevin and Denverite special. Two awards were for photography featured in stories: one shined a light on a beloved Denver cafe while the other profiled people recovering from police brutality. An award for enterprise reporting was for a story about the pandemic’s impact on Denver businesses. And the final award was for a multimedia story on the football team at Montbello High and what it means for the community.
CPR Classical had an exciting year as the world returned to attending live concerts, giving us numerous chances to engage with listeners in-person. We also saw extremely high radio listening numbers. Since the 2021 holiday season, we’ve had a record-breaking share of total radio audience, making us one of the top performing classical music stations in the country.* Listeners continue to turn to CPR Classical as a steadfast companion in their lives, providing a wide variety of music that inspires curiosity and soothes the soul.

*Walden-Rettig

COLORADO’S LIVE MUSIC RESOURCE

In September 2021, CPR Classical kicked off the Great Fall Ticket Giveaway to amplify the (cautious) return to Colorado’s live classical music. In addition to receiving scores of free tickets, listeners turned to CPR Classical for information on what to see and where, through an online guide and information from on-air hosts.

MOZART SNAPSHOTs

Mozart Snaps, a series of videos in collaboration with Colorado pianist Katie Mahan, launched in March. Each week, Katie walks us through the everyday life and places of Mozart’s early home, Salzburg, where Katie lives now. This has been an exciting partnership to bring fascinating bits of music history to our audience from a tour guide with a local connection.

THE CULMINATION OF THE SPIRITUALS RADIO PROJECT

CPR Classical completed its yearlong Journey to Freedom: the Spirituals Radio Project, in partnership with M. Roger Holland II of the Spirituals Project Choir at DU. Each month, Roger chose spirituals illuminating the experience and resilience of African Americans and provided insight and reflections.

CPR Classical partnered with DU’s Lamont School of Music and the Spirituals Project Choir to host a sold-out spirituals show, “Journey to Freedom: Building Community Through Song” at the Newman Center on May 14 to close out the project. The event featured music and storytelling around the history of spirituals with the goal of building community.

RETURN TO FESTIVALS

In the summer of 2021, Indie 102.3 was able to restart its festival and event activities. Indie was a media partner for The Underground Music Festival (UMS) in August, broadcasting on site, producing interviews and social videos with artists, and introducing acts on stage. We also hosted an in-person Local 303 Meetup at the fest to a sold-out crowd.

Just weeks after UMS, Indie was again on site at the Westword Music Showcase. We took over a venue the first night for dedicated Indie performances. The second day, we had exclusive access to an “Indie stage,” where we announced acts and gave out more Indie swag.

BACK IN THE PERFORMANCE STUDIO

Indie 102.3 reopened the doors of our performance studio as the Indie Lounge and hosted sessions with artists Alt-J, Arlo Parks, Dehd, IDLES and others. All of our videos are featured on the NPR Music Live Sessions website.

PRIDE MONTH KICK-OFF

Indie 102.3 hosted the official Denver PrideFest kick-off party with an LGBTQ+ Showcase at Meow Wolf. The packed event featured music and performances from all LGBTQ+ artists, and it was a great opportunity to debut Indie's newest specialty show, Serve It. Serve It, also hosted an in-person Local 303 Meetup at the fest to a sold-out crowd.

Indie 102.3 is finding listeners hungry for music discovery across the state thanks to an expansive network of signals, including new, more powerful signals in Colorado Springs. We continue to elevate Colorado musicians through our Local 303, often playing them before any other station and giving them access to fans here in their home state. Through partnerships, events and promotional campaigns, we are reaching more listeners than ever before.

"Indie 102.3 is my soundtrack when I’m in Colorado, and I also stream it when I’m not. I love discovering new indie music and always do when I listen. My wife and I strongly believe in supporting the arts, and we especially appreciate the station’s support for local artists and the community.”

-Jim Kirkland, Donor Advised Fund donor

"CPR offers the most magnificent music ever written along with cogent & knowledgeable commentary and very personable hosts. The performances recorded in your studio offer additional musical enjoyment. Does any other classical station in the country do this? The spirituals played this month are also a tribute to the African-American spirit.”

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PODCASTS

Music Blocks, a music appreciation podcast designed for middle- and high-schoolers, launched in August 2021. Music Blocks responded to a moment when arts education was declining in Colorado’s public schools, classroom time was turned on its head by distance learning, and many young people grappled with their emotions during the pandemic.

Teachers who found the show loved using it in their classrooms and asked for more! Data indicates it’s been used all around the country.

