



Illinois Public Media™

Momentum

2017 ANNUAL REPORT



From left to right:
John Raschke,
Connie Edwards,
Patrick Lam,
Mark DePue.

You can now
teach your
Amazon Echo
to play WILL
and NPR
programming
at your voice
command.

Choosing what makes it into our annual report is often the most challenging part of the creative process. While the next 10 pages showcase some of the highlights from 2017 at Illinois Public Media, they're only part of the story. In our case, the whole is definitely greater than the sum of its parts.

For me, one of the most powerful aspects of Illinois Public Media's role within the central Illinois community is our ability to provide a sense of place within a larger narrative. A great example of this was the localized content created around **The Vietnam War**—Ken Burns and Lynn Novick's documentary—as well as local conversations surrounding the topic. There's no denying the war had a profound effect on the nation as a whole, but each individual community experienced that time in history in a unique way, often having enduring effects on its citizens.

That's just one example of how I believe our content has had a significant impact within our local community.

My promise to you for 2018: Illinois Public Media will continue to stimulate minds as well as conversations; provide a public forum for a healthy exchange of diverse voices and opinions; explore issues of importance to those in our community; be a trusted news organization; ensure classical music, along with arts and cultural programming, has a place in our daily lives; and inspire lifelong learning through our work. I hope you will join us!

As always, a sincere thank you to the Friends of WILL for making it all possible.

Moss Bresnahan
President and CEO

Wake Up
with WILL
is a monthly
gathering of
Friends of WILL
who freely
exchange ideas
on public
media's role
in Illinois.

Local perspectives

Ken Burns and Lynn Novick's landmark documentary **The Vietnam War**—which premiered on WILL-TV in September—sparked a national conversation. Individuals at the local level were emboldened, perhaps for the first time, to talk with their fellow community members about how the war affected them personally.

Still Here: Vietnam War Stories from Illinois was an evocative WILL Radio documentary featuring stories from Illinois residents who served in the war, opposed the war, or became war refugees. By weaving these first-hand accounts together, some of the harsher realities of war, as well as journeys of survival and recovery, were revealed.

Illinois Public Media also hosted a free preview of the **The Vietnam War** in partnership with the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum in Springfield, which was followed by a panel discussion with veterans, a conscientious objector, and a refugee.

These localized conversations continue even now via an extended series of oral histories with a diverse group of veterans, civilians, and refugees, in addition to a collection of archived WILL Radio and TV productions. All of these are available at will.illinois.edu/vietnam.

South Vietnamese troops fly over the Mekong Delta in 1963.



Pictured with his mother, Donald Hyche of Champaign, IL served as a Marine helicopter gunner.



Niala Boodhoo, host and executive producer of **The 21st**.

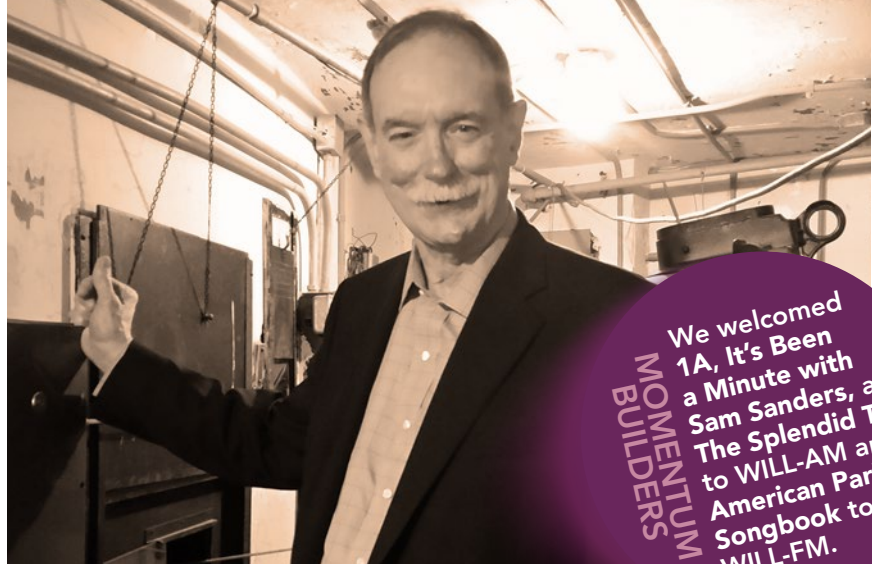


Regional reach

The 21st—Illinois Public Media’s daily talk show covering news, culture, and stories that matter to Illinois—celebrated its first anniversary with the addition of a fifth station, Northern Public Radio/WNIJ, and a partnership with Northwestern University’s Medill School of Journalism.

