



# **2019 NET LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY**



Nebraska's  PBS & NPR Stations





# WE ARE VALUABLE

Across more than 77,000 square miles, NET, Nebraska's PBS & NPR Stations, enriches lives, engages minds, connects communities and celebrates the state with programs and services that educate and enlighten our citizens.

More than **1 million** people watch, click and listen every month, accessing our award-winning statewide public media network. Our commitment is organized around three key pillars which demonstrate our value – public safety, civic engagement and universal access to education for everyone in the state.

Nebraskans can watch our **four** television channels **free** over-the-air, just as they began watching our first broadcasts more than **65 years ago**. There's NPR and local news, classical music, jazz and lifestyle programs on our **two** radio channels. And, our rich collection of digital, online and mobile content makes us a constant companion.

We demonstrate our value to Nebraska by the stories we tell, the trusted news we report, the community engagement events we host, the early learning opportunities we create, the fine arts and music we showcase, the history we share and the new technologies we embrace.



**More than  
28,212 members  
and 175 corporate  
partners** invested in  
NET during the 2018-19  
fiscal year.

**"I SUPPORT NET RADIO AND  
TELEVISION BECAUSE IT IS FOOD  
FOR THE BRAIN AND SOUL. IT  
ENRICHES MY LIFE AS A CITIZEN,  
TEACHER AND HUMAN BEING."**

**BRIAN MOHR**  
GRAND ISLAND



## WE EDUCATE NEBRASKA'S CHILDREN

Early learning happens everywhere, every day. It's how our children begin their journeys to be scientists, artists, mathematicians, engineers, musicians and writers.

Decades of research confirms that children gain critical literacy, math and social-emotional skills when they watch PBS KIDS programs. Kids can watch **232.5 hours** of trusted educational programs free over-the-air each week, while online content and more than **40** mobile apps for kids and parents enrich learning around the clock.

We're also in local communities, presenting family-friendly events and offering take-home materials that encourage more learning at home. We support parents, teachers and caregivers as they raise Nebraska's children, prepare them for school and lead them to a bright future.



**55 educators** formed sessions on technology, literacy and self-improvement at our first PBS KIDS Edcamp

**900 kids & adults** participated in STEAM Nights at Omaha and Grand Island elementary schools

## Family and Community Learning Nights

taught science concepts to kids & parents, many of whom were English as a second language learners.

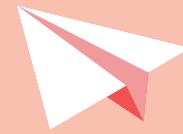


## 2,700 attendees

met PBS KIDS characters at summer learning workshops in 13 communities.

## 100 K-3 students

from 34 Nebraska towns entered fiction, non-fiction and poetry in the NET PBS KIDS Writers Contest.



**Thousands of kids** engineered paper airplanes at the Offutt Air Force Base's summer air & space show in Bellevue.

**"MY CHILDREN EXPLORED NEW THINGS AND LEARNED ABOUT DESIGNING AND SOLVING PROBLEMS."**

**WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT**  
LINCOLN

**"I LET MY KIDS WATCH PBS KIDS BECAUSE IT'S A GREAT LEARNING EXPERIENCE. THEY LEARN ALL TYPES OF THINGS WITH NUMBERS, BEING KIND AND SAFE AND POLITE."**

**LATASHIA RAMIREZ**  
PARENT  
GERING







**During the past year, we earned more than 30 awards and accolades.** And, for the second straight year, NET was named Outstanding News Operation in the three-state Associated Press Great Plains Broadcast contest.

Popular, long-running local television programs like *Backyard Farmer*, *Big Red Wrap-Up*, *Nebraska Stories* and radio's *Friday LIVE* become treasured favorites, while an original documentary like *Small Town Cops* reveals a new concern – how rural police work is shifting in our complex world.

And, we produce documentaries about the things Nebraskans enjoy – chocolate, local beer, wine and food, plus independent filmmaking, music, health, high school and collegiate sports, water in the Great Platte River Basins and innovators who push the limits.



## **We all eat, so we all have a stake in food production.**

Our Harvest Public Media journalism partners report on our food system, producing stories about the state's largest industry. And, our *On the Table* podcast explained the 2018 Farm Bill, a huge piece of legislation that does much more than direct agricultural policy.



