



2024 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



We have all enjoyed WNIT's programming, It has, without a doubt, the best source for news, true stories, adventures, and the arts.
– Anne (Benton Harbor)

PBS Michiana- WNIT is a trusted, community-owned public media source that is dedicated to inspire, inform, educate, entertain, and unify the communities we serve.



PBS Michiana- WNIT is a valuable part of Michiana's advancement. Bringing a local lens to national issues, weekly shows like *Politically Speaking* and *Education Counts* highlight local responses to big-picture events. Original documentaries celebrated the history of the area, and national favorites continued to educate, inform, and inspire local audiences. PBS KIDS continues to serve as a supplement to the area's early childhood education, and increased efforts to share educational resources to the community spread the word even further.

In 2024, PBS Michiana- WNIT provided these vital local services:

- *PBS KIDS activities and education outreach*
- *Serving as a robust community resource for local stories, local viewpoints, and national favorites*
- *Commemorating the last 50 years of public television in Michiana with community events and original programming*

PBS Michiana- WNIT's local services had deep impact in northern Indiana and southwestern Michigan. With more than 320,000 weekly viewers on the main channel and more than 200,000 viewers accessing PBS KIDS content on the 24/7 channel, our traditional content continued to serve our community. Growing digital numbers (and increasing content made for different platforms) makes our programming accessible in new ways to new audiences.

In 2024, PBS Michiana-WNIT continued our unwavering commitment to educate, inspire, and unify our community.

Throughout the year, we remained a vital cultural and educational force in the region. As part of our 50th-anniversary celebrations, we reflected on our rich history while continuing to deliver media and experiences that are uniquely tailored to the Michiana area.

In 2024, we expanded our efforts to create fresh, locally-focused content for multiple platforms, while also offering exciting educational initiatives. We remained deeply invested in bringing engaging, fun, and family-friendly events to the community, fostering both learning and enjoyment for all ages.

PBS Michiana-WNIT continues to serve the public good by providing a diverse range of programming that aligns with our mission to inform, educate, and entertain.

Thanks to the support of our community and stakeholders, we have built a robust media organization that serves 22 counties in northern Indiana and southwestern Michigan. We are proud to be a forward-thinking, adaptable organization that continues to innovate in the face of a rapidly changing media landscape. Our work not only connects viewers with information but also shapes the future of public media, ensuring its ongoing relevance and impact.

The foundation of our community impact in 2024 was built upon three key objectives:

- **Bringing PBS KIDS activities and educational resources across the Michiana community:** Through initiatives like local PBS KIDS events, workshops, and interactive programs, we made high-quality educational content accessible to thousands of children and families in our region. Our outreach efforts emphasized the importance of early childhood learning and continued to make PBS KIDS a trusted resource for parents and educators.
- **Serving as a robust community resource:** PBS Michiana-WNIT has always been dedicated to telling the stories of the people and places that make our region unique. In 2024, we spotlighted the diverse voices and talents of our local community through powerful storytelling. Our programming focused on issues that matter to Michiana residents and provided a platform for underrepresented communities to share their narratives.
- **Commemorating 50 years of PBS Michiana, while looking forward to new opportunities:** This milestone year allowed us to reflect on our journey, honor the contributions of those who have been part of our history, and renew our commitment to continue being an essential resource for the region. Through events, special programming, and community celebrations, we marked this achievement while embracing the opportunities that lie ahead.

2024 also marked the beginning of a leadership transition at PBS Michiana-WNIT. Longtime President & General Manager Greg Giczi announced his retirement. Director of Development Amanda Miller Kelley was named as his successor, and the two worked closely in the final months of the year to ensure a seamless transition.

Local programming and original content continue to be some of the station's greatest strengths.

In 2024, PBS Michiana-WNIT showcased a wide variety of locally produced content that resonated with our audience. With six weekly shows—*Politically Speaking*, *Dinner and a Book*, *Economic Outlook*, *Experience Michiana*, *Education Counts*, and *Outdoor Elements*—we continued to engage our viewers with thought-provoking discussions, cultural features, and educational topics. Additionally, our three original documentaries—*Legends of Michiana: Kim and Scott Welch*, *From Signal to Story: 50 Years of WNIT Public Television*, and *Legends of Michiana: Gladys Muhammad*—were highlights that celebrated the people, history, and legacy of Michiana, offering deep dives into the lives and contributions of local figures who have shaped the region.

