



My NJ. My PBS.



## 2023 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

"I love NJ PBS and all its programs."  
-NJ PBS Viewer

LOCAL  
VALUE

2023 KEY  
SERVICES

LOCAL  
IMPACT

NJ PBS is a valuable part of the advancement of New Jersey and its surrounding areas.

In 2023, NJ PBS provided these vital services: Emergency Broadcast Service, quality local and national programming, and community/education initiatives.

NJ PBS's local services had deep impact in cities and towns across all 21 counties of the Garden State.



## 2023 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT IN THE COMMUNITY

### A Year of Growth Across Platforms

NJ PBS is dedicated to its mission of providing news, programming, and special events that inform and represent New Jersey and its diverse communities. What's more, NJ PBS goes beyond broadcast with more digital content that ever before so constituents can access it when -and however- they want, including digital-first series like *The 21 Film Series* and new podcasts. Here are some of the network's highlights and updates from the past year:

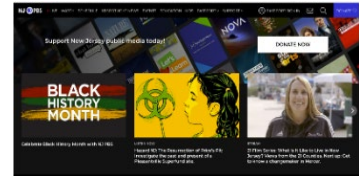
### Appointment Local Programming



For those who prefer traditional television viewing and love local shows, NJ PBS continues to provide a dedicated program block called *NJmade* on Wednesdays at 8pm, featuring exclusively Jersey-centric programming. Additional local programming is scheduled throughout the week.

### A Website of Resources and Content

**MyNJPBS.org** offers hundreds of hours of streamed programming, the NJ Spotlight News microsite, blogs, a community events calendar, membership information and free digital resources for education via PBS LearningMedia New Jersey. [Visit the site here.](#)



### News for New Jersey



**NJ SPOTLIGHT NEWS** is the newsroom of NJ PBS. It's New Jersey's leading destination for local issues-driven news and investigations with an audience-focused, story-first approach across all media platforms. So New Jerseyans get their news any way they want to, on television, on their computers, or on their phones. Each weeknight the team reports on the newscast, *NJ Spotlight News with Briana Vannozzi*, with content and information updating throughout the day on [NJSpotlightNews.org](#) (a microsite on MyNJPBS.org) and social media platforms. Daily and weekly e-newsletters give constituents news right in their inbox. Live virtual roundtables invite public participation (more to come on that later). It is notable that in a media landscape where more and

more news outlets are installing paywalls for their content, NJ Spotlight News resources remain free to the public.

**LIVE GUBERNATORIAL AND ELECTION NIGHT COVERAGE:** The NJ Spotlight News team provided NJ PBS with live, multiplatform coverage of Governor Murphy's State of the State and Budget addresses this year. Coverage, anchored by Briana Vannozzi and Senior Political Correspondent David Cruz, featured analysis from members of the NJ Spotlight News team and other guests. Political coverage continued post-election on the newsroom's [NJ Decides 2023](#) microsite.



**GOTTA KNOW JERSEY:** This multimedia series produced by NJ Spotlight news provided constituents with critical information about voting in New Jersey ahead of the November elections, from why and where to vote and how the Legislature really works to why state elections have more to do with your daily life than federal ones. Read more about it [here](#).

**WATER'S EDGE: TRIALS AND TRIBUTARIES OF THE DELAWARE RIVER WATERSHED:** In this multimedia series, NJ Spotlight News examined the progress so far, the prospects of further restoration and the hazards still facing the vital Delaware River Watershed. [Explore it here.](#)



**REPORT FOR AMERICA/NJ CIVIC INFORMATION CONSORTIUM:** NJ PBS was awarded participation in the *Report for America* program, which brings emerging journalists into communities that need reporters. The program enabled NJ Spotlight News to add a education/children's welfare reporter to its team this year.



