

An aerial photograph of the Milwaukee skyline at sunset. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue. The city lights are beginning to glow, with many windows in the buildings illuminated. The architecture is a mix of modern glass skyscrapers and older brick buildings. A river is visible in the middle ground, and a bridge crosses it. In the foreground, there are rooftops of buildings, some with HVAC units and other equipment. The overall scene is a vibrant and detailed view of the city.

**WUWM 89.7**

MILWAUKEE'S **npr**

# ANNUAL REPORT

FISCAL YEAR 2020

JULY 1, 2019 - JUNE 30, 2020



# Message from the General Manager



**The reporting work that has been done over this past year reflects our level of commitment to you our listeners. I promise you that this commitment will never waver, our work is too important to you and this community.”**

Has it really been a year, already!

What a crazy year it has been. Between COVID-19, Black Lives Matter and the elections, the events that shaped our lives this past year never seemed to stop.

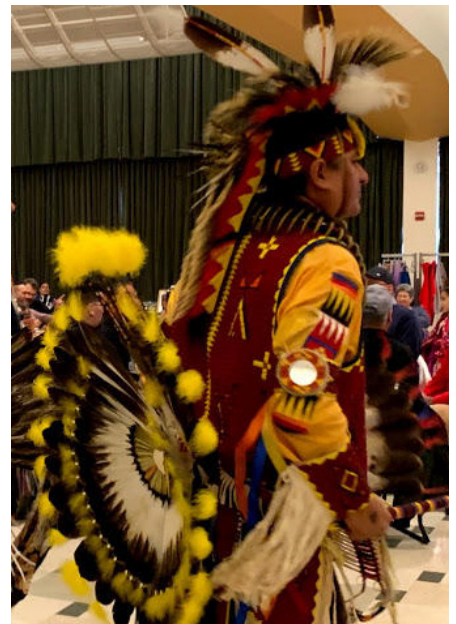
I started my new job here at WUWM on January 13, 2020, taking over from my friend and colleague, Dave Edwards. While Dave was settling into retirement, I was settling into my new job as the station's General Manager. After only eight weeks, everything changed and all management and operations of the station moved remote, all within a few days. Through all the turmoil and uncertainty of those early pandemic days, everyone here at WUWM continued to serve the community with distinction. Our staff's commitment to excellence and their passion to report the news accurately never wavered, no matter how tough the assignment. The conditions that they have had to work in over the past year were akin to covering a war. It didn't matter whether they had to turn a home broom closet into a makeshift studio, laptop balanced on their knees, or report on a protest march in-person with a six-foot boom mike in hand, trying to communicate with an interviewee through a face shield and a double mask. These were conditions that none of them trained for and certainly wasn't taught in journalism school. The reporting work that has been done over this past year reflects our level of commitment to you, our listeners. I promise you that this commitment will never waver, our work is too important to you and this community. While it has only been a year for me in this role, I've been honored to be part of this team and I look forward to many memorable years ahead.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Hess". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "John" and "Hess" being capitalized and prominent.

**John Hess**  
General Manager

# Highlights

*WUWM is known for its in-depth coverage of important issues facing our community. In addition to our regular reporting, WUWM News and Lake Effect regularly produce multi-part series that examine the environmental, educational, political and cultural issues facing the Milwaukee metro area.*



LEFT & RIGHT PHOTOS: ADOBE STOCK // MIDDLE: ANGELINA MOSHER SALAZAR

## Capitol Notes

This weekly series, which airs during *Morning Edition*, features WUWM reporter Marti Mikkelson and WisPolitics Editor JR Ross, who discuss highlights in Wisconsin politics.

## Bubbler Talk

*Bubbler Talk* puts listeners' curiosity front and center, answering questions about the Milwaukee area's people, places or culture. Our reporters received hundreds of questions and produced 18 pieces from listener-submitted asks.

## Beats Me

WUWM's beat reporters answer questions from listeners about issues that fall into their beat areas. Each beat reporter completes a report every other month. The stories air during *Morning Edition & Lake Effect*.

