



WETA DIVERSITY STATEMENT

WETA, Washington, D.C.'s community-based public media organization, is committed to employing and retaining a diverse workforce. As an employer and a not-for-profit business, we acknowledge that best business practice treats each employee as an individual, with a unique set of traits, knowledge base, background, skills, and culture. We embrace the varied points of view that our staff contribute to WETA, recognizing that diversity comes in many forms. We also recognize that, historically, there have been real or perceived barriers to entrance to some groups. WETA focuses extra recruiting attention on members of under-represented groups.

WETA proudly celebrates the diversity of our community with collections of special programming aired in celebration of pride months throughout the year. In Fiscal Year 2020, WETA aired programs, hosted community screening events, and created online resources and brochures to support Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, Black History Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, and LGBTQ Pride Month. WETA's local productions continuously highlight the diversity of the DC metro area in local programming. The arts programs *WETA Arts* and *Around Town* included a look at Mignotae Kebede's documentary *What Happened 2 Chocolate City*, which explored the historical roots of the rise and subsequent challenges of Black community in Washington, D.C.; and an interview with director of the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden Melissa Chiu, who shared her vision for the museum while spotlighting new exhibits and initiatives. *Washington in the '90s* and *Washington in the 2000s* are the latest in a series of "decades" documentaries featuring seminal local events in the national capital area, through the recollections of those who saw and shaped them.

During Fiscal Year 2020, the WETA Ready To Learn and Where Literacy Begins early learning initiatives hosted workshops to encourage literacy and STEM skills, success in school, and childhood and learning development through public television. Designed for parents, teachers and other caregivers, 57 workshops were held in English and Spanish, reaching over 2,000 children in local Washington, D.C., Maryland and Virginia communities. WETA also participated in community events to share our programming with local audiences such as The Big Build and Washington, D.C.'s annual public school fair EdFEST, and collaborated with ITVS Indie Lens Pop-Up, the Anacostia Arts Center and LISC DC to host a preview screening of the film *Always in Season* at the Anacostia Arts Center.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a large number of workshops were cancelled. However, WETA was able to pivot and launch the At-Home Learning Initiative that began in the spring of 2020 and continued through the Fall. A partnership between WETA, WHUT and MPT, the initiative supported the education needs of families whose children are learning from home with coordinated schedules of programs. Additionally, WETA created a weekly, mobile-friendly "At Home Learning with WETA" email (in English and Spanish) with educational content connecting

children’s programming to related books, online games and free activities to do at home. From April to June, presentations included 39 lessons with 76 children's books recommendations, 50 educational family activities and 51 games and apps suggestions.

Select examples of varied national programming co-produced during the last two fiscal years include the series *Samantha Brown’s Places to Love* and *Pati’s Mexican Table*, the ambitious documentary series *Asian Americans*, *Dave Chappelle: The Kennedy Center Mark Twain Prize*, as well as the latest projects from Ken Burns and Florentine Films, *College Behind Bars* and *The Gene: An Intimate History*. Programming currently in development and production include the latest season of *Finding Your Roots* and the two-part *The Black Church: This is Our Story, This is Our Song*, both hosted by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. These programs feature a wide range of subject matter, as well as diverse group of talent both on-camera and behind-the-scenes. WETA national productions are broadcast to the WETA viewing audience in the national capital region and PBS stations nationwide, and are often accompanied by local community outreach efforts. In Fiscal Year 2020, WETA hosted public preview events that included a *Finding Your Roots*, Season 6 event with Sirius XM radio host Joe Madison and series participants Dr. Shirley Ann Jackson and Lidia Bastianich at Lisner Auditorium; and a screening of *College Behind Bars* with a number of community partners at Duke Ellington School of the Arts.

The WETA Digital media team continues to engage with the community, creating exclusive digital content for weta.org and short form video that airs on WETA television channels. The locally-focused *Boundary Stones* blog shares the history of the Washington, D.C. region, tackling topics this fiscal year such as “Belair at Bowie: Segregated Suburbia,” “The Filipino Women’s Club of Washington D.C.,” “The 1868 Mayoral Election, African-American Vote, and Riots That Followed,” “The First Korean students at Howard University,” “Black History Sites in D.C. That Deserve More Attention” and “Fired for Being Gay, Frank Kameny Spent the Rest of His Life Fighting Back.” Additionally, the team produced micro documentaries about Dr. Cleve Francis, a local cardiologist who became a pioneering African American country music artist; and Long Live GoGo, an organization that strives to preserve Black culture in Washington, D.C. through social activism and live performances of this unique local music form.

WETA Learning Media is committed long-term to producing content celebrating and serving diverse communities. Among other efforts this year, Colorín Colorado has played a leadership role in providing timely information to help educators and families of English language learners and immigrant families address the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Topics covered include expanding digital access, the impact of the pandemic on immigrant families, supporting distance learning for ELLs, communicating and collaborating with multilingual families, and multilingual information about the virus that schools and community partners can share. *Talking About Racism and Violence: Resources for Educators and Families*, was produced in direct response to the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery. These resources help promote deeper understanding around the issues of racism and violence and contribute to discussion of these topics with colleagues and students during this difficult time, even at a distance. Reading Rockets began publishing the blog *Right to Read*, which looks at high-quality reading instruction and literacy through an equity lens; as well as an interview with

Wade and Cheryl Hudson, children's authors and founders of Just Us Books, a publishing company focusing on titles that feature children of color. Resources about teaching reading to children with autism have been expanded to include a growing list of children's books that feature characters on the spectrum, and the launch of a new resource on supporting children with autism during COVID-19. Start with a Book developed a new summer and out-of-school-time toolkit "We Are Storytellers," about exploring multicultural folktales, fairy tales, and myths through reading and student writing. And BrainLine.org continues to serve people with brain injury and PTSD, including veterans and their families.

