



2024 **IMPACT REPORT**

wfiu n p r PUBLIC RADIO **WTIU** PBS



FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

As we begin 2025, WFIU and WTIU remain committed to being a highly trusted and leading source of local news and information, an essential outlet for arts and entertainment programming, a key partner in public and civic education, and a community connector through our events and partnerships.

I'm proud of the accomplishments our team has achieved during 2024:

- We told the story of Major Taylor, a cyclist from Indiana whose achievements as the world's first Black sports superstar had been lost to history but who now is finally getting the recognition he deserves.
- We covered the April eclipse, providing multiplatform content about this once-in-a-lifetime event on our radio, TV, and digital platforms.
- Our news team kept our audiences informed about important local and statewide issues and provided comprehensive reporting on a monumental election season.
- For the first time, we brought our Jazz in July concert to Columbus. The community response was tremendous, with an estimated 750 in attendance.
- We offered educational opportunities and programming for all ages—from teaching school-age children how to be future entrepreneurs at Lemonade Day University to connecting seniors with free resources and information about growing older through our WTIU Conference on Aging webinars.
- Through our digital content and engagement efforts, we have extended our reach and impact beyond our geographic broadcast area.

These are just a few of the many ways WFIU and WTIU work to create a resilient and connected community in south central Indiana and beyond. **And our public media services are free and available to all!**

This is an especially exciting year as we celebrate 75 years of WFIU connecting Indiana with the world—with programming that makes such a difference in our awareness, our understanding, our appreciation, and our lives.

We look forward to continuing to serve you in 2025.

With gratitude,



Jay Kincaid
WFIU/WTIU Interim Executive Director



2024 BY THE NUMBERS



3,861,554
Web Page Views



920,332
WFIU Streams



48
Awards



51,400
Average Weekly
Broadcast Listeners



91,000
Average Weekly
Broadcast Viewers



128,953
Social Followers



31,029
Email Subscribers



44
Events



2,913
Local News Stories



319,637
Podcast Downloads

Sources: Google Analytics, Triton, Nielsen, Bluesky, Facebook, Instagram, Threads, X, YouTube, Constant Contact, WFIU/WTIU website, and WFIU/WTIU records.

IMPACT OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT

A mix of state and federal funding, Indiana University support, grants, member donations, investments, and corporate partnerships support the following:

- The creation and acquisition of high-quality content including documentaries; arts, cultural, and educational shows; NPR and PBS programs; and more.
- Helping young children learn through PBS KIDS' programs and apps.
- Serving Indiana residents through local programs that showcase the state's history and culture.
- The distribution of our local content to national audiences on PBS and NPR member stations, apps, and online platforms.
- Providing an unbiased source of local and national information through award-winning and trustworthy news and public affairs programming.
- Development and maintenance of online streaming services and digital content.
- Maintenance of WFIU and WTIU's digital and broadcast infrastructure that provides the backbone for emergency alert, public safety, first responder, and homeland security services.
- Ensuring that WFIU and WTIU remain free and accessible to everyone.

LOCAL STORIES

A Major Year for Major Taylor

Major Taylor: Champion of the Race premiered in February on WTIU, and its impact continued to grow throughout the year. The documentary explores the life and legacy of speed cycling champion, civil rights activist, and Hoosier hero Marshall Walter “Major” Taylor. Born in Indianapolis in 1878, Taylor was the world’s first Black sports superstar by the turn of the 20th century. On the track, Taylor captured more than 20 world records during his career. Off the track, he was an early civil rights pioneer who fought for greater social opportunities for African Americans in the heart of Jim Crow America.



From left to right: US Representative Jonathan L. Jackson, Joyce Brown, Barbara Brown, Todd Gould, and Karen Brown Donovan.



Major Taylor's great-granddaughter Karen Brown Donovan accepted the Distinguished Hoosier Award on his behalf.

The film received local and national attention. US Representatives Jonathan L. Jackson and Mike Thompson invited WTIU Senior Producer/Director Todd Gould to participate in a screening of *Major Taylor* on Capitol Hill last June. The event was held in support of a bipartisan bill that Representative Jackson introduced in December of 2023 to award Taylor the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian honor that can be given by the US Congress. Following the screening, Gould participated in a panel discussion with Major Taylor’s great-granddaughter Karen Brown Donovan. About 100 people attended, including members of Congress, staffers, and journalists. Two more screenings of *Major Taylor* took place in October at the Heartland International Film Festival, where the documentary was an official selection of the festival.

