KBCS 2023 Station Activity Survey (SAS)

Section 6 Telling Public Radio Story

*1. Describe your overall goals and approach to address identified community issues, needs, and interests through your station’s vital local services, such as multiplatform long and short-form content, digital and in-person engagement, education services, community information, partnership support, and other activities, and audiences you reached or new audiences you engaged.*

KBCS News features reporting with a social justice focus. Our News Director is actively involved in furthering DEI initiatives in our region and across the campus of Bellevue College. Our morning programming lineup features the Thom Hartmann program, a live progressive call in talk show that is broadcast nationwide and offers local listeners to opportunity have their opinions and voices on the most pressing issues of the day heard across the nation. KBCS produces a local Community Calendar with an online and broadcast component. Our programming features local experts, politicians, and teaching professors from across our region. Our news stories include outspoken advocates for social justice and reform and among those activists our reporting during 2023 featured Linda Sarsour, Cornel West, Sonali Kolhatkar, and local indigenous leaders.

*2. Describe key initiatives and the variety of partners with whom you collaborated, including other public media outlets, community nonprofits, government agencies, educational institutions, the business community, teachers and parents, etc. This will illustrate the many ways you’re connected across the community and engaged with other important organizations in the area.*

KBCS shares our news reporting with other public radio stations across the state of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho through our affiliation with the Northwest Public Affairs Network. We are also a member of the National Federation of Community Broadcasters, the Pacifica Radio Network, American Public Media, and the University Station Alliance. Our community partnerships include our collaboration with local high schools and colleges providing internships in our news department as well as volunteer and paid student worker opportunities. Local community volunteers also have the opportunity to work in our news department or hosting music programs on the air. KBCS is a member of the Eastside Culture Coalition (ECC) which features leaders of local nonprofit arts and cultural organizations. The ECC provides support services as well as serving as advocates for local arts and culture across the greater eastside of the Seattle metro.

*3. What impact did your key initiatives and partnerships have in your community? Describe any known measurable impact, such as increased awareness, learning or understanding about particular issues. Describe indicators of success, such as connecting people to needed resources or strengthening conversational ties across diverse neighborhoods. Did a partner see an increase in requests for related resources? Please include direct feedback from a partner(s) or from a person(s) served.*

We receive a lot of positive feedback from our listeners and generous supporters whose donations to the station contribute over 80% of our yearly operating budget. Listeners will often call the station inquiring about something that they heard on KBCS that stimulated their intellectual curiosity. Listeners express their appreciation for the variety in our locally produced music programming including our cultural music programs such as Balkana, a program of ethnic Slavic music. Some of the comments from a recent fundraising drive include; Terri from Deming WA “…I am so grateful for the station, especially the folk music on the weekends…the commitment and fortitude, not to mention the spirit raising of your staff and volunteers exemplifies the best meaning of community.” Matthew from Menlo Park wrote, “…thank you for the progressive talk radio and excellent music” Bill from Seattle, “KBCS is that light at the end of the tunnel” and Don from Fife WA, “Bellevue College prepares students for actual careers.”

*4. Please describe any efforts (e.g. programming, production, engagement activities) you have made to investigate and/or meet the needs of minority and other diverse audiences (including, but not limited to, new immigrants, people for whom English is a second language and illiterate adults) during Fiscal Year 2023, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2024. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.*

Our 2023 local reporting initiatives included interviews with Rebekah Fonden, Board President of the Organization for Prostitution Survivors; Linda Sarsour an outspoken Muslim advoicate and leader of MPower Change and Unit Freedom, LaNesha DeBardeleben of the Northwest African American Museum, Former Washington Governor Gary Locke, Dr. Cornel West, Camie Goldhammer, the founder of the Native American Breastfeeding Coalition of Washington, and local investigative journalist David Neiwert speaking on the rise and dangers of white supremacy, among many others. KBCS also broadcasts our land acknowledgement statement in the Native American Lushootseed language.

*5. Please assess the impact that your CPB funding had on your ability to serve your community. What were you able to do with your grant that you wouldn't be able to do if you didn't receive it?*

KBCS is a self-support service of Bellevue College and is required to raise all the funding necessary to cover our operating expenses without any supplemental funding from the college. Our yearly operating budget is between $ 1.1M and $1.2M and if we were to lose our CPB funding, which is our largest single source of income, we would need to lay off a full time staff member from a small staff of just five full time and overextended professionals. The CPB- CSG grant is a critical component of the stations survival.