



## 2015 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



*"This event was a great way to get our students moving on a cold drizzly morning, and they were also excited to receive goodie bags with their own book to take home. Thank you so much, WTTW! It was an amazing morning."*

*~Ms. Courtney McGinnis, 3rd grade educator  
Neil Armstrong Elementary, Hoffman Estates, IL*

WTTW, which celebrated its 60th anniversary in 2015, provides distinctive programming that informs, inspires, educates, and entertains, and is one of the most-watched public television stations in America. Recognized for its award-winning local and national productions, WTTW is committed to presenting the very best in cultural, nature, science, public affairs, and children's programming to Chicago and beyond across its four distinct channels and online at [wttw.com](http://wttw.com).



WTTW serves a vital role in the four-state area it serves: almost two million weekly households in Chicago and its suburbs, southern Wisconsin, northwest Indiana and southwest Michigan. We provide relevant quality programming and trusted news analysis, and local arts coverage to our diverse community across our **four distinct television channels**: our main WTTW11 HD channel; our WTTW Prime channel; V-me, our Spanish-language channel; WTTW Create/WORLD, our "how-to" and international channel, and at [wttw.com](http://wttw.com), via our video **portal**. Our **children's programming** reaches almost 90 percent of households with children across our region.

In 2015, WTTW provided these key local programs and services to the communities it serves:

- ***WTTW Readers are Leaders Tour***
- ***WTTW Kids Great Food Fan Van***
- ***The Grandparent Connection***
- ***American Graduate: Let's Make it Happen!***
- ***The Golden Apple Awards for Excellence in Teaching 2015***
- ***Sesame Street Play Zone*** family event
- Monthly public screening **events** and panel discussions at the Chicago Cultural Center for ***Independent Lens*** programs.
- ***Chicago Tonight*** – WTTW's nightly newsmagazine focused on a wide variety of issues relevant to our diverse community. Content can be accessed on television and on the **website**, which includes a comprehensive video archive, blogs, infographics, and many other web-exclusive features.

WTTW's array of local services had a substantial impact on viewers and event participants in the Chicago area.

Thousands of adults, children, parents, seniors, and caregivers were directly impacted by our public outreach **events**, which promoted healthy eating, exercise, literacy, school readiness, the value of higher education, family connections, an informed citizenry, and enhanced knowledge of, and an appreciation for, the city in which we live and work. The community was kept engaged and informed on [wttw.com](http://wttw.com), on **Facebook**, and on **Twitter**.

### *WTTW Kids Readers are Leaders Tour*

This year, the *WTTW Kids Readers are Leaders* program continued to educate more children than ever and visited more venues than ever before. In our seven-year history, the program has entertained and educated close to 40,000 children between the ages of 3 and 8, many of them in under-served areas of Chicago where educational materials are scarce. In 2014-15, math games and learning were added via the integration of [UMIGO.com](http://UMIGO.com); children were provided with booklets, learning toys, and tools which provide an exciting link between the worlds of reading and math. Children, parents, and caregivers are guided to visit the website, where math adventures continue through interactive appisodes and online games. These UMIGO gifts accompany other special learning materials, resources for parents and caregivers, and gift certificates for complementary fruits and vegetables from presenting partner ALDI, distributed to every child at the end of every event.



### *WTTW Kids Great Food Fan Van*

This was the 7<sup>th</sup> anniversary season of the *WTTW Kids Great Food Fan Van* program, which educated and entertained thousands of children, parents, grandparents, and caregivers throughout seven Chicagoland counties at grocery stores including Whole Foods Market, Jewel-Osco, Mariano's, Brookhaven Marketplace, Sunset Foods, Ultra Foods, and Strack & Van Til. Every *Great Food Fan Van* event comprises of healthy food education and sampling, stretching exercises, singing, dancing, educational games, and one-on-one health guidance. The goal of the *WTTW Kids Great Food Fan Van* program is to combat childhood obesity through fun and education, one family at a time. The nutritional guidance that is provided is reinforced by the healthy food samples that are provided by our generous partners.



### *The Grandparent Connection*

This was year two for this outreach program brings children between the ages of 7 and 9 from a nearby school or day-camp together with seniors during an hour-long program that integrates stretching and movement activities, collaborative story-telling, lessons about nutritious eating and healthy habits, interactive sing-alongs, and fun games that build and help re-build literacy skills. These interactions reduce isolation, connect seniors to their community, and provide positive stimulation for those suffering from dementia and other cognitive impairments. Averaging more than 50 senior attendees per event, the program serves more than 300 seniors each year, alongside more than 450 students.



