

Sunrise Communications Inc: KZUM November '23 Newsletter



KZUM volunteers interviewing Hasan Khalil, owner of Golden Scissor, as he takes a break from giving haircuts to kids at the F St. Community Center during 2023 National Night Out.

If you missed the Annual Meeting, Don't worry! In this issue:

- Words from KZUM General Manager, Kerry Semrad
- Info at a glance

2023: Annual Report

Reflections on this year presented by Kerry Semrad, KZUM General Manager at the 2023 Annual Meeting

Welcome:

Thank you to everyone for attending this annual meeting of Sunrise Communication, which will recap this anniversary year, banner year, busy year and very interesting year of 2023 for KZUM Community Radio.

Changes to our staff:

We said goodbye to Underwriting Director Amanda McKay as she moved on to a non-profit partner Fresh Start and said hello to Jenn Graham, a former middle school teacher. She brings a wonderful sense of community and that wacky energy that is just perfect for KZUM. If anyone can handle us...it's a middle school teacher!

Newsroom:

We started off the year with a four part series on how journalists and newsrooms combat bias and misinformation. The series included journalists, educators and media professionals from all over the region. Our news director did approx. 160 on air features over the course of 2023. She also went "live" on social media for 7 hours from the Nebraska State Capital during the contentious debate of LB574, the bill to limit abortion access and gender affirming care for trans youth in our state. In fact, the KZUM Newsroom was the only newsroom in the area to run a feature about gender affirming care for trans youth that featured an in-depth interview with trans youth from our community. The fact that we were the only newsroom that brought listeners the voices of those who would be directly affected by this bill is an incredible oversight of our local news media. This is the problem that the mission of "KZUM News" is designed to solve: Extending media access to marginalized voices in our community. This is something to be immensely proud of. I'd like to give Amantha a round of applause for the great work in reporting this year.

Additionally, we have further diversified our news offerings by partnering with “Mundo Latino” (Omaha, NE) to bring local news en español every weekend to our Spanish speaking community. We also brought “National Native News” to our weekly schedule. This is a nationally syndicated news brief that highlights topics from native and indigenous cultures in the US. This important program runs every weekday at 7:02 a.m.

During our news department’s strategy meeting for 2024, we decided that we are going to get a TikTok account and utilize our YouTube channel for more news offerings and other community related material. Studies have shown that a lot of folks get their news from these outlets. This will be another way to build our programming and reach our community where they are.

Programming:

Our broadcast schedule has seen quite a few updates! During the pandemic, we said “good bye” to a handful of programmers, which is the ever flowing nature of KZUM. However, because of the pandemic, we could not hold the close contact, in studio training needed to bring on new volunteers to the airwaves. Because of this, you heard more syndicated programming on the ZUM and that is not what we’re all about. This year, we trained several new programmers and our schedule is back to its wacky, joyful and live in Lincoln antics. We have another programmer academy coming up in December and have a handful of great folks ready to be trained for shows! Our production team has been awesome at filling in programs when needed, training volunteers and fixing all of the equipment when needed (more on that later). Keeping us FCC compliant, on the air and sounding great is no small task and Steffan and Lucas are just the best.

Underwriting:

Transitions in staff positions are always hard for a small team. Amanda McKay did a fabulous job of supporting our team after she left the underwriting director position in May. Jenn was able to come aboard and hit the ground running. Underwriting is up 25% this year! This is partly due to our community and small businesses coming back to life after the pandemic but also due to Jenn’s hard work and diligence of bringing folks back into the fold. She has done an amazing job in the short time she’s been on staff.

Listener donations:

Donations from listeners are steady and on par with last year’s total. This is really comforting. Our country is in a recession. Everyday needs and groceries are incredibly expensive. Philanthropy numbers are down across the national nonprofit sector. You may have even noticed that our fund drives have been a little slower than usual. We haven’t been reaching our birthday and fall drive goals because we have been crushing our Give to Lincoln campaigns. Our listeners have been more motivated to give in May because of the Give to Lincoln match, offered by several generous sponsors and gathered together by the Lincoln Community Foundation (thank you so much LCF). In fact, for the second year in a row, we have come in a few hundred dollars under \$50,000 before the LCF match. Mark my words: in 2024 we are going to surpass 50k during Give to Lincoln!!!

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Dancing to Jonathan Leach at Stransky July 13, 2023



Queer Choir at Stransky June 15, 2023



KZUM Volunteers at Latino Fest September 16, 2023

Engagement:

Somehow, the KZUM staff pulled off 18 events between June and October and are standing upright. That does not include events that our staff, board and volunteers showed up to represent KZUM or events covered by our newsroom.

