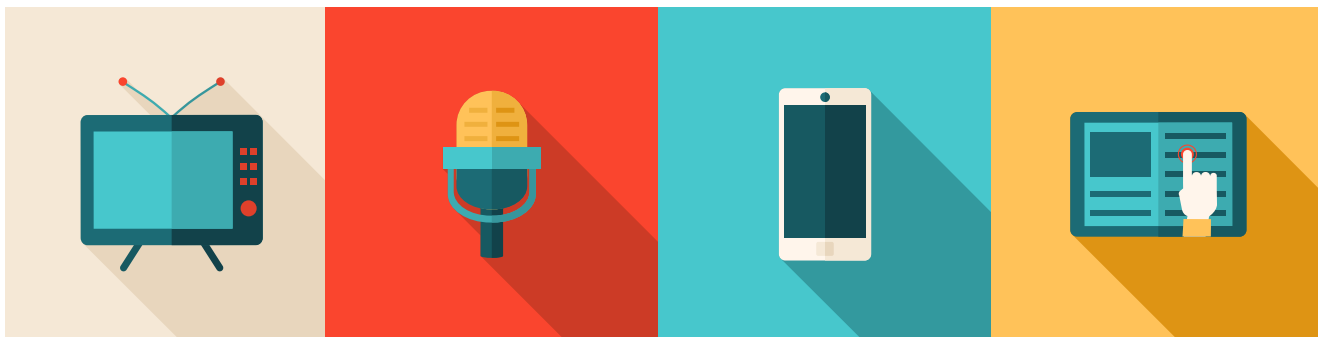


WKNO

Public Media

ANNUAL REPORT
2020 – 2021



A LETTER FROM WKNO'S PRESIDENT AND CEO

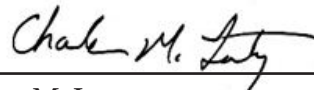
The past year has been memorable for all of us. Who could have imagined how a pandemic would impact our lives? A little over a year ago, the world faced a widespread medical emergency. With much of our staff working off-site, and following safety guidelines for our on-site workers, every department engaged in purposeful planning that would continue to provide viewers and listeners with the programming they expect and the engagement they appreciate from the WKNO-TV and FM stations.

We believe our work provides an essential public service, and we strived to preserve as much normalcy as possible. Our local WKNO-FM news coverage expanded to include daily COVID-19 updates from the Memphis and Shelby County Joint COVID Task Force and access to news conferences, all while reporting news stories pertinent to Memphis and the Mid-South. Pandemic updates, guidelines and information were provided on our WKNO-TV and WKNO-FM websites.

While reflecting on WKNO Public Media's achievements, I am overcome by a deep sense of pride in the work our staff accomplished. We engaged in a new virtual world and provided digital options. The WKNO App provides access to WKNO Public Media in our area anywhere cell service exists. WKNO's Teacher Teacher partnered with the Memphis Public Libraries for a virtual parent and child workshop.

Local programs like **Behind the Headlines** continued through the pandemic with timely virtual live interviews. Even though Gallery 1091 exhibitions were on hiatus from March to October 2020, November 2020 marked the first virtual Gallery 1091 exhibition available online. Virtual access has provided our staff with continued learning through virtual training, webinars and national association meetings with PBS, American Public Television (APT), National Educational Telecommunications Association (NETA), Public Television Programming Association (PTPA), National Public Radio (NPR), to name a few.

We are grateful for the tremendous support we received from listeners and viewers as we celebrate the 65th Anniversary of WKNO-TV in 2021 and the upcoming 50th Anniversary of WKNO-FM in April 2022. Local support set a solid foundation for WKNO going into a new budget year. We are planning as we evolve and adapt our public service mission, in 2022. We are committed to preserving your trust and building upon the solid legacy of our service to the communities across Memphis and the Mid-South.



Charles McLarty
WKNO President & CEO

MID-SOUTH PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT
2020 – 2021**Mission Statement**

WKNO is the Mid-South's premier public media organization committed to creating and presenting both unique local and national content for television, radio, and digital media.