**SEGREGATED:** NJ Spotlight News was part of a collaboration of news organizations across New Jersey examining segregation in the state's schools, both on a statewide basis and in individual cities and towns. [Learn more.](#)



## NJ PBS Local Television Series

NJ PBS's broadcast programming includes:

- ***Chat Box with David Cruz***: Half-hour weekly public affairs program featuring one-on-one interviews with New Jersey newsmakers and lawmakers.
- ***Classroom Close-up, NJ***: Half-hour weekly program produced by the NJEA featuring New Jersey's public school success stories.
- ***Drive By History***: The half-hour series follows the investigations of host Ken Magos as he stops at local roadside history markers to explore what happened and why it still matters.
- ***Drive By History: Eats***: The half-hour series finds host Ken Magos revisiting past *Drive By History* investigations with a focus on the food, specifically seeking recipes/menus that would appeal to today's palate.
- ***Governors' Perspectives with Kent Manahan***: Interview specials featuring former New Jersey governors sharing their insight on headlining issues and leadership.
- ***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.
- ***New Jersey Business Beat with Raven Santana***: Each week, host/NJ Spotlight News correspondent Raven Sanatana takes a deep look at the stories, trends and influencers shaping New Jersey's business landscape.
- ***NJ Spotlight News with Briana Vannozzi***: Half-hour local news program concentrating on issues and news affecting New Jerseyans.
- ***Table For All with Buki Elegbede***: Half-hour program that examines local culture through a food lens.
- ***Pathway to Success***: Half-hour show produced by the African American Chamber of Commerce of NJ and hosted by its President/CEO John E. Harmon, Sr., spotlighting contributions of African American businesses.
- ***¿Que Pasa, NJ?***: Half-hour program hosted by business leader and entrepreneur Carlos Medina, who interviews the tri-state area's rising Hispanic stars and role models and celebrates the region's rich cultural diversity.
- ***Reporters Roundtable with David Cruz***: Half-hour weekly public affairs program featuring in-depth discussion with leading journalists from across the Garden State about New Jersey issues from the State House and beyond.
- ***State of Affairs with Steve Adubato***: Half-hour weekly public affairs show produced by Caucus Educational Corporation featuring in-depth analysis of critical issues that affect the lives of New Jersey residents.
- ***Soundcheck***: Half hour specials feature behind-the-scenes look at local music performances and venues through the lens of performance collaborations.
- ***State of the Arts***: Half-hour weekly program goes on-location with creative NJ personalities and places.
- ***Think Tank with Steve Adubato***: Half-hour Caucus Educational Corporation series with insightful studio interviews and discussion, tackling a range of important issues.
- ***Treasures of New Jersey***: Half-hour specials profiling some of New Jersey's iconic places.
- ***Special Live Coverage***: Live coverage of the Governor's State of the State and Budget addresses and more.

### Programming To Reach Audiences Where They Watch & Listen

To serve New Jersey’s diverse communities, NJ PBS offers unique Jersey-centric programs and content intended to speak to local issues and interests, including:



**THE 21 FILM SERIES:** Produced by NJ PBS’s NJ Spotlight News team, *The 21 Film Series* investigates life in New Jersey and whether *where* you live affects *how* you live through the stories of change-making residents in each Garden State county. The short digital documentaries, 6 to 10 minutes, are accompanied online by snapshots providing statistics, resources and other essential information about each county. In 2023, NJ PBS completed its line-up of stories from every county, including Gloucester, Middlesex, Morris, Union and Warren. All are available online at [MyNJPBS.org/21](https://www.njpbs.org/21). Several of these films

have been screened at local film festivals, including the Indie Lens Pop Up Festival, coordinated through the Teaneck International Film Festival, and the Garden State Film Festival.

**HAZARD NJ:** Hosted by former CNN reporter Jordan Gass-Poore, the [Hazard NJ](#) series investigates New Jersey’s Superfund sites, from Newark to Vineland, with an eye on the environment and sometimes the environmental justice issues associated with them. In 2023, it completed its first season with [The Resurrection of Price’s Pit](#) in South Jersey. Bonus episodes and updates on previous podcasts can be found on the [Hazard NJ website](#).



**HERSTORY WITH JOANNA GAGGIS** Produced by NJ Spotlight News, the series delves into the many sides of issues affecting New Jersey women. This year, the Black maternal health inequity crisis in NJ was discussed, interviewing First Lady Tammy Murphy, medical professionals and advocates who are pushing to close the gap in maternal and infant mortality along with those who shared heart breaking personal stories of loss. [Watch the program here](#).

**CHAT BOX WITH DAVID CRUZ:** David Cruz, NJ Spotlight News Sr. Political Correspondent and series moderator (*Chat Box, Reporters Roundtable*) celebrated 30 years in journalism with a special episode taped before a live audience that included Former Governor Christine Todd Whitman and U.S. Senator Cory Booker. This season, Cruz also welcomed Governor Phil Murphy and U.S. Senator Bob Menendez among other guests on this weekly public affairs series.