To cap off the year, Major Taylor was named the winner of the Distinguished Hoosier Award in November. One of the highest awards given to Indiana citizens by the governor, the award honors those who distinguish themselves by significant contributions to their communities, and whose qualities and actions endear them in the hearts and minds of Hoosiers. That same month, 299 PBS member stations—covering 91.6% of the country—began airing *Major Taylor*.

“Gould’s turning the idea of a Taylor documentary into a finished product reaching millions, after dozens of efforts failed over the decades, could be compared to the British legend of Arthur pulling the sword from a churchyard stone.”

—Velo Outside

A Programming Collaboration with the IU Jacobs School of Music

WFIU debuted two programs in 2024 as part of our continuing collaboration with the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music to broadcast recordings of music performances from their extensive archives.

To commemorate the centennial of Grammy-award winning cellist and former Jacobs faculty member János Starker, WFIU aired *A Tribute to János Starker* in July. The program featured performances that showcased the breadth of Starker's 55-year career at IU, including notable collaborations with colleagues like pianist György Sebök and violinist Josef Gingold.



In November, *Jacobs Legacy: Voice* premiered on WFIU. The program focused on Jacobs' voice department, which has produced numerous singers that have gone on to lead prolific careers and perform on the most prestigious stages in the world. Hosted by Sylvia McNair, the show included recordings from McNair's time as a student at Indiana University, as well as Lawrence Brownlee, Jamie Barton, Kyle Ketelsen, Elizabeth Futral, Ailyn Pérez, and Angela Brown.



Inner States Moves to Digital-First Format, Expands Coverage

In August, WFIU's arts and culture series *Inner States* began a new digital-first content strategy with episodes released biweekly on Wednesdays on all major podcast platforms. *Inner States* continues to offer conversations with unconventional artists, thinkers, and doers from southern Indiana and has expanded its coverage to include more stories from across the state of Indiana and the Midwest. Episode highlights from 2024 include an interview with *Rust Belt Femme* author Raechel Anne Jolie about punk scenes in the Midwest, the origin of the term "American Heartland," processing grief through art, and more.



"I am sending this gift because of the joy you all bring to my mother Jane O'Donnell, about to turn 89 years old. We are both living in Sacramento, California, and since she has discovered WFIU on her Alexa device, she listens [to] WFIU every day. When I stop in to see her, she excitedly tells me about whatever new things you all have been playing. Bloomington is lucky to have you, but please know your impact goes well beyond Indiana! Thank you."

—Barrie, Granite Bay, CA

Investing in Local News

As access to local news diminishes, the WFIU/WTIU News team has stepped in to fill the void. Our newsroom continues to grow and focus on local stories with diverse voices and perspectives that help enrich our community and foster meaningful dialogue on critical issues.

Our news team continues to serve south central Indiana with ten newscasts each weekday on WFIU; sound-rich features from roving reporters around the state; chances for listeners to engage directly with decision-makers via the weekly feature *Ask the Mayor* and the discussion program *Noon Edition*.

Indiana Newsdesk, a half-hour, weekly program on WTIU, focuses on the latest in economic, political, educational, and environmental issues. Now in its 12th season, the program delivers stories that impact not only the communities we serve, but also our region and state.

WFIU and WTIU also broadcast Governor Holcomb's *State of the State Address*, the *State of the Judiciary*, the *State of Higher Education Address*, and Indiana University President Pamela Whitten's *State of the University Address*.

Covering the Eclipse

South central Indiana experienced a once-in-a-lifetime event when it was in the path of totality during the April 8 eclipse. We created multiplatform eclipse content for WFIU and WTIU's broadcast, digital, and social media channels covering a wide variety science and safety topics and news features. Our eclipse programming series culminated in live news special on April 8, featuring a recap of the day's events and reporting from multiple locations across south central Indiana.



Following the Protests on the Indiana University Campus

In May, the IU Divestment Coalition set up an encampment in Dunn Meadow to protest the war between Israel and Hamas and to pressure the university to divest from Israel. Our reporters provided 24/7 coverage from the scene of protests and arrests at Dunn Meadow. Then, we followed up with thorough reporting on IU's policies.

Our interview with Indiana State Police Superintendent Doug Carter about his department's response to the protests at IU was one of our top stories of the year, with readers collectively spending more than 19,800 minutes on it (the equivalent of more than 13 days of non-stop reading).



2024 Election Coverage

Our news team provided primary and general election coverage, with real-time results and analysis, both on-air and online. We reported on the Indiana governor's race and aired the October debate on WFIU and WTIU. Throughout election night on November 5, our reporters delivered live news reports from watch parties and campaign headquarters around Indiana. Our comprehensive online coverage included an election website with information on all the major races and a voter guide tool for Indiana residents to see who was on their ballot. The voter guide was the 9th most viewed page on our website for 2024 with 24,262 views. The election website also served as a resource for people to learn about the candidates and the issues that mattered to them, with interactive results for national, statewide, and local races.



