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GBH Community Benefits Report

April 2024

For the period July 2022-June 2023

INTRODUCTION

GBH is an active and involved member of the Boston community and strengthens, includes, and serves our diverse community, fostering growth and empowering individuals. We strive to be a hub for positive change and understanding, focused on community and the public good. We enrich people's lives through programs, events, and services that engage, illuminate, and inspire, fostering citizenship and culture, the joy of learning, and the power of diverse perspectives. Through free multiplatform content and comprehensive education and curriculum resources, GBH empowers Boston audiences with information and resources that are rooted in and reflect our city.

Throughout the year, through TV and radio broadcasts, online and mobile content, educational activities, performances, and virtual and in-person events, GBH fostered community connections, contributed to the city's vibrant culture, and provided essential news and information to thousands of community members.

GBH invited artists into its world-class recording and performance studios in Brighton for cross-genre concerts for in-person and virtual audiences. We provided audiences with engaging and educational content through 187 in-person and virtual events that covered issues of interest to Bostonians, such as reparations, clean energy, gun violence, free speech, artificial intelligence, problems on the MBTA, safe drinking water, and more.

We significantly expanded our events and engagement at the GBH Boston Public Library Studio, with daily local cultural and news programming.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

GBH provided a variety of community programs and services designed to uniquely benefit Boston residents. As a proud member of the city's educational and cultural scene, we provide television and radio broadcast programs for Boston audiences; events for Boston students, families, and visitors; and robust programming that focuses on the city's cultural riches and diverse neighborhoods. GBH's local television channels include GBH 2, GBH 44 and GBH Kids.

With a newsroom headquartered in Boston, GBH reaches across the city with GBH 89.7, Boston's Local NPR; and CRB Classical 99.5. We offer four local web services—gbh.org, gbhnews.org, classical wcrb.org, and gbh.org/jazz247 that provide complimentary streaming, podcasts, blogs, news updates and a wide range of resources that are relevant to Bostonians. The Boston Kids & Family Channel serves the city's families with a broad range of cultural content. As a community service, GBH donates use of its television tower to Boston EMS and Boston Police.

GBH broadened our collaborative partnerships, enhancing the ways we make media and engage with our communities. We were the exclusive public media sponsors of the NAACP Convention in Boston, which included live broadcasts; we sponsored the Boston Book Festival, where GBH executive producers, hosts, and our President/CEO led discussions on a diverse range of topics; and we produced five new episodes of *The State of Race*, a series that began in 2020 about race and inequality produced in partnership with GBH, WORLD, NAACP Boston, and *The Boston Globe*.

GBH Boston Public Library Studio

Attendance at events held in the GBH Boston Public Library Studio was up almost 200% over the last year, with nearly 9,000 people in attendance. *Boston Public Radio* continued its audience-friendly broadcasts at the studio twice a week.

GBH Community Advisory Board

GBH depended on its [Community Advisory Board](#), composed of community leaders from around Greater Boston, to offer an external perspective on GBH's responsiveness to the diverse educational and cultural needs and interests of the communities we serve. Board members review programming goals established by GBH, assist in being responsive to community needs, and evaluate whether GBH is meeting these goals.

PROGRAMMING

GBH broadened our perspectives and collaborations, enhancing the ways we make media and engage with our communities. In four key areas—journalism, science, children's media and education and history, arts, and culture—we provided relevant, engaging, and inspiring resources across multiple platforms for our community.

Journalism

GBH's journalism is factual, credible, and reflects the range of diverse voices that make up our community. Throughout the year, GBH covered stories that make a difference to Bostonians. At a time when many local media outlets have been shuttered, GBH continues to provide a robust local service, deepening our commitment to cover the news in – and with – communities that have been traditionally under-represented.

- [GBH News](#) continues to operate one of the largest public media newsrooms in the country, producing timely, award-winning multiplatform reporting online and on radio and television, with its website drawing 400,000 monthly users. GBH News tells stories infused with and informed by the diverse communities we serve across the Commonwealth, through our bureaus at the State House, Dorchester, and Worcester, and our broadcast studio at the Boston Public Library. Our newsroom won three 2023 National Edward R. Murrow Awards from the Radio Television Digital News Association.
- With a focus on the stories of often historically excluded people, GBH developed two new series. [Priced Out](#) continued its exploration of the local impact of skyrocketing home prices, especially in communities where residents can least afford to pay more. The idea for [Life After Prison](#), an ongoing project of the GBH News Center for Investigative Reporting, emerged as reporters met with people in communities that have high numbers of returning prisoners. The series explores the challenges faced by thousands of Massachusetts residents who return from incarceration each year and the organizations, communities, and families that welcome them home. This series features contributions of dozens of returning citizens who share their struggles and successes.
- GBH News' new podcasts, including the Boston-focused "[The Big Dig](#)" with more than 2.5 million downloads, the largest in GBH history, and "[College Uncovered](#)," which featured some Boston area interviewees, drew listener acclaim, with behind-the-scenes coverage of the nation's largest construction project and the hidden workings of colleges and universities.
- On GBH 89.7 [Boston Public Radio](#) with Jim Braude and Margery Eagan continued to be GBH News' most popular show across multiple platforms. They continued their long tradition of broadcasting live "Ask the Mayor," "Ask the Governor," and "Ask the Attorney General" segments from the GBH Boston Public Library Studio, where listeners had opportunities to engage with decisionmakers.
- [Greater Boston](#), GBH's Monday-Thursday broadcast and YouTube program delivers in-depth news and local perspective through conversations with the people who bring Boston to life. Episodes have focused on restorative justice, Boston's art scene, and the city's political issues.
- [Basic Black](#), the longest running program on public television focusing on the interests of people of color, featured episodes on Boston's Black theater scene, affordable housing, and women of color business leaders.
- Season Three of [The Curiosity Desk](#) with Edgar B. Herwick III covered such local issues as how to decode a license plate from Massachusetts, the closing of neighborhood bars, Keno in Massachusetts, how the MBTA's Boston train lines got their colors, Boston's "unwritten rules," and more.