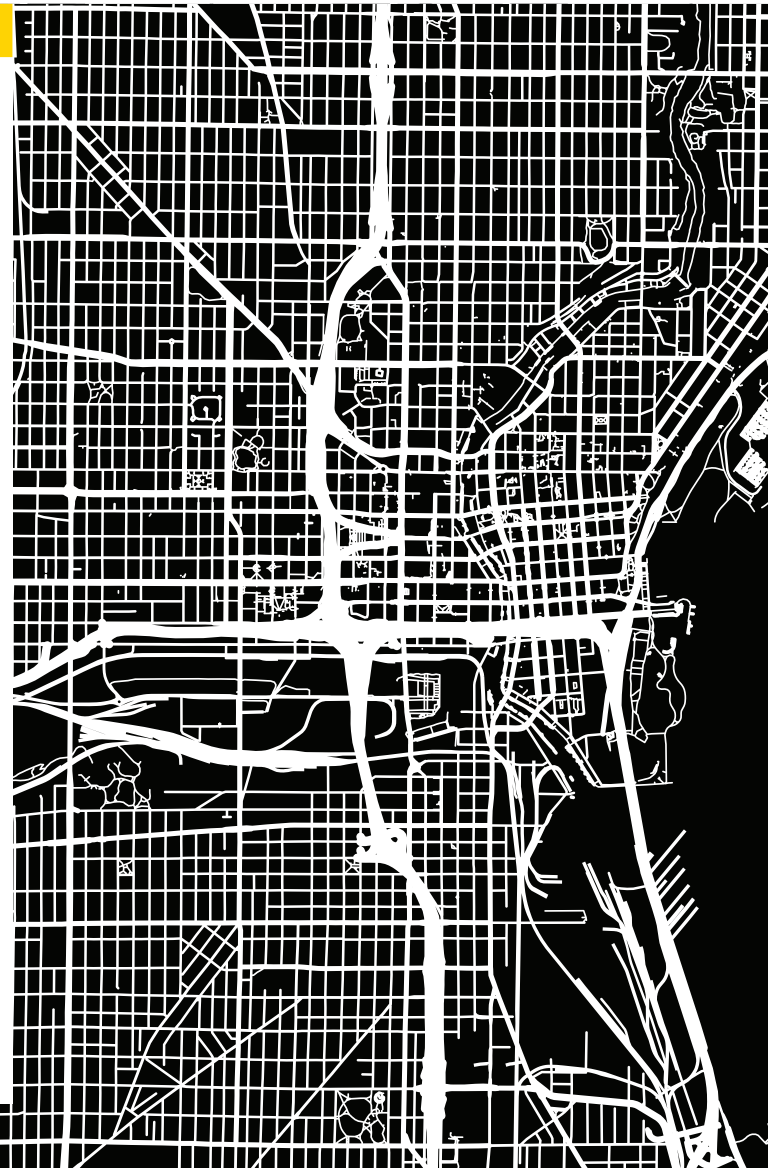
# 40

*awards were given to WUWM's Newsroom, Lake Effect program and website, including 6 first place honors, for stories and interviews broadcast in 2019 - 2020.*

## Listen MKE

Listen MKE is an ongoing community listening project created by WUWM 89.7 FM — Milwaukee’s NPR in collaborations with the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, Milwaukee PBS and the Milwaukee Public Library. The goal of this initiative is to understand what’s most important to people who live in Milwaukee’s north side neighborhoods and help fill information gaps. Listen MKE fosters inclusive communication and dialogue that helps make the community stronger. It’s what the journalism organization Journalism That Matters has called “civic communications.”

In early 2020, we conducted in-person events and coffee chats but have since switched over to a virtual series due to the coronavirus. Conversations take place on Facebook Live, and then air on Milwaukee PBS, on WUWM’s *Lake Effect* program, and are posted on the Journal Sentinel’s website. Previous conversations focused on Juneteenth celebrations and youth protest organizers. All of the conversations feature people who live and work on Milwaukee’s north side.



## Digital Growth

**276%**  
increase in  
unique visitors

**257%**  
increase in  
sessions

**244%**  
increase in  
pageviews

**187%**  
increase in  
streaming

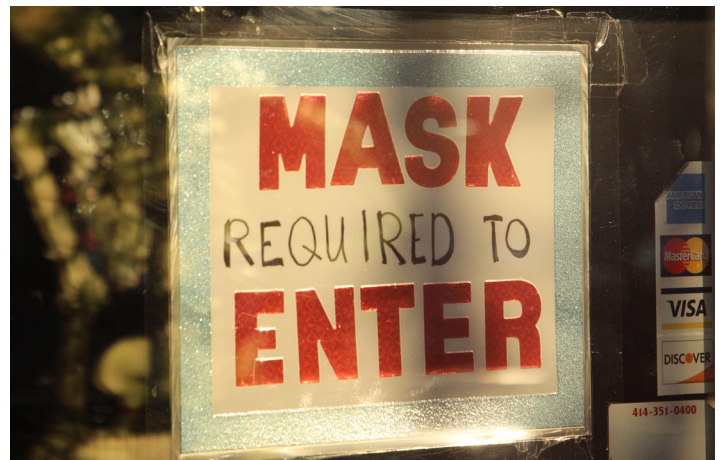
The first six months of 2020 saw tremendous growth in every measurable category for our digital platforms. In April 2020, WUWM.com had its largest month ever -- 440,321 users and 653,835 pageviews.

