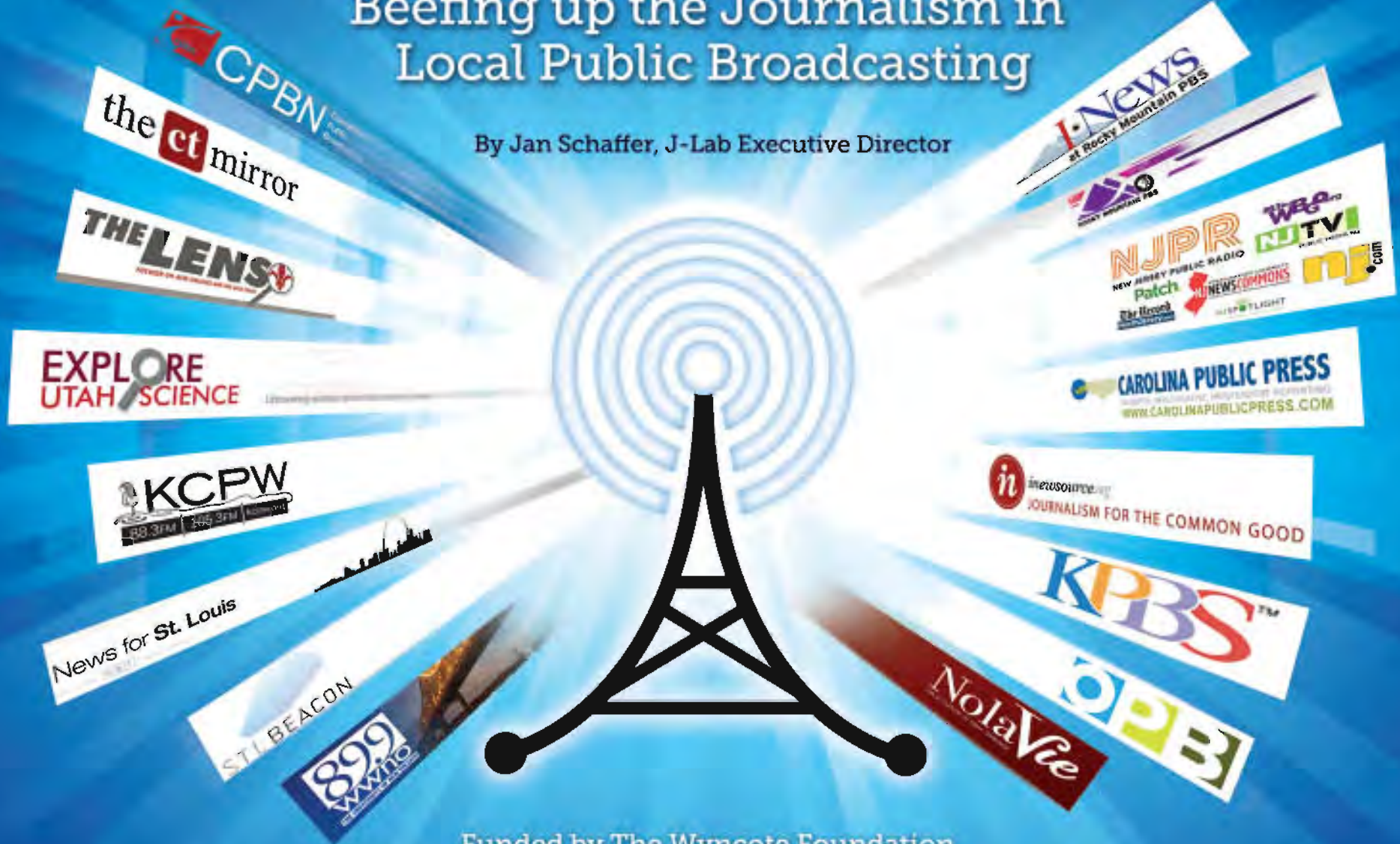


NEWS CHOPS:

Beefing up the Journalism in
Local Public Broadcasting

By Jan Schaffer, J-Lab Executive Director



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News Chops: Beefing up the Journalism in Local Public Broadcasting

By Jan Schaffer

Unfettered by competitive pressures and fortified by trust in their brand, local public broadcasters are finding new ways to engage in more local news – especially more investigative and enterprise journalism – than ever before.

From unprecedented mergers to unique partnerships, from shared workspace to shared reporters, creative approaches are positioning public radio and television stations to step up to new roles in their local news ecosystems. In the process, some are becoming critical linchpins for state and metro-wide news networks.

In this July 2013 report, J-Lab examines through nine case studies, developments, large and small, that have occurred within the last year.

Motivated by cutbacks at newspapers and thinner wire-service offerings, many public broadcasters

are seizing new opportunities to fulfill their public-service mission and attract new members in the process. With the acquisition of new digital skills, they have a suite of assets – on air, online, mobile and social media – and newfound confidence to leverage those for greater community impact.

Few of the stations in these case studies were propelled by major grants from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting or NPR. Instead, many are boosting resources by partnering with news start-ups that have launched and proven their merit.

Of note, while legacy news organizations increasingly erect paywalls in front of their journalism, these local public broadcasters are tearing down walls to reach out to partners – both nonprofit and commercial – to co-produce or share original content and to give longer tails to the best journalism in their areas.

It's a win-win for the broadcasters and their partners. "They're giving us content that we wouldn't be able to get," said John Dankosky, news director of [WNPR](#) in Connecticut, "and we're giving them exposure."

Given the trust the public broadcasters have in their local communities, no one is looking "to put a thumb on the scale," said Doug Price, president and CEO of [Rocky Mountain PBS](#). But there is some increased willingness to take what he calls a "Mother Teresa" approach to community issues that might engage a library or a university as easily as an investigative news site.

"I think we are seen as a good middle ground. We can highlight; we can curate," said Morgan Holm, [Oregon Public Broadcasting](#)'s senior vice president and chief content officer, who's constructing a statewide news network. "It's a little bit like a Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval."



This report profiles the creation of statewide news cooperatives in Oregon, Connecticut and New Jersey, building newsrooms from scratch in Denver and New Orleans, merging two existing newsrooms in St. Louis, and adding reporting firepower in San Diego, Salt Lake City and western North Carolina.

Public media outlets play an important role for news start-ups. A partnership with a public broadcaster amplifies their journalism and validates their efforts in ways that can help their sustainability.

This report profiles the creation of statewide news cooperatives in Oregon, Connecticut and New Jersey, building newsrooms from scratch in Denver and New Orleans, merging two existing newsrooms in St. Louis, and adding reporting firepower in San Diego, Salt Lake City and western North Carolina.

Several of the public broadcasters are striving to make local content “ubiquitous” and give it a long tail. Local impact is valued more than webpage clicks. And members and sponsors seem to like increased local news. When [St. Louis Public Radio](#) and the [St. Louis Beacon](#) calculated the costs of fully merging their newsrooms, they figured on a \$3 million shortfall over the first five years. “We already

have \$2.5 million of that pledged,” said Tim Eby, the station’s general manager.

While we give a nod to such major public-media initiatives as [Project Argo](#), the [Local Journalism Centers](#), [Localore](#) and the [State Impact](#) projects for building collaborations and producing good journalism, we do not revisit them here. Nor do we reprise previous reports about content partnerships that [KQED](#) in San Francisco and [WHYY](#) in Philadelphia have spearheaded. Instead, we have focused on lesser-told stories.

Public media observers note that it will be increasingly easy in the future to go directly to NPR for national stories and to go to, say, [Pandora](#) for music. How do public media stations sustain themselves in the long run? “They have to focus on local [news],” said Scott Karp, whose [Publish2](#) platform is used by some of the public broadcasters for content sharing.

For many of the communities we examined, there is a pronounced sense of being in the vanguard of change. “We could blow this,” said media blogger Jeff Jarvis of Montclair State University’s efforts to build a [New Jersey media hub](#). “But there is great potential and great need.”

“If we get it right,” said Margie Freivogel, founding editor of the *Beacon*, who is willing to merge with St. Louis Public Radio to create a newsroom with 26 people. “We have the beginning of a blueprint for how to create a vigorous news organization that serves a region and takes advantage of the assets of public media. I think it’s a very important possibility.”

Our thanks to the Wyncote Foundation for its generous support of this project and to the Ethics and Excellence in Journalism Foundation for additional publishing support.

