



**LOCAL CONTENT &  
SERVICE REPORT**

**JULY 1, 2022-JUNE 30, 2023**



2023

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# DEAR FRIENDS

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the Mississippi Public Broadcasting Annual Report for fiscal year 2023. This is a testament to the collective dedication and hard work of the staff of MPB. Life in Mississippi is returning to normal as we welcome back family and community gatherings. That means the workflow here at MPB is picking up as we strive hard as ever to fulfill our mission - to educate, inform, and inspire Mississippians with quality programs and services while providing trusted information during emergencies.

Throughout the year, we made many changes, from updating our logo and brand to creating a new program called Mississippi Antique Showcase, where we travel the state showcasing the rich historic treasures families have had in their homes for years.

Often, we were faced with situations that required the combined efforts and talents of our entire staff. Our Engineering Department works to ensure we are always on the air so in case of a storm or any emergency, we can help keep everyone informed and safe.

MPB is more than just a broadcast entity. We now have a digital-first approach to reach the younger residents of Mississippi. Our goal is to be on the platforms where they are.

I am fortunate to be part of a team with such passion for delivering innovative and high-impact local experiences. Community is at the heart of everything we do. Throughout this report, you will find more information about the power of public media for public good. Because now more than ever, the world needs quality media we can trust - paired with holistic resources that truly make a difference.

This is only possible with a supportive Mississippi Legislative body, Governor and you, our loyal members and viewers. Mississippi Public Broadcasting will continue to positively impact the state we serve for many more years to come.

## THANK YOU!

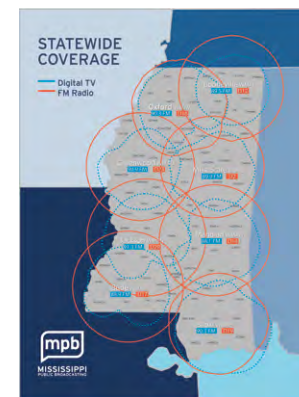
Royal Aills,  
MPB Executive Director



# MISSISSIPPI IS OUR MISSION

## OUR VISION - Enriching the lives of Mississippians with engaging, thought-provoking programs and services for lifelong learning.

Mississippi Public Broadcasting is the state's resource for educational and informative programming and news coverage. Our programs and services connect communities throughout Mississippi while our network of towers provide vital infrastructure to transmit emergency warnings and alerts across the state. Our mission is Mississippi, and we are committed to serving that mission and the people of the state every day.



## OUR REACH IN 2023

**50.6 MILLION**  
streams across MPB platforms

**47.6 MILLION**  
streams across PBS platforms

**1 MILLION** NPR streams

**2.8 MILLION**  
users across PBS platforms

**500,000**  
NPR listeners annually

**654,885**  
television viewers each month

**371,378** podcast downloads

## OUR IMPACT

**19%-27%**  
of Mississippi's population is watching MPB at any given time.

**95%** of households that MPB reaches with PBS Kids.

**PBS** reaches **more** children aged 2-8 from low-income families than **ANY OTHER** children's cable **TV NETWORK.**



## MISSISSIPPI'S ALERT SYSTEM


MPB is a critical first alert provider for Mississippi through partnerships with the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency, the Department of Public Safety and the Office of the Governor. MPB serves as the primary source for statewide emergency information, utilizing a network of radio and television transmitters and towers. It is the only resource capable of transmitting alerts to every Mississippian at the same time, providing lifesaving datacasting services.

**MPB's tower network provides infrastructure for emergency communications utilized by over 96 federal, state, and local jurisdictions.**

MPB's tower network consists of eight towers that range from 600 to 1,500 feet tall and 12 microwave towers over 300 feet in height, all of which cover more than 550 square miles. Beginning in FY 2023, MPB made significant progress updating the infrastructure of the towers with the installation of a fiber network. Once completed, the fiber network will provide greater redundancy and signal strength across the state.

Strengthening the tower network's infrastructure is a priority. Mississippi is ranked among the **top three most disaster-prone states** in the country. Since 2000, Mississippi has experienced 50 disaster declarations, including three hurricanes: Hurricane Katrina in 2005, Hurricane Harvey in 2017, and Hurricane Ida in 2021. The state is also prone to tornado risk, with 50 twisters in the state every year. MPB has been the single station that has provided statewide updates in every one of these emergencies.

