



2021 Local Content and Service Report to the Community



WCTE PBS is coordinating the Datacasting Initiative for Tennessee PBS Stations.

Explore Your World. Experience WCTE Central Tennessee PBS.

For more than 43 years, the Emmy award-winning WCTE PBS has enriched the lives of its viewers in central Tennessee, stimulating educational, civic and personal development through informational and innovative programming and services that address local and regional needs.



WCTE Central Tennessee PBS is an essential resource for the people we serve.

On air, online, in print and in the community, WCTE PBS is middle Tennessee's premiere storyteller and convener.

WCTE PBS is the ONLY television station, public or commercial, in a 75-mile radius of Cookeville, TN, making it a strategic partner with education, health services, government, arts and music.

In 2021, WCTE Central Tennessee PBS, provided these vital local services:

Seventy-six hours of original, locally produced content covering a variety of topics such as sustainable agriculture and environmental living, health, history, public affairs, education, music, art, and sports.

Featured live coverage of the Tennessee Senate and House of Representatives as part of a continued collaborative initiative with all Tennessee PBS stations.

WCTE Central Tennessee PBS, local services had deep impact.

WCTE PBS's signal reaches 1.3 million people throughout middle Tennessee and southern Kentucky with over the air broadcast, cable, streaming and satellite services.

WCTE partners with leaders in local education, business, agriculture, economic development, public safety, music, art, theatre, athletics and tourism to provide much needed resources to the citizens we serve.

Explore Your World. Experience WCTE Central Tennessee PBS.

The mission of WCTE PBS is to give voice to the people and places of the region we serve. We strive to engage our citizens through distinctive programs and services that inform, educate, entertain and inspire. Since 1978, WCTE has been a leader in celebrating the stories and people of this region. We continue this tradition today through multiple platforms of engagement that extend beyond the broadcast. Below are brief highlights of some WCTE initiatives and series from 2021.

1. Local Cultural History Programming and Initiatives

Capturing the essence of local culture and the history of a region in a way that entertains, educates and inspires is part of the fabric of WCTE PBS's storytelling and community engagement as evidenced in many of the activities of the past year.

***50th Annual Smithville Fiddlers' Jamboree** celebrates traditional mountain music, dance and crafts. For more than 32 years, WCTE has been there to capture the event. Due to the pandemic, the station pivoted with the Jamboree Board of Directors and produced a one-hour special that was shared across the nation.

***One on One with Becky Magura** President and CEO Becky Magura hosts this WCTE original series that incorporates interviews with fascinating guests who include: Marie Benedict, Coach Kim Rosamond, Morris Irby, Amy New, Mayor Randy Porter and Mayor Ricky Shelton, Dr. Mary Evins, Hippie Jack, Philip Gibbons, and Elyse Pervis.

***Now That's A Good Question with Phil Oldham** featured President Oldham who interviewed university faculty to discuss their current research projects along with any published scholarly papers and books that help keep the university competitive and provide unparalleled student experiences across a broad spectrum of academic environments.

***Live at 5** airs and streams live on digital platforms on Thursday from 5 pm - 5:30 pm with an encore on Friday discussing local news, COVID-19 updates in the community, and highlighting what communities are doing throughout central Tennessee.

***Jammin at Hippie Jack's** featured 4 episodes of Americana Music performances from the 'Sanctuary' on Hippie Jack's central Tennessee farm.

***Cookeville County Christmas Parade** featured the annual coverage of this long-standing parade, which returned in 2021 after a COVID-19 hiatus.

***Red, White and Boom** featured the largest fireworks display in the southeast, held in the Putnam County Fairgrounds, and honoring tornado survivors, healthcare workers, first responders and essential workers.

***Tennessee Tech Homecoming Parade** featured high school marching bands, community organizations, Tech Greek organizations and the homecoming court on a route that weaves its way from Dixie Avenue through Tennessee Tech's campus in Cookeville.