Jumpstarting a Newsroom from Scratch

About a year after journalist Laura Frank started the nonprofit investigative news start-up *I-News* in her kitchen, she moved into offices at [Rocky Mountain PBS](#) in downtown Denver.

From that humble beginning in 2009, she built, bit by bit, a half-million dollar news operation whose five-person team broke the kinds of news stories that changed laws and policy across the state.



Laura Frank

Then in January 2013, Frank – editor, fundraiser, partnership builder, business person – took on a new title. In addition to *I-News* executive director, she became vice president of news at Rocky Mountain PBS.



Doug Price

More than taking on a new job, however, she stepped up to an overarching vision for Colorado public broadcasting that led to the nation's first formal merger of a public broadcasting station with an independent news start-up.



I-News reports have changed Colorado laws and policy.

"We basically became the news operation of Rocky Mountain PBS," she said.

For Doug Price, the president and CEO of Rocky Mountain PBS, the merger was a no-brainer, even though it means his network will now ultimately shoulder the tab for the *I-News* operation.

"We have a strategic vision around pertinence," he said. "We saw a void in the market and we think we can increase our memberships by filling that void, and we're satisfied that we can do it without financial difficulty."

A former bank executive, Price thinks in terms of big systems. Not content with being the flagship public broadcaster in the state, reaching one million viewers in Colorado, Wyoming, Nebraska and New Mexico, he is methodically investing in a new model for distribution that will get his broadcast assets moving "higher on all cylinders."

And so along with the *I-News* merger, Rocky Mountain PBS entered into formal alliances with three of the state's five major public radio stations, [KUNC](#) community radio for Northern Colorado in Greeley, [KRCC](#) in Colorado Springs and [KVNF](#) in Paonia. As well, it formally merged with [KUVU](#), a mostly Latino jazz radio station.

"We wanted to see what the audience of the future is in Colorado and how we begin to serve them," he said. "We wanted to be demographically, geographically and economically broad."

He also seeks to create a distribution stream that can be "narrowcast, not just broadcast, and have a focus on improving civic life."

To sustain these new activities, Price projects that RMPBS needs to increase its members by 10 percent and its average gifts by 10 percent.

The merger announcement was timed to coincide with *I-News*' ground-breaking "[Losing Ground](#)"

special report, which used census data to document in five parts and an e-book, how the state's black and Latino residents are falling farther and farther behind white residents.

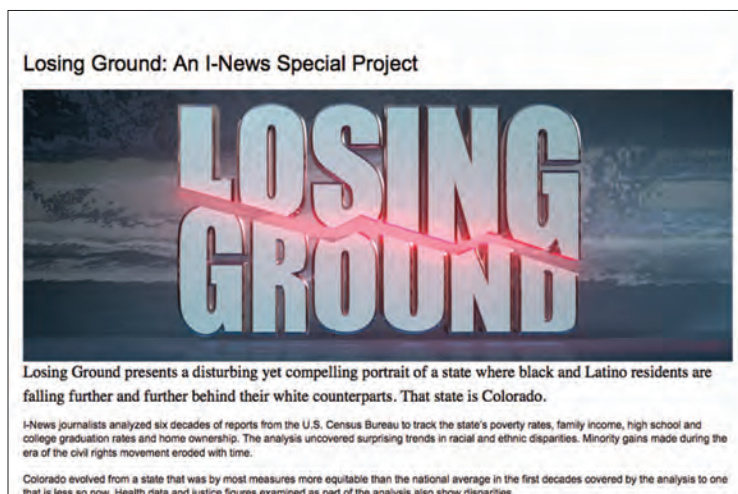
That kind of enterprise reporting – offered to every news outlet in the state and combined with a long tail of roundtables, discussions and follow-up stories – is exactly what Price had in mind when he offered to merge with *I-News* rather than just pay for content. He envisions more “subterranean stories,” so deep, he said, they can support months of follow-ups and have real impact.

“We got lucky,” Price said. “In the first week of ‘Losing Ground’ every single daily except one carried it on the front page of their Sunday edition.”

“I love the series,” wrote general manager Scott Stanford, on the *Steamboat [Springs] Pilot & Today* website. “I can’t wait to publish the next project.”

Indeed, even Colorado Public Radio, which is not a formal part of what RMPBS is doing, has run multiple stories.

“Losing Ground” is the [kind of journalism](#) that paved the way for *I-News* to partner with some 100 news outlets around the state. Some of the larger



The data in “Losing Ground” documented how the state’s black and Hispanic residents are falling behind white residents.

newspapers had even offered to pay for *I-News* content in recent years until those fees fell victim to relentless newsroom cost cutting.

“Then we started trading chickens,” Frank said. For instance, she said, one partner might work on graphic. Another might put in a house ad for *I-News*’ summer camp.

Even with the merger, *I-News* will still distribute its journalism to its network of partners. However, Frank said she has been very upfront in discussing the merger with them. “There will have to be some kind of contribution, either in kind or real money” to help support *I-News*’ deep dives.

The merger is seen as a win-win for both parties. The fact that RMPBS had no newsroom meant there were no issues of merging newsroom cultures.

“When you look at what we were doing and all the impact we’ve had – laws that have changed, changed policy – this is what public media ought to be doing,” Frank said. “They can either build it from scratch or use our stuff.”

While RMPBS has gained a newsroom, *I-News* got “an infrastructure that would have taken us years to build,” Frank said. “We now have 65,000 members.”



I-News had contracted with a fundraising consultant who recommended a goal of securing 5,000 members, Frank said. "It would have been a heavy lift to get to 65,000 members."

The merger by no means liberates Frank from fundraising, but she now can participate in some joint fundraising meetings with RMPBS. Moreover, her staff members, as RMPBS employees, now get health and other benefits.

Price said he was motivated by diminishing newspapers, changing TV and the "declining amount of high-value journalism."

He saw *I*-News' objective as "laudable." [Education News Colorado](#) is also located in his building. He also sees opportunities for more arts and culture reporting and journalism around STEM issues.

"We had this perspective that public media needs a lot of reform. Nostalgia is the enemy. History is the guide," he said "We tell our people we have to train ourselves [to move] from a linear manufacturing company of the '50s to a tech company" of today.

Key to that is creating content that moves across many distribution platforms and via many distribution partners and can be shared geographically through the web, applications and social media.

"We had this perspective that public media needs a lot of reform. Nostalgia is the enemy."

— Doug Price, president and CEO of Rocky Mountain PBS



I-News now falls under Rocky Mountain PBS's brand.

"You have created the bandwagon for people to jump on."

— Laura Frank, *I*-News executive director and vice president of news, Rocky Mountain PBS

While the public broadcasting network may not be able to do daily reporting, "we can have great impact," he said. "From my banking days, if we did a thoughtful review of what our system should be, content should always be married to distribution."

"Primarily we are an educational institution," Price said. So he's also looking to partner with such entities as universities and libraries "to create value over time" and long-lived impact.

"Given the trust PBS has, everyone is very cognizant of not putting the thumb on the scale," he said. But he forthrightly embraces a more involved mission than do some public stations who "tend to be more aloof and don't want to be tainted mixing it up with too many partners."

"We follow much more of the Mother Teresa approach," he said. "Some careful news organizations might not see that in their best interests."

Frank now also takes charge of the network's weekly "[Colorado State of Mind](#)" program. She says her sponsors have applauded the idea of the merger.

"One of them told me: You have created the bandwagon for people to jump on." ■

Merging Two Major Newsrooms

If all goes as hoped, in coming months *St. Louis Public Radio* (SLPR) and the *St. Louis Beacon* will formally merge their two newsrooms. It will be the first time a public radio station with a staff of journalists has combined its operations with another daily-news producing outlet.

This is not an easy thing to do. For one, St. Louis Public Radio is owned by the University of Missouri's Board of Curators, and top university officials must sign off on the deal. For another, both the *Beacon* and the station have strong brands, their own sponsors, their own content management systems, their own organizational charts – not to mention their own definitions of news and ways of producing it.

Yet both parties are convinced it is the right thing to do. Their supporters seem to agree. “We know in the first five years there will be a \$3 million revenue gap. After five years, we see sustainability,” said Tim Eby, general manager of St. Louis Public Radio. “We already have \$2.5 million of that pledged.”



Margie Freivogel

“If we get it right,” said *Beacon* founding editor Margie Freivogel, “We have the beginning of a blueprint of how to create a vigorous news organization that serves a region and takes advantage of the assets of public media. I think it’s a very important possibility.”