**292 ALERTS**  
were transmitted.  
during last fiscal year.



**“MANY DO NOT REALIZE THAT THE EMERGENCY ALERTS RECEIVED STATEWIDE ON TELEVISIONS AND SMART DEVICES COME THROUGH MPB TOWERS.”**

—Royal Aills, Executive Director





# MISSISSIPPI'S CLASSROOM

MPB Learning recognizes that access to learning resources in the early years of life is critical to children's long-term well-being and success. MPB partners with the Department of Education, other state agencies, businesses, organizations, and nonprofits on numerous programs designed to support intergenerational learning and skills development for children in literacy, critical thinking, and collaborative problem-solving.

MPB Learning supports educators across the state by providing access to continuing education units, instructional lessons for classrooms and professional growth models. The efforts do not end there; MPB Learning also offers workforce development and skills training for adults and conducts community outreach statewide.

“ I ENJOY ALL THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AT MPB! ” –Patricia in Jackson

“ I'VE ENJOYED EVERYTHING ABOUT MPB, AND IT'S ALSO A GREAT EDUCATIONAL STATION FOR ME AND MY GRANDDAUGHTER. WE'RE LEARNING A LOT! ”

–Brenda in Florence

## OUR IMPACT

**3,729** Continuing Education Units through e-Learning courses

**1,704** Teachers who received CEUs

## HIGHLIGHTS OF MPB LEARNING IN 2023

### DIGITAL EDUCATION NETWORK

The DEN provides certified teachers for high school classrooms across Mississippi through a virtual platform. MPB is the hub that makes the connections. Classes currently taught are ACT Prep, Art, Spanish, and Creative Writing.

### STUDENT COUNCIL

The newest initiative, the MPB Student Council, consists of a group of some of the state's brightest middle and high school students who receive hands-on career training, lead civic engagement activities, and serve as MPB's liaisons to their peers. In addition to college readiness and career training, council members are equipped with journalism and broadcast skills to lend their voices to discussions about Mississippi's progress. The students champion projects, publish a podcast, and create campaigns geared specifically to their generation in their own voices.

**22** STUDENT MEMBERS

**30** STUDENT-PRODUCED PODCASTS

**OVER 1K** PODCAST DOWNLOADS



## OF NOTABLE INTEREST

In October 2022, a MPB Student Council news report by Makenna Mead, a teen from Hernando, was featured on PBS Newshour. Makenna participated in NewsHour's ReportingLabs to tell the story of a Miss. woman who came to reject conspiracy theories. The Moments of Truth series explores misinformation and showcases intergenerational conversations about facts, information, and truth.



**900K** PBS NEWS HOUR AVERAGE VIEWERSHIP



# TELEVISION

MPB's television programming educates, informs, and entertains. The television crew produced more than 100 hours of MPB Classroom TV while delivering coverage from the Governor's Office, joint agency news conferences, State of the State Address, Promote the Vote initiative, weather alerts and various other timely state-wide announcements.

The team also continued work on documentaries expected to be released in 2024 to national audiences - a profile of bluesman Bobby Rush and the Medgar Evers legacy project that explores the life of the civil rights activist and the lasting impact of his work. A highlight of 2023 was the original MPB TV production, Mississippi Antique Showcase, a new show featuring people from across the state who bring their prized possessions to be appraised.

MPB has also launched an ambitious digitization project to preserve historic television and video recordings. Archival media documents the collective memory of the state and its impact on national and international history. It reflects a diverse community's struggles, achievements, and aspirations, amplifying voices that might have otherwise been marginalized or forgotten.

**“ I HAVE DISCOVERED SO MANY THINGS THAT I HAVE NEVER HEARD OF BEFORE. I REALLY ENJOY THE PROGRAMMING. ”**

-Teresa from Meridian

## PRESERVATION THROUGH DIGITIZATION

MPB began the work of preservation through digitization. The work included the planning, assessment, organizing, cataloguing, and quantifying the resources from the past 50 years. The number and type of other quantifiable products expected from the project will be remarkable: 25,000 digitized media items, 25,000 preserved media items, as well as curriculum materials, documentaries or other original productions - all digitized and organized in a single searchable database. The products will be aligned to the Mississippi Curriculum Frameworks, easily searchable and applicable for teachers across the state.