2. Local Engagement

Indie Lens Pop-Up (ILPU) Screenings, a neighborhood series that brings people together for virtual film screenings and community-driven conversations. Featuring documentaries seen on PBS's Independent Lens, Indie Lens Pop-Up draws residents, leaders and organizations to discuss what matters most, from newsworthy topics and social issues, to family and community relationships. Screenings in 2021 included, *Coded Bias*, *Philly D.A.*, *Donut King*.

In preparation for **Asian American month**, we produced interstitials and aired them on WCTE PBS to promote the ILPU event. We hosted the ILPU panel discussion on the film *The Donut King* with guest panelists Yoshie Lewis of Pretzel Productions and Shogo Sano of Hive LA.

For **Black History Month**, WCTE hosted a local Indie Lens Pop-up Screening of *Mr. SOUL!* which included a moderated Q & A discussion with Dr. Krystal Akehinmi, Professor of History at TTU, and Marc Burnett, former Vice President of Student Affairs and Chief Diversity Office at TTU immediately after the screening.

Through the American Portrait 2 grant, WCTE hosted a virtual **student film festival** that emphasized the American Portrait initiative. Student's submissions and local submissions included their American Portrait story, but also those of their parents and grandparents. As part of the Student Film Festival, WCTE also hosted a series of educational seminars with professionals in the TV and film industry.

The **Live at 5 weekly show** features a monthly education update from the Putnam County School System, TN DOE At-Home Learning representatives, and Sesame Street Communities grant deliverables and more.

(Much of our in-person local engagement has been impacted by COVID).

In partnership with Zimmer Broadcasting in Cookeville, TN, WCTE PBS presents two half hour radio shows every Saturday morning at 9am and 9:30am:

WCTE PBS ON THE RADIO

At 9am, Brent Clark (Director of Content & Digital Media) hosts in-depth conversations and coverage of favorite shows. plus talks about what's happening at WCTE PBS and Passport.

WCTE PBS's GET READY TO LEARN

At 9:30am, the Get Ready to Learn Show, hosted by Cindy Putman, shares tips and other helpful information for parents and students.



Community Engagement and Education

The very foundation of public media and WCTE PBS is that of engaging, educating and entertaining the families of the Upper Cumberland and Central Tennessee. For over 43 years of service WCTE PBS has been dedicated to ensuring that the rural families and communities in our region have the resources they need and the access they deserve.

- WCTE PBS Get Ready to Learn with Cindy Putman is a weekly radio show that takes a closer look at trending topics around education by interviewing local experts. Cindy has focused on educational content, PBS Kids resources, and celebrating WCTE's community partners for over six years. The 30-minute recorded talk radio show airs Saturday mornings on a local commercial radio stations channel.
- WCTE PBS has been using digital and social platforms to engage families. WCTE PBS's web site the Connection Zone features fun interactive games, puzzles, videos, TN DOE At-Home Learning Zone, Home Resources and PBS Learning Media links.
- Education team made monthly visits to Putnam County Schools to make connections with the principals and teachers, attended the monthly meeting at Student Services, and to also speak with librarians about WCTE's upcoming training on PBS Learning Media and SSIC as part of PCSS's BLITZ Week.
- WCTE PBS provided virtual educational field trips using PBS Learning Media resources for TN Tech Prep Academy students. We conducted two virtual events one for Kindergarten through fourth grade and another for fifth through eighth grade.
- Provided a 3-hour training on PBS LearningMedia and Sesame Street in Communities to the librarians of Putnam County Schools at their Blitz Week professional development training.

Grants

Sesame Street in Communities - Received the Sesame Street in Communities grant – used the grant to meet L.B.J. & C. Head Starts with over 130 teachers participating.

Camp TV Grant - WCTE was awarded a grant to produce three segments for season 2 of WNET / Thirteen Group's Camp TV. Education team participated in the project launch and best practices webinars, and scheduled the filming of the first two segments with Appalachian Center for Crafts.