Vision

A trusted resource of information and inspiration
An essential provider of educational and cultural services
A preeminent public institution in and for the Mid-South
A leader in public media, both locally and nationally

Value

Be an exemplary steward of the public trust
Seek diversity and excellence in people, ideas, and services
Build and nourish relationships in the community
Hold ourselves accountable for results
Help each other succeed
Have a sense of humor

WKNO-TV/FM with the support and involvement of its Board of Trustees and Mid-South community accomplished the following:

Led by the Education & Outreach Manager, Felicia Peat, WKNO PBS Kids and WKNO's Teacher Teacher has gained grant funded project support. The goal to engage and serve children in the communities where they live throughout Shelby County with special emphasis in the 38127, 38126, 38106, 38109 and 38116 zip code areas of underserved communities. WKNO's Teacher Teacher has partnered with the Memphis Public Libraries with virtual parent and child workshops. WKNO's Teacher Teacher promotes literacy with her **Book Adventures** readings presented on WKNO-TV's Facebook page. Monday through Friday mornings at 8:00 a.m. WKNO's Teacher Teacher and friends read a children's book, on Tuesdays at 1:00 p.m. she presents a math lesson called **Math Minutes**, and on Thursdays at 1:00 p.m. she presents a science lesson called **Silly Science**.

WKNO-TV Channel 10 in partnership with all PBS stations across Tennessee support the Tennessee Department of Education's "**Teaching Tennessee**" with a dedicated block of programming during our weekday morning PBS Kids lineup from 9:00 a.m. through 11:00 a.m. on WKNO Channel 10. Included in the "**Teaching Tennessee**" curriculum are ten **Math Minute** modules by WKNO's Teacher Teacher. They have been nominated for a Public Media Award.

In January 2020, WKNO-FM News Director Christopher Blank was named Senior Producer at The University of Memphis' Institute for Public Service Reporting providing WKNO News with collaborative stories. The reports were awarded national recognition.

WKNO-FM continued to provide classical music during the pandemic providing a respite from the news of the day.

In July 2020 WKNO TV Channel 10 for the first time hosted a Live online event. The event was in partnership with We Are Memphis. WKNO TV aired **The Little Tea Shop** and immediately followed the presentation with a Live online chat with the independent filmmaker Molly Wexler and Suhair Lauck, the owner of The Little Tea Shop, a much-loved, local restaurant owner.

In 2020 and 2021 WKNO-TV partnered with Indie Memphis, to present a broadcast of **Indie TV: Local Short Films from Indie Memphis** with a live online chat with filmmakers and panelists. The broadcast showcased recent short films by local filmmakers featured at the Indie Memphis Film Festival.

In October of 2020 WKNO TV Channel 10 in partnership with the PBS series **Age of Nature** presented three online virtual events. Each event previewed a short video produced by WKNO's Bard Cole about the topic being featured with panel discussion and questions from attendees. On Saturday October 3 the topic was with the Wolf River Conservancy on water conservation, on October 10 the topic was with The Overton Park Conservancy on Bird Watching in Memphis, and on October 17 the topic was with Memphis Tilth on community gardening and community empowerment.

In conjunction with **cityCurrent**, the 7th Annual **SPARK Awards** aired on WKNO Channel 10 in December 2020. Pandemic safety guidelines made this awards program presented with hosts social distancing and recorded acceptances. The Awards show celebrated the service of individuals, organizations, and corporations in the Mid-South in 13 categories.

In addition, the pandemic created unique opportunities with Arts organizations all across the Mid-South. WKNO-TV and WKNO-FM became the preferred venue to share programs and annual events with viewers and listeners when in-person events could not happen. A stronger bond has been established with the Arts, their patrons and our viewers, listeners, and Members.

WKNO-TV/FM History

On May 26, 1953, The Memphis Community Television Foundation was chartered under the laws of the State of Tennessee, as “a nonprofit corporation created for the purpose of enhancing the educational and cultural opportunities of the community through the development, ownership, and operation of a noncommercial, educational television station.” As a result of the Foundation’s activities, WKNO-TV went on the air on June 25, 1956.