**TABLE FOR ALL WITH BUKI ELEGBEDE:** This NJ PBS production continued its exploration of local culture through the lens of food in 2023. Hosted by NJ Spotlight News producer Buki Elegbede, the show crisscrossed the tristate area to share the stories and recipes of Africa, the West Indies, Latin America, Jewish Americans and more. This season also spotlighted philanthropy and food, showing the community engagement work of local restaurateurs and companies. [Watch the series here](#).



**SOUNDCHECK:** This music series, hosted and produced by NJ Spotlight News' Jen Eckert, mixes live concert footage and interviews with the artists and their notable collaborators. This year, the program interviewed Stephan Jenkins, lead singer of alt rock band Third Eye Blind and his collaborator Billy Corgan of the Smashing Pumpkins, who both spoke about songwriting and fronting an influential rock band. Another episode featured a behind the scenes look at the inaugural American Music Honors Awards, hosted at Monmouth University. Among those interviewed were the event's four nominees: Steve Earle, Darlene Love, Sam Moore, and Stevie Van Zandt. [Watch the full series here.](#)

**TREASURES OF NEW JERSEY:** The *Treasures* series showcases some of the Garden State's most fascinating places. This year, it told the story of New Jersey's largest museum, The Newark Museum of Art. Established in 1909, it has more than 130K art objects. Today, the museum brings together community for education and social justice events, and recently unveiled its reimagined "Seeing America: 18th & 19th Century" galleries with highlights from their Indigenous, early and modern American works. [Watch episodes here.](#)



**HERE'S THE STORY:** A 2023 NJ PBS co-production, this series profiles unique people and stories from New Jersey and the tristate area. This season, in addition to exploring New Jersey's unique poetry and music scenes, an episode entitled *Hear Their Stories* featured the firsthand accounts of four local American World War II veterans. Through their vivid recollections, audiences gained insight into their experience of war, as well as the wisdom that comes from a life well-lived. Since its filming, two of the veterans have passed away, but their legacy lives on in this program. [Watch episodes now.](#)

**¡AHORA SI! JERSEY'S LATIN BEAT: A CHAT BOX & QUÉ PASA SPECIAL:** Co-hosts David Cruz (*Chat Box*) and Carlos Medina (*Qué Pasa, NJ*) explored local Hispanic life through conversations with influential Latinx legislators, journalists, chefs, artists and athletes. Guests sharing their personal stories and insights included two-time Olympic medalist Laurie Hernandez; New Jersey Senate Majority Leader Teresa Ruiz; Wells Fargo Senior Community Impact & Sustainability Specialist Tomas Porturas; entrepreneur Monica Martinez Milan; journalist and President/Founder of Futuro Media Maria Hinojosa; private chef/culinary producer Ronaldo Linares; and Eva Lucena, Founder/Artistic Director, Alborada Spanish Dance Theatre. Members of the Alborada Spanish Dance Theatre and actor/singer-songwriter Allison Strong also performed in the special. [Watch now.](#)



**A MATTER OF FAITH** – This pilot podcast, inspired by the NJ PBS series of the same name, *A Matter of Faith* is a different kind of conversation to help us better understand how faith intersects with, and influences, our world. NJ Spotlight News Anchor Briana Vannozzi moderates a conversation with faith leaders to get their insights from a spiritual perspective on how we can process our grief, navigate emotions like anger and fear and participate meaningfully in our communities during times of crisis.

## Community Engagement

NJ PBS is a beacon for community discussion and engagement, hosting and participating in special local events throughout the year to spotlight topical issues and encourage public conversation, including these in 2023:



NJ Spotlight News | VIRTUAL ROUNDTABLE SERIES  
**Mental Health Crisis in New Jersey:**  
Understanding Pressures,  
Implementing Solutions

**NJ SPOTLIGHT NEWS VIRTUAL ROUNDTABLES:** NJ Spotlight News continued its popular series of virtual roundtable discussions in 2023. This year, the team addressed the topics of the *Mental Health Crisis in New Jersey: Understanding Pressures, Implementing Solutions* in a series which featured events on adolescent depression, workforce impacts, and elder mental health challenges; and *The Delaware River Watershed's Challenges and Promises for New Jersey*. NJ Spotlight News roundtables attracted 1,678 attendees this year.