The WETA Community Advisory Council (CAC) meets twice annually to assist WETA in outreach to and from its community of broadcast. Members of the WETA Community Advisory Council are representatives of local community organizations that comprise a broad range of interests and specialties, including education, arts, history, literacy, and underserved populations in the community. As the flagship broadcaster in the nation's capital, WETA is committed to ensuring that the Community Advisory Council's geographic distribution encompasses the station's broadcast area, which includes Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. The Council advises the WETA Board of Trustees with respect to whether programming and other policies of the station are meeting the specialized educational and cultural needs of the community.

Over the last fiscal year, *PBS NewsHour* continued to prioritize reporting on race and other issues of diversity, inclusion and equity across our broadcast, online and social platforms. After the deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, regular breaking news was reported on the nationwide protests, the Black Lives Matter movement, the removal of confederate statues and calls to defund the police. In addition, through the long-standing "Race Matters" series, the *NewsHour* talked to Black leaders and listened to the voices of protesters, community leaders, scholars, students, artists, and other citizens. Additional reporting examined the nationwide reckoning on race through multiple lenses including stories on hardships faced by Black business owners, why communities of color suffer more from COVID-19, racial equity in the workplace, racism in the military, economic disparities between Black and non-Black authors, the racial wealth gap, and how decisions at the family and individual level matter as much as structural racism. During this time, the *NewsHour's* Student Reporting Labs provided guidance and space for students around the country to share their perspectives. Several stories were highlighted on the *NewsHour* broadcast and SRL's Race and Justice YouTube playlist.

To further this important reporting, the *NewsHour* produced *Race Matters: America in Crisis, A PBS NewsHour Special*, which premiered on PBS stations nationwide on June 5, 2020. This one-hour primetime special focused on the frustration pouring out onto American streets and outrage about police brutality. It explored America's deep systemic racial disparities in education, the criminal justice system, the economy and health care, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The program also included grassroots voices from around the country and conversations with thought leaders, newsmakers and experts.

Other important stories covered over the past year included racist attacks on Asians amid the pandemic, how educators are fighting back against white nationalism, what has changed in Ferguson five years after Michael Brown's death, the national discussion on reparations for

slavery, the Supreme Court's LGBTQ employment discrimination ruling, the Trump Administration's changes to Title IX, and many more.

Online reporting included a livestream of the 2019 Hutchins Forum "Divided We Stand: Can We Overcome?" The forum was hosted by *PBS NewsHour* special correspondent Charlayne Hunter-Gault and moderated by Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., and produced by the Harvard University Hutchins Center for African & African American Research.

Similar to the organization, the WETA Board of Trustees looks for ways to diversify and to represent the communities it serves. The Nominating and Governance Committee meets twice a year and is responsible for seeking out candidates for service on the Board. This Committee reviews expiring terms, current vacancies and diversity data to determine a list of potential candidates.

The organization's commitment to diversity is reflected in our employment policies and practices. The WETA Employee Handbook includes our Equal Employment Opportunity Policy. We recognize that each employee makes an important contribution to the organization. At WETA, all employees and job applicants receive equal opportunity in employment consideration and treatment, and all of us are responsible for carrying out this policy and for treating every coworker with equal respect and dignity. WETA takes appropriate steps to ensure that all persons are treated in a nondiscriminatory manner. This year and next, all WETA staff will participate in virtual, interactive Unconscious Bias training, to help employees better understand diversity and inclusion, equity and equality, and the effects of unconscious bias, microaggressions, and stereotyping in the workplace.

As part of WETA's commitment to diversity and inclusion, a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Council was created to monitor inclusion, equity and diversity at the organization while identifying areas of growth and opportunity. This group of 22 staff volunteers of varying age, gender, race and background have been reviewing five areas of our organization: recruiting, hiring, and retention; structural inequality assessments; cultural awareness and belonging; handbook policy and procedures; and content, communication, and collaboration. Based on their findings, the DEI Council will develop strategies and plans to examine ways to support the goal of enhancing the environment for diversity, inclusion and equity across the organization. Additionally, they will advise senior leadership on editorial, strategic and daily practices from a diversity and inclusion lens, ensuring that our policies and procedures are inclusive.

Over the past year, WETA has maintained our diverse hiring practices. Our partnership with America's Job Exchange, a service that helps us notify a wide range of community-based organizations about our open positions, has continued over the past year. Over 200 organizations focused on diversity, disability, veterans, seniors, and women are notified about every position we post. We also continued work with our Employer Engagement Specialist at Hire Heroes USA to help identify transitioning military, military spouses, and veterans who may be qualified for our jobs.

PBS NewsHour staff participated this year in the virtual National Association of Black Journalists/National Association of Hispanic Journalists Conference and Career fair and the virtual Asian American Journalist Association Conference and Career Fair. WETA staff also attended the Gallaudet University Job and Internship Fair.

WETA will continue its efforts to sustain and promote diversity among our workforce, management team, governing body, Community Advisory Council, local television broadcasts, national productions, and community outreach. WETA will always meet the standards of federal and state law, and the WETA Equal Employment Opportunity Policy.

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