Just as St. Louis is a city that is trying to re-invent itself, so are its media outlets. The *Beacon* is a \$1.4 million operation with a staff of 18, 14 of whom are reporters. St. Louis Public Radio has 12 people producing news in its \$6 million operation.

“I think Tim realized, ‘I need a much stronger news and content engine,’” said Freivogel, a former editor at the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. “He could see that he could build that one person or two people at a time. This is an opportunity to bring 18 people into his organization. That brings a lot of strength.”

For her part, Freivogel knew the *Beacon* needed to build more revenue generation into its operations.

In moving from the idea of an alliance, announced in the fall of 2012, to a full-bore merger, the two organizations commissioned a study of what they were actually doing on their websites.

“What we saw was the opportunity was huge,” Freivogel said. Both could improve what they were doing and deliver in-depth coverage of “things no one else is doing very well.”

And they could give their news and information broader reach. For one thing, SLPR has the pipes; the *Beacon* does good reporting but it shows up in text and social media. SLPR’s website is mostly expanded radio stories.



Tim Eby

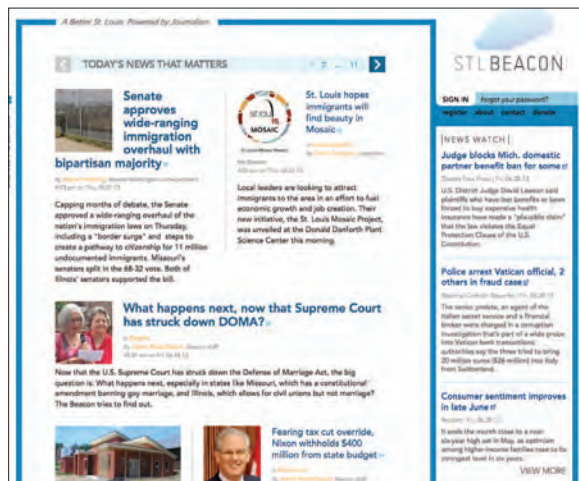
They concluded that nothing short of full integration – one newsroom, one business operation – would allow them to take full advantage of the opportunities.

But the process is not without angst. “What do we call ourselves? How do we brand ourselves? Do we lose the *Beacon* name? That’s scary for us,” Freivogel said. “We’re very proud of what we have done. But we truly want to morph into something new, and we want people to know that it is something new.”

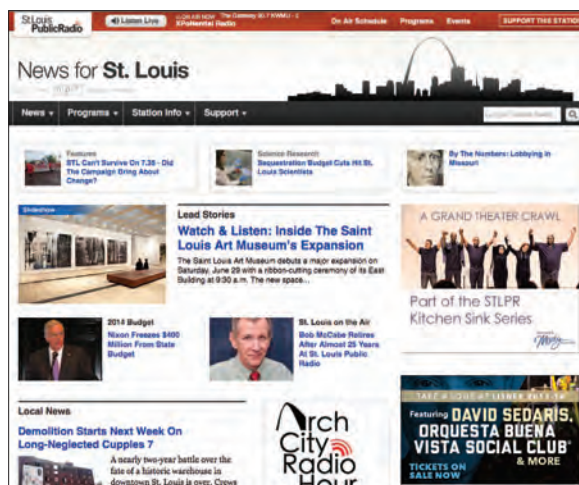
Eby acknowledges, “We know it’s not going to be easy. Just understanding the language of what we do compared with what the *Beacon* does, we have

“If we get it right, we have the beginning of a blueprint of how to create a vigorous news organization that serves a region and takes advantage of the assets of public media.”

— Margie Freivogel, *Beacon* founding editor



Combined, The Beacon and St. Louis Public Radio can support stronger journalism with more reach.



to be very intentional with how we are going to do this."

Although the two organizations share Washington, D.C., stories and *Beacon* reporters do on-air debriefs for SLPR, things got more serious last year when SLPR moved into a new University of Missouri-St. Louis building in Grand Center, the heart of the city's arts and cultural scene. It was also right next door to the *Beacon's* offices at the public television station, the *Nine Network of Public Media*, which also collaborates with the *Beacon* but is not part of the merger plans.

Then when *WWNO* public radio in New Orleans announced it was exploring an expanded collaboration with *The Lens* in the summer of 2012, Eby said, "Well, if it could happen there, why not here?"

Once SLPR and the *Beacon* signed the letter of intent in October 2012, they sought help making it happen. They got \$40,000 from the Knight Foundation to pay for Rusty and Janet Coats of Coats2Coats to help them sort through content, vision, revenue plans, technical and branding issues and governance. Working groups of staff members and board members participated.

NPR is also working with SLPR to come up with solutions around its content management system. "We may be the guinea pig," Eby said.

While there will be some cost savings in the merged operations, no layoffs are expected. "The

whole objective of this is to have more reporters and editors," Eby said. "The biggest thing for us is really establishing ourselves as a place to be producing meaningful content on broadcast as well as digital platforms."

"Don't expect coverage of crime or the Cardinals," he said. Instead, they plan a disciplined focus on politics, education, science and technology, health care, the economy, race, and arts and culture.

For now, the parties are walking the plans through the university system, where some officials have expressed interest in adding an academic program around the merged newsrooms. The prospective partners are now "working intensely" on investigating academic opportunities that would align with a merger, Freivogel said. "The biggest thing," Eby said, "is to make sure we can get this done in a timely fashion" and keep those donors who have stepped up informed of the progress.

Underlying the mechanics of the merger, however, is a different vision for what is news and how to engage the community. Already the *Beacon* has partnered with community groups that news outlets don't normally partner with to cover such issues as obesity and the role of arts as a regenerator of community.

"Our job," Freivogel said, "is to talk about what's going on. What's working and what's not working." ■

Building a Statewide News Network

In March 2013, Oregon Public Broadcasting (OPB) hired a former Associated Press reporter to undertake an ambitious vision: Build a robust statewide news network with OPB as the linchpin.

For her first several months, Julia Silverman, OPB's Director of Content Partnerships, has been traversing the state, talking to nearly every daily, weekly, tribal and college newspaper, television station and digital blog.

Her goal: persuading some 40 to 50 news outlets to partner in sharing their content with OPB and its media partners while using shared stories themselves.



Morgan Holm

"I really regard this as a start-up," said Morgan Holm, OPB's senior vice president and chief content officer.

With *The Oregonian*, the big Portland daily, pulling back on its statewide reporting and its daily delivery, and with AP's state presence

diminishing, Holm said a newspaper colleague prodded him: "OPB was the last statewide media and we'd better step up. ... So I told my boss, we'd better figure out a way to work with newspapers."

OPB joined with the Oregon Community Foundation and in 2012 snagged a \$300,000 grant from the Knight Foundation's Community Information Chal-

"Some people get it right away and it's an automatic 'yes...' "

— Julia Silverman,
OPB's Director of Content Partnerships

lenge program. OPB and the community foundation matched that grant, and the infrastructure for a statewide news network has begun to take shape.

"We can't do this on our own," said Silverman, who is spearheading the collaborations. "We have only four reporters – three in Portland and one in Bend, Oregon."

OPB is a key player in a well-established news partnership with public radio stations in Oregon, Washington and Idaho. The "Northwest News Network" provides coverage around the region and includes a state capitol correspondent in Salem. Coverage of environmental and energy issues comes from *Earth Fix*, an OPB-led collaborative funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. OPB must find support to continue it in the future.

"We are one of the only media that reaches everywhere – whether you live in Portland or Ontario, which is in a different time zone," Silverman said. "I was just out in eastern Oregon," she said. "It was two hours between towns with only sagebrush in between."



OPB regards its efforts to build a statewide news network as a start-up.

She views her mission as not just focusing on the state's metro papers, but also the smaller newspapers who are not AP members, but may have a great story "but it doesn't travel." Or the AP may not put it on the wire until a couple days after it's been published.

"Some people get it right away and it's an automatic 'yes,'" Silverman said. "Some people ask: What's in it for me?"



A lot, if OPB's plans take hold. Silverman is approaching her task in stages. First is outreach to existing news organizations to persuade them of the benefits of partnering. "Then," she said, "I will transition to more of a curator/ editor."

In that role, she will sift through partner stories and push out some 10-15 stories a day to form the "core of a thoughtful statewide news report – news of public interest, not the latest meth bust."