# A News Cycle Like No Other

*WUWM's newsroom pivoted in the first half of 2020 in order to accommodate an intense and sustained period of breaking daily news in three areas, which dominated the news for long periods and frequently overlapped: the coronavirus pandemic, demonstrations for racial justice and election coverage.*

## The COVID-19 Pandemic

The story of the coronavirus pandemic unfolded in Wisconsin as lawmakers and interest groups battled over health protocols and schools tried to figure out how to safely educate students – without statewide guidance on how best to do so. WUWM went into overdrive with local news coverage in order to keep listeners abreast of developments. We beefed up our digital offerings, creating a blog post featuring the latest updates on the most important stories. WUWM covered frequent briefings from state and local government. We reported on how educators had to adapt and change course as guidance from health officials evolved. Our news team did stories on how businesses and health care systems were adjusting operations, and we covered multiple additional angles of the story as COVID spread and impacted nearly every area of life.



TOP PHOTO: JACK HURBANIS // BOTTOM PHOTO: LAUREN SIGFUSSON



PHOTO: SAMER GHANI

## RACIAL INJUSTICE

### Elections

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Wisconsin held elections in February and April 2020. There was controversy over the decision to hold the presidential primary in April in the midst of the coronavirus, as many states chose to move their primaries. Wisconsin's decision prompted legal challenges and debate over the role of absentee ballots, access to the polls and safety at polling places. WUWM covered those issues in addition to following the presidential primary and other contests of local and statewide importance. Our reporters covered the long lines that sprouted up at the small number of Milwaukee polling places in April (staffing was down dramatically because of concerns over the coronavirus, resulting in the limited number of polling places). We also did stories about tracking cases of the coronavirus that may have been connected to the controversial election. WUWM reporters appeared on NPR programs with multiple stories about the primary election.

### DEMONSTRATIONS FOR RACIAL JUSTICE IGNITE IN WISCONSIN

In May 2020, protests against police treatment of people of color flared up in a number of Wisconsin cities, in the wake of George Floyd's death at the hands of Minneapolis police. Demonstrations continued for months and called attention to broader concerns about lack of diversity, equity and inclusion in society. WUWM reporters covered the protests, taking listeners to the scene of sometimes tense stand-offs with police, as well as vigils and events that focused on unity, education and prayer. We featured a variety of voices from people of all ages and backgrounds who were pushing for change. Demonstrations against police brutality and for social justice were among the biggest stories in May and June. WUWM's website was updated frequently with blog posts and other information that kept users up to date on developments.

# Community Events

*Engaging with our community directly helps WUWM better understand the people we are serving. WUWM hosted or sponsored over 12 events in the community throughout the year, including Lake Effect On-Site, Wisconsin 2020 and our newly launched series Listen MKE.*



PHOTO: AUDREY NOWAKOWSKI

Milwaukee Ballet Artistic Director Michael Pink speaking with Lake Effect's Bonnie North at the Lake Effect On-Site, which took place in the Third Ward on March 2, 2020.



## I'm An American

What does it mean to be an American for people from underrepresented groups in an era when civility and tolerance are sometimes in short supply?

Race and Ethnicity Reporter Teran Powell was inspired to explore this question after attending an Ex-Fabula workshop. That inspiration grew into WUWM's *I'm An American* series where she interviewed a diverse group of individuals about their experience. The series was selected for UWM's Common Reading for incoming freshman and held a live Q&A entitled "I'm An American: The Nuisances of Identity."





## Wisconsin 2020

A collaboration with the Journal Sentinel & Ziedler Group

The Journal Sentinel & WUWM's "Wisconsin 2020" collaboration teamed up with Zeidler Group to bring community-driven election questions to life in a community engagement series.

To kick off the series, we hosted a community forum at Birch in Wauwatosa in the fall of 2019. In February 2020, we held our first discussion on the Milwaukee Public Schools Referendum at Good City Brewing.



PHOTO: KAREN OLIVIA PHOTOGRAPHY.

## A Scandal In Colombia

Listening Session With Angelina Mosher Salazar

More than 10 years ago, a military scandal rocked Colombia. The killing of innocent civilians still haunts many families to this day. It's a somber story that shines light on a country that is trying to reconcile with atrocities from its past while forging a modern peace.

For more than a year, WUWM's Angelina Mosher Salazar traveled to Colombia to report on this story for NPR's *Latino USA*. After Angelina's piece aired nationally, WUWM 89.7 FM - Milwaukee's NPR and Hispanic Professionals of Greater Milwaukee hosted a listening session at Zócalo in Milwaukee in January 2020. WUWM's Teran Powell moderated a question and answer session with Angelina about her reporting experience in Colombia to a sold-out crowd.