On November 4, 1970, the Foundation charter was amended to permit the Foundation to engage in forms of electronic communication other than non-commercial television.

As a result, WKNO-FM (91.1) went on the air with an abbreviated schedule in March of 1972, and a full schedule on April 1, 1972. WKNO moved to 900 Getwell Road on The University of Memphis South Campus, in May of 1979. On June 15, 1980, WKNO dedicated the building to its founding chairman, Julian B. Bondurant, in a live televised ceremony. The public was invited to participate in this event entitled Dedication Day on the Grounds. The building from then on would be known as the Julian B. Bondurant Building.

With the move to a new building, the Board of Trustees determined that concerted efforts should be undertaken to upgrade the station’s broadcast and production facilities. The actual raising of capital funds was envisioned in 1976, and in 1979, a Capital Development Committee was formed to develop a plan to raise the necessary funds. This ambitious effort was accomplished during the years of 1980 through 1983, resulting in a capital fund in excess of \$3 million, which since has been augmented by the successful acquisition of several federal facilities grants. A change in name from Memphis Community Television Foundation to The Mid-South Public Communications Foundation was proposed in 1989. This change, suggested for the purpose of reflecting the full scope of the Foundation’s activities, became effective on August 1, 1989. The Foundation’s charter remained essentially the same: “a non-profit corporation created for the purpose of enhancing the educational and cultural opportunities of the community through the development, ownership, and operation of a telecommunications system of non-commercial, educational radio and television stations.”

August 3, 2004, marked the completion of the first two phases of WKNO-TV’s Digital Transition Plan originally adopted by the Board of Trustees in March of 1999. With the sign-on of WKNODT, WKNO successfully completed all of the FCC-mandated requirements.



In August 2009, construction on the WKNO Digital Media Center was completed, and the station moved its operations to 7151 Cherry Farms Road in Cordova, TN.

On February 16, 2017, WKNO-TV launched its third digital channel, WKNO3 PBS Kids Channel (10.3). The WKNO3 PBS Kids Channel devotes 24 hours per day to curriculum based, award winning children’s programming that is the foundation for the continuation of our children’s initiative and is available on smart phones, livestreamed on wkno.org, computers and tablets.

WKNO-TV celebrated 65 years on the air on June 25, 2021.

WKNO-FM celebrated 49 years on April 1, 2021 .

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS
Financial Report

WKNO raised \$6.2 million in operating revenue, with the local community continuing to be the largest source of income at 67%. Federal and state grants made up 33% of annual support. Locally raised funds came from development activities including contributions, corporate and institutional sponsorships, online auctions, educational programs and special events. Other income included entrepreneurial activities such as production grants, contract services, rental income, and program royalties. WKNO received grants from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), the State of Tennessee, and local foundations. WKNO received government stabilizations grants that helped meet the financial impact of the pandemic. Each year our financial statements are audited by a local, independent CPA firm. These audited financial statements can be found on our website at wkno.org. Volunteers continue to be an integral part in helping WKNO reach its financial goals. WKNO’s experienced staff is made up of 33 full-time and 8 part-time employees. Of the experienced staff we have, one-third of our staff have been working for WKNO for more than 20 years.



Photo Credit: Jacob Brüner



WKNO TV/FM
Facilities/Technical Report

WKNO TV/FM operates from the Digital Media Center located at 7151 Cherry Farms Road in Cordova. The transmitters are located at 7192 Raleigh LaGrange Road, a little more than a mile from the studios, and are interconnected by a microwave system. The transmitting tower is 1,114 feet tall, making it one of the tallest in the Memphis area. WKNO-TV (WKNO-HD, WKNO2 AND WKNO KIDS) operates on channels 10.1, 10.2, and 10.3 at an effective radiated power of 835,000 watts, providing 60-mile radius coverage area.

All stations operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year serving a population in excess of 1.65 million people. WKNO-TV is seen on over 50 cable TV systems as well as DirecTV and the Dish Network, and YouTube TV.

WKNO-TV broadcasts three unique program streams and a 1Mb/s (Megabit per second) secured datacasting stream.