When devastating spring floods ravaged Nebraska communities in March 2019, NET News mobilized our reporters to respond – keeping citizens informed and focusing the nation's attention on the scope of the disaster.

**89 flood-related stories**  
**21 NPR reports**  
**4 PBS NewsHour features**

NET was part of the Nebraska Strong flood fundraiser organized by the American Red Cross and the Nebraska Broadcasters Association. The effort raised \$436,710 for flood relief.



Photo: Nebraska Governor's Office, near Fremont, March 2019

## WE PRODUCE TRUSTED NEWS & LOCAL CONTENT

Our award-winning PBS, NPR and local NET News coverage stands alone in the media landscape – offering valuable, relevant, skillfully told stories that aren't found on other media.

Independent, local journalism on radio's daily *Signature Story* and television's *Speaking of Nebraska* are part of the fact-based reporting Nebraskans know they can trust.

Presented across multiple platforms including television, radio, online, mobile and social media, our stories don't gloss over the news with sensational headlines. Our reporters add context and perspective to news that address issues and concerns in communities across the state.



**329**  
STORIES



**92**  
COMMUNITIES

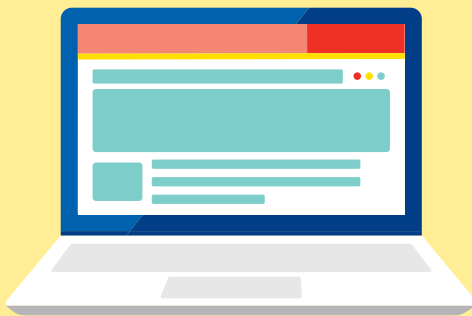
**"WE ENJOY THE SHOWS ON PBS AND NPR, AND APPRECIATE THE UNBIASED NEWS COVERAGE."**

**BETSY WARREN**  
KEARNEY



## WE SUPPORT PARENTS, CAREGIVERS & TEACHERS

Raising kids isn't always easy, but we're all in this together! We support parents, caregivers and Nebraska's teachers as they find ways to help our kids thrive at home and at school.



**Every week, our electronic *Education Newsletter*** delivers tips for parents and classroom-ready resources for teachers. With nearly **4,000 subscribers**, it's filled with ideas and inspiration to help kids learn and grow.

**PBS Parents offers trusted, online resources curated by experts.** Searchable by topic and age, families can find guidance for toddlers struggling with tantrums or school age kids struggling with peers.

**[pbs.org/parents](https://pbs.org/parents)**





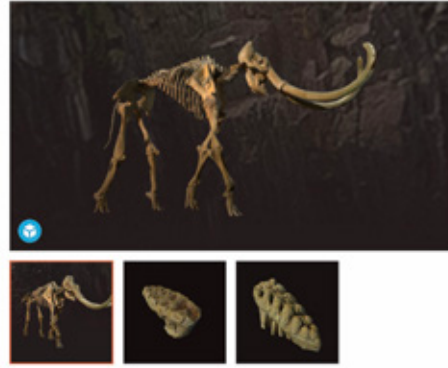
## Our small group family and community engagement workshops

are collaborative, multi-generational and hands-on. They are designed to explore science concepts and improve literacy, and many participants are English as a second language learners.

**NET PBS LearningMedia** is a trusted K-12 classroom resource. More than 7,780 Nebraska users access more than 120,000 lesson plans, videos, interactives, productivity tools and curated collections to create learning experiences that ignite curiosity – and it's all free!

**net.pbslearningmedia.org**

Columbian Mammoth ("Archie")



**More than 8,700 users viewed 18,500 pages on our interactive *Paleo Sleuths* website**, offering amateur paleontologists scientific explanations, pictures, charts and diagrams that piece together ancient life on the Great Plains. And, cutting-edge photogrammetry software turns mammal fossils into extraordinary 3-D models.

**paleosleuths.org**

**"OH MY! DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW MUCH TIME YOU HAVE SAVED ME?"**

**ABIGAIL BRUMMEL**

**SOCIAL STUDIES TEACHER**  
**GRAND ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS**



**On our updated *Nebraska Studies* website**, 91,500 teachers, students and history buffs discovered the past at their fingertips. Last year, more than 318,500 page views each year revealed archival photos, letters, maps and videos. Since its 2001 launch, visitors have clicked on 10 million website pages.