**NJ PBS HISTORY PROGRAMMING DINNER EVENT:** A cultivation event held in October treated guests to dinner at the historic Grand Café in Morristown. The evening featured *Drive by History* host Ken Magos and author/journalist Neil King, Jr. in conversation about little-known elements of New Jersey history. The evening also included remarks from CEO of The WNET Group, Neal Shapiro, NJ PBS Vice President/General Manager Joe Lee, and Former Governor Tom Kean, who is also a NJ PBS Board Trustee.



**NEWARK SUMMIT:** NJ PBS Vice President & General Manager Joe Lee participated in a panel discussion at the inaugural Newark Summit, with more than 800 attendees. The conference, which gathered stakeholders in Newark's development, discussed the progress and challenges of growing and sustaining New Jersey's most densely populated city. Lee spoke on the panel *Arts: Spaces, Culture and Catalyst* about the influence of arts and cultural institutions on business and real estate development in the city. He was joined by representatives from

Newark City Parks, NJ Motion Picture & Television Commission, NJ Performing Arts Center (NJPAC), The Newark Museum of Art, and the Newark Symphony. He shared that NJ PBS, being anchored in Newark, has "the opportunity to really share the positive narrative" of the city, citing specific local productions that spotlight the city.

**NJ SPOTLIGHT NEWS COFFEE CHATS:** NJ Spotlight News journalists and editors periodically sit across a virtual table to engage special guests and NJ PBS members to discuss timely topics. This year, chats included insight from NJ Spotlight News reporters Andrew Lewis and John Hurdle who discussed environmental reporting and Lilo Stanton discussed healthcare reporting. These are regularly scheduled at 9am on the second Wednesday of the month.

## Corporate Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Activities

NJ PBS and The WNET Group strive to maximize our inclusion and diversity policies to assure the network and our entire organization is inclusive in staffing and in reaching and representing often underrepresented communities with our content. Working in tandem with The WNET Group's Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer, an internal Inclusion, Diversity and Equity Advisory (IDEA) Council and The WNET Group's diversity consultant, here is sampling of activities that took place in 2023 throughout the organization:

- **Ideation Academy:** Applications to the Ideation launched in 2023, a program designed specifically to address the historic inequity of content creators within The WNET Group, including NJ PBS. The program gives Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) employees the opportunity to build skills in production and programming, enabling them to step into different roles as their careers progress.
- **The Buddy Program** also continued for its second year to help new hires acclimate to The WNET Group culture. New hires will be assigned a volunteer "Buddy" who can be a friendly face and a resource for support and advice.
- There is a **designated spot on the IDEA Council** for an employee located in our NJ office.

### Education Initiatives

NJ PBS and The WNET Group provide free teacher resources and other educational services throughout the year. In 2023, powered by a grant from the Fred Rogers Company and PNC Bank, The WNET Group Kids' Media & Education (KME) department combined efforts with New Jersey's Liberty Science Center to bring *Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood* literacy resources to local Title 1 schools and families in New Jersey. During the event families and children in Halloween costumes completed a variety of hands-on Daniel Tiger themed activities: coloring sheets, mask-making, a read aloud of Daniel Tiger Stories, a screening of two Daniel Tiger episodes, and enjoyed meeting and dancing with Daniel Tiger. Participants also received Daniel Tiger books and PBS Kids stickers to take home.



NJ PBS airs a significant amount of children's programming throughout the week, including family favorites *Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood*, *Wild Kratts*, and *Odd Squad* as well as locally produced series such as *Cyberchase*, the award-winning and longest-running animated math series in the US. Now in its 21<sup>st</sup> year, the actors and animated characters continue to serve as role models who are persistent and confident, inspiring kids to approach math and environmental topics enthusiastically and become heroes and problem-solvers in their world.

