The mission of Fort Wayne Public Television, Inc. (PBS39) is to provide high quality telecommunication and developmental opportunities through educational, informational, cultural and entertaining programs and service.

PBS39 is a valuable part of the northeast Indiana area:

PBS39 has been defined by northeast Indiana viewers as a “public alternative to commercial broadcasting,” “a public library - neutral ground - a place where ideas can be shared through its broadcast signal to anyone who wishes to tune that signal in,” and “a vital, consistent source of quality programming.”

PBS39 upholds the high level of trust that viewers have in public television for its quality programming, its respect for the audience, and its commitment to early childhood education and lifelong learning.

PBS39 educates, engages across northeast Indiana:

PBS39 serves 277,000 households in 16 counties in northeast Indiana and northwest Ohio, providing children’s educational programming 24-hours a day, plus access to the arts and sciences, local performances, news and public affairs. Since 1975, PBS39 has been the only public television station in northeast Indiana, and the only locally-owned & operated full-power television service in our community. PBS39 seeks to be relevant, responsive, and relational to its service area.

In FY 2015, PBS39 provided these key local services:

- Regional cultural performances, including the IPFW Holiday Concert, the Manchester Symphony Orchestra and the Gene Marcus Piano Competition
- Collaboration with AWS Foundation, WANE-TV and area organizations to produce public service announcements and local programs, celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Hands-on literacy programs, such as The PBSKids Go! Writers Contest, PBS39 Kids Summer Reading Challenge, and PBS39’s partnership with the FW TinCaps Reading Program
- Partnership with ACPL’s Audio Reading Service to stream its programming on PBS39.4’s secondary audio channel.
Empowering Community Connections

PBS39 exists thanks to a visionary father’s commitment to fulfill the educational needs of his little girl. When Wally Fosnight moved to Fort Wayne from Pittsburgh in 1970, he soon discovered that his young daughter’s favorite programs, Mr. Rogers’ Neighborhood and Sesame Street, could not be seen locally. Motivated to address this void, Mr. Fosnight’s investigations culminated two years later in the creation of a local public television station, which ensured community access to quality educational programming for all children in the area. Thus the mission of PBS39 is to provide high-quality telecommunication and developmental opportunities through educational, informational, cultural and entertaining programs and services.

PBS39 serves more than 800,000 persons in northeast Indiana and northwest Ohio. PBS39 provides children's educational programming 24-hours a day, plus access to the arts and sciences, local performances, and news and public affairs. In addition to the station’s main channel, viewers can receive PBS39Kids (39-2), which is dedicated to quality, non-commercial, educational, children's programming; PBS39Create (39-3) offers a national PBS schedule of “How To…,” travel and lifestyle programs, and PBS39Explore (39-4), which airs local and Indiana-centric programs, news and public affairs, and the best of PBS. Meeting the broad range of needs and interests of the community is the heart of PBS39’s mission.

PBS39 is a critical, free, over-the-air educational, cultural, and civic broadcast service, available to any home or classroom, regardless of income, education, gender, ethnic background or age. PBS39's history provides the foundation for continued success as it links the diverse resources of the region with its entire population. It is the vision of PBS39 to be an indispensable and trusted community partner by being an ongoing model of excellence while enhancing the quality of life in the community.

A Strategic Focus on the Station-Community Relationship

Strengthening local connections remains a key component of PBS39’s strategic plan. Noteworthy in this regard are the following accomplishments:

PBS39, WANE-TV and Anthony Wayne Services Foundation worked together to produce spots and programming to build local awareness around the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The series of 60-second spots highlighted inspirational stories of the positive impact the ADA makes to improve the lives of those throughout northeast Indiana with enduring developmental and physical disabilities. PSB39 also produced a documentary, Artists of Unlimited Abilities, profiling how art has changed the lives of people considered “differently abled.”

PBS39 completed production on another regional history documentary, The Rise of Orthopedics in America. The hour-long broadcast focused on Warsaw, Indiana, recognized globally as a hub of biomedical research and innovation. The evolution of patient care and orthopedic technology was told, in part, by surgeons, engineers, therapists, and leaders in the field of orthopedics, along with archival resources.

PBS39 was a presenting organization at the February 2015 Inter-Professional Children’s Oral Health Summit. The station-led session, “Preparing Children to be Ready To Learn,” featured highlights from the documentary “Little Children, Big Returns,” which focused on the academic and economic sense for investing in early childhood education. Attendees received handouts on online resources and programs via PBS Learning Media, PBS KIDS, and PBS39's Explorer Club.

