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

Our values inspire, inform and guide our everyday actions. They serve as a set of expectations and a promise we make to ourselves, our partners and audiences.

Creative | Respectful | Curious | Ethical | Inclusive

To inform, inspire and entertain all Coloradans.

Our Mission

Our Values

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As I reflect on our fiscal year at CPR from July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023, I’m struck by one thing in particular: how Colorado Public Radio and each of our services remain a vital presence in the community.

Reading through this report, you’ll see ways in which CPR News content impacted legislation, how Denverite expanded some of its most important coverage for Spanish-speaking audiences, what happened when KRCC opened its community room doors, how new hosts at CPR Classical and Indie 102.3 are extending the stations’ reach into the community, and how our podcasts foster invaluable community conversations.

CPR has a multitude of touchpoints with Coloradans statewide every day, whether we reach them with news and music in their car, in-person at an event or through digital stories and newsletters that have become a habit for tens of thousands of our neighbors.

And while we’re already doing more than ever before, we’re excited about the future growth ahead. In August of 2023, we purchased a new building in central Denver that will be the future home of CPR and a gathering place for Coloradans.

Thank you for your ongoing support of all we do. We’re here because you care.

-Stewart Vanderwilt

My first year leading the Board of Directors of Colorado Public Radio has been exciting, fulfilling and challenging — in a good way. We live in a time when local news and culture are crucial to civic engagement and the strength of our communities, and I am proud to lead the Board of Directors for an organization that is leading that charge.

This year, Colorado Public Radio provided constant news and music to keep Coloradans informed and entertained. This public service is made possible by people like you, many of whom are members and sponsors, who understand what a gift it is to our community.

Thank you for this continued support. CPR is entering an exciting new era, but it is not immune to the challenges media organizations face in our polarized world. I believe CPR can be a bridge to bring people together for community conversations and experiences, and I’m thankful that you do, too.

Thank you to my fellow board members, to CEO Stewart Vanderwilt, to the CPR staff and to everyone in Colorado and beyond who relies on CPR.

-Bradley Greenwald
Colorado Public Radio is for the public. This year, we engaged with events all around the state, including festivals and concerts, panels and conversations, volunteer days and more. Being out in the communities we aim to serve with our news and music helps us include more voices in our coverage, find out what we’re missing and be better neighbors.
Over the past year, CPR News continued to serve as a critical source of trustworthy information for Coloradans on the radio and online.

In September 2022, CPR News sued the Adams County coroner’s office after it refused to release the amended autopsy for Elijah McClain, the teenager who died after a stop by Aurora police in 2019. Acting on a tip, reporter Allison Sherry filed a Colorado Open Records Act request for the amended autopsy. The coroner refused to release it, citing state grand jury secrecy. However, autopsies are not part of grand jury testimony. Attorney Steve Zansberg represented CPR News, and several other news organizations joined the lawsuit. Two courts ruled that the autopsy had to be released. Stories about the outcome and CPR’s lawsuit were published around the country, and Adams County was ordered to pay CPR’s legal fees.

In the 2022 fall election season, our voter guides reached the highest number of people ever seen for a midterm election, thanks not only to their thoroughness, but also to a new effort to reach Spanish-speaking audiences. The translation effort was the largest in CPR’s history, and was accompanied by a marketing campaign of billboards, radio ads and digital ads to spread awareness of this resource.

The work that CPR does is essential to a thriving democracy. Sharing the stories of our neighbors, close and far, is the foundation for developing a collective sense of community.

- William, Niwot, Colorado

CPR News

A vital community resource

"Thank you so much for reaching out to all of us for this opportunity to team together. I am honored to have shared the debates with our listeners. When I heard the announcement with all of our community radio stations mentioned, I felt nostalgic and pride for the power of collaboration between all of us." - Kelley Dole, KBUT, Crested Butte

During the legislative session in the first half of 2023, CPR News’ impact was seen in a number of bills that referenced our reporting. The legislature passed a nearly $3 million bill to fund wildlife investigations prompted by CPR News’ investigation into wildlife caustics in 2021. Reporting on issues with the compost waste stream was cited in a bill to require more oversight of packaging that claims to be compostable. And our investigation into how Colorado’s Red Flag law is—or isn’t—being used led the legislature to allocate more money for a hotline.

In March, we launched a new joint project for both radio and TV. Real Talk with Denver7 and CPR News is a weekly program that tells unique Front Range stories and centers underserved communities in the conversations. Reporters Nathan Heffel of CPR News and Micah Smith of Denver7 provide a platform for open conversations on topics ranging from inequities in maternal healthcare to food deserts to Colorado’s Chichano history.