Cyberchase Green It Up grant - Held a day camp at Northside Community Center for 19 students ages K-4 who live in low-income area; day camp at Jere Whitson Elementary LEAPs program for 113 students ages K-4; and food delivery boxes to 45 immigrant families whose children attend Putnam County Schools.

Dollar General Grant for literacy – The funding is used to purchase needed antennas for families in marginalized areas to assist with their AT-Home Learning. The antennas will provide these children with access to PBS Kids and PBS programming, as well as, the Tennessee At-Home Learning resources.

CPB Public Health Emergency Grant – created six interstitials that highlighted the impact of COVID on six individuals and tagged with COVID vaccine information.

TN Art Commission Grant – funding that allowed a family engagement event: a virtual Paint Like Bob Ross event.

Tennessee Department of Education Grant -WCTE in the second year of a three-year grant. The grant funds At-Home initiative with over the air programming, datacasting pilot, digital and social campaign for Starting with Sounds, and Decodable Book Series 360.

At the end of the year, WCTE PBS was awarded a Finding Your Roots grant and a Community Foundation for 2022.

At-Home Learning and Partnership with the Tennessee Department of Education

This was the second year for the At-Home Learning initiative. WCTE PBS, along with the other Tennessee PBS stations, have worked collaboratively with the TN DOE to continue to provide in the classroom instructions with over the air broadcast, PBS Learning Media resources, and curriculum that relays to over the air programming. This initiative is primarily for students in remote areas where learning options during COVID are limited.

The education team continued to provide creative supplemental resources for two hours a day of PBS education programming to provide parents and teachers with options for keeping students in grades K-3rd from falling behind during the pandemic.

The education team also provided additional resources and education content via our At-Home Learning and Connection Zone pages.

This year kicked off a datacasting pilot for the state of Tennessee. WCTE PBS is the lead on the project.

WCTE PBS participated in the Tennessee Department of Education's launch of the At-Home Decodable Book Series as part of the Reading 360 initiative.

Other Projects

Education team provided Bridges Out of Poverty Training for the leadership of the Upper Cumberland Development District and the Upper Cumberland Human Resource Agency.

The Education team conducted a learning experience for at-risk ESLL PreK students using the Alma's Way content on-line and on air. The final project was a family centered mural that was created during the two months of classes. Cindy Putman served on the Fred Rogers Alma's Way Advisory Board.

The Education team utilizing PBS Learning media to train L.B.J. & C. Head Starts staff, teachers, site directors, and leadership with over 150 in attendance for their required Professional Development.

Joined a local school for career day event to discuss career opportunities in media and demonstrated how the camera worked.

WCTE Internship Program with TTU, CHS, and Highlands Workforce Development and Education offers numerous opportunities for college and high school students to work in their field of study. It is a collaborative effort that provides wonderful on-the-job training for selected students.

4. Local Programming

WCTE has always been recognized as a leader in the creation of local content. As the region's premier storyteller, WCTE continues to capture important community content on a daily basis. The following are just representative of that emphasis.

***Live Green Tennessee: 'Tis the Season with Guest Chefs** featured Live Green Tennessee's host, Melinda Keifer, from her kitchen. Melinda invited home chefs and foodies, Dr. Carl Owens and Yad Araujo and her daughter, Ellie Ariday Alanis, to her home to serve up the best of their Southern and Latino cooking heritage traditions with a holiday meal using fresh ingredients.

***Spirit of Holiday Traditions** featured some of central Tennessee's favorite holiday traditions which include homes from the Merry and Bright Cookeville Christmas Tour of Lights, showcasing homes glowing with colorful lights and decorations. The show featured a segment about Kwanzaa, plus holiday table decorating ideas, and cultural Indian, Latino and German traditions.