## MEDGAR EVERS LEGACY PROJECT

MPB made significant progress on the preproduction and production phase of a documentary and wrap-around media about the life and legacy of Medgar Evers. The project will explore the significance of Evers' contributions to the Civil Rights Movement and his lasting impact on American society. Approximately 90% of the production was completed in FY 2023.

The project has three components: a feature-length film, a podcast, and K-12 curriculum materials. Once the documentary is complete, it will be used to develop the educational curriculum and instructional materials. The resources will be realized through state-directed collaboration and partnership with the Mississippi Department of Education.

## MISSISSIPPI ANTIQUE SHOWCASE

The Television Department and MPB Foundation collaborated to bring viewers a brand-new show. MPB hosted a series of filmed events across the state, featuring hundreds of Mississippians who brought their prized possessions to be appraised. Items ranged from a Mickey Mantle signed baseball and Muhammad Ali's boxing trunks to precious crystal and Native American tapestry. The appraisals were captured on film and turned into a new MPB original series that began airing in 2023.





## OUR IMPACT

**371,378** podcast downloads in FY 2023

**24** hours a day of music from around the world

**15** locally-produced series

**2.8 MILLION** users across PBS platforms

## TOP MPB RADIO PODCASTS

(by all-time downloads)

**364,000** – The Gestalt Gardener

**286,000** – Fix-it 101

**281,000** – Mississippi Edition

**235,000** – Money Talks

MPB Think Radio serves curious, creative minds with content that ranges from culinary mastery to green-thumb gardening expertise. Shows offer something for every listener, from practical, fix-it tips for automobiles and around-the-house jobs to healthy lifestyle shows that range in topics from eating healthy to women's healthcare. Podcast downloads continue to soar as streaming expands MPB's audience beyond state borders into a global audience.

### RADIO READING SERVICE

MPB provides an important service for our state's blind and visually challenged citizens. The Radio Reading Service of Mississippi (RRSM), through a team of volunteers, provides information via a special MPB receiver or internet audio stream to people who are visually or physically challenged, 24 hours a day and free of charge. RRSM features on-the-air readings of newspapers, books and magazines. The RRSM signal is carried on a sub-channel of MPB Radio and is also available through a non-published internet link that is sent to qualified individuals upon their request, offering a lifeline to the world.

**OVER 4K** SPECIAL RECEIVERS IN 81 COUNTIES

MPB News is a trusted source of fact-based journalism. The team of reporters, producers and hosts fulfill MPB's mission to provide state-wide news and public affairs programming. The team explores critical issues in the state and region, including government and politics, health care, education, criminal justice and disenfranchisement.

MPB News airs five hours of Mississippi and regional news each weekday, which includes six daily newscasts. Mississippi Edition is MPB's 30-minute news and public affairs program that airs each weekday morning.

## OUR IMPACT

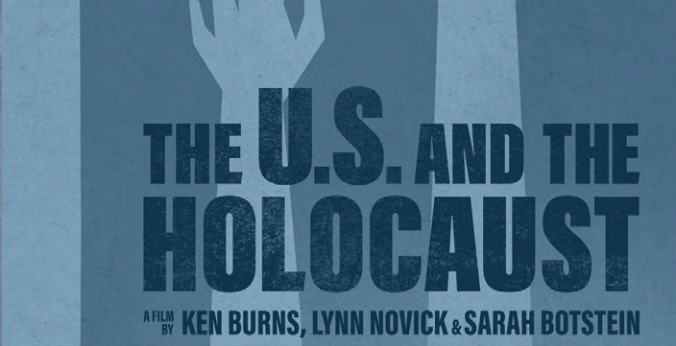
Around **40K** listeners tune into MPB Radio each morning to hear MPB local and national news.

MPB News won **2** Mississippi Association of Broadcasters Awards: Achievement and Best Young Reporter (Rookie of the Year).






## COMMUNITY




## THE U.S. AND THE HOLOCAUST

A FILM BY KEN BURNS, LYNN NOVICK & SARAH BOTSTEIN



As communities emerged from the pandemic, MPB began hosting both virtual and in-person screening events. Documentaries broaden the world view of MPB audiences and offer deeper insight into culture, history, technology, and the arts. All MPB screenings and events are open to the public.