“With Real Talk, we’re reaching new people and inviting them to explore public radio in a way that hasn’t been done before by CPR News. We did an episode on adoption, and I visited a camp just for adopted kids in Estes Park. As an adoptee myself, hearing their stories, spending the weekend with them and truly feeling a part of their community was profound. They were so honored to be featured by CPR News and truly felt seen and recognized as part of the Colorado fabric." - Nathan Heffel, CPR News Host

CPR News is here for the Colorado community as a watchdog over power, a resource for the curious and a megaphone for those without a voice.

Parched

Parched, a 10-part podcast on the Colorado River, debuted April 18. A CPR team spent about a year reporting on the effects of drought on the river that supplies drinking water to more than 40 million people in the U.S. and Mexico. The goal of the podcast was not just to detail the dire condition of the river, but to profile those who are working on a variety of solutions to address the shortage of water.

Parched is the best performing podcast from CPR to date, with over a million listeners around the country.

“I could never have imagined that Parched, a podcast series about Colorado River solutions, would receive the level of attention that it has. Listeners across the country showed us that people care deeply about the future of Western water in a warming world. One of those listeners approached me at a conference. She had recently been elected to an Arizona water board, and she told me that she listened to Parched to help educate her on the Colorado River and inform her successful election campaign. She told me that her teenage daughter also loved the series, and they would listen in the car together. Her story shows the kind of impact that podcast series like Parched can have on our world.” - Host Michael Elizabeth Sakas

Colorado Matters

Colorado Matters hosts Ryan Warner and Chandra Thomas Whitfield know the power of community. They see it every day as they bring you interviews and stories of Colorado’s people, issues and ideas. Chandra Thomas Whitfield has now been with CPR for over a year. We asked her for some highlights:

“People approach me all the time in public to tell me that they appreciate hearing a woman who is clearly a woman of color — not someone ‘racially ambiguous’ — on the radio every week. They say it means a lot to them personally to hear a diverse voice on the radio.

I did a radio documentary for Black History Month 2023 on a former Negro Baseball League player who lived in Denver named William Richardson. My roots in the community helped me connect with his family and co-produce a documentary that led to legions of Coloradans learning about this man’s amazing story and his contributions to American history and to the Colorado community overall. Also, through this project, our team was able to reveal new information to his family about him that they did not previously know.

This project happened organically and I am grateful it was so well received and embraced by the Colorado community. Mr. Richardson has since been formally honored and acknowledged in multiple ways. It was truly an honor to have a platform to tell his story the way it deserved to be told.” - Host Chandra Thomas Whitfield
In the past year, the doors to the community room at the Southern Colorado Public Media Center (SCPMC) were flung open to provide a place for community events and conversations. From panel discussions and candidate forums to nonprofit meetings and choir practice, the SPCMC is becoming a hub of civic engagement and community activity for Colorado Springs.

Here’s a partial list of groups that have reserved the space:

- The Colorado Springs World Affairs Council’s (CSWAC) foreign dignitary forums
- Youth Documentary Academy
- SWAC and Youth Documentary Academy presentation of “Social Change through the Arts” to foreign delegates, sponsored by the U.S. State Department
- The League of Women Voters’ candidate forums
- KRCC’s partnership with the Colorado College Journalism Department in presenting NPR’s John Burnett
- The Colorado Arts Alliance
- Colorado College Journalism visiting lecturers
- Reporting workshops, support space and employee events for KRCC and Rocky Mountain PBS
- Pikes Peak Community Foundation
- Meadowgrass Music Festival
- Springs Ensemble Theater
- Pikes Peak Bulletin weekly newspaper
- Mill Street Fusion for homeless youth
- Out Loud Men’s Choir practice

In June, KRCC and CPR were proud to host StoryCorps, the oral history project that travels around the country recording, preserving and sharing the stories of people from all backgrounds and beliefs. The mobile recording studio was parked in the Plaza of the Rockies via a partnership with the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum, and residents of all stripes stopped by to tell their stories, including the former mayor of Colorado Springs, John Suthers. CPR and KRCC shared some of the stories on air, and StoryCorps will archive them in the Library of Congress.

“The Advisory Committee [of the Racial Equity Fund, a giving circle of the Pikes Peak Community Foundation] has met regularly over the year at the Southern Colorado Public Media Center. The SPCMC has provided a private, comfortable, centrally located, professional space with the technology needed to ensure access for members who are not able to meet in person. We feel welcome and supported, from setting up our meetings to greeting us and making sure we have everything we need. This community space has been a game-changer for us this year in creating impact for communities of color! We can’t thank you enough for making it available!”

