1. Describe your overall goals and approach to address identified community issues, needs, and interests through your station’s vital local services, such as multiplatform long and short-form content, digital and in-person engagement, education services, community information, partnership support, and other activities, and audiences you reached or new audiences you engaged.

WMNF participated in a multitude of community events, outreach, and live music, events in 2023. Some of these include the Dunedin Art Harvest, Shruti Foundation East-West Music & Dance Festival, Tampa Bay Veg Fest, St. Petersburg Science Fest, and the Gulfport GeckoFest. It is a goal to be present in as many different cities in our listening area as possible. The station and our Diversity and Inclusion Committee have expanded our Mission Calendar, highlighting specific community issues (for example, anti-war and human rights or environmental issues) and non-profits doing work surrounding those topics to address on-air each month. WMNF also works with local non-profits to inform our listeners of essential services and deadlines for things like Affordable Care Act open enrollment periods. 88.5FM continues to use technology to provide content on platforms where listeners want to receive it: terrestrial radio for those in our broadcast range, our website, wmnf.org, phone apps, and through social media platforms for those who interact with us digitally. Our HD2 channel continues to be programmed by people of color, providing locally produced, wide-ranging, culturally relevant, and diverse music and public affairs programming. We now employ two professionals to manage social media across the wide-ranging landscape of options. WMNF’s Community Advisory Board, as well as our Diversity and Volunteer Committees, help us define important local issues for our listeners, so we can better inform our programming choices. Members and guests to those committee meetings are encouraged to turn the station’s attention to subjects of interest within the local community. As of October 2022, we have been holding our meetings hybrid (face to face and via Zoom) which allows for more participation by stakeholders. For more than 44 years, WMNF has maintained a strong mandate to open our doors and airways to community members who do not have access or voices in mainstream media. With the exception of our news department, all of the WMNF programmers are volunteers from the community, with more than 125 individuals on the air weekly. WMNF has approximately 10 – 12 hours of programming, both midday and weekend, with open phone lines and e-mail access to the hosts, which allow community members to engage publicly through our airwaves. Our news and music departments have developed an internship program with two area universities, one community college, and several high school participants. Many of them continue producing original content for broadcast and online posting. Interns assist with music, news, live broadcast TV programs. Our website posts community information and our staff and volunteers continue to strengthen and build relationships with a variety of organizations throughout the Tampa Bay area. We continue our partnerships with the University Area Community Development Corporation and other local non-profits. New and renewed alliances include local arts organizations, the Glazer Children’s Museum and Sanding Ovations – Treasure Island. We continue to strengthen relationships with the University of Tampa, University of South Florida, Hillsborough Community College, AARP, Gasparilla Music Foundation, and many other local organizations. Some of the objectives of these partnerships include active high school and college intern programs; support and access for local musicians; training for retired and/or senior volunteers; training for high school and college students to build audio technology and multimedia skills.
2. Describe key initiatives and the variety of partners with whom you collaborated, including other public media outlets, community nonprofits, government agencies, educational institutions, the business community, teachers and parents, etc. This will illustrate the many ways you’re connected across the community and engaged with other important organizations in the area.

WMNF enjoys a strong and lengthy partnership with the Tampa Bay Black Heritage organization, assisting in programming, publicity, and planning their annual events. WMNF also continues work with the Tampa Organization of Black Affairs by supporting their various initiatives. WMNF has been participating in the Annual Tampa Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Parade on MLK Day for decades and we continued this support in January 2024. We are long-time sponsors of the neighborhood Belmont Heights Little League, annually paying $500 to purchase their uniforms. We have also planned and are now delivering a podcast training class at the Boys & Girls Club of Tampa, which will lead to the production of a 30-minute radio show to be aired locally and distributed nationally. WMNF meet with Career Source Tampa Bay, to participate in their Summer internship program, highlighting opportunities in radio and broadcasting. We also hosted a group of students from Camp Fire Sunshine, a Florida non-profit where high school students visited the radio station to learn about careers in broadcasting and volunteer time (another visit is scheduled for this summer). WMNF has established collaborations with the River Tower Festival, to raise awareness to save the Sulphur Springs Water Tower and plans to participate in the Tampa 2024 Eco-Fest, and both the Tampa Diversity Pride Parade, and the St Pete Pride Parade. WMNF continues collaboration with Mi Gente, Mi Pueblo, a Latino community non-profit arts group who uses our facilities for meetings and writing workshops. We provided our space for a Latin Open House, with film screenings, and an open healing discussion circle. The station was again a media sponsor for the Shruti Foundation East-West Music and Dance Festival and provided a stage announcer and outreach for this community event, featuring vendors and multi-cultural performers.