PBS39 collaborated with The IPFW College of Visual and Performing Arts (CVPA) and Shruti, the Indian Cultural Society of Fort Wayne, in the promotion and broadcast of “The Flowering Tree,” an original work by Natya Dance Theatre. Shruti's mission is to raise awareness of Indian culture in the local community by providing social, educational, cultural, recreational, and community programs. The performance was recorded at Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne (IPFW).
PBS39 served as a member of Arts United’s Cultural Advancement Committee, working with community leaders in developing The Platform for Cultural Advancement. The Platform is a community cultural plan guiding the creative sector of northeast Indiana with a shared vision and actionable strategies.

PBS39 recorded and broadcast a performance of Beethoven’s Symphony No. 6 by the Manchester Symphony Orchestra. This was the first time that the orchestra had been televised. This was the third year for the broadcast of the Gene Marcus Piano Competition Winners Recital, and the fifth year for the live broadcast of the IPFW Holiday Concert. The year also included the broadcast of 50 Hands Monster Piano Concert, a featured IPFW 50th anniversary celebration event with music for piano ensembles, featuring 4 to 50 hands playing together.

For the first time, PBS39 provided live broadcasts of IPFW Mastodon sports. The broadcasts of the five men’s basketball games, two men’s volleyball games, and one women’s basketball game were based on teams’ home schedules and other clearances. Games aired on 39-1 with that channel’s regular programming available on 39-4 on game days.

In its 16th year on PBS39, The PBSKids Go! Writers Contest continued for the region’s elementary schools. Entries were judged with awards that included the production of segments featuring the winning students reading their stories with overlays of the illustrations. Segments were broadcast on PBS39’s main channel and its 24-hour children’s channel. Regional winners were sent on to PBS for national consideration.

PBS39 continued its partnership with the Eckhart Public Library in Auburn to provide a PBS Digital Media Lab. The lab features iPad Minis, charging station, youth chairs, and PBS apps and resources to serve the more than 5,300 DeKalb County households with children. This includes approximately 3,700 DeKalb County children from pre-K to third grade. The PBS39 Media Lab at Eckhart Public Library helps children and families discover that any time can be learning time, that learning can be fun, and that PBS KIDS literacy activities can contribute to language and skill development for children 2-8.

This was the second year of collaboration between PBS39, The Fort Wayne TinCaps and Longe Optical to expand the TinCaps Reading Program, a venture that serves more than 100,000 children in the Northeast Indiana and Northwest Ohio regions, and encourages children to develop their reading skills. “As the nation's most-trusted and most-watched TV source for kids, PBS KIDS and PBS39 are uniquely positioned with the TinCaps to help families keep the learning going while they have fun together,” said PBS39 General Manager Bruce Haines.

PBS39 participated with a variety of organizations as a media sponsor for events in 2015, such as The Fort Wayne Philharmonic, The Honeywell Center (Wabash), IPFW, The Embassy Theatre, Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory, Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation, The League for the Blind and Disabled, and Three Rivers Festival.

PBS39’s Explorer Club coordinated/promoted a variety of events for families including It's Curiosity Day! with IPFW Bookstore; Explore the Outdoors with Kendallville Parks and Recreation; Children's Literature Night at Fort Wayne TinCaps; Curious George Boo Fest with Foellinger-Freimann Botanical Conservatory; Healthy Halloween Fair at DeKalb County Fairgrounds; Wild Kratts Holiday with Ivy Tech.

PBS39 hosted free public screenings of several PBS series, including Downton Abbey Season Five, Last Days of Vietnam, Indian Summers, The Making of America, Wild Kratts, Curious George, and Dinosaur Train. The station also hosted its fifth annual 3 Rivers Film Festival for regional amateur videographers, provided facility tours for local schools and organizations, offered its meeting space to community groups, hosted an audio edit suite for IPFW students, and facilitated internships with area schools.
Expanding Public Service in HD

August 3, 2015 was a big day. That Monday, PBS39 converted its broadcast operations to High Definition. All local programs and projects are now being shot, produced and broadcast in HD. Mission-critical upgrades have been made to the station’s edit suites, control rooms, and studios in order to create local programming that meets viewer expectations and merits community support. PBS39 is seeking the last $400,000 of its technology campaign to acquire HD cameras and related gear for remote broadcasts of artistic, civic, educational, and public affairs programs across the region. The production truck is here awaiting the equipment that can create this regional community. Your support can help move this new service forward!