- Zuleika Johnson, CEO and Founder, Luna Philanthropy and Advisory Council Member of the Racial Equity Fund

Denverite’s Tireless Reporting

Denverite tackled all sorts of issues this year, and made an impact with reporting such as a 20-hour journey on RTD to meet people who ride trains and buses all day to stay warm and safe. This story led RTD to pause their implementation of a policy to ban these types of riders.

Denverite covered local government, housing and development, homelessness, safety and other hard-hitting issues with persistence and compassion all year — while also keeping readers entertained with stories on what’s happening at Casa Bonita, how to be part of the Nuggets’ victory parade and what to do for fun in the city every weekend.

Election Coverage Centering the Community

Denverite sponsored a mayoral forum on March 7 at the Carlo Madison Recreation Center. Partnering with several nonprofit groups that work with marginalized communities, Denverite focused the forum on issues important to those communities. The room was full of voters who may not typically feel included in these types of conversations. Later, Denverite hosted a second event for the runoff candidates, in partnership with The Denver Post and Denver7, which aired on TV and live on CPR News.

“Organizing the People’s Forum leading up to the mayoral election felt like Denverite’s responsibility. We have long covered issues around rising costs of living and how these disproportionately affect communities of color, so we put our efforts where we felt they could be most equitably applied. The event was not only a test of the candidates’ commitment to recognizing people’s needs but also a way to check our own commitment to having an open community dialogue about inequity. We did the work and centered the questions and concerns put to those seeking power by those who feel they are not often heard in the city. After the event, we heard from several attendees and people who tuned in online that the forum added something new that had been missing in the election cycle to that point.”

- Obed Manuel, Denverite Editor
**INTERNS**

**News and KRCC**

For the past year, CPR has been hard at work revamping its student development programming, with a goal of creating meaningful, paid internship and fellowship opportunities to foster the next generation of public media talent.

In summer 2022, four interns for CPR News and KRCC were immersed in our news practices and produced substantial audio and digital content for our audiences across the state, including voicing newscasts, features, and interviews.

In the summer of 2023, four students were selected for internships — two journalism internships with KRCC (in partnership with Colorado College), one journalism internship with CPR News and one production internship (in partnership with Pikes Peak State College).

Throughout the summer, the interns contributed a great deal with Pikes Peak State College).

“I did not know what I was getting myself into. My journalism class could not have prepared me for this. But going through the editing process with both Shanna [Lewis] and Andrea [Chalfin] taught me so much, like how to write for the ear, and how hard it is to be completely, entirely accurate in everything that you say. After this experience, I feel like I could work in a newsroom now — and I didn’t before.”

-Jessica Duran, KRCC Intern

PODCASTS

**¿Quién Are We?**

“¿Quién Are We?”, a podcast exploring “what it means to be Latino, Hispanic or Chicana, or however you identify,” launched in 2022 with nine interview episodes hosted by CPR News’ Moy Ortega. The show is a step in CPR’s efforts to create programming for Latino audiences made by Latino journalists and producers.

In the community: CPR hosted a launch party for the show at Raices Brewing, inviting local leaders in the Latino community to get a sneak preview of the show.

The show received attention and acclaim from Apple Podcasts, Latino USA and NPR, and it was included on OprahDaily’s “Best Spanish and Latino Podcasts” list. The show took third place in Best of the West’s audio storytelling category. “There is no substitute for the sheer joy and enthusiasm exhibited by this host,” the judge wrote. “Ortega carries the entire show and that attitude is infectious. The listener has no choice but to share in the happiness and for me this represents the best way of making the host part of the story.”

-Moy Ortega, CPR Intern

**My Story So Far**

My Story So Far, the flagship podcast from the Audio Innovations Studio’s Community Audio work hosted by Luis Antonio Perez, launched on March 23. The podcast curates the best moments from a series of live storytelling events.

In the community: Each of the episodes in My Story So Far is created from a live event hosted by CPR. At the events, regular people tell their stories in front of audiences of people with shared experiences. One episode is the product of the Audio Innovations producers’ mentorship efforts with YBBO, a podcasting program for high schoolers based at Aurora’s Empower High School. One features formerly incarcerated people starting over in life. Others showcase life lessons from survivors of the devastating Marshall Fire that hit Superior and Louisville.

Other returning and new shows were Music Blocks, which returned for season two on stories musicians tell through sound; The Wedge, a six-part series exploring a family rift between a science journalist and her vaccine-skeptic mother; Systemic, back for season two on diversity and equity in education; and Terra Firma, which pairs nature-themed essays from Indigenous artist CMarie Fuhrman with outdoor soundscapes from sound recordist Jacob Job.