3. What impact did your key initiatives and partnerships have in your community? Describe any known measurable impact, such as increased awareness, learning or understanding about particular issues. Describe indicators of success, such as connecting people to needed resources or strengthening conversational ties across diverse neighborhoods. Did a partner see an increase in requests for related resources? Please include direct feedback from a partner(s) or from a person(s) served.

WMNF’s partnership with the University Area Community Development Corporation has a long-standing and successful collaboration. The UACDC is located in an area in Tampa, and 95% of those in their service area live below poverty levels. The UACDC works to improve the economic, educational, and social levels of the community through youth programs, adult education, and resource assistance. WMNF’s strong relationship with the organization has allowed the UACDC to expand its services to youth to include collaborations with the station. The station has participated in their Caribbean Festival, and multi-cultural Hispanic Recipe event and looks forward to participating in the 2024 Uptown Music Festival, a fundraiser for the UACDC, to further its growth. WMNF continues partnering with Blanketing Tampa Bay, a group that provides food, material aid, and shelter to our neighbors in need, collecting items for distribution within our community. The Diversity and Inclusion Mission Calendar gives monthly focus to 12 or more important mission-driven topics, in both news coverage and musical
recognition of the themes. Living Mirror Playback Theater hosts a monthly Community Talk-Back and Improv Show in the WMNF Live Music Studio at 7pm on the 4th Friday of every month. The monthly subject of each event is to be based on our Mission Calendar, covering topics such as homelessness or mental health, and more. We are able to highlight and discuss often-overlooked subject matter in new ways. This interactive experience allows free expression and sharing of concerns in a creative manner, where participants feel supported. Collaboration with Boys &Girls Club of Tampa led to the production of an episode of a nationally distributed radio show, “Sprouts.”

4. Please describe any efforts (e.g. programming, production, engagement activities) you have made to investigate and/or meet the needs of minority and other diverse audiences (including, but not limited to, new immigrants, people for whom English is a second language and illiterate adults) during Fiscal Year 2023, and any plans you have made to meet the needs of these audiences during Fiscal Year 2024. If you regularly broadcast in a language other than English, please note the language broadcast.