### ***American Graduate: Let's Make It Happen!***

WTTW's *American Graduate* initiative has continued to raise awareness of the high school dropout crisis in Chicago across a variety of platforms. PSAs produced in partnership with the youth production organization Free Spirit Media continued to broadcast in station breaks throughout the year, and *Chicago Tonight* provided coverage of the issues leading to low graduation rates and the programs in place to support students at risk. WTTW presented a free screening, discussion and resource fair around the locally produced film *The Hometretch*, along with a *Chicago Tonight* special which aired after the program. WTTW participated in the all-day national *American Graduate Day* broadcast, providing 13 locally produced interviews and packages recognizing organizations and individuals who provide services and resources. In June, WTTW, in partnership with Slow Roll Chicago and the Chicago Park District, hosted a *Celebration of Graduation* neighborhood bike ride and celebration in the park on Chicago's south side. This event was attended by more than 250 community residents.



### ***Golden Apple Awards for Excellence in Teaching 2015***

The *Golden Apple Awards for Excellence in Teaching* celebrated its 30th anniversary in November as WTTW produced and aired this annual awards ceremony, honoring ten outstanding teachers from schools throughout the Chicago area. In addition to a trophy and valuable prizes (including an Apple computer and a sabbatical), each teacher was featured in an interstitial which included revealing footage shot at the school and heartwarming testimonials from students and parents. This year, the awards show, taped at WTTW's Grainger Studio and hosted by Geoffrey Baer, featured the best 4th through 8th grade teachers from the city and surrounding suburbs.



### ***Public Screenings and Special Events***

WTTW and WFMT hosted public events in connection with our content throughout the year. Among these were free monthly *Independent Lens* community screenings at the Chicago Cultural Center, part of a partnership with ITVS; a *Sesame Street Play Zone* event in Grainger Studio; author luncheons at the Union League Club; several public screenings surrounding *Cancer: The Emperor of All Maladies* and *Rx: The Quiet Revolution*; a meet-and-greet with the *Chicago Tonight* on-air hosts and correspondents; Chicago River architecture cruises with popular program host and CAF docent Geoffrey Baer; a *Catalyst Critical Conversation: Attracting and Keeping Great Teachers*; and a free preview screening of the new animated children's series *Nature Cat*, which premiered nationwide in November 2015.



## *Chicago Tonight*

WTTW's long-running nightly newsmagazine *Chicago Tonight* was the city's destination for up-to-the-minute reporting on a wide variety of issues of vital interest to our diverse local community. The production continues to provide numerous fellowships and internships for many young aspiring journalists.

In addition to unbiased news reporting and analysis from top-flight journalists, regular features on *Chicago Tonight* include timely and relevant stories -- on-air and online -- about education, business, culture, local sports, science and technology, health, and more. In 2015, in the interest of fostering an informed citizenry, the program provided extensive coverage of the Chicago mayoral race with candidate forums -- including one with students from the non-profit, non-partisan Mikva Challenge and two in partnership with The City Club of Chicago -- extensive web exclusives, free digital exposure on *Chicago Tonight's* website given to candidates, and more.

Many of *Chicago Tonight's* other **2015 segments** supported unserved or underserved audiences in the community, including stories on such topics as the city's cold weather response, public school closures, the state budget crisis, the city's response to the influenza and measles epidemics, the red light camera controversy, Islamophobia, mental health treatments, applying for social security, water quality, casino hearings, property taxes, the Emerald Ash Borer's effect on the city's trees, the legalization of medical marijuana, Chicago's Little League debacle, the proposed Obama Presidential Library and Lucas Museum of Narrative Art and the use of lakefront parkland for them, and public transit issues, among many others.

*Chicago Tonight* is made possible in part by contributions from viewers, corporate supporters, foundations, and individual donors.



In March 2015, *Chicago Tonight* host Phil Ponce moderated a forum with the candidates for Chicago Mayor, Rahm Emanuel and Jesus "Chuy" Garcia, in advance of the April runoff election.

**WTTW's award-winning nightly newsmagazine *Chicago Tonight* continued to serve our diverse community in 2015, reaching approximately 175,000 weekly households across the region.**

**The program's content-rich and mobile-optimized website included extensive video, blogs, special features, and other exclusive supplementary materials.**



**WTTW is one of the Midwest’s premier public media organizations, committed to creating and presenting unique television and digital media content. We are dedicated to bringing Chicago and the world together to explore the arts, sciences, humanities, and public affairs across four distinct television channels – WTTW11, WTTW Prime, the Spanish-language channel WTTW V-me, and WTTW Create/WTTW WORLD, and on wttw.com, where visitors can connect with others in the community and access a full library of local and national video content for kids and adults, interactive features, event and membership opportunities, and robust microsites and blogs dedicated to WTTW series and specials. Each week, WTTW reaches an audience of almost two million households over a four-state area, making it one of the most-watched public television stations in America.**

**Through our quality programming and community outreach initiatives in underserved areas, we have engaged with countless members of our diverse community to promote literacy for preschoolers, combat childhood obesity, boost the high school graduation rate, and furnish vital information about the civic and cultural life of our city and beyond – always encouraging continuing education as the path to a better life.**