Left: David shares his story at a My Story So Far event at the Tattered Cover Bookstore (Hart Van Denburg). Right: The Music Blocks team at the Colorado Music Educators Association conference.

2022 intern Ev Jaynes in the KRCC studio.
While hosting the Local 303 Meetups, I have been able to connect with our community and hear the stories of why they listen and how excited they are to discover local music. Similarly, I love to hear from the artists we highlight on the impact that their feature on-air has on their music. Artists tell me they book more shows, their streams on digital platforms increase, as does their following on social media. The Local 303 has become a touchstone for the Colorado music community!

Host and Local Music Director Alisha Sweeney
The Alliance for Women in Media Foundation Gracie Award* 
Interview Feature - Radio Non-Commercial Local, Allison Sherry. “Stressed out, busy moms say microdos ing mushrooms makes life easier and brighter.”

Westword Best of Denver 2023 
Best Radio Station for Music, Indie 102.3

ACLU of Colorado Larry Tajiri Award 
Vic Vela, for his honesty and compassion in sharing stories of substance use and recovery

Colorado Broadcasters Association 
Station of the Year (Metro Market) 
Awards for Excellence for CPR News (Metro Market):
• Best News Feature, Report or Series, “Stressed out, busy moms say microdosing mushrooms makes life easier and brighter,” Allison Sherry, Alison Borden
• Best News Coverage of a Single Event, Shooting at Club Q, CPR News & KRCC staff
• Best Sports Feature, “For a guy named Bones, a winding road to the NBA has him ready to show what he’s made of — and where he comes from,” Vic Vela, Andrew Villegas

Awards for KRCC (Major Market):
• General Reporting- Series, First Place, “Many people on the Front Range depend on water from the Denver Basin. But the underground supply isn’t infinite, and one group is trying to find a solution,” Shanna Lewis
• News Reporting: Single Story, First Place, “Ever wonder what all those numbers mean on your property tax bill? Take a tour of a bill with a Pueblo homeowner and find out.” Shanna Lewis

Awards for Denverite (Medium-Newsroom Category):
• Multimedia Story, First Place, “Play our version of Guess Who and get to know some mayoral candidates,” Kevin Beaty, Obed Manuel

The Weby Awards 
• Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Podcast, Honoree, “¿Quién Are We?”
• News & Politics Podcast, Honoree, “Purplish”

Public Media Journalists Association 
• News Feature, First Place - KRCC, for “Colorado Springs man hopes to be the fourth person to push a peanut up Pikes Peak with his nose,” Abigail Beckman

Regional Edward R. Murrow Awards from the Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA)
• Overall Excellence
• Continuing Coverage for Coverage of Club Q Shooting
• Digital for CPR News and Denverite online
• Excellence in Sound for “She was a World-Class Violinist Who Became Homeless. Now Her Instrument is Getting a New Life”
• Hard News for “Fentanyl is Everywhere, and Showing up in Other Illicit Drugs”
• Investigative Reporting for “A Criminal Investigation and Complicated Professional History Loom over the Adams County Sheriff”
• News Documentary for “How Colorado Counts Your Ballot”
• Sports Reporting for “‘Where Nerds Win’: At the Colorado School of Mines, Excellence on the Field is a Natural Product”

NLGJA: The Association of LGBTQ+ Journalists 
• Excellence in Radio Award, Hayley Sanchez and Kevin Beaty for “For the Colorado Springs LGBTQ community, the Club Q shooting has dredged up memories of the area’s bigoted past — and the huge progress made (and yet to make)”

Top to bottom: Colorado Matters Senior Host Ryan Warner with Mike Bane at Denver Botanic Gardens, April 26, 2022; Kevin J. Beaty, the CPI team at the Colorado Dragon Boat Festival, July 24, 2022; Kevin J. Beaty, LeRoux tells her story at a My Story So Far event in Fruita, Colo., May 2023; CPR Classical Host Matt Wesner interviews composer Wang Wei at the Colorado Music Festival, Aug. 4, 2022 (Hart Van Denburgh); The Inkle 163.3 studio at Goodwill during the Underground Music Showcase (Brittany Werges); Denverite Presents Denverites, a gallery exhibit showcasing portraits by Visual Journalist Kevin J. Beaty, Oct. 6, 2023 (Brittany Werges)

FINANCIALS 
Fiscal Year 23: July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023
Operating Revenue - Total (in 000s): $28,821
Individual Giving: 72%
Sponsorship: 22%
Corporation for Public Broadcasting: 4%
All other: 2%
Operating Expenses - Total (in 000s): $29,295
Programming & Production: 69%
Sponsorship & Fundraising: 23%
Management & General: 8%

Colorado Public Radio

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