***TN Capitol Report** is a half-hour show interviewing TN government leaders to find out key legislation and government insight. This is a joint effort between the PBS stations across TN.

5. Local Business Programming and Engagement

WCTE recognizes the need to feature local business and industry to be supportive of economic development within our region. The following series and outreach opportunities strengthen those partnerships and regional growth.

***WCTE's Great TV Virtual Auction** is a showcase for businesses. This important fundraiser for WCTE serves an equally important role for local businesses.

***It's Your Business with Michael Aikens, Seasons 1 & 2**, hosted by Michael Aikens from the Tennessee Tech Center for Rural Innovation as he visits with regional business leaders and entrepreneurs, and shares resources and strategies for businesses in this uncertain time.

***Community engagement events** that bring this service to light are the Upper Cumberland Tourism Membership Dinner, Putnam County and Overton Chamber After Hours Business Expo, Highlands 8th Grade Career Fair, and Upper Cumberland Women's Club Luncheons.

6. Collaborative Initiatives with all Tennessee PBS stations

In 2010 all six Tennessee public television stations were finally connected through a fiber system. For the first time the stations could collaborate on important programming and initiatives.

***The Tennessee Channel** collectively airs on Saturdays and Sundays and continues to grow in popularity.

***Live Legislative Coverage of the Tennessee Senate and House** is a service and a wonderful opportunity to inform our citizens.

***Datacasting Initiative** across the state and coordinated by WCTE PBS.

***Live statewide Coverage of Governor Bill Lee's State of the State Address.**

7. Local Programming currently in distribution nationally

It's hard to believe that a station as small as WCTE (only 17 full time employees) and rural (located in the Upper Cumberland region of Tennessee) could produce relevant, locally produced, quality programming that is distributed for a national audience. Much of this is possible through a collaboration with independent producers.

***50th Anniversary Smithville Fiddlers' Jamboree.**

***Bluegrass Underground** is a music series presented by WCTE PBS, and features performances by well-established musicians and emerging artists as they perform in a cave at The Caverns.

***Ray Stevens Cabaray**, presented by WCTE PBS, is a music-based series from songwriter and artist Ray Stevens, and features a variety of multi-talented guests and personalities in a half hour show based in Nashville.

***National Recorded Pledge Breaks** for "Dolly Parton and Friends: 50 years at the Opry," and "Wynona Judd: Concert from My Place."

8. Collaborative Partnerships & Events

WCTE's Great TV Auction, May 25 - June 12, 2021 - In 2020, the decision was made to make our largest and longest running fundraiser virtual. We decided to keep our hybrid model in 2021 by doing an online auction with a live broadcast component. The live showcase was held May 25 – June 12 and involved volunteers as auction hosts and auctioneers. This continues to be our most successful fundraiser and involves many community sponsors, partners, donors, and volunteers. WCTE PBS grossed \$78,082 in revenue from this event.

Day of Giving, August 21, 2021 - WCTE PBS's Day of Giving celebrated the day WCTE PBS went on the air 43 years ago. The all-day broadcast campaign with virtual and digital components reached a record high this year grossing \$45,880. The money raised on this one day goes to support the Education Endowment fund that was established in 2018 during WCTE's 40th Anniversary.