**nebraskastudies.org**



**Our *Nebraska Virtual Capitol* website** was seen by 8,500 users who viewed 221,500 pages to learn about the building and its sculptures, murals, architecture and history. The site is a rich archive of classroom resources for teachers and Nebraska fourth-graders who are studying our state's history, as well as students and others who may not be able to visit.

**nebraskavirtualcapitol.org**





## WE REACH LOCAL COMMUNITIES

We create diverse programming and events that enrich lives, address needs and concerns, and empower people to build thriving communities in Nebraska.

At our *On the Road* events, we screen local productions, record episodes of our popular local radio and television series, host educational PBS KIDS events for families, hear from community leaders at *Town Talks* and, most importantly, listen.

In a state where sports is more than a game, we deliver more than **200 hours** of unmatched coverage to virtually every home in Nebraska. Whether it's Husker volleyball, the Shrine Bowl or NSAA championships, we capture competitive drama and react with smart analysis.

We are a leader among a handful of public television stations in the country that produce high school sports, speech and music, plus college sports broadcasts – more than **80** events each year.

Our *Good, Healthy Life* series offers expert advice on navigating the healthcare system, worksite wellness, cancer, high blood pressure, diabetes and mental health.

Community events like our *Indie Lens Pop-Up* film series encourage discussion about combatting violence, Native musicians and the legacy of Fred Rogers, while the screening of *God Knows Where I Am* in Lincoln and Grand Island began a dialogue about a woman's tragic death due to mental illness.



**We traveled more than 1,000 miles to host 20 *On the Road* events in 9 towns.**

Alliance • Brule • Chadron • Gering • Lewellen  
Mitchell • Ogallala • Scottsbluff • Sidney



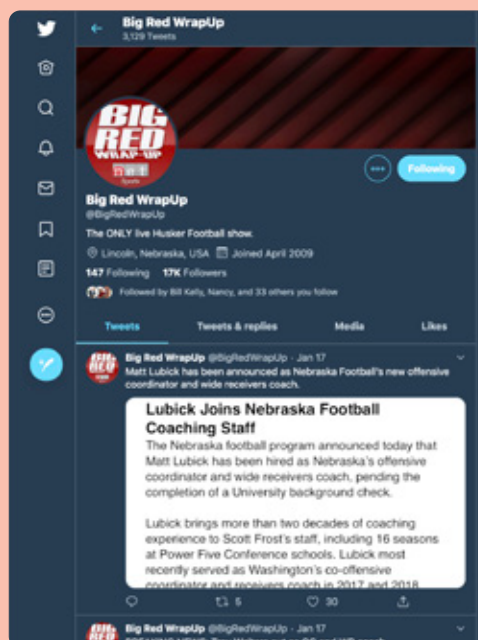
**Nearly 500 people** attended  
11 community film screenings held in  
three cities.

**"IF WE DIDN'T HAVE A STATEWIDE NETWORK LIKE NET, VIEWERS' LIVES WOULD NOT BE AS RICH."**

**PEG CARRAHER**  
OMAHA VIEWER



**NET was FIRST to present Husker volleyball to a statewide audience.**

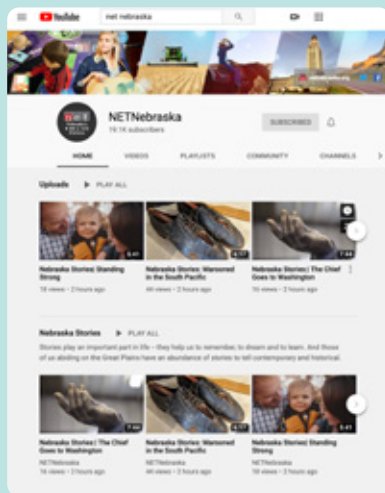


**Our Husker sports television series *Big Red Wrap-Up*** has more than 16,000 followers on Twitter and 13,000 on Facebook.





Rendering of University Hall




**On YouTube,** our content garnered more than 2 million views and more than 250,000 hours of viewing. The average watch time was over 7 minutes.