### SOUTHERN STORYTELLERS OF MISSISSIPPI



In June 2023, MPB hosted “Southern Storytellers of Mississippi,” a two-part outreach event on the Gulf Coast and Jackson. The event was held in conjunction with the premiere of the “Southern Storytellers” television series that highlighted several artists from the South, including Mississippi natives Angie Thomas, Natasha Trethewey and Jesmyn Ward. At the coast event, performers included William Dan Isaac of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, Meridian-based storyteller Anne B. McKee, and Da Terrence Roberts, a storyteller of the West African Tradition of Jaliyaa. In Jackson, the storytellers were Talamieka Brice, an award-winning artist, photographer and visual storyteller, and Lauren Rhoades, director of

grants at the Mississippi Arts Commission and host of MPB’s Mississippi Arts Hour. The event celebrated the spirit of southern storytellers, and attendees were invited to share their own story.

### FIGHT THE POWER

MPB hosted a screening of “Fight the Power: How Hip-Hop Changed the World,” in February 2023. The event, which was held on the Jackson State University campus and featured a panel discussion, was a collaboration between MPB and WJSU “The Sipp FM.” The series director, Yemi Bamiro, appeared virtually from London. The documentary detailed the origin of hip-hop, a music genre spawned by political unrest.

### THE U.S. AND THE HOLOCAUST


MPB, the Jewish Federation of Oxford and OxFilm hosted a virtual event about the three-part documentary, “The U.S. and Holocaust.” The event featured film clips, a moderated panel discussion and Q&A. The panel experts were Kate E. Temony, Ph.D., assistant professor of religion, Montclair State University, co-chair of the

Religion, Holocaust and Genocide Unit of the American Academy of Religion and co-founder of the Genocide Education and Prevention Project; Joshua First, Ph.D., Croft associate professor of history and international studies, University of Mississippi; and Chauncey Spears, community engagement manager for educational equity and community development at The Alluvial Collective (formerly The William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation).

### MISSISSIPPI BOOK FESTIVAL


Known as an annual “literary lawn party,” the Mississippi Book Festival connects hundreds of authors with fans and new readers. The event’s attendance has reached over 9,300. As a festival partner, MPB has an opportunity to increase its visibility and expand its audience through on-site outreach, pre-event promotions, post-event broadcasts, author interviews and podcasts. MPB sponsors the festival’s Kids Club in the state Capitol, offering books, activities and on-site children’s characters.

### MICROSOFT SKILL-IT-MS



MPB partnered with Microsoft Philanthropies and local organizations to host a two-month upskilling competition for Mississippians. The collaboration with The Bean Path, the city of Jackson, and the Jackson Resource Center was designed to provide tools for job seekers, professionals, and students looking to gain new skills or expand their professional development. Mississippi was one of three communities selected nationally to partner with Microsoft. There were over 700 Certificates awarded.

### PROMOTE THE VOTE



Each year, MPB partners with the Secretary of State Office on Promote the Vote, an effort to encourage civic engagement among young people. The program consists of mock elections, contests, and election curriculum. The “Why Vote?” theme encourages students to consider the importance of voting and how it corresponds to their beliefs and values. In addition to the art, essay, and video production contests, MPB organizes a social media contest.





# “COMMUNITY IS AT THE HEART OF EVERYTHING WE DO.”

—Royal Aills

## GOVERNOR'S ARTS AWARDS

Each year, MPB films the annual Governor's Arts Awards, an event recognizing Mississippi's top artists. The event is later aired on MPB Television and Think Radio. Presented by the Mississippi Arts Commission, the Governor's Arts Awards are given to individuals and organizations to recognize outstanding work in the artistic disciplines as well as arts-based community development and arts patronage in Mississippi.

## AN EVENING WITH DAVID SEDARIS

MPB partnered with the David Sedaris Group for "An Evening with David Sedaris" in October. Leveraging a partnership with Sedaris' management team, MPB was able to offer exclusive ticket access to members.