# Financials

## Revenue \$5,856,453



- 50% MEMBERS (DONORS)  
(Does not include one-time estate gift of \$900,000)
- 27% UNDERWRITERS
- 9% UW-MILWAUKEE  
(Grants and Indirect support)
- 5% CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING
- 9% OTHER  
(Includes investment gain (loss), special event income, audio transcripts, royalties, and in-kind property and services)

## Expenses \$5,159,986



- 46% PROGRAMMING
- 20% MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION
- 16% UNDERWRITING
- 8% FUNDRAISING
- 7% BROADCASTING
- 3% PROGRAM INFORMATION

### INDIVIDUAL & FOUNDATION SUPPORT

Contributions from individuals and foundations were the largest source of revenue to the station's operating budget.

### BUSINESS SUPPORT

The business community continued to invest (underwrite) generously in WUWM programming.

### PUBLIC BROADCASTING SUPPORT

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting® (CPB) provided support through a variety of grants.

### UW-MILWAUKEE, COLLEGE OF LETTERS & SCIENCE

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee provides WUWM with support through grants and in-kind donations.

# People & Programs

## WUWM STAFF

### ADMINISTRATION

Dave Edwards - Director/General Manager\*  
 John Hess - Director/General Manager (2020 - present)  
 Ann Piatt - Assistant to the General Manager  
 Cheryl Locher - Manager, Finance and Administration  
 Michelle Nobbe - Accounts Receivable/Traffic Specialist  
 Yvonne Wagner - Business/Fundraising Specialist

### PROGRAMMING

Lauri Jones - Announcer  
 Rachel Owens - Announcer/Morning Edition Host

### WUWM NEWS

Ann-Elise Henzl - News Director  
 Susan Bence - Environmental News Producer  
 LaToya Dennis - News Producer  
 Emily Files - Education Report  
 Michelle Maternowski - Managing Editor  
 Marti Mikkelsen - News Producer  
 Angelina Mosher Salazar - News Producer  
 Chuck Quirnbach - Innovation Reporter  
 Teran Powell - Race & Ethnicity Reporter  
 Olivia Richardson - Erin Von Fellow  
 Lauren Sigfusson - Digital Producer  
 Maayan Silver - News Producer

### LAKE EFFECT

Becky Mortensen - Lake Effect, Executive Producer  
 Bonnie North - Lake Effect, Executive Producer  
 Audrey Nowakowski - Lake Effect, Producer  
 Joy Powers - Lake Effect, Producer

### MEMBERSHIP

Melanie Johnson - Membership Manager  
 Susan Koppa McClurg - Major Gifts Specialist  
 Christine Lamitina - Marketing Specialist  
 Jennifer McCollum - Membership Associate  
 Jill Schanon Macek - Membership Associate

### UNDERWRITING - MARKET ENGUINITY

Gina Dragutinovich - Underwriting Manager  
 Dan Anderson - Underwriting Representative  
 Erin Frank - Underwriting Representative  
 Anne Jdrzejczak - Underwriting Representative  
 Paul Steinhafel - Underwriting Representative

### BROADCAST OPERATIONS

Jon Strelecki - Chief Engineer  
 Jason Rieve - Studio Engineer

## INTERNS

### DIGITAL

Jack Hurbanis, Spring - Summer 2020, UW-Milwaukee  
 Alesandra Tejada, Summer 2019, Colorado College

### LAKE EFFECT

Maggie Holdorf, January - March 2020, UW-Milwaukee  
 Cassidy Schrader, Summer 2019, UW-Milwaukee

### NEWS

Louna Mbomo Lepovire, Summer 2019,  
 Science Po Bordeaux-University of Political Science

## ADVISORY BOARD

Eileen Dubner (Chairperson) • Beth Weckmueller (Vice Chairperson) • Helen Ambuel • F. Michael Arnow • Bruce Campbell • Faithe Colas • Tom Gauthier • Lawrence Goodman • Laura Gough • Margaret Hickey • Letha Joseph • Bill Koenig • Eric Korbitz • Vivian Moller • Kathy Potos • Karen Rhyan • Amy Shapiro • Jasmine Alinder (ex-officio)

## UWM ADMINISTRATION

Mark Mone - Chancellor • Johannes Britz - Provost • Scott Gronert - Dean College of Letters and Science • Jasmine Alinder - Associate Dean College of Letters and Science

### WUWM-PRODUCED PROGRAMS:

Lake Effect • Lake Effect Weekend • It's Alright, Ma, It's Only Music • UWM Today

### NATIONAL PROGRAMS:

All Things Considered • Ask Me Another • BBC Newshour • BBC World Service • eTown • Fresh Air with Terry Gross • Freakonomics Radio • Here and Now • Hidden Brain • How I Built This • Humankind • It's Been A Minute • Live From Here • Marketplace • Morning Edition® • The New Yorker Radio Hour • On Being • On the Media • The Politics Show • Quirks & Quarks • Radiolab • Reveal • TED Radio Hour • This American Life • Wait, Wait... Don't Tell Me! • Weekend All Things Considered • Weekend Edition® • The World

\* Dave Edwards retired in 2019.

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