**Our Twitter accounts** for *Big Red Wrap-Up*, NET Nebraska and NET News have more than 37,000 total followers.



**Our NET Nebraska Facebook page** has 23,000 followers, an increase of 26 percent from last year.

# WE EMBRACE TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION



Our diverse television and radio programming is free over the air – just as it has been since we began broadcasting in Nebraska. But today, viewers and listeners are accessing our trusted news, drama, history, science and arts programs in ways our founders never imagined.

We engage our audience with social media and adapt to changing technology, offering live and on-demand streaming on our NET Nebraska app, plus smart speakers and podcasts such as *On the Table*, which explains the 2018 Farm Bill.

We're also connecting our viewers to Nebraska's largest industry with food, water and agriculture stories on our new *Pivotal* website – focusing on the industry, science and human spirit.

Good ideas often start with a simple question, and Nebraskans respond with creativity and innovation. Our *What If...* series follows visionaries who aren't afraid to think outside the box. *Innovator Insights*, our companion online videos, are part of the NET PBS LearningMedia library, serving as a resource for teachers, students and others exploring higher education options.

We embrace cutting-edge production techniques that use drones, augmented and virtual reality and 360-degree videos. Our augmented reality video project is recreating University Hall, the first building on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus, while 360-degree videos provide an immersive experience and a view in every direction.

In a partnership with PBS, we shared our 360-degree video series *Watershed* with stations and viewers across the U.S., exploring the allocation of water resources in the Greater Platte River Basins at [pbs.org/watershed](https://pbs.org/watershed).

Another 360-degree video, *Under the Milky Way*, follows stargazers from the bright lights of the city to Nebraska's Sandhills.

Q Catalyst, a leader in digital media disruption and growth, is guiding NET on a Corporation for Public Broadcasting Digital Accelerator project. We are viewed as a public media pioneer, and have been selected to work with much larger stations like KQED (San Francisco) PBS SoCal and Rocky Mountain PBS on the project. We'll be discovering new ways of working in digital spaces, as well as mentoring other stations.





**More than 8 million minutes** of our legislative coverage was streamed.



**"THE *NEWSHOUR* ABSOLUTELY DEPENDS ON NET HERE IN NEBRASKA. YOU ARE ON THE GROUND HERE. YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON WHETHER IT'S FLOODS OR AN EDUCATION STORY THAT'S UNIQUE TO YOUR STATE."**

**JUDY WOODRUFF**  
*PBS NEWSHOUR*

**Judy Woodruff spoke at the ICAN Women's Leadership Conference in Omaha in April 2019.**



## **500 people attended**

*An Issue of Trust: Democracy and the Future of Journalism* community discussions at Humanities Nebraska-sponsored forums about news media and society.



## WE INFORM OUR CITIZENS

We believe the debate that echoes off the walls of the State Capitol is something all our citizens should be able to hear. Since 1980, we've broadcast gavel-to-gavel television coverage from Nebraska's Unicameral, and more recently from 12 state government venues including the Nebraska Supreme Court and the Governor's Hearing Room.

With just a few clicks, all of our offerings appear on computer screens and mobile devices, plus our award-winning news team provides analysis and perspective each day of the session on radio.

In November 2018, we partnered with Humanities Nebraska to host community conversations

about the role of the news media in our democracy. At *An Issue of Trust: Democracy and the Future of Journalism* events in Kearney, Lincoln, Norfolk and North Platte, journalists, including former NET reporter Sarah McCammon who now works for NPR, led conversations about fact and fiction in news.

We are also a trusted source for coverage of local and national elections. Our *Campaign Connection* news team provides intelligent, fact-based analysis and results from our state's major races. In addition to our radio and television coverage, we post results on NET's Facebook and Twitter accounts, as well as our *Campaign Connection* webpage.





**When devastating spring floods ravaged communities,** NET News mobilized our reporters to respond – keeping citizens informed and focusing the nation’s attention on the scope of the disaster.

# WE KEEP NEBRASKANS SAFE

We understand that safety for families and communities is important for all Nebraskans, and we are committed to fulfilling public media's role in protecting them in times of emergency. NET is the first radio station notified by the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency during times of routine testing or an actual alert.

We relay emergency and weather information to other Nebraska stations, and during an Amber Alert, the National Weather Service notifies us so we can communicate critical details about missing children.