- WKNO-HD (10.1) is made up of high definition, widescreen programs.



Photo Credit: Jacob Brüner

- WKNO2 (10.2) provides “WORLD SERVICE” programming along with repeat telecasts of selected programs initially broadcast on Channel 10.1, as well as the “Tennessee Channel”. WKNO2 (10.2) is transmitted in wide-screen standard definition format.

- WKNO along with other public broadcasting stations across Tennessee televised daily live coverage of the Tennessee Legislature while in session.

- WKNO PBS Kids 24/7 (10.3) provides children’s programming all day every day. WKNO PBS Kids is also available on digital channels on-line. WKNO3 (10.3) is transmitted in wide-screen standard definition format.



WKNO is engaged in a Datacasting Pilot Project funded through a grant from the Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security. A 1Mb/s carve-out of our 19.39 Mb/s transport stream has been committed to the project. The Datacasting Network commenced in May, 2019 and the pilot ended June 30, 2021. Tennessee PBS Stations are now working with the Tennessee Department of Education on At Home Learning and datacasting for Education.

WKNO-FM operates on 91.1 with an effective radiated power of 100,000 watts. The WKNO-FM tower is 584 feet tall giving the station a 75-mile radius coverage area. In addition to West Tennessee, the station can be heard in many areas of Arkansas and North Mississippi. WKNO-FM also operates in the HD radio format. This provides three very high quality digital radio program services.



- HD-1 is a duplicate of the traditional FM signal of WKNO-FM.
- HD-2 offers additional classical music and news programming.
- HD-3 provides listeners 24/7 BBC news coverage.

WKNP-FM, located in Jackson, Tennessee broadcasting as a satellite of WKNO-FM – operates on 90.1 with an effective radiated power of 18,000 watts. Tower space is leased from a commercial broadcaster for the WKNP-FM transmitter and antenna.

WKNO-FM and WKNP-FM are on the air 365 days per year. The stations broadcast 24 hours a day providing over 2600 hours of programming, including the HD services on WKNO-FM in Memphis.

The WKNO App launched in late November 2019. The WKNO App provides streaming access to listen and watch WKNO Public Media radio and television on the go, pause and rewind live audio, and view the program schedule all at once! The WKNO App provides access to explore On Demand content, search for programs, bookmark a program for later, and wake up to WKNO with the alarm clock. The WKNO App provides access to WKNO Public Media anywhere cell service exists.



WKNO-FM Report

The WKNO-FM Stations are members of NPR, Public Radio Exchange (PRX), and American Public Media (APM) – all providers of award-winning national programs. Local regularly



scheduled productions include **Friday Live Lunch from Playhouse on the Square, IRIS Orchestra Previews, The Memphis Symphony Radio Hour, and Opera Memphis Previews.** During the pandemic radio also played recordings from the Memphis Symphony Orchestra and IRIS Orchestra, alternating Friday afternoons at noon.

WKNO-FM is pleased to showcase the vibrant Mid-South Arts community with weekday interviews at 9:01 a.m. and 3:50 p.m. on **Checking on the Arts** with hosts Darel Snodgrass and Kacky Walton. In the course of a year, they will produce some 500 interviews. The volume of interviews decreased during the pandemic because many performing arts groups had no performances, but as the arts community has found new ways to connect with their audiences, the interview schedule started getting back to pre-pandemic levels. The pandemic also required new methods of conducting these interviews; most are now via phone and Zoom rather than live in-studio, maintaining safety protocols.

Weekly weekday features air during NPR's **Morning Edition** and **All Things Considered** news magazines. The locally produced segments include **John Malmo Business Commentary, Spotlight on Lifelong Learning, The Weekly Dish** with renowned chef Jennifer Chandler, **Life Matters** with Church Health, and **IRIS Music Minute** with Conductor Michael Stern.