## POETRY OUT LOUD

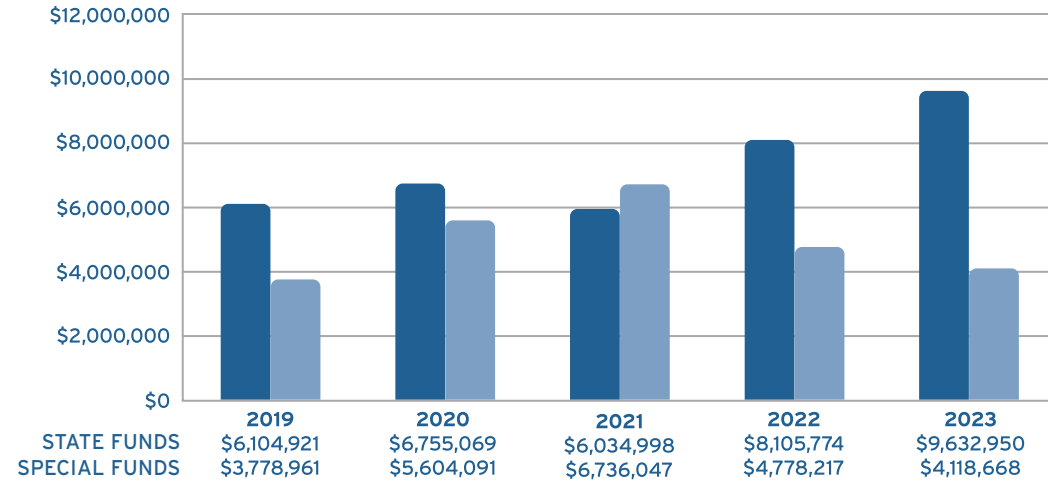
Scholars from across the state competed in the 2023 Poetry Out Loud state recitation contest that was filmed, and later aired, by MPB. Poetry Out Loud is a national program for students in grades 9-12 created by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation. It is administered by the Mississippi Arts Commission. Since 2005, the competition has helped students master public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and improve their reading comprehension scores while learning about their literary heritage.