That may involve editing, say, a 900-word story into 300 words for space-challenged newspapers. She will also be editing OPB staff content, much of it written for radio, for print publications.

The last part, she said, is to take partner content and turn it into radio spots that can be read on the air. She also hopes to develop a corps of reporters around the state who will get audio training and participate in debriefs. "That's nice brand promotion for [their] newspapers," Silverman said.

By December 2013, OPB plans to roll out a project website with top news stories from around the state. "We hope it will be a traffic driver to the partner sites as well," although Silverman concedes the project will have to figure out how to prompt readers to click through on links to partner content.

"I know OPB can't singlehandedly fill that gap. But we must continue to meet our public-service obligation through initiatives like this..."

— Morgan Holm,
OPB's senior vice president and chief content officer

OPB took a cue from Minnesota Public Radio's "[Minnesota Today](#)," which curates and aggregates content from public officials, bloggers and business or industry experts throughout the state, but does not rely on formal media partnerships.

OPB began its efforts before paywalls at Oregon newspapers really took off and *The Oregonian* announced major changes. Now, most of the state's papers charge customers for digital access, although a majority of the paywalls are metered, giving viewers free access to a certain number of articles before charges apply, "which is good for us," Silverman said. One chain has a hard paywall, requiring payment to see anything. "They are among the only ones who said 'no,'" she said.

"People do ask us: Is this a replacement for AP? I say: 'For the moment, it's not.' "

— Morgan Holm

Asked about the pros and cons of partnering, Steve Forrester, editor and publisher of [The Daily Astorian](#) near the Pacific Coast, says, "It's all pro in my book. We'd be foolish not to." He's already been collaborating on regular radio programs with his local community radio station.

OPB's efforts occur in a rapidly changing media landscape. *The Oregonian* announced in mid-June 2013 that it would cut home delivery to four days a week and sell only street editions the other three days. It laid off nearly 100 of its 650 employees, including as many as 49 in the newsroom. It also announced the creation of a new company, the Oregonian Media Group, to "expand news and information products" in Oregon and Southwest Washington.

Holm sees *The Oregonian's* latest moves as another part of the strategy employed by its parent company, Advance Publications Inc., in New Orleans, Cleveland and elsewhere.

"Like many people, I am deeply concerned about the loss of reporting capacity and institutional knowledge that will result from these changes," he said. "I know OPB can't singlehandedly fill that gap. But we must continue to meet our public-service obligation through initiatives like this content exchange because it can provide a place for people to find news from all over the state while *The Oregonian* goes through this period of painful adjustment."



In the meantime, he said, OPB is open to any discussions with *The Oregonian* about supporting “as much strong, original journalism as possible” around the state.

Some of OPB’s prospective partners are enthusiastic about a statewide news network’s ability to break through their isolation. Others express concern that they don’t have a large enough news hole to publish more stories, but Silverman tells them their online space is unlimited and they can add state and regional tabs.

“TV stations are a little tricky,” she said “They all want to be the only one in their market.”

The biggest pushback, Holm said, is: What is it going to cost me? “I don’t have the answer yet because it all depends on the number of partners.”

For now, Holm said, he is shouldering “a significant commitment.” OPB is picking up the tab for Publish2’s system of content sharing. It makes it easier to connect various partner content management systems, create feeds for different delivery platforms and feed content directly into partner systems.

Down the road, partners will be asked to pay for the costs of editing and curating. Silverman says it may be as little as \$50 a month for a small community paper to a couple hundred dollars for a larger one.

“I think we are seen as a good middle ground. We can highlight; we can curate...It’s a little bit like a Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval.”

— Morgan Holm



OPB has a history of collaboration, including high-profile initiatives with other public radio stations.

“It’s on me to make it valuable enough,” Silverman said, but also “make it clear this is not a money-maker for OPB.”

Holm would like to see OPB develop a local-news presence on TV but for the moment he’s trying to build a place for shared news about statewide issues.

“I think we are seen as a good middle ground. We can highlight; we can curate,” he said. “It’s a little bit like a Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval.”

“People do ask us: Is this a replacement for AP?” Holm said. “I say: ‘For the moment, it’s not.’”

But he says he can see a future where many state news outlets could do without AP “and not lose any ground” although they’d need to find a way to get sports coverage.

As things move forward, Holm is betting a statewide news network will help a lot of news outlets in the state. “If it doesn’t meet a need,” he said, “we shouldn’t do it.” ■

Partnering to Blanket the State

Two years after the [Connecticut Mirror](#) launched to cover public issues across the state, the news start-up moved into the Hartford headquarters of the [Connecticut Public Broadcasting Network](#), home to CPTV and WNPR public radio.

“Proximity really matters,” said Jim Cutie, who, as the Mirror’s CEO, helped orchestrate the 2012 move into space one floor below WNPR, the nonprofit news site’s biggest collaborator.

It was just another way to take one of the nation’s more robust public-indie media partnerships up another notch. “If the staff thinks you are in sync, they behave as if you are,” he said.

To date, WNPR and CTMirror.org have shared the costs of reporters, co-published content, collaborated with interviews and made sure print reporters got audio training, said John Dankosky, WNPR news director. Dankosky, for one, was among the group of local poli-influentials who paved the way for the *Mirror’s* creation.



Jim Cutie

“They’re giving us content that we wouldn’t be able to get and we’re giving them exposure,” Dankosky said.

Then in April 2013, Cutie was tapped for a new role. He was named [Content Direc-](#)

[tor](#) of the Connecticut Public Broadcasting Network (CPBN) with a mandate to figure out how to distribute news across all the statewide network’s platforms and amp up the role of news video.

“Cutie? He’s my boss now,” said Dankosky, whose hosting of the popular “[Where We Live](#)” has made him a state household name.

There’s no question that the state’s size – 3.6 million people across eight counties – has helped WNPR and the *Mirror* build a robust statewide news network.



The Mirror offers robust coverage of state policy issues.

They’re giving us content that we wouldn’t be able to get and we’re giving them exposure.”

— John Dankosky, WNPR news director

In their latest foray, the *Mirror* and WNPR wanted to beef up coverage in the western, New York-centric, part of the state. They secured funding to co-hire in June 2012 a full-time environmental reporter based at Fairfield University in Fairfield County. “We wanted a foothold there,” Cutie said to foster coverage that was less Hartford-focused.

“I’d love to have that situation five times over” with multimedia reporters filing stories for both the *Mirror* and WNPR, Cutie said.

Cutie, a former New York Times Co. executive, helped launch the *Mirror* in 2009 on a shoestring budget with an editor and two reporters. With his move to CPBN, the site has grown to 10 full- and part-time staffers and a \$1.1 million annual budget. It is the only news organization in the state with a full-time correspondent in Washington, D.C.

“In the course of all that, we were very aggressive in getting partnerships,” Cutie said. “We give our content away.” [Soon, however, the *Mirror*

“...we were very aggressive in getting partnerships.”

— Jim Cutie, former Mirror CEO

might charge news organizations that use its Washington bureau stories.]

“There are 17 dailies in the state, and we have partnerships with 13 of them,” Cutie said, plus collaborations with most of the state’s other ethnic and alternative news outlets. Participants include [The Hartford Courant](#), former home of many of the *Mirror*’s staffers.

“Our goal was to make the content ubiquitous,” Cutie said. “Sponsors and supporters love that we have that kind of reach.”

Growing that reach involves getting *Mirror* reporters on the air and WNPR reporters on the *Mirror*’s website. For instance, when the *Mirror* did [enterprise reports on the state budget](#), Dankosky advanced the series of budget stories on his program using the *Mirror*’s lead budget reporter, Keith Phaneuf. He then interviewed the governor and followed up with input from the reporter.

WNPR often gets stories from Ana Radelat, the *Mirror*’s Washington correspondent. “We don’t pay for her, but Ana files often for us,” Dankosky said.

And *Mirror* editor Jenifer Frank and Dankosky talk all the time, Cutie said. “It’s as if it’s a single newsroom.”

A more integrated collaboration involves raising money to share reporters. In 2010, the *Mirror* got a three-year grant to share reporting “fellows” with WNPR and the [New Haven Independent](#). One fellow

per year worked a four-month stint at each of the three news organizations and produced stories for all. *Politico* hired one and the *Texas Tribune* hired another.

With Connecticut shoehorned between the New York and Boston media markets, there is opportunity for lots of local and regional coverage and there is high interest in sports and politics. WNPR not only produces a robust three full hours of local talk shows but CPBN also includes CPTV Sports.