WKNO News worked hard to keep up with the many evolving stories in our community — from the pandemic to social justice. The collaboration with the Daily Memphian — through spot news and COVID reports. In January 2020, Christopher Blank was also named Senior Producer at the University of Memphis' Institute for Public Service Reporting, which has helped present more collaborative stories from award-winning journalist Marc Perrusquia. It also resulted in a fully funded, paid journalism internship for WKNO. Caleb Suggs became the first University of Memphis student to win a major journalism award from the William Randolph Hearst Foundation for a story produced by the station.

Through a partnership with the Institute for Public Service Reporting at the University of Memphis we continue to work on investigative pieces on a radio-television series about cold-case civil rights cases.

Perhaps our biggest challenge was in February 2021 when both Christopher Blank and reporter Katie Riordan were trapped in their homes during the major winter storm but managed to produce and air multiple daily stories about the subsequent public emergency. Our reporters have contributed multiple times to NPR newscasts including Juneteenth celebrations, the mass shooting at the Collierville Kroger and flash flooding risks in the Mid South.

Local political analyst Otis Sanford has joined the weekly lineup. The WKNO-FM Stations' program schedule is composed of NPR offerings such as **It's Been a Minute with Sam Sanders** and **Wait Wait . . . Don't Tell Me!** And selected programs from PRX and APM like **Marketplace** and **The Splendid Table.** Nearly



WAIT WAIT... DON'T TELL ME!
FROM NPR® & WBEZ® CHICAGO



2000 hours of the program schedule is **Classical Music** hosted by Director of Radio Darel Snodgrass and Music Coordinator Kacky Walton.

WKNO-FM embarked on a major studio equipment program, replacing obsolete automation and streaming systems with new, state-of-the-art equipment. These systems are more reliable and require much less day-to-day input. They can also be accessed remotely, so any problems that arise can be handled from remote locations.

WKNO-FM 91.1/Memphis and WKNP-FM 90.1/Jackson serve the greater Mid-South community. Additional programming is available through the use of technology of HD Radio. The three services feature **NPR News/Information** programs, **Classical Music** and the **BBC World News** 24 hours a day. WKNO-FM's schedule is live streamed at wknofm.org which also features local, national and world news. The WKNO App has made WKNO and NPR streams, podcasts, local news and other services available anywhere cell service exists.

WKNO-TV Report

WKNO-TV broadcasts the national program service from the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) with 54 hours of early education programming each week, 3 hours of daily news programming, and 3 hours of national prime-time programming. Thursday and Saturday evenings contain local/regional programming and acquisitions. WKNO2 broadcasts 12 hours per day of the WORLD service, TN State Legislative coverage from January through April every year, how-to programming from April through December, and the TN Channel on weekends, consisting of shared programming from all 6 Tennessee Public Television stations. Children's educational programming continues to air 24/7 on WKNO3 PBS Kids.

Core PBS programming included **Masterpiece**, **Nature**, **Antiques Roadshow**, **American Experience**, **NOVA**, **Frontline**, **Great Performances**, **American Masters**, **Finding Your Roots**, **PBS NewsHour**, and many public affairs series. High profile special programming in FY21 included **Hemingway**, a new series from Ken Burns; **By One Vote** on the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment; **American Portrait**, for which WKNO received a production grant to create companion programming & engagement; **Black Church: This is Our Story**, new series by Henry Louis Gates Jr and **Philly D.A.** **Masterpiece** presented a new series reboot of **All Creatures Great & Small**, as well as new seasons of **Call the Midwife**, **Grantchester**, and **Endeavour**.

In keeping with the mission of public television, several programs were presented in response to current national events, delivering critical information and starting dialogues in many communities affected by the events. Programs that aired in FY21 included **coverage of the 2020 Election including political conventions and Presidential and Vice-Presidential debates**; **Race in America** programming continued in response to social justice events. **Frontline** continued investigative coverage on the COVID 19 pandemic and vaccine, the 2020 Election and the subsequent political divide. **NOVA** and **Nature** continues to cover current developments in scientific world.



EVERYONE HAS A STORY. TELL YOURS.



Added to the PBS core programming are programs produced or acquired locally, and programs distributed by American Public Television (APT), National Educational Telecommunications Association (NETA), Executive Program Service (EPS), and BBC Worldwide.