Some highlights: we hosted 7 Stransky Park Concerts, partnered with the F Street Community Center on a live broadcast during National Night Out, sponsored events with Star City Pride, El Centro Des Las Americas, Partnership for a Healthy Lincoln, Nebraska Appleseed and the EN Thompson forum. We participated in Hub & Soul and the 50th Anniversary of Zoofest (what a party!) All in all, we had a great jam packed summer and fall. And, besides the fun, we managed to make some new community connections and strengthen partnerships that already exist.

KZUM in DC:

I was asked by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting to join a panel of 13 station leaders and convene 5 times throughout 2023 to talk about the importance of community media in our towns and cities and what their funding contributes to our goals.

Our mission: to strengthen the Community Service Grant Program. I, along with a few others, advocated for more grant funding to be allocated to rural, “minority” run and small stations. KZUM is considered a small station. The committee adopted this recommendation and it will be presented to the CPBs board of directors in the coming weeks.

Being at the table with the biggest stations in the biggest markets to represent our Lincoln and the needs of KZUM was a great honor. I hope this isn’t the last opportunity that I have to visit DC and advocate on behalf of the little guys. I’m still processing the experience. Hot Take: it’s easy to get swallowed up by the big market stations. They are producing content that is played on hundreds of stations across the country. And, while that content is great, it’s not KZUM...it’s not Lincoln...it’s not us. It’s vitally important to have our voice in that conversation.

Now for the WOES! Equipment, Equipment, Equipment:

Listen, we are not the only community station that is having tech woes. Stations all over the country like ours are scrambling to find funding for updating equipment as tech becomes more sophisticated. Our set up was creatively installed and has been “frankensteined” over the years to accommodate advances in tech. Think about how much different the internet is from just 20 years ago. When something breaks, we fix it. If it takes us off the air, we scramble to fix it faster. We use everything until it falls apart.

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KZUM General Manager, Kerry Semrad at the Corporation for Public Broadcasting headquarters in Washington D.C., July 2023

This year was different. In 2023, we will have spent almost \$20,000 on equipment. The biggest issue has been our server room at the Terminal Building where our transmitter lives. We have been under the attack of condo construction for two years and it's been really hard on our equipment. Most of our broadcast outages have been a result of our power going down, surging, construction dust, cables being cut in half and construction workers doing their jobs but kicking, bumping and accidentally turning off our transmitter. Our Board of Directors has been preparing to start a campaign in 2023 to raise money to pay for a new HD transmitter and the engineering fees to replace our current equipment. However, the hostile environment has increased wear and tear on our equipment resulting in more frequent outages. It became very clear that we didn't have the time to raise the 75k to 100k needed for this project. So in order to make sure we could stay on the air should the current transmitter finally give up....we pivoted. Thanks to a gift from James Pratt in memory of KZUMie Jaqueline Crocker, we were able to purchase a brand new analog transmitter. This piece of equipment cost about \$30,000 less than the HD set up and this simple and reliable tech will be easier for the staff at KZUM to maintain. Additionally, the Terminal Building owners are providing KZUM with a new, secure and clean room with an engineer to set up our new equipment. This move is happening in January 2024. We will be off the air during the move. I anticipate it being 3- 5 days. We will have notice for you, in advance.

AND NOW THE FUTURE:

You don't need a crystal ball to know that crumbling infrastructure is a big issue. If KZUM is going to continue to uplift voices, inform our community especially in times of an emergency and soothe the soul with music and community stories, we need to be prepared to fix problems as they come up. We are vitally important to this town. We serve several parts of the community that everyone else leaves out. National programming from larger media conglomerates can't serve Lincoln like we can. They are not here, rooted in our community like we are. SO, to make sure that we are around for decades to come, we will be starting a major donor campaign to invest in and secure the future of our local voice. We will be asking our generous donors and local funders to contribute outside of their yearly donations and invest in an equipment and maintenance endowment that will ensure that when we need to spend 20k or more to stay on the air and serve our community...WE CAN. We are calling this fund the Loyal to Local Fund . By the end of 2026, we want to have \$200,000 pledged to ensure the longevity of our important organization.

If you are interested in helping raise money for this critical fund, have the means to donate yourself, or know someone who does, please feel free to contact me or a board member. We are all very excited about this and, while we have a big task at hand, being proactive for KZUM feels really great. We need to do this. There is only one KZUM and we are worth investing in.