“There is neither a here nor there unless we do it, so we can pretty much cover the whole state,” Cutie said.

The online/radio partnership has been almost seamless. The next push, Cutie acknowledges, is for print news organizations to figure out how to do similar partnerships in the online world where the “cannibalization” of unique visitors is more likely to occur, Cutie said.

Next up: the *Mirror* and WNPR hope to soon launch a civic-media website, seeking more peer-to-peer engagement from active contributors affected by public policy. Plans are for Heather Brandon, one of Dankosky’s former producers, to spearhead it.

“In public media, we tend to say: Let’s do more together,” Dankosky said. “The most important thing is to get information out there.” ■



WNPR’s John Dankosky is a full partner with The Mirror.

Creating a Newsroom from Outside In

In New Orleans' topsy-turvy world of journalism, where alliances shift, talent is raided and a newspaper war is blossoming, WWNO public radio for the past year has steered a determined course.

Informed by research and bolstered by a sense of opportunity, it is erecting, piece by piece, the components for an all-news format, complete with its first news director, hired in February 2013.



Paul Maassen

"WWNO has never had a news department or news director in its 40-year history," said Paul Maassen, general manager of WWNO, which serves about 1.5 million people in New Orleans and 11 parishes in Southeast Louisiana. By moving WWNO's jazz and classical music offerings to digital

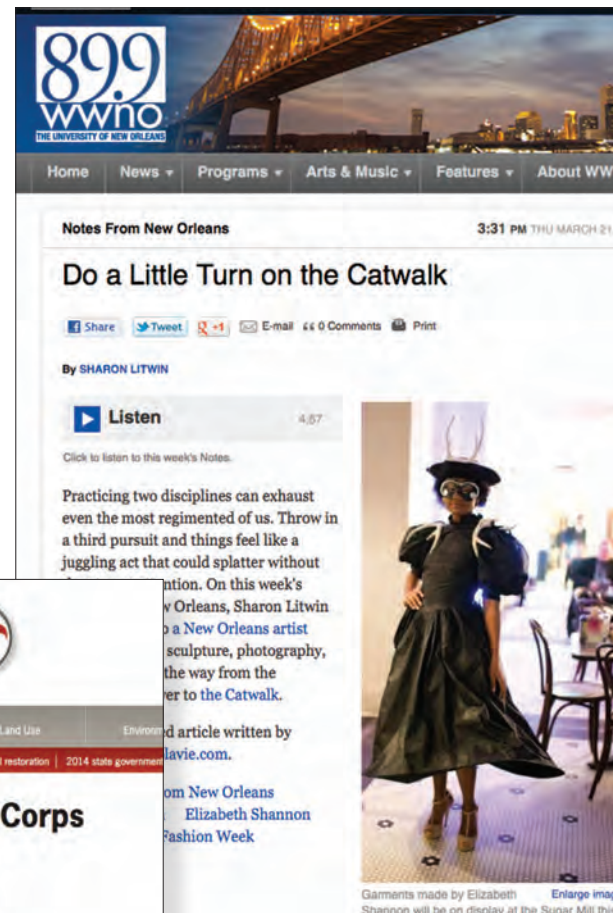
channels, Maassen created the window to do more NPR news and features. Now, he is looking to add more local news and information — what his audience said they wanted.

"I said, 'All right, we need to be working towards this,'" Maassen said. "Do you bring in a news director and three reporters?" he asked. "We didn't have the money to do that. We had to work with partnerships."

Propelled by a \$102,000 Knight grant awarded

in July 2012, WWNO cut deals with *Nola Vie*, a two-year-old arts and culture start-up, the [Greater New Orleans Community Data Center](#), and *The Lens*, an investigative news nonprofit launched in 2009 that anted up \$10,000 to help match the Knight funding.

Now, *Nola Vie* turns its content into three WWNO features a week with Knight funds helping to pay freelancers. *The Lens*, known for groundbreaking, crowd-sourced charter-school coverage, has held school-board election forums with WWNO, shared its enterprise stories and participates in reporter debriefs with the station. It is about to hire a producer-in-residence, embedded at *The Lens*, to help inject audio life into its many data-driven stories.



The Lens provides charter-school and issues coverage to WWNO. Nola Vie offers podcasts on arts and culture.

"What has come out of this has been a very collaborative-driven approach to news in a city," Maassen said. "What's different here is that we are doing it as the fiber of how we develop this news department, instead of: Here's a news department, let's add some partnerships."

The Knight grant was awarded a little more than a month after the [New Orleans] *Times-Picayune* announced that it was following in the footsteps of some of its sister papers. It cut its news staff in half, reduced print publication to three days a week and put more emphasis on its website, Nola.com. A communitywide outcry fueled a flurry of media activities and the launch of a *New Orleans edition*

by *The [Baton Rouge] Advocate*. By the spring of 2013, the *Times-Picayune* announced a return to daily publication, although with a smaller tabloid three days a week.

"It just kind of under-scored what we were doing," Maassen said.

Shortly after, he announced

plans to build a nonprofit newsroom to be called *NewOrleansReporter.org*. But WWNO soon pivoted. A revised plan sought to "avoid duplication and build on existing resources" and opted instead for an expanded partnership with *The Lens* to cover government, education, crime and flood issues. WWNO will do general assignment reporting and

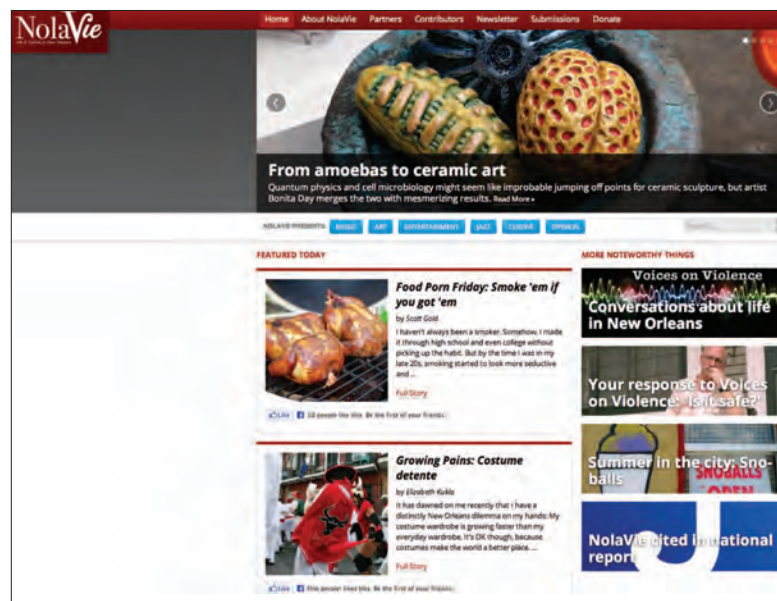
Nola Vie partners with New Orleans cultural institutions and covers lifestyle, arts and music.

Nola Vie will contribute arts and culture. "It's a thing where everyone does what they do best," he said.

"NPR was working closely with them on that," said Russell Lewis, NPR's Southern bureau chief and a Katrina reporter, now based in Birmingham, Ala. Lewis, who has been helping WWNO with the transition, said he had not seen this kind of collaboration anywhere else. NPR is also helping to convert the station's website into more than a programming grid, Maassen said.

"We see our role in this not as just a content developer, but as a catalyst," Maassen said. "I am trying to raise the profile of nonprofit, independent journalism. I am saying this is valuable and it should happen. Because of the situation here in New Orleans, it's being paid attention to – to a degree that it's not in other communities."

Editors at both WWNO's partner start-ups are former *Times-Picayune* journalists. They subscribe to what Steve Beatty, *Lens* editor and long-time investigative journalist, called a "write-one/publish-many" model of distribution. In addition to working with WWNO, their stories can appear on *Nola.com*; in *The Advocate*, whose new owner has moved aggressively into the New Orleans market; on the air of television partners; or on the websites of the



"It's a thing where everyone does what they do best."

— Paul Maassen, general manager of WWNO

four-member *New Orleans Digital Alliance*. *The Lens* rents space in the newsroom of *WVUE Fox8*, the Fox affiliate, another partner. (*Nola Vie* got its early start with a *J-Lab* grant.)

"We may do six stories a week," Beatty said. "There have been days when I've seen our stories published in four different media."