WKNO's news lineup includes **The PBS NewsHour**, **BBC News America**, **BBC World News**, **Washington Week**, **PBS NewsHour Weekend**, **Amanpour and Company** and a variety of public affairs programs.

In addition to television broadcasts, WKNO provides content for viewers online at www.wkno.org. WKNO Members also have the benefit of thousands of hours of past PBS programming via the **WKNO Passport** portal. Viewers can now livestream WKNO's programming via the wkno.org website, WKNO App or the YouTubeTV subscription streaming service.



LOCAL PRODUCTIONS

WKNO continues to produce three weekly series **Behind the Headlines**, **The Family Plot: Gardening in the Mid-South**, and **The Best Times**. Two monthly series **The SPARK** and **A Conversation With** also continued in FY21.



Other Specials are produced annually or as topics present themselves, like **The SPARK Awards 2020**, **Indie TV: Local Short Films from Indie Memphis 2021**, **Hollywood: Legacy of a Memphis Dump**, **Advance Directives TN**, and **Fight to Vote: Black Voter Suppression in TN**.

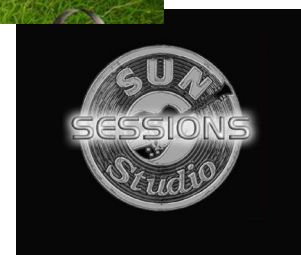


Due to the pandemic, many local organizations collaborated with WKNO to present the programming that could not take place in person. Programs included **Society of Entrepreneurs 2020 and 2021**, **Memphis Soul Prize**, **Nutcracker: A Gift from Ballet Memphis**, **Stax Music Academy Live** (20th anniversary special), **Orpheum High School Musical Theatre Awards 2020** and **Charley Pride: Star of Hope** (from NWMS Community Foundation's Crystal Ball). WKNO also presented **Ballet Season**, an independent film from Steve Ross on a pivotal year in Ballet Memphis history.



WKNO NATIONAL PRESENTATIONS

New in FY21: **Family Plot: Gardening in the Mid-South** increased national exposure as APT added the series to the CREATE schedule, carried by majority of PBS stations. WKNO continues to represent new seasons of recurring series: **Sun Studio Sessions**, **Classic Gospel**, **Burt Wolf: Travels & Traditions**, and **Burt Wolf: A Taste of Freedom**.



KIDS PROGRAMMING

WKNO PBS Kids, our 24/7 children's programming service continues to thrive under the leadership of Education Manager Felicia Peat. In addition to the broadcast on 10.3 and Comcast 912, WKNO PBS Kids is also available as a streaming service online and on YouTube TV subscription service. The 24/7 broadcast is strengthened by community engagement activities and collaborations with other Early Childhood Educators. In FY21, many activities pivoted to online engagement, like weekly **Book**



Adventures, Silly Science, and Math Minutes on Facebook, hosted by WKNO’s Teacher Teacher and special guests.

As schools continued to be closed due to COVID protocols, WKNO’s outreach activities expanded online and in conjunction with the At Home Learning initiative between the Tennessee’s Public Television Stations and the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE). A two-hour block of TDOE lessons and interstitials continue to be broadcast every weekday. During the summer, WKNO added Camp TV and Let’s Learn programming to the curriculum. Statewide efforts continue to involve to improve children’s access to education while learning at home.

PBS Kids added two new series in FY21 – **Elinor Wonders Why** and **Donkey Hodie**

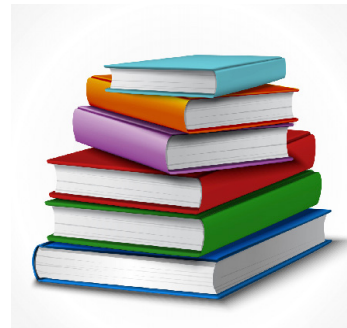


Photo Credit: Jacob Brüner

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

WKNO-FM Book Club

Each month the WKNO-FM Book Club meets over a Dutch treat dinner to discuss a selected title. Fiction and non-fiction, literary and mass-market, the only criteria is that the book and/or author has been featured by NPR. In 2019 the Book Club had a New York Times best-selling author as a guest at one of their meetings. The Book Club, in conjunction with the Germantown Public Library, chose a book to read that was suggested by the NEA as part of their “The Big Read” program. In 2020 to follow pandemic safety guidelines the Book Club began meeting via monthly Zoom sessions. Even with the meetings being held virtually, the Book Club was still able to include one of its selected authors in a Zoom meeting. The Book Club is promoted through social media, e-mail, and the WKNO-FM website.