**YOUR STORIES.  
OUR MISSION.**

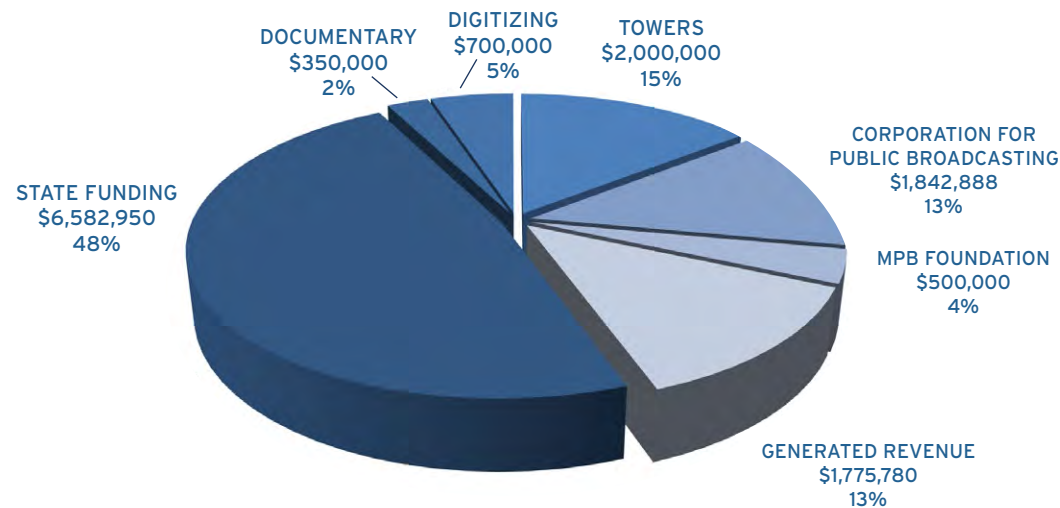


# MPB FINANCIALS

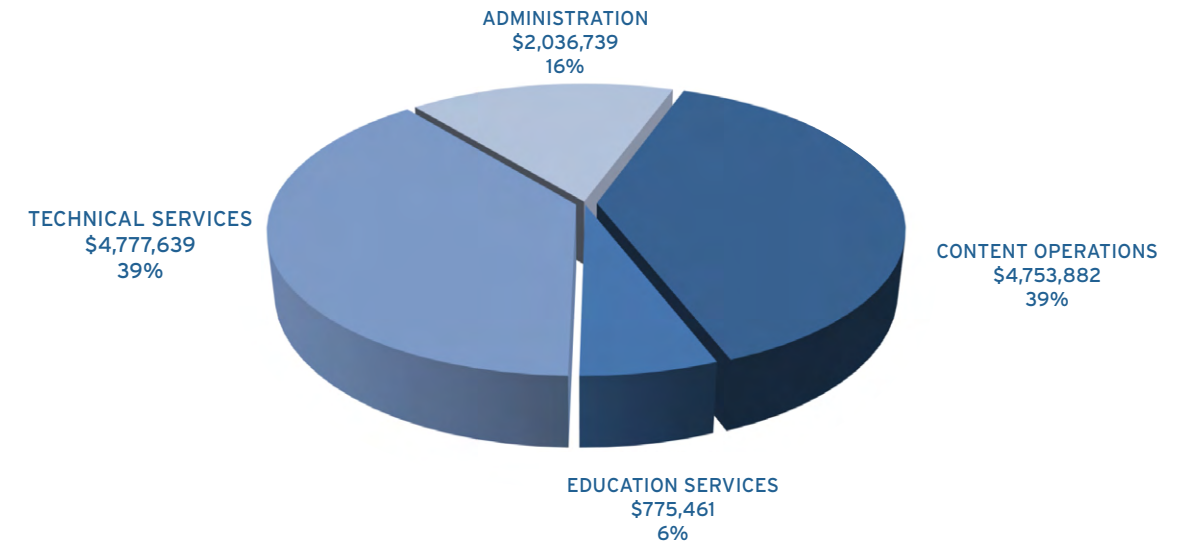
## 5-YEAR REVENUE HISTORY



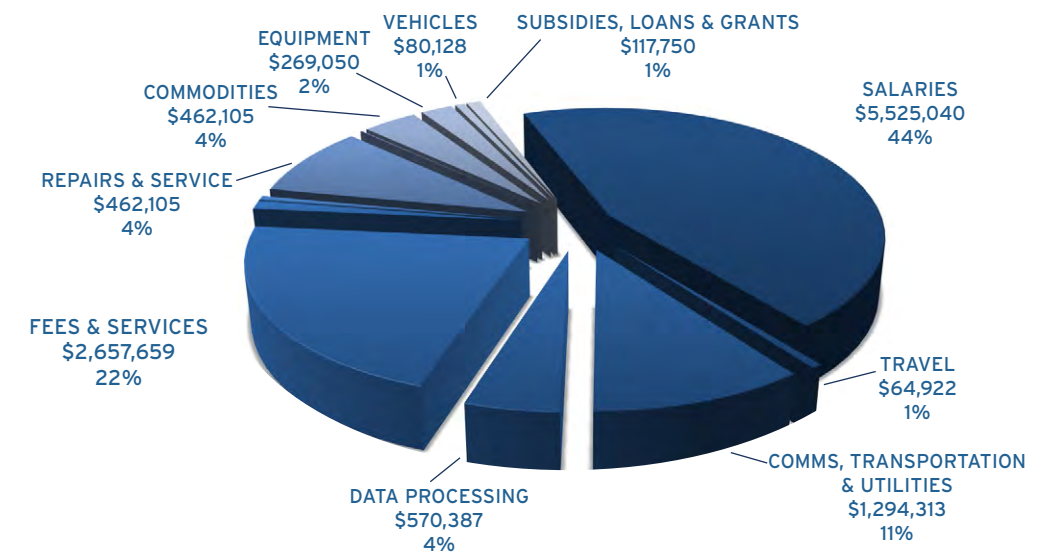
## REVENUE SOURCES FY 2023 BUDGET



## EXPENDITURES BY PROGRAM FY 2023 BUDGET



## OPERATION EXPENSES FY 2023 BUDGET





# MPB FOUNDATION

“ I AM PROUD OF WHAT MPB IS DOING AND IT'S A GOOD CAUSE. IT'S VERY HELPFUL TO HAVE GOOD SHOWS NOW AND IN THE PAST, AND FUTURE. ”