The partners see these arrangements as win-wins. The emerging attitude among nonprofit news start-ups is that "it's better to be ubiquitous than syndicated." Impact and awareness, they say, trumps click-throughs on their websites. "We want to be able



Steve Beatty

to tell our funders: If it were not for your money, this problem would not be solved," Beatty said.

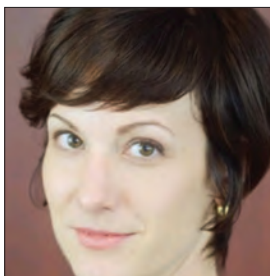


Renee Peck

Airtime, in particular, really builds their brands: "We want people to hear *The Lens* on the air," he said. For *Nola Vie*, the WWNO partnership means "we take our reporters and our copy and work with WWNO producers to turn them into on-air segments," co-founder Renee Peck

said. It's a learning curve for the print reporters. They must be mindful to avoid what Beatty calls "those kind of small, head-slapping things" like saying a-huh during an interview or drumming fingers on a table.

In February 2013, Maassen hired news director **Eve Troeh**, a *Marketplace* reporter who had earlier stints as a New Orleans reporter and producer. She now must weigh when to do an interview and when to do a highly produced feature, with all the scenes and sounds that are public radio's hallmarks.



Eve Troeh

"When you start creating more local content, the audience expects that content to be better," she



WWNO and Nola Vie co-produced "Voices on Violence" after the city's Mother's Day shootings that injured 20.

said. She's working hard to marry the station's audio tech skills with journalism skills.

In June, she worked with *Nola Vie* to produce "**Voices on Violence**" in response to the city's Mother's Day shootings that injured 20 people. In one-on-one interviews, people were taped talking about how they experienced violence in the city. *Nola Vie*, in addition to the podcasts, also rendered the interviews as Q&As.

Troeh takes heart that the station in June raised a third more than expected in a one-day mini-campaign for local-news funding. "We're getting close to getting enough content, and it's good enough, where we feel we need to create space for it," she said, in addition to the local-news cutaways

in the national programs.

"It feels like we are really pioneering this in a way," Peck said. "The overall product is very good for the community." *Nola Vie* launched in 2009 with a formal partnership with Nola.com but found WWNO's overture appealing. The site's other co-founder, nonprofit executive Sharon Litwin, had reported for BBC radio earlier in her career and now does regular *Notes from New Orleans* radio stories for WWNO.



Sharon Litwin

In any partnership, Peck said, "What you try to do to police is that you get your credit for the story and links back." Increasingly, however, *Nola Vie*'s founders want to engage its stakeholders in a four-to-five minute story rather than posting its content on a partner site that wants "people to drop in for just a nano-second" so they can count the traffic.

Maassen said he thinks communities will increasingly lean on public media and radio stations to get their news. "I think we should be prepared to respond. We should recognize that as an important part of what we do as service to our communities."

"Perhaps what we are doing here other communities could adopt." ■

Creating a Unique New Jersey Media Hub

The germ of the idea came at a 2011 meeting in Newark, N.J. What was going to happen to news coverage once Gov. Chris Christie spun off the state-owned New Jersey Network (NJN) of radio and television stations?

As the group of funders, journalists, academics and public broadcasters from New York City and Philadelphia mulled various possibilities, a voice piped up: “What we probably need here is a co-op, sort of like the Associated Press.”

That idea, recalls media blogger and critic [Jeff Jarvis](#), sprung from [Debbie Galant](#), the queen of hyperlocal news start-ups who founded [Baristanet.com](#) a decade ago in Montclair, N.J. The notion germinated for a year and took firm root at Montclair State University (MSU).

In July 2012, Galant was hired to honcho the [New Jersey News Commons](#) with a goal of helping the state’s legacy and hyperlocal news outlets develop and share stories, get training and grow the ecosystem.



Jeff Jarvis

The Commons is now aggregating content from more than [50 local news partners](#). Bigger plans are afoot.

The Commons is one part of MSU’s Center for Cooperative Media, a unique initiative at the School of Media and Communica-



tion. While many journalism schools are innovating around news entrepreneurship, Montclair State has gone in an entirely new direction. In the past year, it has created an actual bricks-and-mortar hub with office space and production facilities for New Jersey news outlets, including all its public broadcasters. NJTV Public Media New Jersey and WNYC’s [New Jersey Public Radio](#) have on-campus bureaus in a new university facility. They are joined by a [half dozen other news organizations](#).



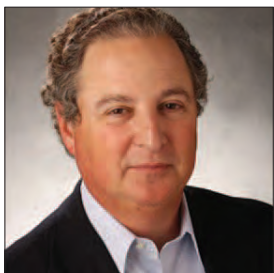
Debbie Galant gathers news from some 50 N.J. news partners and spearheads special projects, including one on immigration.

“The idea is: if they are just hanging around, things are going to happen. Indeed, things have happened,” said Jarvis, who is also director of the Tow-Knight Center for Entrepreneurial Journalism at the City University of New York’s [Graduate School of Journalism](#).

MSU’s efforts are still shaking out, but Jim Schachter, WNYC’s vice president of news, called them “interesting and important. The old ways of doing things are not working. It’s important to figure out the new ways of doing things.”

Spearheading the initiative is Merrill Brown, founding editor-in-chief of MSNBC.com who was named in August 2012 as the school's inaugural director. "What we're doing is really unique," he said. "It's different because of the complexity of the partnerships and the number of partnerships."

MSU offered NJTV a New Jersey studio and newsroom space at a cut-rate price. NJTV now has a 25-person operation that



Merrill Brown



Jim Schachter

produces, with student help, a newscast five nights a week in the school's new production studios. New Jersey Public Radio – acquired in the NJN split-up by WNYC's parent, New York Public Radio – has space for a two-person bureau at the school – its first office outside of New York City.

MSU also has offices for the New Jersey sites of AOL's Patch.com; NJSpotlight.com, a public issues news site; North Jersey Media group, which includes [The \(Bergen\) Record](http://The (Bergen) Record); NJ.com, a digital alliance of 12 newspapers

in the state; WBGO, a noted Newark-based news and jazz station. Reuters has signed on to use the university newsroom in regional emergencies.

MSU's ambitions align with public broadcasters' aspirations to beef up their local news coverage through far-reaching partnerships. "We want to be able to multiply our forces by collaboration. That is important to us," Schachter said. "Also we want an opportunity to know what others are doing so we can provide a megaphone."

For now, apart from the nightly newscast, most of the action is around the NJ News Commons. Already Galant has gathered hyperlocal news sites for training in business development, created a daily e-news digest of the best partner stories, and convened hackers in the state. Going forward, there are plans

Montclair State's media partners can use its new production facilities.



to award micro grants for investigative reporting and seed grants to help launch new start-ups.

She has launched an Immigration Project to curate and develop stories on Jersey's foreign-born population. (The state ranks fifth in the nation in the number of foreign-born residents.)

The Commons has also launched content-sharing via Repost.us, which allows a pre-approved list of publishers to re-publish complete articles, including images, links and multimedia. Repost also picks up any content updates within 10 minutes of any changes.

"I think the proudest accomplishment of the Commons is the establishment of the Repost.us network," Jarvis said. But its other goals are to grow and support the news ecosystem and improve the quality of the journalism.

Leading the charge for all this activity is the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation. Other foundations, such as the Knight, Wyncote and Patterson Foundations and the Community Foundation of New Jersey have also stepped up. Grants have funded new production studios at the university, training and collaborative reporting efforts, including around the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy.

In WNYC's eyes, "it's a good business proposition," Schachter said. WNYC bought four North Jersey

"We are investing substantially in journalists to cover New Jersey in an enterprising way,"

— Jim Schachter, vice president of WNYC

public-radio stations in the NJN split-up. The following year, WNYC began ratcheting up its news-reporting capacity. Now, about 30 percent of WNYC's audience is in New Jersey, and Schachter said there might be another bureau soon in Trenton, the state capitol. "We are investing substantially in journalists to cover New Jersey in an enterprising way," he said.

WNYC already has reporting partnerships with *New Jersey Spotlight* and *The Record* newspaper in Bergen County, flagship of the North Jersey Media Group. Schachter said he'd like to see public media playing a leadership role. "We need to focus on enterprise reporting that is not being done elsewhere," he said.

