



2019 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



"I will be watching NJTV in the Future to follow these issues"
– Jack K., NJTV forum attendee



NJTV's local services had deep impact in New Jersey and its neighboring states, on and off the small screen.

In 2019, NJTV provided these vital local services: Emergency Broadcast Service, quality local and national public television programming and community partnership initiatives.

NJTV, New Jersey's Public Television Network, is a valuable part of the New Jersey metropolitan area's advancement.

The year 2019 was a time of progress and community service for NJTV, New Jersey’s public television network. We continue to provide **more than 30 hours of local Jersey-centric programming each week**, exceeding the 20-25 hours initially promised when the network operations began in 2011, hosted **community forums** and **special events** and welcomed the public to our studio. Here are some of the year’s highlights:

Appointment Local Programming

NJTV continues to provide a dedicated primetime block called **NJmade**, featuring exclusively local programming, making it easier to find. Viewers can tune in **Wednesdays at 8pm** to catch rotations of popular local series.



NJTV News with Mary Alice Williams broadcasts from the Agnes Varis NJTV Studio in Newark’s Gateway Center



Affiliates NJTV News and NJ Spotlight teamed up for a multi-platform special report on Garden State agriculture this fall.



NJTV News Sr. Correspondent David Cruz reported on New Jersey’s US Senator Cory Booker’s run for president.

Local News, Politics and Special Events and a new affiliation with NJ SPOTLIGHT

NJTV uses its Newark and Jersey City studios as well as content bureaus across the state to get the latest scoop from legislators at the source for both its weeknight newscast, [NJTV News with Mary Alice Williams](#), and public affairs programming like [Reporters Roundtable](#) and [On the Record with Michael Aron](#). NJTV also offered **ongoing coverage of political events and discussion** throughout the year, from **Governor Phil Murphy’s State of the State and Budget Addresses** and **weather-related emergency press conferences** to **Congressional debates** and **high-profile, policy-related press conferences and announcements**.

In February, NJTV aired a live special report covering **U.S. Senator Cory Booker’s** press conference announcing his Presidential candidacy from his home in the central ward of Newark. **NJTV News Sr. Correspondent David Cruz** was on-location with his colleagues and pundits in-studio. The announcement was live-streamed on Facebook, Twitter and moderated on NJTV’s YouTube Channel by **NJTV News Correspondent Briana Vannozzi**. **PBS Newshour** embedded the NJTV livestream on their homepage and digital platforms. Cruz would continue to follow the New Jersey candidate’s campaign throughout the year and across the country with an ongoing series of segments called [The Booker Beat](#).

In March, **NJTV News and NJ Spotlight**, the award-winning online news site, joined forces to bring a new, multi-platform approach to local, in-depth journalism in the state. Cross-pollinating news content on-air and online, this collaboration creates one of the largest and most comprehensive news and public affairs organizations in the state. The affiliates first major investigative project shed light on the Garden State’s agricultural industry, [njfarmland.org](#).

In September, **NJTV News** teamed up with other public television news organizations across the country for [Cannabis Country](#), a half-hour special on the U.S. cannabis industry. **NJTV News** also featured its segments on the newscast.

In November, NJTV announced hiring its first **Senior Managing Editor, Jamie Kraft**, to oversee **NJTV News** and **NJ Spotlight**. Also in November, **NJTV News** and **NJ Spotlight** provided **election coverage** on air and online, with correspondents reporting from key campaign headquarters and real-time results as well as other relevant resources at [njdecides.org](#).

Constituents continue to download the **NJTV News app**, which provides all of the assets from [NJTVNews.org](#) plus push-notifications for up-to-the-minute breaking news. The app is also available on OTT devices such as Roku. The newscast regularly provides coverage via **Facebook Live** and over other **social media platforms**, so viewers get their news all the ways they want to receive them.



NJTV's local television series:

NJTV News with Mary Alice Williams: Half-hour local news program concentrating on issues and news affecting New Jerseyans.

A Matter of Faith with a Bishop, An Imam and A Rabbi: Half-hour program addressing headlining issues through the lens of faith; taped at the NJTV Agnes Varis Studio.

Classroom Close-Up NJ: Half-hour weekly program featuring New Jersey's public school success stories.

Caucus: New Jersey: Half-hour Caucus Educational Corporation series combines in-depth documentary coverage with insightful studio interviews and discussion, tackling a range of important issues.

Driving Jersey/Here's the Story: Half-hour monthly program that hits the road to tell the stories of unique people and places across the Garden State and beyond.

On the Record with Michael Aron: Half-hour weekly public affairs program featuring one-on-one interviews with New Jersey newsmakers and lawmakers; taped at the NJTV Agnes Varis Studio.

Pasta & Politics with Nick Acocella: Half-hour program featuring conversation and cooking with local political figures.

Reporters Roundtable with Michael Aron: Half-hour weekly public affairs program featuring reporters discussing New Jersey's headline issues; taped at the NJTV Agnes Varis Studio.

State of Affairs with Steve Adubato: Half-hour weekly public affairs show featuring in-depth analysis of critical issues that affect the lives of New Jersey residents; taped at the NJTV Agnes Varis Studio.