Archiving Airwaves: The Miley Collection

Our news team told the story of 93-year-old John Miley of Evansville, Indiana, who has compiled the largest collection of sports broadcasts in the country. In September, we released a radio and television documentary on WFIU and WTIU that explored Miley's extensive collection, which includes every Super Bowl, a half-century of the Kentucky Derby and Indianapolis 500 races, the World Series games from 1954 to the present, and more.



Convening Community Conversations

We hosted four live *Noon Edition* radio broadcasts and invited the public to join us for conversations with our panelists around a variety of topics. The first live broadcast focused on the eclipse and took place in April at Wonderlab in Bloomington. The following month, *Noon Edition* traveled to Eastern Greene High School in Bloomfield to talk with high school seniors about their future plans. We also discussed the election at the Monroe County Courthouse in October. To wrap up the year in December, we hosted a conversation about books with *New York Times* bestselling author Michael Koryta and other panelists at Viewpoint Books: Chapter Two in Columbus in December.



"I really appreciate that you provide essential news for free to the public. It is nice to be able to tune in on my drive to work and hear the headlines of the day; it makes me feel more informed about my community and the world."

—Robin, Bloomington

EVENTS

Just You & Me 40th Anniversary Celebration

In December, we celebrated the 40th anniversary of WFIU's afternoon jazz program *Just You & Me* with a listener reception and live broadcast in our studio. Former host Joe Bourne joined current host David Brent Johnson to share some of their favorite songs and memories of working on *Just You & Me*.



Photo credit: Yael Ksander

“I can’t tell you the number of times people have told me over the years that they never listened to jazz until they tuned in to my program. I think that’s just phenomenal.”

—Joe Bourne

Earth Eats Workshops

Kayte Young, host and producer of WFIU's radio show and podcast *Earth Eats*, led four hands-on events where participants learned new skills to take back to their home kitchens. Two workshops hosted in the summer at Mother Hubbard's Cupboard focused on how to make jam and safely can it. Then in November, Young did two cooking demonstrations at the Monroe County Public Library's Southwest Branch. Young showed attendees how to make Hijiki Baked Rice Wrapped in Nori—a recipe from the book *Tenderheart* by Hetty Lui McKinnon.



“I really enjoyed partnering with [Kayte] for these workshops. We heard lots of great things from our participants (and I myself have made the recipe at home three times now).”

**—Becky Craft, Adult Services Librarian,
Monroe County Public Library Southwest Branch**



Bringing Live Jazz to Our Communities

Last summer, WFIU hosted a free outdoor jazz concert in Columbus for first time with great success! An estimated 750 people attended Jazz in July to see the Al Cobine Big Band perform on the plaza at the Bartholomew County Public Library. Because of the enthusiastic response, plans are underway to bring back Jazz in July to Columbus in 2025.

Then in September, we brought another free outdoor jazz concert series to Bloomington by collaborating with the Department of Jazz Studies at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music to co-host Swing in September. The concerts were held every Friday on the IU campus and included performances by the Hickey-Shanafelt Collective, Palonegro, The Big Push, and The Postmodern Jazz Quartet.



7th Annual WTIU Conference on Aging

We hosted the 7th Annual WTIU Conference on Aging on Zoom every Wednesday in October and November. The conference was free and open to the public, with our reach extending beyond Indiana because of the online format. Area experts explored various facets of aging and offered insights and resources to 373 participants. The conference included nine sessions on the topics of Creative Movement for Seniors, Medicare, Social Security, Senior Living 101, Advanced Care Planning, Art and Aging, Nutrition for Seniors, Planned Giving, and Navigating Difficult Situations.

All nine sessions and their accompanying resource materials are archived at wtiu.org/aging.



“I love this program. I appreciate the videos being available. It is a great resource and one reason I support WTIU!”

—Karen F., WTIU Conference on Aging participant

CHILDREN'S OUTREACH & EDUCATION

Station Tours

We welcomed six student groups for tours of the WFIU and WTIU broadcast facilities. Middle, high school, and college students got a behind-the-scenes look at how we produce radio and television programs, met WFIU and WTIU on-air personalities, and learned what it takes to keep our stations on the air. Some of the students are interested in pursuing careers in broadcasting or engineering, and the tours provided an opportunity for them to ask questions of professionals working in those fields.