As part of a national plan, we are expanding emergency alert capabilities to mobile devices and digital platforms so that alerts can be heard and seen on phones, HD radios, car devices, Radio Data Systems (RDS) displays and online. We also deliver technical support and infrastructure resources for the new Nationwide Public Safety Broadband Network – the first high speed network dedicated to public safety.



**NET partners with the Department of Homeland Security** to offer first responders a portion of the broadcast spectrum for use during times of crisis.

Public television is the backbone of the Emergency Alert System that enables the President of the United States to alert citizens about national emergencies.





**Nearly  
43,000  
users**  
streamed our  
radio programs  
this year.



**We offer  
71 hours**  
of classical music  
on radio each week.

**"I AM A PRE-K TEACHER AND DURING NAP TIME,  
WE LISTEN TO NET RADIO CLASSICAL MUSIC. IT  
IS PEACEFUL FOR THE CHILDREN AND FOR ME AS  
WELL! I AM VERY THANKFUL FOR THIS STATION."**

**BRIA DISPOTO**  
HICKMAN LISTENER

**"I LIKE TO LISTEN TO NET RADIO BECAUSE  
NUMBER ONE, YOU DO SHOWS LIKE *FRIDAY  
LIVE* WHICH SHOWCASES DIFFERENT  
AREAS OF THE STATE."**

**LYN MESSERSMITH**  
ALLIANCE



**The national radio show  
*Live from Here with Chris Thile*  
was recorded live in Lincoln.**

Photo courtesy: Live from Here, American Public Media.



## WE CONNECT NEBRASKANS TO ARTS AND CULTURE

Our music is the soundtrack a busy day whether listeners enjoy classical on our main FM radio channel or jazz on our HD radio channel. It all started **30 years** ago with a grassroots effort by a group of dedicated volunteers.

Our local radio programs are a valued complement to the NPR programming that was our foundation. Since 1997, *Friday LIVE* listeners have tuned in each week for arts and entertainment news from The Mill Coffee and Tea in Lincoln, as well as remote broadcasts from other coffee houses and arts venues around Nebraska.

*Classics by Request* lets listeners choose the music they want to hear. *All About Books* shares a passion for books and reading. *The Verge* features classical music with a twist. *Jazz Currents* includes straight-ahead, mainstream jazz – plus music that skirts the edges. And, *Nebraska Concerts* features compositions performed and recorded around the state.

We also work with our public media partners to bring national shows like *Performance Today* and *Live from Here with Chris Thile* for to Nebraska. In October 2018, radio personality Chris Thile appeared on stage in Lincoln, entertaining the audience with musical performances, comedy and more.

From established bands to solo artists, some of Nebraska's best known and emerging talent appeared in *JAM*. With intimate interviews and stellar performances in local music scene venues, the performance documentary put the spotlight on the makers of some of the best original music heard in local clubs.

Since 1972, PBS' *Great Performances* has showcased a diverse range of performing arts specials from around the world, and *Masterpiece* has brought the best in drama to American public television audiences since 1971.



/netnebraska



@netnebraska



@netnebraska



YouTube /netnebraska

**Nearly 120,000 people** engage with us on all of our social media channels.

## BACKYARD FARMER

**The University of Nebraska** has been a strong partner with NET for nearly 70 years. Together, we produce *Backyard Farmer* – the longest running, locally-produced television series in the country.



# SUMMARY

We tell stories that inspire the pursuit of knowledge, nurture imaginations and capture hearts. Tiny hands clap with joy when Big Bird dances across the television screen and lifelong learners watch and listen to satisfy their interest in science, history, news and music.

NET is committed to fulfilling three guiding pillars that measure the success of public media – public safety, civic engagement and education.

- **We understand** that safety for families and communities is important to Nebraskans, and we are committed to fulfilling public media's role in protecting them in times of emergency.
- **We connect** Nebraskans with each other, their government and their communities with thought-provoking stories and engagement that encourages creative thinking.
- **We provide** teachers, parents and caregivers free, high-quality PBS KIDS television programs, resources and community workshops that prepare children for success in school and beyond.

Our work reinforces values and emphasizes what is important here – in our cities and towns and on the prairies of Nebraska.





Nebraska's  PBS & NPR® Stations

