

2021

Local Content & Service Report To The Community

BALL STATE  PBS



Ready To Learn

Ready to Learn More

Ball State PBS believes that every child matters and is deserving of opportunity. Thanks to a grant the station received in 2021, opportunities will flourish for children in Delaware County and beyond.

In October, Ball State PBS was awarded a \$260,000 grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) and PBS to extend the reach and impact of PBS KIDS early learning resources to local communities.

Over the next four years, Ball State PBS will collaborate with local partners to create a “Learning Neighborhood” that fosters a community-wide culture of learning at home, in the neighborhood, and within local systems and spaces. The program is part of the CPB-PBS Ready To Learn Initiative, funded by the U.S. Department of Education.

The 2020-2025 Ready To Learn Initiative is focused on connecting children’s media and learning environments to build key skills for success in school and life, including functional literacy, critical thinking, and collaboration, as well as showing them career options in age-appropriate ways.

“We are thrilled to be able to continue working with wonderful partners to engage children and families with even more innovative, high-quality PBS KIDS content that is inclusive and impactful.”

–Michelle Kinsey, Community Engagement and Grants Manager



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2021 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT

Community Engagement

'Bee-ing' safe

The Ball State PBS Regional Spelling Bee looked a little different in 2021. Ten top spellers from area schools competed in the sixth Ball State PBS Spelling Bee March 13, at Sursa Performance Hall, on the campus of Ball State University.

Those familiar with the bee know that the station usually has nearly 60 champion spellers competing on stage.

Because of pandemic guidelines and our commitment to keep all of our spellers as safe as possible, we conducted an initial round online to narrow the field to 10 spellers for the in-person competition.

Champion spellers from more than 45 schools from Delaware, Blackford, Jay, Randolph, Madison and Henry counties utilized the online testing platform, provided by the Scripps National Spelling Bee, in that first round.

The Bee, featuring our top 10 school champions, was broadcast on Ball State PBS on March 20 and March 27.

The winner of our bee, Burriss Laboratory School student Alesya Rathinasamy (right), advanced to compete in the Scripps National Spelling Bee finals, which was conducted online.





“This program is awesome because it allows them to be engaged with reading and allows them to bridge the gap from the school year to the next school year. I’m glad Huffer is a part of it.”

–Erika Serf, Huffer Memorial Children’s Center

“The camp is very hands-on and engaging.”

–Linda Rose, Academic Director at Motivate Our Minds

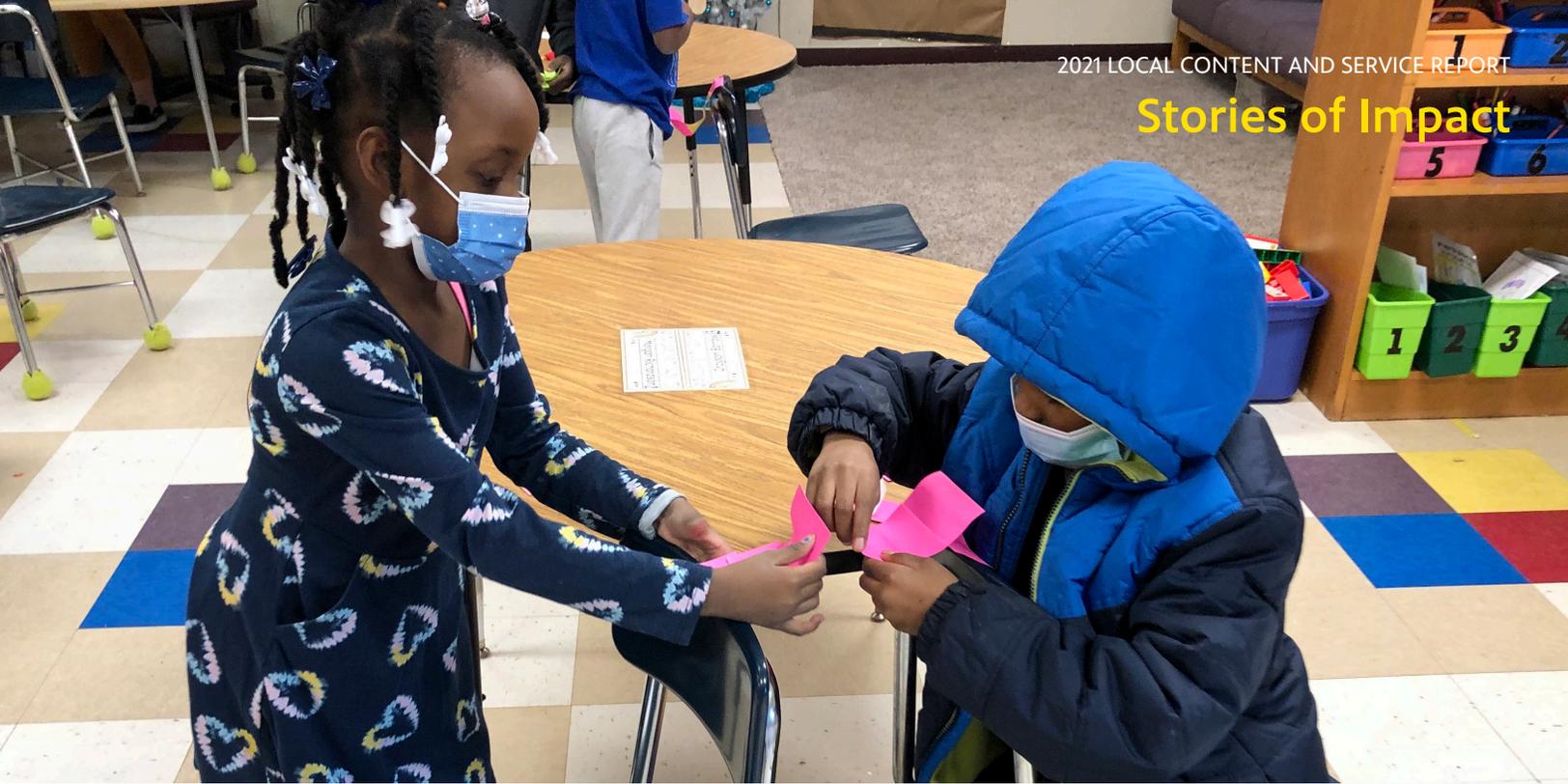
The COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact our station in 2021. Our strong commitment to impactful engagement didn’t waiver, however, and Ball State PBS continued to develop meaningful connections with our communities in unique ways.