True to the state's pattern of being shoehorned in between the New York City and Philadelphia media markets, the successful bidders for the NJN licenses were public broadcasters from those two cities. At the time Montclair State also tried to bid on some of the properties, but lost out to WNYC. [WHYY](#) in Philadelphia purchased five stations serving South Jersey. WNET won the state's public TV licenses and began developing NJTV. There were, however,



Eight media partners now have office space at MSU's Center for Cooperative Media.

assurances that the new owners would not be carpetbaggers.

"I said, 'No, no, you don't really want to [operate] a public broadcaster,'" said Jarvis, who was consulting with MSU. "But you can have a relationship with them. In fact, they need you." That paved the way for NJTV to be housed at MSU.

MSU's Brown sees the role of the Center for Cooperative Media as providing office space and state-of-the-art production facilities, student workers, training, and assistance with media partnerships. Finding the funding to support that falls in his lap. "No one has under one roof the array of assets we have," he said. "Some people may have deeper relationships."

He signed on, knowing the university had big plans: The university will build a new building for the school in the next few years and Brown said he expected to launch a journalism major (it is now a

minor) in the fall of 2014. He's up for the challenge of building that program "from scratch."

For now, he is strategically meeting with people in Montclair and Manhattan to develop donors. He acknowledges that raising money to fund the Montclair media hub will be a challenge. "A lot of people think media are in decline," he said.

So far, no Philadelphia news outlets have an office at the university, however, WHYY's [NewsWorks.org](#) is one of the Commons' partners.

It remains to be seen whether Montclair State can create collaborative opportunities and amplify state news while also honoring news organizations' jealously guarded independence. It also must not create competition for funding that many of the nonprofit news partners need as well.

"Collaboration for impact and getting the word out to more people is desirable," Schachter said. "I am opposed to collaboration for the sake of collaboration."

Jarvis sees great potential in the MSU initiative and great need, especially with the June 2013 announcement that the *Newark Star-Ledger* would shut down by year's end without givebacks from its unions.

"Because we have no media, this is a blank slate," he said. "So we have the chance to really leapfrog and build something amazing." ■

Amping up Accountability Skills

Since mid-2011, [KPBS Public Broadcasting](#) in San Diego has started a 6:30 p.m. television newscast, added another at 5 p.m., moved to an all-news radio format – and invited a four-year-old investigative news start-up to move into its newsroom.

Now KPBS and [inewssource.org](#) are planning enterprise coverage together, training each other's journalists in news skills and jointly raising money to add more hard-news reporting firepower.



Suzanne Marmion

"They strengthen us, we strengthen them. We are utterly interdependent," said Suzanne Marmion, KPBS's director of news and editorial strategy. "We've had a lot of different partnerships in the three years I've been here. How do you make that stick? You embed them."



Lorie Hearn

Lorie Hearn, *inewssource* founder and a former *San Diego Union-Tribune* top editor, likes the fact that her reporters' work is "intertwined" without being fully merged with KPBS. The public media outlet gets the first right of refusal on all *inewssource* reports and she is free to

work with other media organizations in the region. "KPBS is pretty agnostic about competition," she said.

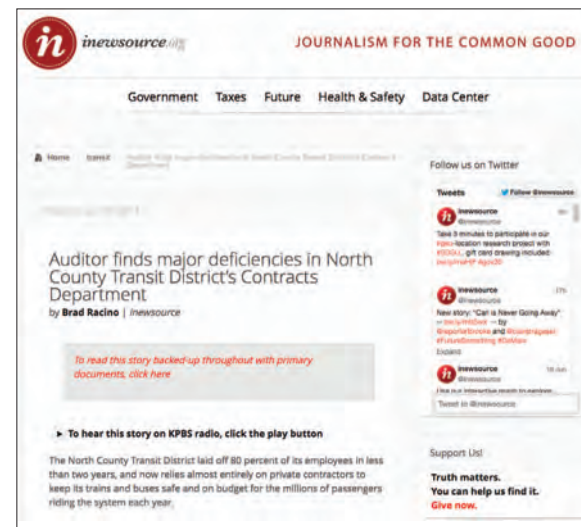
"It's been a huge win for us," said Tom Karlo, KPBS general manager. He sees KPBS's arrangement with *inewssource* as part of his efforts to find "a new vision and purpose in our community" and to deploy all of KPBS's assets – radio, television, web, mobile – in pursuit of holding the community accountable.

To that end, the two news outlets broke a major report signaling deficiencies in [whooping cough vaccine](#) amid a pertussis epidemic. They created a [searchable online database](#) to let the public learn whether they are paying an additional California real estate tax imposed on property owners in certain development districts. And they revealed the city newspaper's substantial political and financial ties to local politicians in the November 2012 election.

Adding some urgency to their efforts is the fact that the relatively new owner of the city's daily newspaper, now called [U-T San Diego](#), has been transparent about using the paper to more openly promote politically conservative causes. The *U-T* recently gobbled up the *North County Times*, which was based in Escondido.



Tom Karlo



inewssource has closely examined the dealings of a local transit district.

They are "leaving the door wide open" for us to be a one-stop shop for local, regional and national news, Karlo said. Indeed, KPBS radio has recently expanded its North County bureau, adding two reporters and new equipment.

Karlo said he began talking with Hearn soon after she launched her investigative reporting site. "It took us a while to figure out what the partnership would be," he said. And it took Hearn some time to figure out her niche. She started out offering data-based stories to news outlets, working from a tiny office at San Diego State's School of Journalism & Media Studies.

Things came together towards the fall of 2011 with the launch of KPBS's evening newscast. "I said why don't we form a joint investigations desk?" Hearn said.

Around the same time, she said a local philanthropist reached out with concerns about the daily newspaper. "When he learned of the relationship with KPBS, we both met with him with a joint plan," she said. The result was three years of funding to add another *inewssource* reporter plus an investigative producer for KPBS.

"One of the things I really wanted to do was expand investigative reporting," Karlo said. "That's traditionally done in the print world."

KPBS's Marmion said *inewssource's* move into the newsroom has changed the culture of both organizations. "They were a pretty legacy news organization, super smart, but absolutely clueless as to telling a good radio feature ... At this point, they are all broadcast storytellers."

KPBS is rotating its best reporters to work with *inewssource* staffers to learn how to do FOIA requests and run data in Excel spreadsheets. "We're trying to get our reporters a little more accountability-driven," Marmion said. KPBS also joined IRE (Investigative Reporters and Editors) and went to its 2013 convention to keep "sharpening the tip of the spear."

Marmion has noticed that Hearn hires differently now. Instead of going just for data reporters, "she is looking for people who have multimedia experience or have the potential [to learn]," she said. She



The two news outlets have shared enterprise journalism on the whooping cough vaccine and on the state's Mello-Roos property tax.

also credited Hearn with embracing KPBS's convergence philosophy: A reporter who does an investigative story should do it on all platforms and "not hand it off to a producer."

In addition to putting Hearn's reporters on the air, KPBS now assigns a videographer to go out on *inewssource* stories, and teaches the site's reporters how to shoot and edit video.

"They need us for the story distribution and broadcasting experience, it gives their journalism more impact," Marmion said.

At the same time, KPBS partners with other news outlets. It has been funded to share a reporter with

Voice of San Diego to cover the diverse City Heights neighborhood. It collaborates with local Patch.com sites, and it works with the city's largest Hispanic newspaper, *El Latino*, which translates its stories into Spanish. KPBS uses a vendor, Publish2, to make it easier to share news stories.

Why doesn't *inewssource* just merge with KPBS, as *I-News Network* has with Rocky Mountain PBS in Denver and the *St. Louis Beacon* is trying to do with St. Louis Public Radio?

"I started this endeavor at great risk some three and a half years ago because I really believe in investigative journalism. I feel very bullish about that mission," Hearn said. "Public broadcasting has a very laudable

mission, but it's much broader than investigative journalism." She said she doesn't want to risk her mission being eroded if budgets got tight in future years.

Marmion sees value in *inewssource* having an independent identity. For one, Hearn is spearheading some reporting around possible harassment of KPBS staffers by a public official. "It's sort of useful in that situation to have another entity look at that and validate it."

While both Hearn and Karlo envision more joint fundraising in the future, Hearn is also planning a membership campaign and earned income from training workshops.

Both, however, agree on one goal: Find the stories that will make an impact, Karlo said, and the community will value us. ■

Fostering Start-up Sustainability

For those who live in the Blue Ridge Mountains of North Carolina, one website working on a micro budget, is doing the hard work of in-depth reporting – not only for the region, but for the state's other news outlets as well.



