



## 2016 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



*"Now more than ever, the role of public media is crucial to the civic fabric of our state, and I'm humbled by the opportunity to build upon the trust Coloradans have placed in our organization." - Amanda Mountain, CEO, Rocky Mountain Public Media*

**Rocky Mountain PBS' mission is to enrich the lives of Coloradans through engaging and essential programs, services and community partnerships that inform, enlighten and entertain.**



**Rocky Mountain PBS is a valuable part of the State of Colorado's advancement.**

Rocky Mountain PBS contributes to the Colorado community in a multitude of ways, by sharing local stories over the air and through digital resources, providing educational opportunities, and facilitating events and experiences in communities across the state.

**In 2016, Rocky Mountain PBS provided these vital local services:**

- Community screenings of *Colorado Experience*
- *Kids Fun Fests*
- *Bright by Text* educational outreach program for caretakers
- *Insight with John Ferrugia*, investigative news reporting on issues facing Coloradans
- *Matchwits*, Homework Hotline and Super School News—educational programming for (and by) students in Colorado
- *Indie Lens* pop-up film screenings

**Rocky Mountain PBS' local services had deep impact in the Denver area and in communities across the state.**

- Connected Coloradans with historical and current stories of local cultural relevance
- Aided caretakers in providing educational content to children of all ages
- Brought unbiased reporting on local, regional, and national issues to Coloradans



## 2016 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT IN THE COMMUNITY

2016 was a notable year, as it included a celebration of RMPBS 60<sup>th</sup> birthday! Rocky Mountain Public Broadcasting continues to serve the Colorado community in new and innovative ways, while continuing our traditional mission. In 2016, we continued to fulfill our mission statement by offering programs and services that Coloradans value, including both PBS content and self-produced informative, educational, and fun content.

Our original programming intends to educate Coloradans on local and national issues and history. Programming that details national issues is crafted to address the impact those issues will have on our viewers. In 2016, *Insight* with John Ferrugia brought many issues to light that are of relevance to underserved audiences in Colorado. This year, *Insight* explored Colorado's high suicide rate, recreational drug use, and the homeless population. These investigative reports addressed issues in rural and mountainous regions that are often underserved by other news outlets. Additionally, we premiered a new season of *Colorado Experience* with several episodes focusing on smaller towns and lesser known events in Colorado history. This fan-favorite program brings history to Coloradans who may not have the opportunities to visit historical sites or learn about these events otherwise.

We hosted several effective community events in 2016, including viewings of our *Colorado Experience* programs across the state. We brought *Colorado Experience* on the road to many Colorado communities that do not get to experience in-office events, like Leadville, Canon City, Trinidad, and Georgetown. Our community outreach events were well-attended, and served as a great opportunity for our staff to engage with viewers outside of the larger cities.

RMPBS's focus on early childhood education also shines through in our programming. *Super School News*, our longest-running original program, continued to showcase Coloradan fifth and sixth graders for its 36<sup>th</sup> year! The award-winning mini television series is written and produced by students across Colorado and presented on-air. It teaches skills such as teamwork, discipline, quick thinking and the importance of the written word. Over the years, many SSN participants have gone on to careers in journalism, while others benefit more generally from the public speaking and engagement skills required by the project. Other locally produced educational programs this year included *Matchwits*, a statewide trivia contest for high-schoolers; *StoryMakers*, a writing contest for middle schoolers; and, specific to Southern Colorado, *Homework Hotline*—a live call-in show about math and science for schoolchildren.

Finally, RMPM continued to provide local news to Coloradans in an unbiased, informative way. Rocky Mountain PBS News provided 2016 election coverage and served as a valuable voice in a contentious election year while *Inside Energy*, a collaborative effort between RMPM and other public media groups, provided investigatory news content on energy development throughout the West—an issue that affects Coloradans in a multitude of ways.



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RMPBS's educational efforts continue to reach outside of our typical on-air programming. New in 2016, RMPBS rolled out the "Bright by Text" program that assists caregivers in providing educational content and learning opportunities to young children. As close to 60% of Colorado children aged 8 and under are cared for by informal childcare providers (family, friends, neighbors), the text service provides useful tips to caretakers without formal educational backgrounds. The program has thousands of subscribers, many of who live in low-income and rural areas, and it allows those subscribers to take advantage of emerging programs and ideas for childhood development.

As in prior years, RMPBS continued our annual Kids Fun Fest celebrations across the state. These are free events for kids and their families that focus on health, education, and general fun. PBS celebrities like Curious George, Daniel Tiger and Clifford the Big Red Dog engage with the kid attendees and families are able to participate in interactive events like arts and crafts, cup stacking, and party games. Additionally, the fest provides parents with information from sponsor vendors like Children's Hospital Colorado, Colorado Shines, and Reach Out & Read.

More generally, RMPBS continues to reach out to underserved audiences through daily operations. Our ever-growing social media presence allows us to reach more passive or infrequent viewers with shorter educational posts, while those who tune into our stations benefit from longer educational programs and community events. Our commitment to serving all members of our community in a variety of ways, to appeal to different types of viewers, was fulfilled in 2016 and it remains a commitment as we move forward.