SUMMER (READING) FUN

Motivate Our Minds (MOM) in Muncie, in partnership with Ball State PBS, hosted its second annual SUPER WHY! Reading camp for four weeks over the summer. Muncie Community Schools teachers facilitated the camp with materials provided by the station. In addition to literacy skills, the children from MOM and Huffer Memorial Children’s Center attending the five-day camp practiced hand eye coordination, fine motor skills, following directions, cooperation, and sharing. Motivate Our Minds is an after-school tutoring and enrichment program.

GROUP EFFORT

When gathering in person was possible, we met with children in grades 1-5 as part of our PBS KIDS Club at Motivate Our Minds and Ross Community Center. The weekly club uses hands-on PBS KIDS activities to engage children in a variety of educational opportunities focusing on literacy, STEM, art and SEL (social emotional learning).



“Parents and kids alike were happy to have the books and were extra grateful for the backpacks to help carry their heavy loads. I remember one little guy who was thrilled to have a book of a boy who likes poetry. He kept saying ‘This is me!’”

—Dorica Young-Watson, organizer of an annual children’s holiday event

WORTH SHARING

Developed at the start of the pandemic in 2020, the station continued to serve area day care providers by delivering weekly activity packets and books for each child throughout 2021. These packets, which can be used at the child care location or sent home with families to use with their children, included activities that focused on a different topic each week such as sharing stories, healthy eating and creating art.

GOOD NEIGHBORS

The in-person annual Be My Neighbor Day events in Muncie and Anderson was canceled for 2021 out of an abundance of caution for young children and their families. In November, we delivered Daniel Tiger backpacks filled with books, bookmarks, printed activities and more to several day care providers in our viewing area. We also provided backpacks and books to local child-centered not-for-profits for holiday giveaways.

BUT WAIT, THERE’S MORE

In June, Ball State PBS offered games and activities during the Circus Symphony, Finding Balance event at Canan Commons in downtown Muncie. The event was hosted by a partner organization, Muncie Ballet, and included dance, music and more for families.

Ball State PBS also offered OVEE screening events for THE BOB ROSS EXPERIENCE and MOLLY OF DENALI in a partnership with the New Castle-Henry County Public Library. The screenings featuring a variety of PBS programs will continue in 2022.

Stories of Impact



New Castle resident Sophie Williams during an interview.



The iconic LOVE sculpture located in Arts Park created by New Castle native and artist Robert Indiana.

“LOVE the Robert Indiana story. Thank you for sharing this great story!

–Debbie W. (FaceBook comment)

“This is so good! We thoroughly enjoyed the Little League story....and all of the stories so far. Thanks, Ball State PBS!”

–Mark O. (FaceBook comment)

Now Entering...