Throughout the year, Niala Boodhoo hosted live broadcasts of **The 21st** from Medill’s downtown Chicago newsroom.

The unveiling of **illinoisnewsroom.org** and widespread release of an Affordable Care Act Open Enrollment explainer video signified the long-awaited launch of **Illinois Newsroom**. This regional journalism collaborative aims to integrate citizens into the editorial process, ensuring more relevant, impactful, and empowering news coverage across three topics: education, politics, and health/environment. With new reporters in place across the state, **Illinois Newsroom**’s first in-depth reports were released by the end of the year.



Robert Endres, Friend of WILL.



Future generations

The **Endres Internship** was established with a generous gift from Robert Endres, a 1962 College of Media graduate who worked in WILL-TV Master Control during his time at the University of Illinois. Endres credits his success to the real-world experience and hands-on education he received as a student and wishes to pay it forward through this internship.

The **Endres Internship** joins the **Donald P. Mullally Internship** and the **Dave Benton Internship** on the growing list of ongoing opportunities for students to work and learn in the WILL Newsroom.



Libby Foster, first Endres Intern.



MOMENTUM BUILDERS
 We joined forces with Chamhana Weather to bring you daily forecasts from local meteorologist Andrew Pritchard.



Photo courtesy of Oliver Peng.



College of Media students at **Sunny Side of the Doc** in June 2017.

Collegiate connections

Students from the College of Media traveled with Illinois Public Media to **Sunny Side of the Doc**—one of the premier documentary conferences in the world. They participated in thought-provoking discussions, pitch competitions, presentations by broadcasters from around the world, and screenings.

Illinois Public Media now oversees the day-to-day operations of the local cable channel **UI-7** by providing technical support, leadership

on programming decisions, and management of a student intern curating the content. In partnership with the College of Media, **UI-7** continues to serve as a local resource, spotlighting the activities and accomplishments of the campus community, while also providing an educational opportunity for students at the University of Illinois.



Photo courtesy of Tim Meyers.

MOMENTUM BUILDERS
 Vic Di Geronimo, host of **Classic Mornings**, joined NPR's Jeremy Hobson for a classical version of **Here & Now's DJ Sessions** for the fourth time.

Award-winning programming



The 21st received two national awards from Public Radio News Directors Incorporated (PRNDI) for "Illinois Reacts to Election 2016: Recap of State House Races" and "Combating Suicide Stigma."

Barns: An Illinois Story received two regional Mid-America EMMY Awards for Best Program Promo and Documentary Photography.

Barns: An Illinois Story and **Ebertfest 2016: Center of the Universe** received a total of five national Telly Awards, including silver awards for General Documentary and Craft Videography/Cinematography, and bronze awards for Craft Editing, Craft Videography/Cinematography, and General Documentary.



Barns: An Illinois Story.



Champaign Park District summer camp students create a moon lander for **Design Squad Global's** "On the Moon" project.

WILL KIDS 24/7 gives local families around-the-clock access to award-winning **PBS KIDS** programming via both TV and online.

Shared discovery

WILL Education combined forces with PBS and **Design Squad Global** to provide one-of-a-kind learning experiences to local after-school programs at Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary, the Champaign Park District, and the Rantoul Multicultural Community Center.

Design Squad Global empowers kids ages 10–13 to solve real-world problems and explore engineering through fun-packed, high-energy, hands-on activities that help them understand the impact of the STEM fields in a global context.

5th grade students of **Design Squad Global** at Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary school in Urbana.



Jupiter String Quartet. Photos courtesy of Krannert Center for the Performing Arts.

Nathan and Julie Gunn.