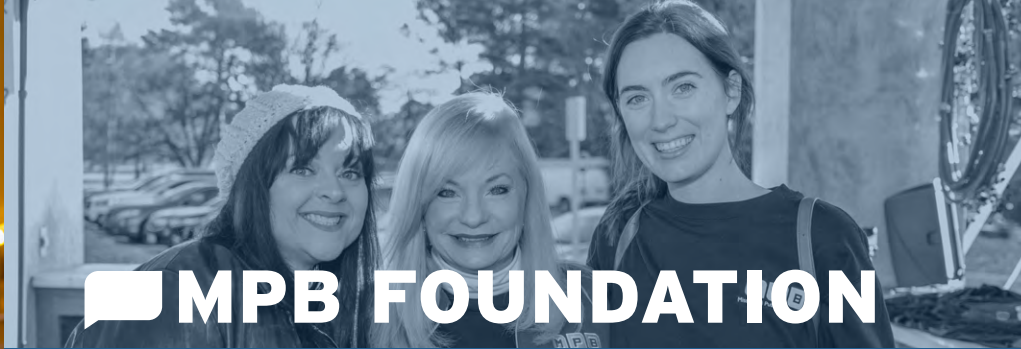
—Dorothy in Kosciusko

In 1989, two decades after the formation of the Mississippi Authority for Educational Television, a group of Mississippians, including Pulitzer Prize-winning author Eudora Welty, chartered the Foundation for Public Broadcasting. They were committed to raising funds to support educational television. The MPB Foundation has since expanded that mission to also provide support and value-added benefits for all MPB members and donors.

In 2023, the MPB Foundation was recognized for its work, winning an award of Excellence in Creative Stewardship from Gravyty at the GForce Conference in Orlando, Florida.

“ THIS IS MONEY WELL SPENT. ”

—Gloria in Jackson



Community engagement is the cornerstone of the MPB Foundation's work. Engaging with community members at festivals, screenings, and other events, they invite people to support MPB by joining the mission to educate, inform and entertain the state's residents. And with membership comes privileges, which the Foundation extended during events, such as Southern Storytellers, An Evening with David Sedaris and the Chimneyville Arts Festival.

## OUR REACH IN 2023

In Fiscal Year 2023, the MPB Foundation achieved unparalleled reach:

**2MILLION+**  
Members, donors and prospects reached through email engagement

**130,000**  
Fine Tuning programming guides delivered to households across the state

**800,000**  
Users streaming Passport, MPB's on-demand streaming service

**25,000**  
members of the community engaged through events



# MPB BOARD OF DIRECTORS



# FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Shawn Mackey, PhD, Chairman of the Board**  
Deputy Executive Director for Programs and Accountability, Mississippi Community College Board (MPB Board President)



**Russ Latino, Vice-Chairman of the Board**  
President and CEO, Magnolia Tribune



**Whitney Lipscomb**  
Deputy Attorney General, Mississippi Attorney General's Office



**Judy K. Nelson, PhD**  
Director of Federal Programs Mississippi Department of Education



**Richard Sawyer**  
Teacher, Jackson Elementary School in Pascagoula



**Ornella Cummings, PhD**  
Chief Strategy Officer, North Mississippi Health Services

**Royal D. Aills (ex officio)**  
Executive Director, MPB

**Nora F. McRae,**  
Community Volunteer

**Paul M. Rocconi**  
Retired physician  
Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees, the Library of Hattiesburg, Petal, and Forrest County

**Don B. Cannada, Chairman of the Foundation Board**  
CEO, Barksdale Management Corporation

**Finney C. Moore**  
Community Volunteer

**Danielle Cox Morgan**  
Mississippi Tourism Association

**Cynthia D. Sutton**  
Executive Director, Ocean Springs Chamber of Commerce-Main Street-Tourism Bureau

**John H. Cocke**  
Merkel & Cocke, P.A.

**Darden H. North**  
Jackson Healthcare for Women

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**John C. Hardy**  
President, Hardy Reed, LLC

**George D. Penick**  
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**Grace P. Lee**  
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Trilogy Communications, Inc.

**Melvin V. Priester**  
Priester Law Firm, PLLC

**Lynn A. Wilkins**  
Professor, University of Mississippi, and President of LA Wilkins Consulting

**Shawn Mackey, PhD, ex officio**  
Deputy Executive Director for Programs and Accountability, Mississippi Community College Board

**George B. Ready, Vice Chair of the Foundation Board**  
Law Office of George Ready

**Rhea C. Williams-Bishop, Secretary of the Foundation Board**  
Kellogg Foundation, Director of Mississippi and New Orleans Programs

**Andrew Mallinson**  
CEO Multicraft International



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