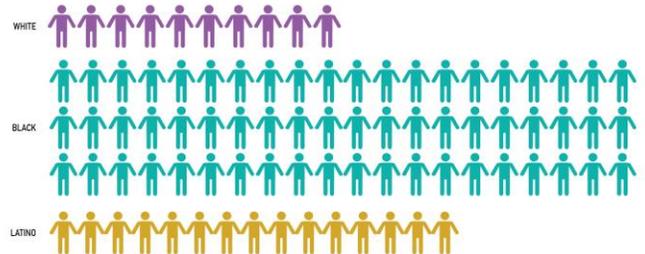


### Race in Colorado: A Sentenced Life

In 2016, Rocky Mountain PBS News brought two new programs on Race in Colorado to the Colorado community. Following 2015's Heartland Emmy Award-winning "Standing in the Gap," which shed light on the disparities felt between races in local school systems, RMPBS News followed up with "Precious Loss," focusing on race and health, and "A Sentenced Life," focusing on race and justice. Each of these three programs focused on statewide issues. RMPBS held three screenings of A Sentenced Life throughout the state—in Colorado Springs, Denver, and Grand Junction—to facilitate discussion about this prevalent issue.

### RISK OF INCARCERATION

Black adults are six times more likely than white adults to be incarcerated in Colorado, while Latino adults are one-and-a-half times more likely than whites to be incarcerated.



Sources: U.S. Census Colorado 2014 Population Estimates; Colorado Department of Corrections, 2014 Inmate Profile; Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Annual Survey of Jails, 2014

### Kids Fun Fests: Engaging Children across Colorado

Who says kids these days only stay inside and watch TV? In 2016, RMPBS' Kids Fun Fests engaged with over 17,000 family members across the state. With regional events in western Colorado, southern Colorado, and the Front Range, Kids Fun Fests allow children to hang out with Clifford the Big Red Dog, enjoy live entertainment and try out dozens of fun kid activities. For adults and caretakers, plenty of sponsors were on hand at each event to provide helpful information on parenting and caretaking resources.



### Suicide in Colorado: Reversing Silence and Stigma

As Colorado's suicide rate in 2015 was one and a half times the national rate, Insight chose to bring this issue to the forefront in 2016. Our program presented the story of a suicide attempt in Colorado Springs and the impact that attempt had on the family. The program and accompanying blog post on our website provided information on mental health resources, suicide prevention, education, and help lines. The RMPBS News team received recognition from the Suicide Prevention Coalition of Colorado for going above and beyond to carefully, respectfully, and accurately portray the issue of suicide.





## Marijuana in Colorado: The State of High

The premiere episode of *Insight with John Ferrugia* took an investigative dive into a dark side of the state's legal recreational marijuana landscape—"dabbing." The episode featured a young Denver professional named Marc Bullard, who, upon graduating at the top of his college class and landing a good job, took his own life in 2015.

Marc's family learned of his addiction to marijuana dabbing, a method of consuming high-potency THC that can bathe the brain with hundreds of milligrams of the drug. Marc's family spoke with John Ferrugia to shed light on the method of THC consumption that may have contributed to Marc's suicide, while scientists, marijuana industry insiders and state regulators also weighed in on the emerging issue facing Coloradans.

### Reach in the Community:

Marijuana in Colorado: The State of High addressed an issue that resonated with Coloradans—drug users and non-drug users alike—across the state. In addition to reaching viewers through *Insight*, a clip of the program aired on PBS Newshour, allowing this issue to reach more Coloradans and national viewers.

### Insight with John Ferrugia:

Investigative journalist John Ferrugia joined Rocky Mountain PBS in 2016, and *Insight* premiered with this episode in late October. *Insight with John Ferrugia* delves into some of the most pressing—and often unseen or misunderstood—issues facing Coloradans. John Ferrugia's reputation for investigative journalism has added to RMPBS's appeal and credibility amongst the Colorado community.

### Impact and Community Feedback:

While Marc's story took place in Denver, the legalization of recreational marijuana across the state presents emerging issues like this one statewide. RMPBS received feedback from viewers statewide thanking the network for bringing emerging issues into focus.



"Please tell the Bullards that I'm so sorry for their loss, and thank them for the courage to make the news clip about dabbing and their son. Just in my immediate circle, I've talked to 4 or 5 parents and it's opened our eyes as parents of high school and college age kids. We knew our kids smoked pot but didn't know why they had blow torches or what dabbing was. **Turns out most of our kids are doing it—some quite heavily.** This gave us a great opportunity to speak to our kids about this and its dangers, and try to stop this. **It may have saved a life.**

Thank you!"

--Beth, an RMPBS viewer



## 2016 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT SUMMARY



*Rocky Mountain PBS is Colorado's only **statewide** network, with 900,000 weekly viewers in Colorado and surrounding states.*

In 2016, RMPBS continued to assert itself as a truly **Coloradan** network, with programming and events reaching more communities than ever before. Our programming originates from buildings in Denver, Colorado Springs, Pueblo, Grand Junction and Steamboat Springs, while local events bring us to mountain and rural communities. Our mission in 2016 was to reach an even broader audience than ever before—a goal that was achieved through our investigative reports, family programming, and local events.



Our educational programs Matchwits (pictured), Super School News, and Homework Hotline give hundreds of Colorado students the opportunity to interact with RMPBS each year.

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**Our Vision: Rocky Mountain PBS will be the premier public media resource for all Coloradans. On-air, online and in person, we will serve our diverse communities as a convener of people, ideas and perspectives.**

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