Gallery Ten Ninety One

Gallery Ten Ninety-One, the art gallery located in the WKNO lobby has been a popular venue for artist exhibitions, booking up well over a year in advance. Gallery Ten Ninety-One hosted lobby exhibits by Judith Weintraub, Memphis/Germantown Art League, Rural Route Artists (Agnes Stark, Ellen and Butch Boehm, Deborah Fagan Carpenter), WinterArts preview, Carl Scott, Bartlett Art Association, Memphis Camera Club, Memphis Colored Pencil Society, and Bruce McGee. From March to October 2020 the lobby exhibits were put on hold to follow pandemic safety guidelines. In November 2020 the Gallery Ten-Ninety-One art exhibitions became virtual on the wkno.org web site. Some of the artists featured virtually include Joe Sullivan, Bartlett Art Association, Tennessee Craft Southwest, Artists’ Link, FourSights group show, Carter Davis, and Mid-South Artists League.



Cook LIVE with Lindia Bastianich

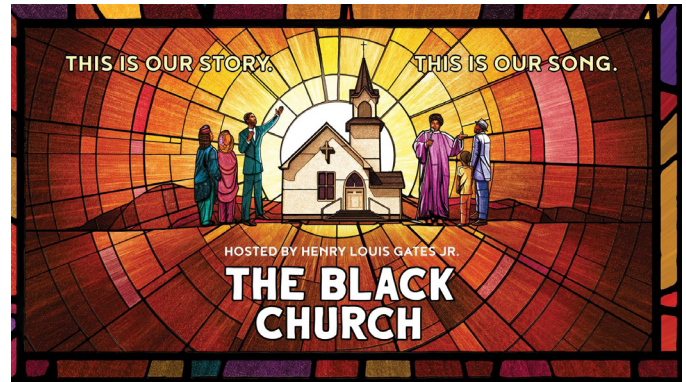
In May 2021 WKNO-TV hosted a virtual event to **Cook LIVE with Lidia Bastianich**, Award-Winning Celebrity Chef, Author, and Host of **Lidia’s Kitchen**. The virtual culinary experience included a Q&A section moderated by Chef Julia Collin Davison from America’s Test Kitchen, where Chef Lidia demonstrated how to create a favorite beverage, and then presented a live cooking lesson that participants could follow.



WKNO-TV Virtual Events

During the lock-down WKNO-TV partnered with programmers to provide added value for our members and viewers with virtual live events. The Virtual Live Events included series previews,

cast interviews, panel discussions and Q&A opportunities. We promoted the Live Virtual Events with e-blasts, in the e-newsletter, in social media, and website mentions. Invitations provided an RSVP link for our members and viewers. The major series included **The Black Church: This Is Our Story, This Is Our Song** hosted by Henry Louis Gates, Jr., **Atlantic Crossing on Masterpiece** and **Hemingway: A Film by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick**. Additional virtual live events included **PBS Books Author Talk** and **The Library of Congress National Book Festival**.



WKNO TV also created Live Virtual Events with local programs. In July 2020 WKNO TV Channel 10 hosted a Live online event in partnership with We Are Memphis. WKNO TV broadcast the locally produced program, **The Little Tea Shop** and immediately followed the broadcast with a Live online chat with the independent filmmaker Molly Wexler and Suhair Lauck, the owner of The Little Tea Shop, a much-loved, local restaurant owner.

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In 2020 and 2021 WKNO TV partnered with Indie Memphis with a broadcast program featuring local independent short films with a live virtual panel discussion after the broadcast

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