GBH Forum Network

[The GBH Forum Network](#) is a public media service of GBH that offers free access to hundreds of video and audio lectures from the world's foremost scholars, authors, artists, scientists, policymakers, and community leaders. Partnering with numerous Boston-based partners, the GBH Forum Network hosted lectures on varied topics, including the following:

- Marking the 250th anniversary of the Boston Tea Party, an exploration of less-remembered aspects, with Revolutionary Spaces
- A look at Charles Dickens' Boston connection, with the Charles River Museum of Industry & Innovation
- Boston 50 years after busing, with the Ford Hall Forum
- An exploration of economic warfare, with WorldBoston
- An introduction to the significant women of Boston, with the Boston Public Library
- A look at Native peoples and U.S. History, with the Massachusetts Historical Society

The Forum Network partnered with additional Boston-based partners including the Cambridge Forum, Boston College, the Lowell Institute, and JCC Greater Boston.

Science

Science educators across the city rely on NOVA, our flagship science series, for resources used in the classroom as well as in museums, libraries, and after-school programs. GBH deepened its commitment to covering our changing climate, illuminating the challenges, and highlighting solutions through documentaries, trusted reporting, and meaningful partnerships with community organizations. NOVA offered an array of science documentaries covering the Earth's history, whales, mega-volcanoes, our brains, and more.

- Many [NOVA](#) documentaries drew on Greater Boston's renowned resources in research and science, featuring local experts and locations. For example, [Chasing Carbon Zero](#) featured Miles O'Brien who lives in Massachusetts and drove a loaned electric car from Boston to Bangor, Maine. The film also features an interview with Yet-Ming Chiang from MIT, and Kelly Sims Gallagher from Tufts Fletcher School appeared in [Inside China's Tech Boom](#).

Children's Media and Education

In addition to being the leading producer for PBS in primetime for general audiences, GBH is also PBS's largest producer of children's programs. Boston parents and teachers can depend on GBH's children's educational programs as trusted and safe sources for children to watch television and play digital games and mobile apps.

- The newest GBH Kids series [Work It Out Wombats!](#) which helps young children with computational thinking, launched in 2023 to great acclaim. To introduce the characters to local viewers, GBH sponsored a day-long series of events around the city, with employee volunteers dressed as Zeke. They visited locales such as Franklin Park Zoo, Boston City Hall, Boston Children's Museum, the Boston Public Library,

and the Boston Common. Common Sense Media hailed the series as one of the best television shows of 2023, awarding it the notable Common Sense Media Seal for Families.

- Boston educators and parents have free access to all the resources of PBS LearningMedia, including the new [U.S. History Collection](#), developed by GBH Education for middle and high school students. The collection was named the best social studies instructional solution of 2023 as part of the annual SIIA CODiE Awards, which recognize the most innovative education technology products in the country.
- Each year, in partnership with New England Public Media (NEPM), GBH Education works with a group of Educator Ambassadors – 18 this year – who advise on a broad range of topics and provide feedback on educational content development and teacher engagement. The ambassadors are diverse in the subjects, grades, and students they teach.
- [High School Quiz Show](#) completed Season 14 with 17 teams competing from schools located in and around Boston.

History, Arts and Culture

Through our radio and television programs, as well our community events in person and online, GBH presents history, arts, and culture to inform the present and uplift the arts in Boston. Producing and presenting arts programming is a critical part of our mission—connecting communities and audiences through free, accessible offerings featuring dance, music, theater, painting, and more.