### Reaching Audiences in Other Languages

- **TRANSLATED NEWS STORIES:** NJ PBS' news division and Montclair State University's Center for Cooperative Media continued to collaborate this year to translate NJ Spotlight News stories into Spanish. The translations have continued typically 2-3 per month and are posted onto the [NJSpotlightNews.org](https://www.njspotlightnews.org) site as an [En Español vertical](#) and are also distributed/promoted in the news division's newsletters. These articles have also been reproduced on the NJ-based [Reporte Hispano](#) website and print edition and occasionally other Spanish-language journals.
- **GOTTA KNOW JERSEY:** To help inform a wider audience about voting in advance of the November elections, NJ Spotlight News' "How to Vote in NJ" episode of its *Gotta Know Jersey* digital series was closed-captioned into Spanish, Korean and Chinese for diverse communities around the state. [Watch here.](#)
- **NHK WORLD:** While NJ PBS does not broadcast in other languages, it does offer NHK World TV. NJ PBS partnered with NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation) to distribute its 24/7 public television network featuring hourly live news and Japanese lifestyle programming on NJ PBS' first multicast channel. [Watch here.](#)

### Public Recognition

**NY EMMY® AWARDS:** NJ PBS received four statues at the 66th Annual New York Emmy® Awards this year. *Table For All with Buki Elegbede* won three (Best Magazine Single Program, Historical/Cultural Long Form Content Program, Host/Moderator) and *Treasures of New Jersey: The Peter Mott House* (Best Historical/Cultural Long Form Content (tied with *Table For All*)).

**NJACCHO AWARD:** NJ Spotlight News health care reporter Lilo Stainton won the "President's Special Recognition" award from the New Jersey Association of County and City Health Officials (NJACCHO). Presented during an organization meeting in Atlantic City by NJACCHO President Chris Merkel, the award recognized Stainton's work, "highlighting the importance of local public health through print media and for being an advocate and champion of public health-related issues throughout the state of New Jersey."

**2023 EXCELLENCE IN JOURNALISM AWARDS:** The New Jersey Society of Professional Journalists honored NJ PBS's newsroom coverage, digital film series and podcasts with nine commendations this year. First place awards were received for *BEST COVERAGE OF STATE GOVERNMENT (Broadcast):* NJ Spotlight News, NJ budgets and taxes coverage; *BEST PODCAST (Broadcast):* NJ Spotlight News, "Hazard NJ Episode 3: Heart of Ringwood"; *BEST NEWS SERIES (Broadcast):* NJ Spotlight News, "Reparations in NJ" and *BEST IN-DEPTH REPORTING (Broadcast):* NJ Spotlight News, "Saving the Sturgeon".

## Public Recognition

**AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN HEALTH CARE JOURNALISM** HAZARD NJ: [Heart of Ringwood](#) took 2<sup>nd</sup> place for audio reporting in the small division for the [Awards for Excellence in Health Care Journalism](#), presented by the Association of Health Care Journalists.



**LLOYD M. FELMLY AWARD FOR BROADCAST:** New Jersey Public Health Association honored NJ Spotlight News' Joanna Gagis, Senior Correspondent, Lilo Stainton, Digital Content Editor, and Briana Vannozi, anchor, with the 2022-2023 Lloyd M. Felmly Award for Broadcast at the organization's Annual Conference and Award Ceremony of New Jersey Public Health Association.

## Viewer Feedback

Here are a few of the comments "viewers like you" had to say about NJ PBS content this year:

### A Table for All with Buki Elegbede

- "My husband and I love this show and hope it continues for many more seasons. Bravo to Buki Elegbede for bringing us closer to the diversity that is NJ and the metro region." – Mally
- "As a NJ Foodie, I appreciate that there is something specific out there about our state. Thank you to everyone that made this show a reality." - Bill

### Here's the Story: Voices in the Garden

- "I'm a New York resident and I loved learning about the poetry renaissance that is taking place in New Jersey. I love how the program showcased these beautiful poets and their passion for the spoken word. I would love to see more programming like this. It was beautifully done." – Raquel
- "I wanted to express my sincere gratitude and admiration for your segment on the underground poetry scene! I thoroughly enjoyed the program and being able to not only see it unfold, but also listen to such brilliant, insightful people who expose their soul so easily." - Thomas
- "As a poet who never feels the art form gets proper representation- *Voices in the Garden* was an incredible segment. NJ has such a great poetry scene and having this reach the people will be greatly beneficial to the culture and art form alike." - Gina

### The Man Who Saved 669 Children

- "I want to thank you so much for airing this beautiful documentary, entitled The Man who Saved 669 Children and was about the World War II efforts of Nicholas Winton. The story was wonderful and uplifting, and the documentary was a fine job of expert filmmaking. Again, thank you thank you." - Susan

### Midsomer Murders

- "Hello and thank you sooo much for starting Midsomer Murders from the very beginning!! I am so happy to see this...Excellent, wonderful show." - Amy