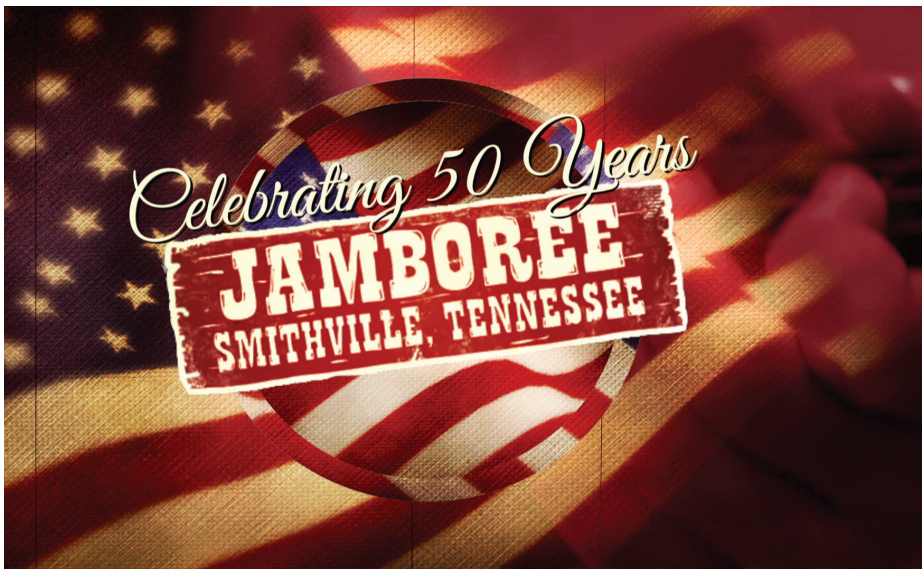
Blues and Brews Craft Beer Festival, October 16, 2021 - In 2014, WCTE PBS premiered an outdoor Craft Beer Festival and live Blues music in the local public park as a fundraiser for the PBS station. The popular event featured over 100 craft beers including local breweries and home brews and blues music quickly became a fan favorite. After hosting a virtual event in 2020, we were able to have an in-person event again in 2021, with some changes and restrictions. For instance, instead of having all of the breweries under one large tent, we used individual 10x10 tents to encourage social distancing. They also had no-touch pour options and 3P sanitization of surfaces. WCTE PBS sold 446 tickets and raised \$26,835. This included business sponsorship.

Haunted Half Marathon, October 16, 2021 - After a virtual race in 2020, WCTE PBS offered both in-person and a virtual options for this year's race participants. The WCTE PBS early morning race, held the third weekend in October, welcomes costume wearing runners to run 13.1 miles in support of public television. WCTE PBS raised \$26,479 from race registrations and sponsorships.

Bob Ross Paint-A-Long, December 5, 2021 - After receiving a grant from Tennessee Arts Commission, WCTE PBS held a virtual Paint Like Bob Ross fundraiser and partnered with the local Biz Foundry and Harper's Rare Books & Collectibles to host the virtual event. Thanks to the grant funding, WCTE PBS was able to offer a lower ticket price, pay for a Bob Ross Certified instructor (virtual instruction), and include official Bob Ross paint kits to all participants. This made the event even more accessible.

**WCTE PBS Produced EMMY
NOMINATED ONE ON ONE
WITH BECKY MAGURA**

Host Becky Magura, Former CEO & President of WCTE PBS, interviewed various special guests as she engaged fascinating guests with captivating stories from the heart of Central Tennessee. One on One with Becky Magura was nominated for an Emmy Award this year featuring trailblazer from Atlanta, Elyse Pervis, who grew up during the Great Depression and earned a law degree before discovering she had a knack for buying and selling real estate, leading to an illustrious career of 50 years in Buckhead, Atlanta. Elyse just turned 93 years old and lives on a farm in Sparta, Tennessee she purchased for her and her family. Guests included Senator Lamar Alexander, Dr. Carl Owens, Martha Teichner, U.S. Congressman Bob Clement, and State of Tennessee Speaker of the House, Cameron Sexton.



**WCTE PBS Produced the
50th ANNIVERSARY OF
THE SMITHVILLE
FIDDLERS' JAMBOREE**

The 50th Annual Smithville Fiddlers' Jamboree and Crafts Festival was shot live on Friday, July 2nd and Saturday, July 3rd, 2021 in Downtown Smithville, Tennessee. The competition featured over 35 music and dance categories, streets full of hand-made crafts, and food booths galore. A one-hour show was produced and distributed through NETA to make available to all the PBS stations across the country.