Angie Newsome

CarolinaPublicPress.org, (CPP) launched in March 2011 by former *Asheville Citizen-Times* reporter Angie Newsome, spearheads investigations, trains journalists from around the state, and shares content across the board with any news organization that wants it.

"Her website is invaluable to people in western North Carolina," said Bryan Luhn, assistant news director for [WLOS](http://WLOS.com), the ABC affiliate in Asheville.

In return for substantive, reliable stories, both public and commercial media outlets are serving, in effect, as the guerrilla marketing arm for CPP, providing a megaphone for its journalism; to a lesser degree, a traffic driver to the website; and the visibility that might help ensure that the site lives on.

"They ARE the press out there," said Frank Stasio, host of *The State of Things* on WUNC 91.5, [North Carolina Public Radio](http://NorthCarolinaPublicRadio.org) based in Chapel Hill. "They are doing the hard work of regional reporting – the kinds of things that have statewide impact."

So when nearly six million gallons of raw sewage was spilled into the French Broad River in April 2013, *Carolina Public Press* not only covered the breaking news but could also point to its [special investigation](#) 10 months earlier shining a spotlight on illegal discharges of wastewater into the river. Other news organizations, including WLOS, "took our report and credited us," Newsome said. "That is validation."



Carolina Public Press's investigation of discharges into the French Broad River preceded a major spill in early 2013.

"We are doing a lot of two-way interviews with their reporters on things we find of interest," said David Hurand, news director of [WCQS-FM](http://WCQS-FM.com), the local community public radio station. It's an informal, "personal handshake" partnership, based "on my personal respect for Angie," he said.



David Hurand (left)

As the only full-time employee in the station's news department, Hurand says CPP content is key. "We cover 11 to 12 counties. There's no way a station as small as we are can cover that area."

Stasio says he regularly reaches out to CPP. "I

make it a point to remind listeners of what *Carolina Public Press* is and how it does its work. It's the hard work of journalism."

He points out that data coverage is very hard on radio. He seeks to marry his brand and market penetration with interviewing CPP's data journalists on the air, then say, "For the details, go to this website."

WLOS's Luhn said, "I approached Angie with the concept that we'd do a broadcast of their stories and send people back to their website. They'd get more visibility. We would get better content than we could devote resources to."

(continued on page 23)

Boosting Unique Local Content

In 2011 [The National Association of Science Writers](#) (NASW) got a bit of a windfall – some \$250,000. It came from fees the [Authors Coalition of America](#) collected for reproducing members' printed copyrighted material, mostly in Europe.

To cycle the funds back to its writers, the association invited grant proposals. One of the strongest came from two women media entrepreneurs who were working at the University of Utah. Their idea: to launch an online science journalism site for the state.

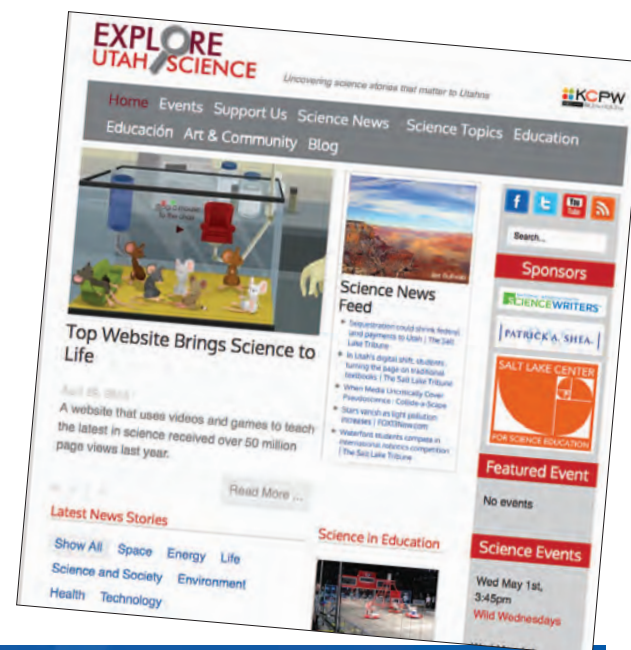
"There's just so much going on in Utah," said Kim

Schuske, a research assistant professor in the university's biology department.

In January 2012, NASW awarded \$35,000, one of its largest-ever grants, to help Schuske and her associate Julie Kiefer launch [Explore Utah Science](#). A key piece of their proposal was a partnership with a public radio station.

They created [ExploreUtahScience.org](#) and now the site has regular stories on all-news, all-local [KCPW](#). The public radio in Salt Lake City links back to

Explore Utah Science offers robust coverage of STEM issues.



CONTENT: NORTH CAROLINA

(continued from page 22)

He has since hired an investigative reporter so CPP can post WLOS reports. "Now it's a two-way street," he said.

Newsome said most of her content-sharing agreements are verbal. "Any news organizations that want to use our [stories] can republish it as is or edit it to fit their style." If they want to publish photos, they must get prior approval.

Her reporters regularly do sit-down interviews for broadcasters throughout the state and the stations have begun offering audio and video to CPP although the site isn't able to use all of it.

She has spent the past year bringing in \$65,000,



"They ARE the press out there. They are doing the hard work of regional reporting – the kinds of things that have statewide impact."

— Frank Stasio, host of The State of Things on WUNC 91.5, North Carolina Public Radio

applying for nonprofit status and doing a lot of organizational development work around generating revenue, developing a board of directors and creating a daily headline email. "That's been an easy way to pick up on us," she said.

Still, all of CPP's media partners worry about the site's sustainability. "I think what we're trying to do is give her a higher profile," Luhn said.

Meanwhile, Newsome has also produced a series of training workshops on public records and open data in three locations around the state that many of her partners have attended. Newsome isn't prepared yet to entertain more formal partnership proposals. "People are very interested in partnering with us in more ways," she said. "I just have to figure out our capacity." ■

their site. "It was our way of creating product that people could only hear on KCPW," said Ed Sweeney, president and CEO of Wasatch Public Media, which bought KCPW-FM from Community Wireless of Park City in 2008.

Robin Lloyd, head of NASW's program committee, said *Explore Utah Science* stood out. "They had a plan. They had a partner. We thought it was executable. We also thought it was a replicable approach. I'd love to see Explore Wisconsin, Explore Ohio, Explore Mississippi."

Utah, it turns out, is a STEM hot spot and fast becoming one of the nation's high-tech centers. It ranks third in STEM [science, technology, engineering, math] job growth, seventh in high-tech business, and fourteenth in STEM job concentration, according to a recent [Enterprising States report](#) from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. The state's Tech Council counts some 7,000 tech companies. The state legislature has poured millions into supporting high-tech enterprises and recently approved another \$10 million for STEM activities.

"The University of Utah is a world-recognized research university, especially for medicine," KCPW's Sweeney said. "We're in the West, so there are a lot of environmental issues," he said. "I think the community has a real entrepreneurial spirit. They are the ones who take these start-ups and incubate them into companies."

But he acknowledges that KCPW is the David to



KUER public radio, the Goliath owned by the University of Utah, so he is looking for programs that would be unique to KCPW.

"The way that we have survived in the market is we try to focus on what I call hyperlocal content, issues that are relevant to our Salt Lake City residents."

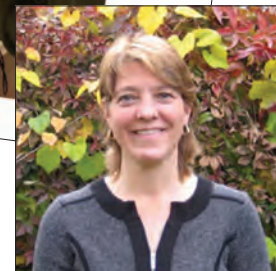
"We took a risk with *Explore Utah Science* and they performed to a T. They are doing a great job," he said. He is also trying to add unique content around higher education, green architecture, arts and culture.

Schuske, who had previous broadcast experience, is now working as a part-time reporter for KCPW. Kiefer is a research communications specialist at the university's Brain Institute.

While the site has rich content and recently applied for nonprofit status, Schuske acknowledges that



Kim Schuske, co-founder of Explore Utah Science, is now a part-time reporter for KCPW.



Kim Schuske

it is a long way from being sustainable. "We need \$100,000 a year for both of us to do this full-time," she said.

Already [Utah Public Radio](#) is starting to use some of their stories. They are seeking sponsors and trying to get buy-in from the community and expand as an educational outlet.

While they have talked with the university, they want to steer clear of doing university promotions. "We don't want to go to a department and say 'Give us money,'" Schuske said, "but we won't write about you in a promotional way." ■



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