Notable partnerships

In a joint production with Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, **From the Stage at Krannert Center: Poetry and Song with Nathan and Julie Gunn and the Jupiter String Quartet** brought works from several 20th-century composers to WILL-FM listeners. This unique broadcast included interviews with performers intertwined with pieces based on works of poetry performed live in Foellinger Great Hall at Krannert Center.

effects of the Illinois budget crisis on everyday people. This two-part documentary special on WILL-TV was born out of a creative partnership with Kartemquin Films. It took an intimate and empathetic look at how homeless people, at-risk youth, and seniors—as well as adult literacy, early childhood development, and higher education programs—were affected by the budget impasse.

As an historic fiscal battle waged on inside Illinois' Capitol, **Stranded by the State** explored the long-term

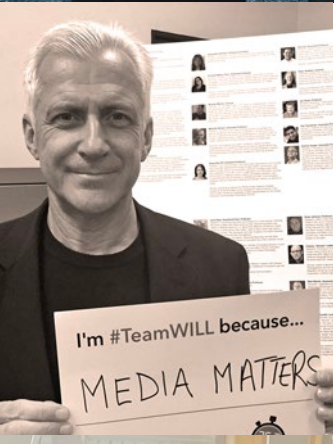
The Book Mentor project handed out 5,678 free books during the 2016-2017 school year, serving 721 pre-K students in Champaign County.



Stranded by the State. Photo by Liz Kaar.



Todd Gleason hosted a variety of WILLag events from 60 different sites across Illinois and throughout the Midwest.



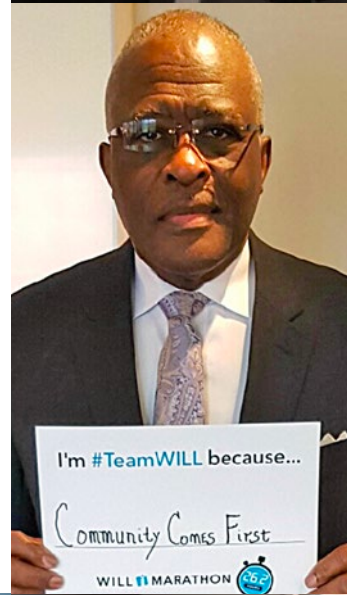
Power of Team WILL



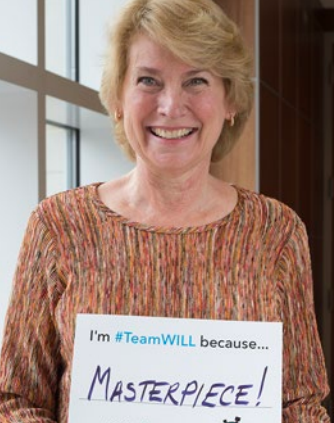
Thanks to 600 Friends of WILL, we raised more than \$132,000 in just 26.2 hours during the **WILL Marathon**. This idea was part of a continued effort to be more efficient with our fund drives.



We increased the number of new members by 20 percent thanks to a \$35,000 challenge grant from the Newman's Own Foundation that centered on attracting new donors. This grant supports the foundation's ongoing commitment to encourage open dialogue and promote civic engagement.



The **Barbara E. Barnes Fund** was established to support new local classical music programs.



Mid-American Gardener hosted two roadshows, answering your gardening questions live and in-person at Urbana's Market at the Square.



Classical/BTS
is coming
to a device
near you in
spring of 2018!

Future fanfare

Continuing in the tradition of **ART/BTS**—our web series that went behind the scenes and into the creative minds of an eclectic mix of local artists—**Classical/BTS** will explore less-traditional ways people are creating, using, and engaging with classical music.

A conductor who includes yoga as part of his preparation for performance? An app developer creating tools to help string players at every level be better musicians? Yes! Illinois Public Media is thrilled to bring you these stories, and others, from central Illinoisans innovating new ways to interact with and enjoy classical music.



WILL producer Isaac Musgrave films composer and pianist Charles Joseph Smith working in a rehearsal space in Chicago, IL (top left) and conductor Joseph Baldwin as he warms up with a yoga pose in Urbana, IL (above).

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