State of the Arts: Half-hour weekly program goes on-location with creative personalities and places in New Jersey; taped at the NJTV Agnes Varis Studio.

Think Tank with Steve Adubato: Half-hour weekly program with expert guests discussing high-profile state issues; taped at the NJTV Agnes Varis Studio.

Special Programming:

In Your Neighborhood: On-location programs that spotlight some of New Jersey's most dynamic places and issues.

Facing the Future: Half-hour documentary analyzing climate change and the Garden State.

Cannabis Country: Half hour documentary done in collaboration with PBS news teams across the country outlining the state of the U.S. cannabis industry.

Treasures of New Jersey: Half-hour profiles of New Jersey's iconic places.

NHK World TV: NJTV partnered with NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation) to distribute its 24/7 public television network featuring hourly live news and Japanese lifestyle programming on NJTV's first multicast channel.

Live Events:

- Governor's **State of the State Address** and **State Budget Address**
- **Election Night** in New Jersey



NJTV News' Michael Hill interviews two of the family featured in the film along with its producers/filmmakers.



NJTV News Business Correspondent Rhonda Schaffler moderated a panel for the Greater Atlantic City Chamber of Commerce.

Community Partnerships and Involvement

NJTV seeks to be a good neighbor in New Jersey's local communities through partnerships and special events. NJTV News talent regularly moderate forums for various community, industry and professional organizations as well as NJTV's own engagement events.

Two examples: First, in January, NJTV News Business Correspondent **Rhonda Schaffler** moderated a panel for the Greater Atlantic City Chamber of Commerce as part of that group's 2019 Leadership Series. The panel, held at the Sheraton Atlantic City, focused on the challenges and potential of the state's casino industry.

Second, in October, NJTV News Correspondent/Anchor **Briana Vannozi** made opening remarks at the **A Seat at the Table Corporate Gender Diversity Breakfast**, hosted by the Executive Women of New Jersey (EWNJ) in Iselin, NJ. The event celebrated women's leadership on corporate boards and in the senior governance of public companies in the Garden State.

NJ Spotlight regularly hosts roundtable events across the state, with their reporters moderating expert panels on issues affecting New Jerseyans. Topics covered this year included vaping, electric vehicles, healthcare, education and more.

NJTV also partnered with film festivals across New Jersey this year, including the **Garden State Film Festival** and the **Teaneck International Film Festival**. In May, NJTV partnered with the **Montclair Film Festival**, where NJTV presented the film debut of the documentary, **Life With Layla**. Produced by local filmmakers, the documentary takes a unique view of a family's multi-generational addiction issues through the eyes of its members. After the screening, NJTV News Correspondent Michael Hill moderated a discussion with the film's participants and producers.

NJTV also partnered with arts organizations in 2019, including **Morris Arts** for their annual **Great Conversations** event, during which NJTV News Correspondent Michael Hill was a featured "conversationalist". NJTV also cross-promoted the **Morristown Jazz & Blues Festival** in August and the **New Jersey City University Center for the Arts** "Jazz on the Pier" event in September. In December, NJTV was a media partner at the annual **New Jersey Travel and Tourism Conference**.

Community Advisory Board

This group, representing various sectors and communities across the state, provides insight and feedback about how the network can best serve New Jersey.

Student Internships

Throughout the year, NJTV News welcomes college students from across the state into the newsroom to get hands-on experience learning the ropes of broadcast and online journalism.

NJTV's *In Your Neighborhood* Initiative



Mary Alice Williams on site at Thomas Edison National Historical Park

Throughout 2019, NJTV hit the road for its third season of the [*In Your Neighborhood*](#) initiative, broadcasting from locations across the state, delving deep into the issues and achievements of some of New Jersey's most dynamic cities and industries. The first stop this year was **West Orange** in May, where the *NJTV News with Mary Alice Williams* team taped a half-hour special on-location at the **Thomas Edison National Historical Park** to give viewers a closer look at New Jersey's legacy of innovation. That was followed up by a second *In Your Neighborhood* program about the state's history in August produced from sites across **Cape May** county.

An offshoot of the initiative, NJTV hosted its second- annual [Tourism Tournament](#) competition on Facebook in July, touted as "the World Cup of fun places to go in New Jersey". The Tournament gave the public the opportunity to vote for their favorite places to visit throughout the state.

This year's Tournament theme was historic places in the Garden State.

The winner? The **Red Hill Museum Village** in Clinton, NJ., which won a trophy and a feature on the weeknight newscast.

Community Forums

In 2019, NJTV continued digging deeper into the issues facing each of its *In Your Neighborhood* stops and beyond with town-hall style community engagement forums.

Three forums were organized this year under the *In Your Neighborhood* banner to discuss topics relevant to each community and the state at large: "[Understanding Mental Stress and Suicide Factors for Today's Youth](#)" in **Morris County**; "[Innovation in Addiction Recovery](#)" in **West Orange** and "[Facing the Future of Climate Change in New Jersey](#)" in **Cape May**.