Encouraging Civic Engagement

People with visual disabilities who listen to the Allen County Public Library’s Audio Reading Service (formerly Northeast Indiana Radio Reading Service) can now do so over a secondary audio channel on PBS39-4. Carrying ARS programs via television broadens how many people can listen to the broadcast of local and national newspapers, magazines, and other print publications. This expansion, which encompasses all of northeast Indiana, means that any digital TV can now act as a primary or secondary receiver of ARS’ service in their home. For its partnership with the Audio Reading Service, PBS39 was awarded the Central Lion Club’s 2015 Frank Celarek Sight Service Award in October 2015.

Enriching Education Outreach

PBS content and resources have been proven to meet the critical school readiness needs of America’s children. Nielsen confirms that PBS stations reach more children ages 2-8 and more children in low-income homes than any other children’s TV network, which makes PBS local stations powerful partners in ensuring access to educational resources. For example, PBS39’s Summer Learning Fun 2015 program blended on-air, online, and one-to-one engagement with northeast Indiana families. PBS39 utilized weekly-themed PBS KIDS programming to inspire children ages 2-8 to explore and learn by distributing free reading packets that follow the on-air programming to children and families at regional locations such as Kendallville Parks and Recreation, Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation, and Auburn’s Eckhart Public Library. Other venues include Explorer Day at PBS39 (photo at right), Parkview Field, and Three Rivers Festival Children’s Fest.
If Indiana communities want to grow, they need to create communities that are attractive to a young, diverse and educated population (though certainly not to the detriment of their existing residents).


Connecting the assets and priorities of the creative sector with initiatives for regional growth will ensure cohesive community-wide development.

– Arts United’s Platform for Cultural Advancement (2015)

Reach in the Community:
Research released in July 2015 by RAVEN Consulting Group for Arts United found that nonprofit arts and culture segment of Fort Wayne’s and northeast Indiana’s creative economy has a total economic impact of $34.5 million and supports more than 1,000 jobs. Moreover, while arts and culture represent the ‘vibrancy DNA’ of our area, these assets need to be continually communicated to ensure a vibrant, attractive, and sustainable community. A similar focus on sustainability and quality of place can be found in the work of The Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership and Greater Fort Wayne, as both seek to transform Indiana’s approach to economic development by creating dynamic communities that attract and retain talent. They realize more community awareness of regional arts and civic assets contributes to a culture of place that is vital to long term prosperity. One of the greatest priorities to economic and creative development is recognizing and leveraging what is uniquely Fort Wayne/northeast Indiana regarding arts and culture.

Partnerships:
Thanks to the leadership gifts of area foundations and individual donors, PBS39 premiered arts IN focus in September 2015. This weekly, half-hour regional arts magazine celebrates the region’s performing arts and foster civic engagement. The program, hosted by Emilie Henry, features 2-3 stories all produced on location, adding to the station’s ability to tell the stories of the individuals and cultural organizations that make northeast Indiana such a vibrant region. arts IN focus is a way to bring communities together through the arts, and an opportunity to educate about and through the arts.

Impact and Community Feedback:
PBS39 is a community collaborator. The station’s strategic plan emphasizes public service partnerships where station resources align with local and regional organizations to share cultural performances and civic engagement experiences that build regional connections and deepen local relevance. Twenty-seven artists/arts organizations were featured in the program’s first 13 weeks. The Indiana Economic Development Commission’s website states that it is time to make our state a “destination for talent.” Showcasing artistic talent regionally through PBS39 empowers community connections and contributes to a vibrant “quality of place” that “attracts and retains future generations of Hoosiers.”
PBS39 a Regional Resource in Communities, Classrooms

A second distribution of PBS39 Video Field Trips on DVD began in 2015. Two years prior, grade-appropriate DVDs and materials were sent to 280 area northeast Indiana schools, representing more than 174,000 students (K-12). The subject matter emphasized early learning in math, science, consumer economics, health and safety and financial education and included teacher guides and learning activities based upon national education standards.

I am always looking for topics to teach my students—we "build background knowledge" using videos and literature. Many students come to school knowing very little about things we think they should know. Your videos become a great resource to connect with students.

—T. Noll, Lima Brighton Elementary

Public service is achieved and public trust is earned only as PBS39 continues to deliver significant programming and services to engaged audiences and as the community values the station for its responsiveness, relevance and relationships.