Ball State PBS's most-watched local program returned for its sixth season in 2021 with NOW ENTERING...NEW CASTLE.



NOW ENTERING... shines the spotlight on the great small towns in our viewing area, offering a video scrapbook of the people, places and history of towns as seen through the eyes of its residents. NOW ENTERING... visits mostly rural towns in our viewing area, engaging with its residents through town meetings, on-site production days, preview screenings and, on the night of the pledge program, bringing members of the community to our home – our studio on the Ball State campus.

The New Castle episode featured stories about its century-long passion for basketball and the 2012 Little League World Series team; leaders in the African-American community throughout the years, and philanthropic organizations throughout the community.

Engagement:
3,800 Facebook Live views
3,300 YouTube views

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Digital Corps crew on the set preparing for a shoot.

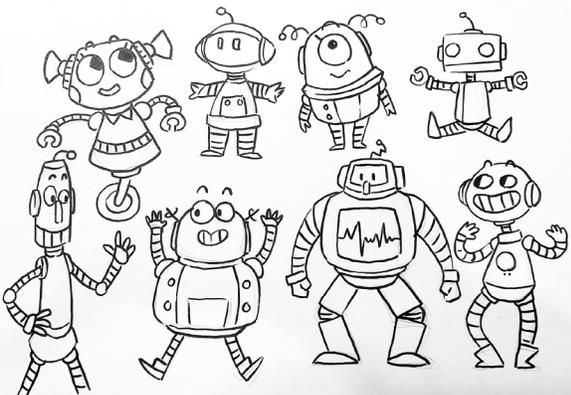
The Loading Zone

Ball State PBS collaborated with the Ball State Digital Corps to create programming for young audiences called THE LOADING ZONE. Airing during PBS Kids programming, THE LOADING ZONE features two curious robots eager to learn more about STEM topics in the world around them. Each interstitial begins with robots Billy and Penelope encountering something in the world that fascinates them – from microscopes or cameras to self-driving cars or recycling – and then asking questions to learn more. Ball State students from the Digital Corps step in to answer their questions in a concise, easy-to-understand way, complete with accompanying animations and visuals to make the topic approachable for young learners.

Plans for 2022 include offering THE LOADING ZONE to PBS stations nationally.

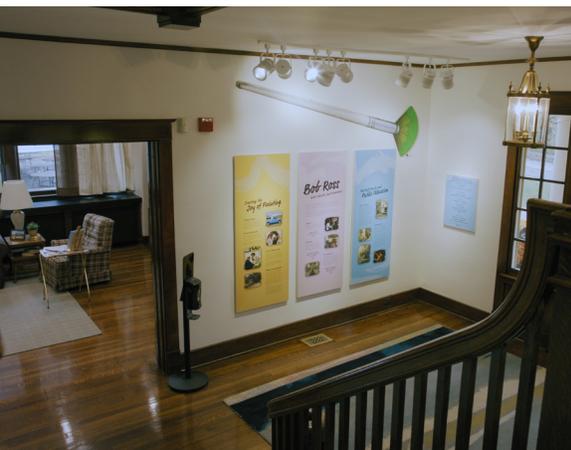
ABOUT THE DIGITAL CORPS

The Digital Corps provides a creative and collaborative program in which undergraduate students support the academic success of the University. THE LOADING ZONE was nominated by the 2019 Lower Great Lakes Chapter Emmy® Awards for Short Format Program, Informational/Entertainment.



Initial character sketches for THE LOADING ZONE.

Local Programming



Interior shots of the Bob Ross Experience exhibit.



Ball State President Geoffrey S. Mearns.

The Bob Ross Experience

In January 2021, we aired the Ball State PBS-produced documentary THE BOB ROSS EXPERIENCE. Bob Ross inspired generations of viewers with his soft-spoken voice and a pallet knife. THE BOB ROSS EXPERIENCE gives viewers a behind-the-scenes look at the research and creative work that went into bringing a new Minnetrista exhibit to life, while also witnessing the impact that Bob continues to have on artists young and old.

Cardinal Compass

Ball State PBS continued producing new episodes of CARDINAL COMPASS: CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS in 2021. The monthly program features Ball State University president President Geoffrey S. Mearns (left) and his guests. CARDINAL COMPASS explores the connections between Muncie and Ball State University. Mearns and his guests take the audience behind the scenes of the evolving relationship by exploring the challenges and opportunities that exist. This show is produced by Ball State students in the College of Communication, Information and Media. Themes this year included athletics, new campus facilities, increasing diversity and inclusion, and philanthropy with a focus on how these topics connect with the community.