Each forum included a panel of experts, audience Q&A and a livestream, with more information available through local exhibitors and hand-outs.

The 2019 *In Your Neighborhood* community forums involved:



- 24 panelists and experts-on hand
- 11 exhibitors from organizations across the state
- 200 Forum Attendees
- 825 views from live streaming
- 8,603 Pageviews to the *In Your Neighborhood* microsites
- Local collaborations: Essex County Community Health Service Office of Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Addiction Services; Society for Prevention of Teen Suicide; Rutgers University; Wetlands Institute; Tedx Cape May

Welcoming the Public into Public Television



The Agnes Varis NJTV Studio at 2 Gateway Center in Newark, NJ serves as a hub for the network and broadcast home of the network's weeknight news program, ***NJTV News with Mary Alice Williams*** and several of its other series. It is also a space that regularly welcomes visitors and draws public attention.

The studio's glass frontage invites passerby to look into the inner workings of productions – an estimated 15,000 people pass by each day. Public tours of the facility are coordinated on a regular basis, and group gatherings take place throughout the year in the studio's **NJM Community Room**.

NJTV regularly welcomes groups into its Newark studio for tours, from Cub Scouts to students to professional groups. In May, for example, members of the YWCA of Union County paid a visit. The group, which advocates for domestic violence victims and promotes social justice in the state, enjoyed a tour of the studio facility and one-on-one time with NJTV representatives and the network's news team.

Online Addiction Resources

NJTV continues to upkeep its [New Jersey's Drug Addiction Crisis](#) website, a one-stop compilation of all things related to addiction, treatment, prevention and recovery. It's stocked with important resource information from statewide organizations, topical news coverage from *NJTV News* and other media as well as shared stories and poems of addiction from the public. Results to date:

- 12,891 Pageviews of njdrugcrisis.org website in 2019
- 52,139 Unique Pageviews of njdrugcrisis.org since 2016
- Collaborations with Essex County Community Health Service Office of Alcohol, Drug Abuse & Addiction Services and the Dodge Poetry Festival
- 30 *NJTV News* stories aired as part of the initial initiative, with ongoing coverage of this important topic



Free Educator Resources

[PBS LearningMedia NJ](#): This microsite on [NJTVonline.org](#) offers free teaching resources to educators, including classroom-ready lesson plans and video clips derived from PBS programming and professional development tips. Its content includes segments from NJTV's local series ***Classroom Close-Up, NJ***.

Preserving New Jersey Public Television's Heritage

NJTV continues to work with the State of New Jersey to archive the content of its predecessor, NJN (New Jersey Network), to preserve and give the public access to state history and its many milestones. The archive project consists of digitizing thousands of hours of important news footage and significant events. Without this project, a good portion of state history would be lost.

Emergency Broadcast Service

NJTV is an Emergency Broadcast Service provider, providing New Jersey and its neighbors vital, and immediate, emergency information during times of concern and crisis.



2019 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

About the Network and its Programming

"Ms. Williams' (*NJTV News with Mary Alice Williams*) professional presence and news delivery are of the highest caliber. While others are excellent as stand-ins for her, no one can quite measure up to her overall outstanding presentation. She is a world-class broadcaster! I hope she continues in her role as the program's anchor for many years to come." – NJTV viewer

"My husband and I have watched NJTV on channel 50 for years. We love the news and many other programs and watched daily." – NJTV viewer

"I got a TV for my parents for Christmas and they loved watching NJTV and NHK." – NJTV viewer

"I love NJTV and PBS" – NJTV viewer

"Thanks for programs like *Vera* and *Father Brown*. They are so well done, and I am glad to be able to find them on your channel!" – NJTV viewer

"*Midsomer Murders*, is a wonderful sophisticated, charming experience, one of the best British shows. I hope this will remain a regular Friday night broadcast, brightening our evening." – NJTV viewer

"At a time when the culture prizes illiteracy and sensationalized headlines over thought, and daily diminishes its humanity with a willing embrace of the most mean-spirited selfish and dumbed-down politics, (*NJTV News* Chief Political Correspondent) Michael Aron is that enduring elegant and educated Zen master, whose very probing and persistently curious presence suggests that maybe things are going to okay, after all." – InsiderNJ

"(David Cruz) has one of the most agile political minds in New Jersey...one of the last of a truly irreplaceable breed of public servants devoted to telling it like it is." - InsiderNJ

About the *In Your Neighborhood* initiative

"It was good to hear from different people working in the field who actually understand global warming" – Mike B. (Cape May forum)

"Glad you brought this topic to our community" – Catherine B. (Cape May forum)

"(The forum) inspired me to work in my own way for Cape May...I have started planning curricula...for schools, pre-K – 12 and college students." – Virginia H. (Cape May forum)

"(The forum) was professional and covered a wide range of points." – West Orange forum attendee

"I believe you covered the issue of Substance Use Disorders very well, especially helping shed light on the impact on the brain..." – Lisa V., West Orange Forum

"Grateful for the opportunity to be a part of a panel hosted by NJTV. It was a very impactful and informative discussion." – Wendy Sefcik, Statewide Advocate of Suicide Prevention (Morris County forum)