- GBH News launched [The Culture Show](#) this year, a daily radio program to provide an expansive, inclusive look at society through art, culture, and entertainment. Hosted by GBH Executive Arts Editor Jared Bowen and featuring Callie Crossley of [Under the Radar with Callie Crossley](#) and Edgar B. Herwick III of [The Curiosity Desk](#) as co-hosts, the show led engaging conversations and interviews with guests from the local arts community.
- [AMERICAN EXPERIENCE](#), the longest-running history documentary series on television, continued its presentation of broader, more inclusive, and representative roster of documentaries, including [The Busing Battleground](#), which examined the deeply mixed legacy of Boston's efforts to racially integrate public schools in the 1970s. GBH hosted community dialogues involving people directly affected by the crisis.
- [GBH Music](#)'s repertoire expanded throughout the year, with concerts and recording sessions in GBH facilities by world-acclaimed musicians. During a year of record ratings that ushered in growing audiences for CRB Classical 99.5, the station continued GBH's longest-standing commitment to the arts – a schedule of 50 concert broadcasts of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. In addition, [WCRB in](#)

[Concert](#) produced more than 20 concert broadcasts with local arts organizations, including a presentation of Boston Lyric Opera's production of Rhiannon Giddens' *Omar*, winner of the Pulitzer Prize for music. GBH Music produced 10 virtual and streaming performances including *Peace – The Concert for Eric Jackson*, in Calderwood and a Celtic/classical crossover in Fraser Performance Studio featuring the Rasa Quartet and Boston Baroque's X-Tet. In collaboration with JazzBoston, the JazzNOW series included a performance of pianist Nina Ott and friends.

- The Boston community mourned the loss of Brian O'Donovan, the longtime host of GBH's radio show *A Celtic Sojourn*, broadcast from the Boston Public Library. O'Donovan, who died at the age of 66, was the creative force and host of *A Christmas Celtic Sojourn*, which had been a Boston holiday tradition for over 20 years.
- Now beginning its seventh season, [Stories from the Stage](#) is produced in Boston and broadcast on 194 WORLD channel stations. More than 5,000 people have applauded multicultural storytellers at the program's live events in Boston or at virtual events. The series has expanded from its roots as an award-winning television show to a radio hour on GBH 89.7, a popular podcast, features on the GBH national radio program *The World*, and digitally on Facebook, Instagram, and its own YouTube channel.

Sponsorships, Donations and Scholarships

GBH donated a variety of resources and support to the Boston community through scholarships, in-kind donations, equipment donation, and free programming for children and families. And our public-minded leadership team and employees volunteer their time locally and serve on the boards of various Boston civic organizations.

Boston Kids & Family Channel

Boston Kids & Family TV is a collaboration between GBH and the City of Boston, offering free educational programs to Boston cable subscribers. Children's programs, such as *Arthur*, *Sesame Street*, *Curious George*, *Peep and the Big Wide World*, *Cyberchase*, *Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood*, and *Dinosaur Train* air during the day. In the evening, Boston Kids & Family TV offers history and cultural programs for adults, such as *History Detectives* and *Pati's Mexican Table*.

These in-kind services represent \$340,893 payment in lieu of taxes.

The Paula Apsell/GBH STEM Boston Public Schools Scholarship

As part of its longstanding commitment to supporting science education, Boston public media producer GBH awarded the 2023 [Paula Apsell/GBH STEM Scholarship](#) to 10 Boston public school high school graduates. Each will receive a \$3,500 award toward post-secondary STEM education. The scholarship is named for Paula Apsell, senior executive

producer emerita of NOVA. The diverse group of scholarship winners are from five high schools and plan to study in STEM at colleges and universities across the country, including Boston area institutions such as Northeastern University, Wheaton College, Boston University, and the University of Massachusetts.

This in-kind service represents a \$35,000 payment in lieu of taxes.

Brighton High School Scholarship

GBH gives a scholarship to a graduating student interested in communications.

This in-kind service represents \$1,000 payment in lieu of taxes.

Digital Mural

GBH continued to reflect the civic life of Boston on the 40 x 80 ft. digital mural – built onto our studio building – for the community and visitors traveling along the Mass Pike to enjoy each day. We featured 19 Boston-focused images, including notable city residents, events, and issues such as Bunker Hill Day, the Embrace Statue on Boston Common, Boston Press Photographers Association's pictures of the year, One Boston Day, Election Day, and mayoral candidates.

This in-kind service represents \$19,000 payment in lieu of taxes.

Television Tower Donation

GBH donates use of our television tower to Boston EMS and Boston Police Department.

This in-kind service represents \$18,000 payment in lieu of taxes.

Computer Equipment Donation

GBH donated a variety of computer equipment to community organizations in Brighton.

These in-kind services represent \$21,650 payment in lieu of taxes.

Various City Entities

GBH donated to various Allston-Brighton community organizations.

These in-kind donations represent \$13,798 in lieu of taxes.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS RECAP

Please note that the deadline for Community Benefits is April 1, 2024. There are also two additional data points we would like to collect this year (see footnotes for more info).

Once completed, please rename the document to reflect the name of your organization. Email an excel and PDF version to PILOTprogram@boston.gov.

INSTITUTION NAME: WGBH Educational Foundation

FINANCIAL YEAR: July 2022 - June 2023[illegible]