WTIU Kids Events

WTIU participated in several events that engaged young children through educational activities and PBS KIDS programming. In May, we hosted the kids' area at the Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce's Showcase Bloomington event, which brought together local culture and businesses in a family-friendly environment with nearly 300 attendees.

In June, we took part in Lemonade Day University to help educate children on financial literacy, product development, customer service, and food safety, among many other topics. We reached 182 kids from Monroe County and their families—the biggest Lemonade Day University we have ever had.

We saw continued success during our summer event, WTIU Kids' Day at the Monroe County Fair, where attendance has shown steady growth, serving approximately 1,100 children every year. The free event featured a visit from PBS KIDS' character Xavier Riddle, games, stage shows, crafts, a photo booth, educational activity guides, literacy labs, and more.



We, along with the Bedford radio stations WBIW, WQRK, and LiteFM, co-presented Super Treat Night at The Boys and Girls Club of Lawrence County on Halloween. We brought plenty of candy and our photo booth—a highlight for families who have told us they look forward to getting their picture taken at the event every year.

"Thanks to your generous involvement, we were able to bring smiles, laughter, and excitement to nearly 3,500 kids and parents, making this year's celebration another tremendous success."

—Timber Browning, Content Manager and Brand Ambassador at WBIW, WQRK, LiteFM

2024 AWARDS & HONORS

Station Awards

WFIU, WTIU, and Indiana Public Broadcasting News (IPB News) earned 24 awards at the Indiana Professional Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists Best in Indiana Journalism Contest. The WFIU/WTIU News team won 18 awards and WTIU earned three. IPB News, a collaboration of the state's nine public media newsrooms and a shared statewide team, received three awards.

WFIU/WTIU News also earned seven Regional Edward R. Murrow Awards for best continuing coverage, best digital for its *Paper Cuts* series, excellence in innovation, best hard news, best investigative reporting, best newscast, and best podcast for *Rush to Kill*.

Additional awards for WTIU include six NATAS Central Great Lakes Chapter Emmys and nine Telly Awards.



Marshall “Major” Taylor Trailblazer Award

Todd Gould was named the recipient of the Marshall “Major” Taylor Trailblazer Award for his work on WTIU’s documentary *Major Taylor: Champion of the Race*. This award was a joint presentation by the Bronzeville Trail Task Force, a citizen activist group dedicated to preserving and promoting the historical legacy of Chicago’s African American community, and US Representative Jonathan L. Jackson.

The “trailblazer” award title refers to a line from Taylor’s autobiography, in which he wrote, “In a word, I was a pioneer and therefore had to blaze my own trail.” Gould and WTIU are the first to produce a full-length documentary on Major Taylor.



WFIU’s George Walker named to IPBS Hall of Fame

George Walker was inducted into the Indiana Public Broadcasting Stations’ Hall of Fame in July. He served as WFIU’s classical music host and producer for 45 years until his retirement in 2022.

Established in 2023, the IPBS Hall of Fame honors outstanding champions of public media with ties to Indiana and the industry who inspire confidence in and from others, work to increase value in people and situations, focus on good, and invest time in purposeful activities. Inductees are selected annually.



Photo by Eric Rudd Indiana University

“George was a model of consistency across what might have been a record tenure. We can’t find any evidence that another daily music host in the history of US broadcasting served one station for longer in that role.”

—John Bailey, WFIU/WTIU Director of Broadcast Operations



Photo by Samantha J. Smith, courtesy of the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music.

LOOKING AHEAD FOR 2025

WFIU's 75th Anniversary

Our programming throughout the year will honor the voices, stories, and moments that have defined WFIU for 75 years and the future we are building with our listeners.

The Soul Kitchen's 10th Anniversary

We celebrated the 10th anniversary of WFIU's music program *The Soul Kitchen* in January with a dance party at Harmony School in Bloomington.

Rush to Kill Bonus Episode

WFIU News's podcast *Rush to Kill* released a bonus episode in January about the current state of death row.

The Influencers

In January, we launched a new multimedia music history series on WFIU's broadcast and digital platforms that traces the musical family trees of today's pop artists.

Journey Indiana: Underground

A new documentary premiering this March on WTIU explores southern Indiana's caves.

Earth Eats: Eats Wild

Premiering in March on WFIU, *Earth Eats: Eats Wild* is a nine-part radio and podcast series on foraging.

The Nutcracker

WTIU and the IU Jacobs School of Music are collaborating to present *The Nutcracker* on WTIU and other PBS member stations this November.

For more public information and reports, visit
indianapublicmedia.org/about