In March, Music Blocks was named Best Podcast for Kids at the Podcast Academy’s Ambies, the Oscars of podcasting.

In February 2022, CPR News and the Audio Innovations Studio debuted Ghost Train, a four-part look at the problems with the Denver metro area’s rail transit system.

Hosted by Nathaniel Minor, the series looked at the visionaries who created the light rail system, the challenges that have kept the plan from reaching its potential and the possible next steps that could make rapid transit more successful along the Front Range. Because of the show, Nathaniel received national and international inquiries.

CPR News and the Audio Innovations Studio created Colorado In Depth at the end of 2021 as a place to showcase the newsroom’s longform audio stories. Episodes include “A day in the life of a restaurant trying to survive the pandemic” and “What the past tells us about the future of abortion in Colorado.”

Purplish came back for its sixth season overall with a deep look at the Colorado redistricting process, followed by episodes about elections in November and the anniversary of the January 6 riot, another full season on the 2022 Legislative Session and more analysis of the June primaries.

On Something’s third season, Fair Shake, was completed in July 2021. The digital team built an expanded website presentation to give the project life beyond the podcast.

Back from Broken returned in February for a third season. The team sought out stories that were underrepresented in previous seasons, including an interview with a Native American woman who overcame addiction to become a private investigator, a Black Muslim woman who endured an abusive relationship before finding a healthier connection to her religion and culture, and a transgender teen who recovered from addiction with the help of a sober high school program in Denver.

“I need you to know I LOVE the Music blocks Podcast!!! It is perfect and exactly what teachers need and can use.” - A music curriculum leader at Denver Public Schools

“I LOVE it! For myself but also for my kids. Such a diverse selection of musical genres and a simplified just enough explanation.” - a parent in Grand Junction

“I truly love this for my class. I teach a music appreciation class, and an introduction to world music class. These episodes go at the heart of music and what we are trying to teach.” - Jeremy, a music teacher in Hershey, PA

“CPR is just wonderful at providing education hidden as entertainment. We wanted to be able to help move the needle by providing an environmental grant to educate and hopefully make a positive difference.” - Debra Perry via the PB and K Family Foundation

“CPR podcasts focused on local issues, and important local reporting focusing on communities of color and rural communities is so important. Thank you for supporting all of these important areas of journalism, CPR.” - Stacy from Denver

“Brad Turner, Luis Antonio Perez & Rachel Estabrook spread the word about CPR’s podcasts at TedxMileHigh”
Colorado Public Radio has entered a new era when it comes to outreach and partnerships in our community. Despite the pandemic restrictions that continued in FY22, we participated in more events and festivals and launched more new partnerships than ever before. This increase in engagement is helping us reach new and more diverse audiences, build awareness for CPR throughout Colorado and be present in our shared local communities. Here’s a partial list of participation in FY22:

- Underground Music Showcase
- Denver Days
- Colfax Canvas
- Westword Music Showcase
- Denver Startup Week
- Denver Film Festival
- Denver Arts Week, CPR Classical performance at Denver Museum of Nature and Science
- Above the Ashes: A Virtual Concert for Marshall Fire Relief
- Newman Center Presents
- Bringing Music to Life
- TEDxMileHigh
- Young Ameritowne
- Partnerships with NPR to bring Jad Abumrad, Paula Poundstone and the Wait Wait Stand Up Tour to the Paramount Theatre
- Levitt Pavilion, media partner for Indie 102.3
- Denver Pride Fest
- Lighthouse Writers Workshop’s LitFest
- Tattered Cover Bookstore
- Juneteenth Music Festival
- Cleo Parker Robinson, partnership to produce a panel on the importance of Black journalism
- Next Gen Radio

A few questions with Managing Editor of Accountability and Outreach for CPR News, Sherkiya Wedgeworth-Hollowell

What does your role entail?
I like to call myself a bridge — a bridge to the newsroom for the community and a bridge to leadership for the news team. I make connections. A large part of my job is problem solving and encouragement. When I was a young journalist, I wish there had been someone in the newsroom who looked like me in leadership.

What new community outreach activities are you most proud of?
I am most proud of the partnerships I have made with Cleo Parker Robinson Dance, Servicios de La Raza and the National Association of Black Journalists, because these partnerships are visible nationwide.

What else do we need to know about your work?
As a black woman journo who has been committed to the field for more than 20 years, I have been through the trenches for reasons that I have always felt were because of those marginalizations. CPR’s commitment to inclusion has rebirthed my love for journalism. We are now hearing many diverse voices and stories, and I look forward to many more.