



2023 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



“Public radio is so important because it focuses locally, promotes the arts, and has diverse programming. The Don Was Motor City Playlist brought me to WDET, but I find myself listening to the station more often.”

-Melissa Bush, Listener

WDET’s mission is to provide an authentic voice for Detroit through news, information, civil conversation, music and entertainment.



WDET is a valuable partner in Southeast Michigan’s advancement.

WDET has been Southeast Michigan’s public radio station for 75 years.

We broadcast within an 80-mile radius of the center of Detroit reaching into Canada and Northern Ohio

WDET is a mix of news, information and music and boasts 150,000 listeners over the air, more than 100,000 website visitors monthly and 670,000 podcast downloads in 2023.

WDET is also the voice of arts and culture in Detroit promoting both the legacy institutions and emerging artists.

In 2023, WDET provided these vital local services:

WDET 101.9 FM serves our community by providing the news, information, and entertainment they want. This year we celebrated **75 years of service** by increasing our local music and arts and culture programming by almost half.

WDET also graduated 38 interns this year, some of whom won journalism awards of the highest degree from Michigan Association of Broadcasters.

WDET’s Detroit Radio Information Services (DRIS) expanded it services to the visually challenged in both depth and breadth by adding listeners, volunteers and new ethnically focused periodicals.

WDET local services had deep impact in Southeast Michigan.

WDET members make up more than 50% of the station’s revenue and we connect with them numerous times throughout the year.

In 2023, we completed a listener survey that netted more than 1200 responses. As a result, we will add 40% MORE local programming in 2024 to highlight the musicians and artists of this region and telling their stories.

Our listener input is coupled with our unwavering foundational elements of Diversity, Integrity and Champion for the Arts as we look to make an even greater impact in 2024.



2023 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT In the Community

WDET's programming seeks to reflect the way metro Detroiters want to live their lives - relying on trustworthy objective news, civil conversations about public policy and current affairs and a broad spectrum of arts, culture, and lifestyle enhancements. Arts programming at WDET is rich with many music traditions, interviews with artists of all mediums, grassroots advocates and non-profit organizations, and information on food, gardens, restaurants, and events.

Our community partnerships reflect the diversity of southeast Michigan. In 2023, WDET has partnered with The Concert of Colors Global Music Festival, The Detroit Jazz Festival, Movement Electronic Festival, The Charles Wright Museum of African American History, Bridge Detroit, Detroit Public Television, Source Booksellers, Outlier Media, Wayne State University and other nonprofits and media organizations.

At WDET every voice is heard, every story is welcome, and every perspective is valued. Whether through a series on I-375 and its impact on the neighboring communities, **The Detroit Evening Report** a 3-minute daily podcast or through our **Internship Program: Building Diversity in Media**, elevating and celebrating diversity is at our core.

Our Building Diversity in Media internship program creates a level playing field so low-income and underrepresented people of color can pursue media careers. They work with nationally recognized News Director Jerome Vaughn, and a member of the Michigan Broadcasters Hall of Fame. Interns worked in the newsroom, on arts & culture programming, audio recording, music programming, financial services, member services and sales to offer an overview to multiple aspects of media. We have more applicants than we can place from schools throughout Michigan and from across the country. We have documented dramatic increases in minority applicants and in 2023 we graduated 21 interns – many placed in jobs throughout Michigan.

Listeners trust WDET to introduce them to new and worthy things. We had been hindered from gatherings due to COVID restrictions and a general reticence to gather in large crowds. 2023 was a year of renewed outreach and new engagement events.

- **NPR's Tiny Desk/Sounds Like Detroit**

Southeast Michigan entrants to the national NPR Tiny Desk Concert totaled more than 120. While the national winner was from Utah, WDET highlighted some of the artists on the radio and created the **Sounds Like Detroit** musical showcase concert and on-line "people's choice" voting as an additional way to elevate local talent and engage the community.



- **Concert of Colors/ Colors of Detroit**

WDET made the Concert of Colors diversity festival of music available to the world through our broadcasts of the multi-day event. Due to popular demand, the station also replayed concert highlights on a subsequent weekend for those who could not attend the free music festival in person. In December, Concert of Colors and WDET partnered in a joint "Colors of Detroit" fundraiser at the historic Motown Mansion uniting the fans of these two important non-profits. More than 250 people attended and were part of a live broadcast of the **Don Was Motor City Playlist**, unique performances and food prepared by five of Detroit's finest chefs. Each partner netted nearly \$50,000.

- **What's So Funny About Detroit?** WDET produced a series of four live, outdoor comedy shows featuring local comics, most from underrepresented communities.



- **Rock and Roll Horror Show**
WDET host Jon Moshier has always had an affinity for locally produced music and Halloween. In October 2023, Jon hosted local bands at Detroit's Cadieux Café for the Rock and Roll Horror Show. More than 300 costumed guests rocked the night away!
- **Essential Cooking Events**
WDET music host Ann Delisi hosted exclusive dinners at five of the regions most celebrated restaurants including She Wolf, Mabel Grey, Ladder 4 Wine Bar, Freya and Sprout House. Ann and Chef James Rigato partnered to produce the Essential Cooking podcast that discusses food, those who create it, and its rich history.
- **Essential Conversations Podcast**
Interviews taking place before a live audience, host Ann Delisi does a deeper dive into the lives and motivations of artists, journalists and musicians. In 2023 Ann's guests were Detroit classical pianist and hip-hop artist BLKBOK for a Juneteenth celebration, and Nabile Ayers, an American music industry entrepreneur, author and musician.