In closing, thank you to our national partners: The Corporation for Public Broadcasting and The National Federation of Community Broadcasters (I am the president of the board for the NFCB and would not be able to manage this station without their guidance and support). Locally, we are proud to be members of Cause Collective, The Foundry, The Community Service Fund of Nebraska and a partner of the City of Lincoln's Welcoming and Belonging strategic plan (which I am a co-chair of).

Thank you to all of the volunteers who contribute on our board, committees and at events. To all of our on air programmers who make the ZUM worth listening to and donating to. And to the staff for working so hard to make this station an important part of our community.



The view looking northwest from the tenth floor of the Terminal Building in downtown Lincoln, NE.

2023 SUNRISE COMMUNICATIONS INC REPORT

In 2023, KZUM celebrated 45 years of community media in Lincoln NE. We further diversified our news offerings, introduced more live volunteers to the airwaves and created a plan for an endowment that will build our capacity to serve our community for decades to come!



New programs in 2023:

National Native News: Native news, daily at 7A.M.

80's Mixtape: Host Dr Karla, Tuesdays at 10A.M.

Roadside Picnic: Host Jeremy Eide, Tuesdays at 1P.M.

Pick and Jams; Host Just Eric, Wednesdays at 8A.M.

Zoinked Out: Host Bella Nelson, Wednesdays at 10P.M.

Bobo's R&B & Soul Review: Host Bobo, Fridays at 12A.M.

Mundo Latino News: Hosts Abril Garcia and Marina Rosado Saturdays at 10:30A.M.

ADHD Queens Podcast: available at KZUM.org

Said goodbye to these programs in 2023:

The Rumble: Host Ben Don

Variations on Jazz and other creative Music: Host Ed Rumbaugh

Eastern Standard Time: Host Carter Van Pelt

Golden Ratio Radio: Host Conoley Ospovat

Nocturnal Resonance: Host Chucky Darkside

Programming

Over 7000 hours of locally produced programming
Over 100 locally produced community news features.
Community News in English and en Español
Countless independent and local artists featured

Funding

Listener Donations: 36.5%

In Kind Contributions: 29.5%

Grants: 21.5%

Underwriting and Events: 12.5%

49 current underwriters

Engagement

84 Community Events sponsored

8 Stransky Park Concerts

89 local organizations sponsored with free PSAs

2023 SUNRISE COMMUNICATIONS INC LEADERSHIP AND COMMITTEES

Guiding Principles

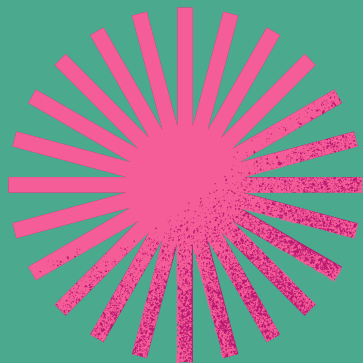
Being **Trailblazers** in our community and industry
Offering our media platform to the **Community**
Showing **Compassion** through our programming
Striving for **Inclusion**
Promoting **Collaboration**
Elevating **Conscientious** actions
Sharing the **Joy** of our mission

Mission Statement

The mission of KZUM is to educate and build community through broadcast media, with diverse and independent voices that enrich the perspectives of our audiences.

Board of Directors:

Phip Ross - Board Chair
Aaron Vlasnik - Vice Chair
Kacey Nelkin Pedersen - Board Secretary
Kelsey Liddy - Treasurer
Marthaellen Florence
Matt Bokovoy
Jake Brandt
Lauren Falconer
Alexandra McCracken



Staff:

Kerry Semrad- General Manager
Steffan Decker- Program Director
Jenn Graham- Underwriting Director
Amantha Dickman - News Director
Lucas Anderson - Production Assistant
Deb Andersen, Lisa Bradley- Co- Music Directors
Dylan Arthur- Assistant Music Director

Programming Committee:

Rick Peters
Dave Rabe
Susan Ritta
Jake Brandt
Aaron Vlasnik

Community Advisory Board:

Dave Hughes - chair
James Dean - secretary
Jim Heydt
Rachel Garver
Richard Russell

KZUM is a proud member of the following:

The National Federation of Community Broadcasters, Corporation for Public Broadcasting's Community Service Grantees, Give Nebraska, The Foundry, Cause Collective, Lincoln Chamber of Commerce Nebraska Broadcasters Association, City of Lincoln's Welcoming and Belonging Strategic Plan