Upper Cumberland Public Safety

Commitment to Safety

WCTE's relationship with the Upper Cumberland's public safety community has always been strong. It continues to grow as the station continues to find new ways to work with law enforcement personnel, firefighters, first responders and others to ensure the Upper Cumberland is a safe place to live and work.

Partnerships

Many of the station's partnerships are based on shared infrastructure. WCTE's broadcast tower property, for instance, is also home to a second tower operated by Putnam County Emergency Services for antennas from various public safety agencies. Power to the site is strengthened by WCTE's backup generator, and WCTE's fiber connection can and has been used to back up the county's microwave internet. This infrastructure relationship will grow even stronger in 2021 as WCTE donated a surplus generator that will allow the county to complete a hardened ring network. In return, the county will create off-site satellite and microwave redundancy to feed WCTE's transmitter in the event of a fiber cut, and the county also included the cost of servicing and maintaining WCTE's main generator in the county's budget.

In 2018, Putnam County provided WCTE with space inside its Emergency Services headquarters for a small television studio that allows remote broadcast from that facility. In the aftermath of an F4 tornado that occurred on March 3, 2020, the city and county mayors, along with various other public safety and emergency management personnel, were able to reach viewers with special live emergency messaging within an hour or two of the devastating touch-down. Emergency personnel broke into WCTE's main program stream hourly for the first couple of days, scaling back to three or four times a day within a week. In 2021, the studio was expanded to provide more room for cameras and lights, to provide viewers with a more professional-looking and trustworthy presentation in times of crisis.

The use of SpectraRep, a service that allows public safety agencies across the region to use a portion of WCTE's broadcast bandwidth to reach responders in remote locations with video, audio or data transmissions, installed in 2020, has not been adopted as eagerly as anticipated by local public safety agencies. Invisible to TV viewers, agencies with the dashboard software and an internet connection can send encrypted information, such as helicopter video, school blueprints, maps and messaging to any place within WCTE's mostly rural coverage area. The system is still in place for use when needed.

The Tennessee Dept. of Education Datacasting Pilot will all be launched using this same technology.

WCTE worked hard to provide much-needed resources to students affected by pandemic-related school closures. As schools shut down, WCTE PBS led a collaborative effort between the Tennessee Department of Education (TN DOE) and all six TN PBS stations to provide the At Home Learning Blocks.

Additionally, we created an online portal of lesson plans for WCTE Connection Zone on our website. Curriculum-based content was also provided on the WCTE Main channel, the World channel, and continued on the WCTE PBS Kids channel. Our coordinated statewide effort provides services that continue today and have brought much-needed financial resources for all six TN PBS stations.

These educational services focused on these primary areas:

- Pre-school and Adult Literacy, WCTE PBS Kids 24/7, Children's Programming Channel
- Community and Statewide Public Affairs / Community Engagement
- Locally produced content with an emphasis on the Upper Cumberland and Tennessee

Through the first part of this Fiscal year, WCTE created content relevant to our community and our region with an emphasis on the PBS Ready to Learn initiative, as well as PBS Learning Media.

WCTE provided two educational channels for viewers: WCTE Main HD and 24/7 PBS Kids. We also provided channels with content aimed at lifelong learning with WCTE World and WCTE Create. In partnership with Putnam County Schools System (PCSS), we created an online site, The Connection Zone, to offer at-home learning resources to parents, teachers, and students.