WDET is more than a radio station, it's a community and a network of people who share common values and interests. By focusing on the specific expectations of our listeners and giving them high quality programs that they desire, we are building a media organization that better serves our community through education and cultural exploration.





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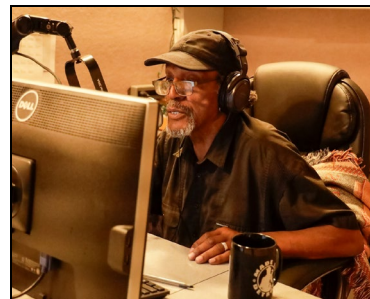
Stories of Impact

- **WDET Engages Listeners in Future Direction**

In 2023 WDET's new program director, Adam Fox was hired and brought his radio, media, and arts leadership experiences to WDET with a commitment to reflecting the diverse culture and perspectives of Detroit and surrounding areas. To accomplish this, Fox embarked on a listener survey to understand what listeners wanted to hear. More than 1200 people returned the online survey and 32% (greater than any other category) said they wanted more local music and public affairs programming. [WDET 2023 listener survey results - WDET 101.9 FM](#) . 2024 will reflect exciting changes to the WDET service to our community.

- **WDET Expands Detroit Radio Information Services**

In 2023, the Detroit Radio Information Service (DRIS) grew exponentially by adding a streaming service. DRIS, WDET's service to the visually challenged community - was previously only available via a receiver. DRIS reads local periodicals like the Detroit News, Free Press and the MI Chronicle, the shopping circulars and in 2023 added a book club. In 2023 both volunteers and the number of hours they logged tripled in size. Below volunteers work the boards reading book club and the news.



- **WDET graduates 21 interns in one year!**

An internship is the path to a better future. If an internship is unpaid, many, such as first-generation college students and low-income students, cannot take advantage of this opportunity. In 2023, WDET graduated 21 interns in a variety of broadcast and business areas. WDET internship program: Building Diversity in Media focuses on low to moderate income students who need the resources of a paid internship to acquire experience. By engaging with lower income, under-heard and under-served population, people of color and marginalized populations we were able to give college students skills they need to become marketable in all aspects of media and in doing so, WDET helped to create a journalistic labor force that reflects, and communicates to, our changing and diverse world.



- **Detroit Today: Reckoning I-375** was a mini-series from **WDET's Detroit Today with Stephen Henderson** that explored the complexities of reconciliation through the lens and opportunity of the redevelopment of I-375 in Detroit. How can a society repair past wrongs fairly? What is the opportunity for not only righting wrongs, but for ensuring positive and equitable placemaking and development of the land where Black Bottom and Paradise Valley used to be. The series won a Michigan Association of Broadcasters award for Broadcast Excellence in the Best News Special or Public Affairs Program in 2023.





At WDET, members make up more than 50% of the station's revenue and we value that relationship tremendously. We don't take any of their support for granted and listen to their feedback and counsel. These are just a few comments sent into the station from our listeners:

I am sorry that I can't donate more at this time, I am struggling financially. I am a musician and I have been played on this station for many years and I am very grateful for that. Please know how much I love this station and the people that make it happen day after day.

Anonymous Listener, Detroit Artist

Hi Ryan, I met you at Bumbo's last night (I'm the Mom of Drummer Rory Nolan, from Core Values ❤️.) I just want to say how much you and your colleagues are appreciated by those of us who love our local musicians! It's wonderful that you give them recognition and a chance to be heard. As I'm sure you know, for every one local musician, there are several family members and friends who are listening as well. We've seen how hard they work, and how much their music means to them. Thank you so much for understanding their passion and their need to express it. Rory has been listening to DET since he was born, because it's always on at our house. This is how you create a musician—expose him or her to lots of music, then let them pound on the pots and pans to their heart's content. Then follow up with years of listening to them practicing in the basement, of buying instruments whenever you can for birthdays and Christmas. Every time I hear local artists on your program, I think of their mom and dad, because you're hearing their love and patience too. It's a lovely thought. It was nice meeting you, Ryan!

Nancy Nolan, Proud to be the Drummer's Mom

WDET has always been a wonderful part of our lives for years, love the Saturday and Sunday musical programming interviews ...so much good material you put on the airwaves...Keep up the great work!

Mike and Nancy Lane, Rochester Hills

Each year I find myself struggling to properly convey how much I truly appreciate the station. The news/conversations/community provided/elevated by the teams at WDET (and NPR) are invaluable. We appreciate all of the hard work that makes this all possible and we will continue to support the station for years to come.

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WDET plays an essential role in delivering quality news and information, music and arts and cultural programming to Southeast Michigan. In our 75th year in 2024 we will expand our community engagement and respond to the counsel of our listeners with exciting changes. We are here to serve our community.