WMNF methodically improves our efforts to engage with minority and diverse communities through our events, programming, and outreach. In programming, 34 of the 79 locally produced shows are presented by or co-hosted by people of color. WMNF has three HD channels: HD3 “The Source”, dedicated to news and public affairs. We continue to develop original programming for our HD2 channel, “Urban Café” – our new streaming platform produced by people of color who highlight classic R&B, soul, reggae, and hip hop music as well as exclusive interviews and locally produced public affairs shows. WMNF’s 3-hour morning drive show continues to have an African American host, one of five, who does their own programming for music and interview choices. We’ve recently added an Indian music show, and a LGBTQ+ news program to the main broadcast schedule. HD4 – “New Sounds” plays music that is in WMNF’s Hot Box (featured new releases) and other new music, plus we are constantly adding original programming. WMNF has returned to hosting in-person open houses, to which we will invite our area audience and community members to attend. We celebrated Juneteenth 2023 with an event featuring a potluck dinner and storytelling. The station had a huge 50th Anniversary of Hip Hop Open House celebration, which won a Creative Loafing Best of the Bay award. WMNF has a popular midday show, True Talk, which focuses on issues centered on the Middle East and the US, and its hosts are from Egypt and Palestine. We also have a long-running Jewish music and culture program, Sunday Simcha. We have three Latino programs and those hosts are active within the LatinX community. They are helping us reach even deeper into underserved areas within our broadcast range and beyond, bringing all voices to the table. The station continues to develop our LGTBQ+ show, which now features three hosts active in the local community. The Big Gay Radio Show continues to win local awards. WMNF continues our collaboration with the Tampa Bay Refugee Task Force by supporting their "Welcoming Week" at the University of South Florida. Boys & Girls Club collaboration led to the construction of an audio recording studio in new neighborhood facility for youth and the local Black community where WMNF will remain integral in training and program development. We recently hired a Communications Manager who is bilingual so WMNF can develop promote to and receive more feedback from the local LatinX community.
CPB funding is critical to WMNF’s ability to serve our community. The Community Service Grant (CSG) is vital to the station’s financial and organizational stability. The CSG makes it possible for WMNF to provide news and information, public service, community outreach, and public engagement. The CSG is also fundamental in our ability to create culture. The CSG allows WMNF to pay for national programming services such as NPR, Pacifica, and Associated Press, as well as our tower rental. The CSG also provides funding for AP wire services, which provide local information related to weather events and weather emergencies. The funding also partially provides for our enhanced EAS (Emergency Alert System). The CSG is integral to delivering locally-produced news. WMNF listeners and our News Department rely on Pacifica, in particular “Democracy Now!” hosted by journalist Amy Goodman. The News Department often uses pieces from “Democracy Now!” in parts of our programming to take an in-depth view into the top stories of the day. The News Department also relies daily on pieces and coverage from NPR, the AP, and News Service of Florida to keep our audience informed and up to date on stories that directly affect their lives. CPB funding is necessary for WMNF’s ability to pay for NPR, Pacifica, the AP, our tower rent, and the utilities that provide access and support to these vital services. Loss of CPB funding would be perilous to the station’s on-air news and information, and severely diminish our capacity to serve the community. Such a huge loss would amount to nearly 7 percent of WMNF’s operating budget and immediately reduce our local news coverage. As a community-licensed station, not having CPB funding would reduce our capacity to serve and engage targeted local communities and force us to stridently cut back many of our community engagement events. If WMNF suddenly became much less valuable to our community as a source of news, music, community engagement, and culture that listeners depend on daily, then that would not only hurt our loyal audience but also create a major void in our region. The WMNF local listenership has grown post-pandemic as more people have relocated to our area, connecting them closely with WMNF’s human touch that provides cultural enrichment, relevant news, and a direct line to the station. Most of our news and music on-air personnel are live in the studio taking calls and engaging on social media. The elimination of CPB funding would irreparably damage a station that has served its community well for 44 years should we lose our capacity to continue to provide such service. Loss of CPB funding would likely endanger the community as well. WMNF has been consistent and reliable in its coverage of COVID-19 as well as live coverage of extreme weather events, even responding live on air with essential information requested by listeners, like when the top wind speeds will be arriving during hurricanes. WMNF was also prepared to operate 24/7 when Hurricane Ian and other major storms hit the west coast of Florida including our listening areas. We remain the air because we have the financial stability and infrastructure to keep the station operable further proving our uninterrupted value to the community. Because of the CSG funding WMNF receives, we are able to perform timely, essential maintenance in preparation for hurricanes so that we have never gone off air either our broadcast channels or streams. We are also able to stay connected to state-wide resources like the Florida Public Radio Emergency Network and all News Directors in the Florida Public Media network to provide listeners with essential information as dangerous storms move through our area. As the CPB grant helps fund NPR and Associated Press, and rental at our tower, WMNF was able to provide critical emergency coverage before, during, and after the storm. Not being able to afford such news services nor
having the ability to pay for the tower would have rendered us ineffective during weather emergencies. In crisis and in better times, WMNF needs this important CSG to maintain the strong standard that makes us a beacon in our listening area and a model for other community and public radio stations. CPB funding helps WMNF fulfill that standard of grassroots locally-produced news, music, and community events which have now resumed since our last report.