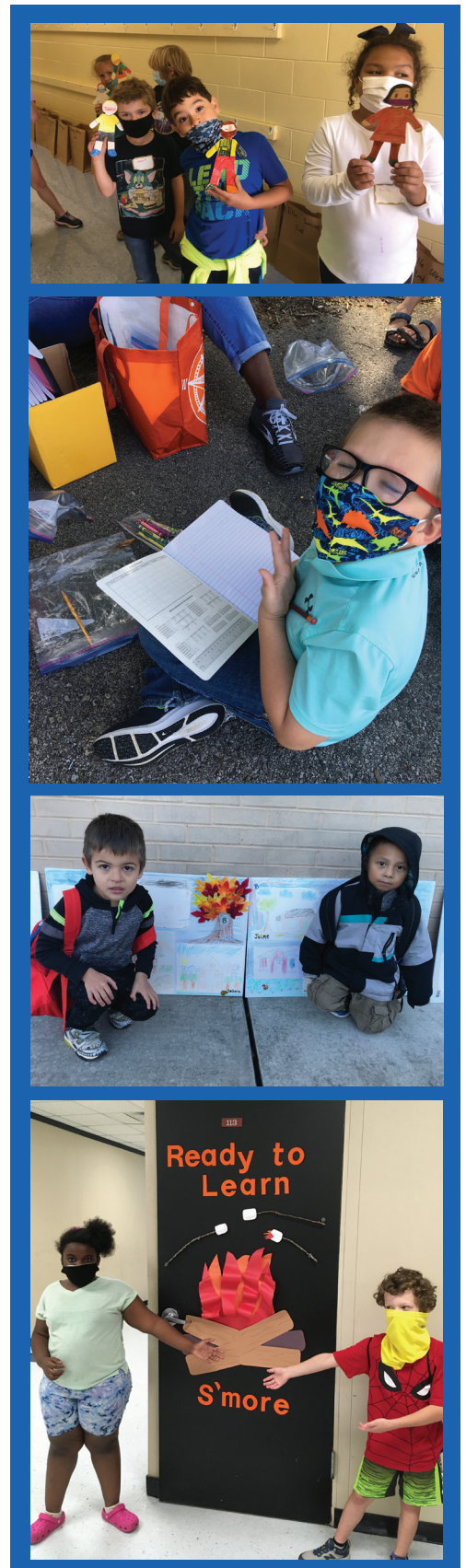
During the pandemic-related school closures, we utilized the WCTE World Channel for additional educational content to provide opportunities for at-home learning.

WCTE also created a new weekly series of public affairs programming, called Live at 5, through which we developed strategic alliances to provide much-needed resource information for small businesses and our rural population. The Education team continues to participate in Live at 5, highlighting topics such as Putnam County Schools updates, as well as VITAL School, and Future Ready programs offered to students.

WCTE offered exercise programming for senior citizens who were isolated at home. We also worked with The Biz Foundry, The Small Business Development Center, and the TTU Center for Rural Innovation to provide regular business webinars and support programming.

As a PBS full member station, WCTE fosters educational, civic, and personal development through informational and innovative programs and services.

We continued our partnership with the Putnam County School System and hired Dr. Cephas Ablakwa to serve as the Director of Education and Engagement.



As schools open back up, and communities become more familiar with living with COVID 19, WCTE PBS continues to provide At-Home Learning blocks, as well as maintaining the WCTE Connection Zone on WCTE PBS website.

WCTE PBS has hired a state-wide project manager to work collaboratively with the other state PBS member stations. This initiative is to pilot the first Datacasting project state-wide, introduce Starting with Sounds, and Reading 360 initiatives. This collaborative effort is in its second year of a three-year grant.

WCTE PBS completed a 3-year Strategic Plan, aiming to showcase all parts of our community through our locally produced content. This content emphasizes early literacy with activities, trainings, and programming based on the PBS Ready to Learn service, as well as PBS Learning Media. We continue to find new and creative ways to engage our audience with lifelong learning resources, early learning engagement, and At-Home initiatives.



“So many Tennesseans have grown up learning from public television, and we are incredibly grateful to PBS for embodying the volunteer spirit and supporting our students through this partnership.

This programming has made it possible to provide more students with access to educational content right in their homes and regardless of internet connectivity—filling an urgent need for many families and setting an example for the rest of the country.”

Dr. Penny Schwinn
Tennessee Commissioner of Education