Educational Outreach: Engaging Communities and Expanding Learning Opportunities

PBS Michiana-WNIT remains committed to providing access to high-quality educational resources for children and families. In 2024, PBS KIDS continued to be the most-watched children's network in the region, with 41% of viewers coming from households with an annual income of less than \$40,000. To support these families, we expanded our outreach by offering a variety of learning tools beyond the channel, including hands-on activities, games, apps, and parent resources, in partnership with local organizations.

In 2024, PBS Michiana KIDS engaged approximately 17,000 children and adults across 11 counties. Our “Summer in the Neighborhood” series brought learning opportunities to the community through fun events, including:

- **Nature Cat Day at Pinhook Park:** A day of outdoor exploration inspired by *Nature Cat*.
- **PBS KIDS Day at Four Winds Field:** PBS KIDS-themed activities at the local ballpark.
- **Be My Neighbor Day at Four Winds Field:** Promoting kindness and community, inspired by *Daniel Tiger's Neighborhood*.
- **Tiny Tee Off Miniature Golf Tournament at Ninja Golf:** A mini-golf event combining fun with educational games.

These events, among others, showcased PBS Michiana KIDS' commitment to making learning accessible and enjoyable for families in our region.

Looking ahead, we are committed to further strengthening our connection with the community. As we continue to evolve in response to new challenges and opportunities in the media landscape, we remain dedicated to being a trusted resource, a platform for diverse voices, and a source of entertainment, education, and inspiration for our region.

***Education Counts* addresses hot-button issues and local success stories**

From reducing barriers to high school diplomas at Goodwill's Excel Center to sensory art for toddlers at the Plymouth Public Library, all *Education Counts* segments celebrate the way a local educator is addressing an issue in education. With the help of an 11-county education advisory council, this weekly show is the only one of its kind in the area.



Bringing the arts to your home

Written by Caleen Sinnette Jennings and based on Gabrielle Robinson's book, "Better Homes of South Bend: An American Story of Courage," this poignant story sheds light on a remarkable chapter in history. Filmed live at the South Bend Civic Theatre and The History Museum, this original production brought local history and local arts together into living rooms across the region.



Hoosier Infrastructure

In partnership with Indiana Public Broadcasting Systems, *Beyond Bridges* is a statewide educational and information project on topics related to infrastructure. From EV charging to Indiana trails, this series brings Hoosiers into the conversation about public projects.



PBS KIDS & Education Outreach

PBS KIDS is the most watching children’s network in the region. 41% of viewing is done by children in homes with an annual income of less than \$40,000. We have increased the use of learning resources that extend beyond the channel (hands-on activities, games, apps, and parent resources) through partnership with community organizations.

Reach in the Community: In 2024, PBS Michiana KIDS engaged directly with 17,000 adults and children in 11 counties. Highlights include events from our “Summer in the Neighborhood” Series: Nature Cat Day at Pinhook Park, PBS KIDS Day at Four Winds Field, Be My Neighbor Day at Four Winds Field, and Tiny Tee off Miniature Golf Tournament at Ninja Golf. We stuffed backpacks, we helped install the PBS KIDS app, we delivered new parent backpacks to postpartum families at hospitals, we delivered activity bags (in two languages!) to libraries—we went where the kids and families are. We also worked directly with school systems to get resources to teachers and in classrooms.

Partnerships: Beacon Health System, Berrien Community Foundation, Cass County Fair, Elkhart Public Library, LOGAN Community Resources, Michiana Family Center, Ready to Grow St. Joe, St. Joseph County Public Library, St. Margaret’s House, South Bend Community Schools

Impact and Community Feedback: Our widely viewed PBS KIDS channel provides 24/7 curriculum-based programming to over 232,000 monthly viewers. We provided additional learning resources to more than 17,000 children and families.



“Partnering with WNIT on the filmed version of “Better Homes: The Play” was pure mission gold. Their broadcasts allowed thousands more people to see this important true story. The CIVIC is committed to amplifying underrepresented narratives, and WNIT helped us turn up the volume. I look forward to partnering with WNIT in the future and continue reaching regional audiences with our local stories.”

- Aaron Nichols, Executive Director, South Bend Civic Theatre



“We love the British shows, Masterpiece dramas, documentaries such as Nature and music. Thank you for good, clean programming that even our grandchildren can safely watch.”

- Diane (Goshen, Indiana)



In 2024, PBS Michiana-WNIT continued to strengthen its role as a vital educational and cultural resource for the community, engaging thousands through locally focused content, outreach, and events. Our commitment to providing accessible learning opportunities, especially for children and families, remained at the forefront of our mission. As we celebrated our 50th anniversary, we look forward to continuing our tradition of innovation, community impact, and serving the public good for years to come.