Mayor's Arts Awards

In November, Muncie Arts and Culture Council, in conjunction with the City of Muncie, celebrated the 4th BIENNIAL MAYOR'S ARTS AWARDS at Sursa Performance Hall on the Ball State University campus. And for the first time, the awards ceremony was broadcast on Ball State PBS. It aired on Dec. 11 and featured the award recipients and performances by local arts organizations.

Local Programming



IPR Radio Drama

IPR Radio Drama

After a one-year pandemic hiatus, IPR's annual holiday radio drama returned to the stage and the airwaves with an original production titled "This American Carol." Ball State PBS recorded and aired the live performance from Sursa Performance Hall.



Michael Hicks, host of THE ROUNDTABLE

Continuing Series

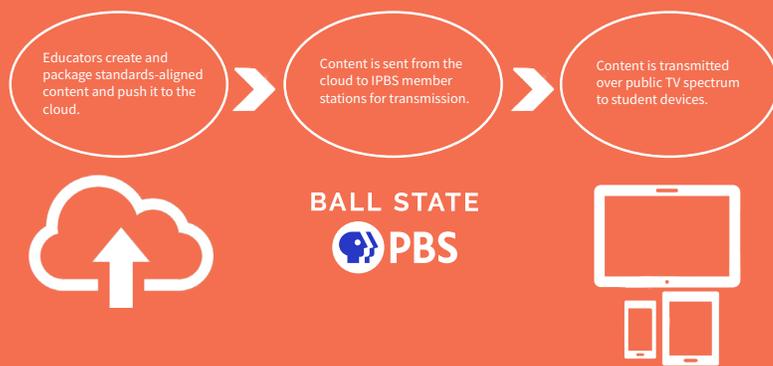
Ball State PBS continued to produce the best in local entertaining and informative programs in 2021 with WELLNESS MATTERS, FRONT ROW CENTER AT SURSA HALL and ROUNDTABLE. WELLNESS MATTERS offered a deeper look into health and wellness topics, FRONT ROW CENTER FROM SURSA HALL presented top-notch music performances, and THE ROUNDTABLE tackled timely business and economic development issues.

Muncie Community Christmas Sing

A tradition for many during the holiday season, Ball State PBS broadcast the 85th ANNUAL MUNCIE COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS SING, featuring the Muncie Community high school, middle, school and elementary school choirs and bands along with other special performances and guests.

Educational Datacasting

Ball State PBS is one of 8 public television stations in Indiana that has deployed datacasting to bridge the digital divide for students learning from home. Indiana Public Broadcasting Stations (IPBS) was awarded several grants by the State of Indiana to implement this initiative during the pandemic. Ball State PBS reached out to several school districts, and Randolph Eastern School Corporation jumped at the opportunity. Randolph Eastern is a rural school district where several families lack internet access, making at-home learning very difficult during the pandemic. Datacasting essentially mimics the internet experience, but instead of using broadband or Wi-Fi, it uses TV broadcast spectrum to carry data to computers. Here's how it works: Randolph Eastern teachers create educational content and upload it to a cloud platform. That content is then transmitted over public television spectrum to student devices.



Our Partners

Ball State PBS is deeply integrated with area schools, agencies, arts organizations, public health experts and many others in an effort to publicize community issues and initiatives in order to help people solve problems and improve quality of life in our community.

8twelve Coalition
 Ball State Center for Economic and Business Research
 Ball State School of Music
 Ball State Department of Theatre and Dance
 Ball State Media (TCOM) Department
 Huffer Memorial Children's Center
 Indiana Department of Education
 Indiana Public Broadcasting Stations
 Indiana Public Radio
 Jay County School Corporation
 Minnetrista
 Motivate Our Minds
 Muncie Arts & Culture Council
 Muncie Ballet Studio
 Muncie BY5
 Muncie Community Schools
 Muncie Symphony Orchestra
 New Castle-Henry County Library
 Randolph Eastern School Corporation
 Ross Community Center
 State of Indiana

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2021 Key Services

In 2021, Ball State PBS provided these vital services:

- Created more than **91 hours of local programming** telling the stories of the people and places in east central Indiana
- **Partnered with non-profit organizations** to help **solve problems and improve the quality of life** in our community
- **Provided STEM resources for young learners** and their families on the south side of Muncie in the 8twelve neighborhoods
- **Deployed datacasting for students** learning from home without internet access in Randolph Eastern School District

*“I love watching Ball State PBS!
The programming rarely disappoints.
Thank you for the excellent service
you provide the public.”*

–Sarah Mahboubi

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WIPB - Muncie, Indiana

BallStatePBS.org