

2017

wttw

## Local Content and Service Report to the Community



*The Vietnam War* preview event with Ken Burns and Lynn Novick

**WTTW**, which marked 62 years on the air in 2017, is a premier public media organization committed to creating and presenting unique television and digital media content across four distinct television channels – WTTW11, WTTW Prime, WTTW Create/WTTW WORLD, and WTTW PBS Kids – and on wttw.com. Recognized for award-winning local and national productions such as *Chicago Tonight*, *Check, Please!*, *Nature Cat*, *Soundstage*, and *Mexico – One Plate at a Time*, WTTW presents the very best in public affairs, arts and culture, nature and science, history and documentary, and children's programming. Visitors to WTTW.com can access a full library of video content for kids and adults, immersive web-exclusive stories and features, event and membership opportunities, and more. Audiences can connect with WTTW on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.

## Local Value

WTTW plays a vital role in the almost two million weekly households it serves in Chicago and its suburbs, southern Wisconsin, northwest Indiana and southwest Michigan. We provide extensive local on-air and digital content and numerous outreach events to our diverse community, and our children's programming reaches almost 90 percent of households with children across the region.



## 2017 Key Services

In 2016, WTTW provided these key local programs and services to the communities it serves:

- **WTTW Kids BIG IDEA Tour**
- **WTTW Kids Great Food Fan Van**
- **WTTW Kids Grandparent Connection**
- **Golden Apple Awards for Excellence in Teaching 2017**
- **My Neighborhood: Pilsen**
- **Special Events, Public Screenings, and Panel Discussions** – these included *The Vietnam War* with Ken Burns and Lynn Novick, WTTW Trivia Nights to engage with our audiences, and monthly screening events at the Chicago Cultural Center for *Independent Lens* documentaries and films of local interest.
- **Chicago Tonight** – WTTW's nightly newsmagazine provided trusted reporting and analysis of 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.

## Local Impact

WTTW's array of local services had a substantial impact on on-air and digital audiences and event participants across 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, and an informed citizenry, and enhanced knowledge of, and an appreciation for, the rich and diverse community in which we live and work. Audiences were kept engaged and informed on wttw.com, on Facebook, and on Twitter.



WTTW Kids BIG IDEA Tour



WTTW Kids Great Food Fan Van

### WTTW Kids BIG IDEA Tour

In March, WTTW Kids introduced the WTTW Kids BIG IDEA tour, created to allow children between the ages of 2 and 7 to expand upon their own natural desires to learn via live performances and excerpts from WTTW Kids' most popular shows. The interactive "traveling lab" visited venues throughout the city and suburbs, promoting the concept that a BIG IDEA is a solution to a problem, an answer to a question, or something that has opened a child's mind to a new understanding. Kids were encouraged to read a book, watch a video, visit a library or a zoo, or talk with someone who might have information to share. Venues included Lincoln Park Zoo, the Chicago Parent Playdate Festival, the Arcada Family Theatre at Pheasant Run Resort, Wicker Park Arts Festival, Thirsty Ears Festival, Lambs Farm Festival, Chicago Ridge Mall, Gurnee Mills Mall, Stratford Square Mall, Orland Square Mall, and more.

### WTTW Kids Great Food Fan Van

In its 10th anniversary year, the WTTW Kids crew made healthy exercise and good nutrition a fun adventure for children, parents, grandparents, and caregivers throughout the Chicago area. The excitement would build as shoppers watched the construction of a WTTW Kids "village" in the parking lots of major grocery stores including Jewel-Osco, Whole Foods, Mariano's, Angelo Caputo's, Tony's, Fresh Thyme, Pete's Fresh Market, and Brookhaven. Each event would include a live concert performance by Miss Lori of Miss Lori's CAMPUS, nutritional food and drink sampling from food manufacturers including Organic Valley and Traditional Medicinals tea, one-on-one interaction and education, and an appearance by Clifford the Big Red Dog.

### **WTTW Kids Grandparent Connection**

Numerous studies have shown that interaction between seniors and children can provide lasting positive outcomes for both. The mission of the WTTW Kids Grandparent Connection program is to help create that spark which gives seniors a deeper sense of fulfillment and children a greater understanding of their elders. Each hour-long event took place at a senior living facility, during which children aged 7-9 from a nearby school took part in minor physical activity and games with their new elderly friends. During each hour-long event, simple exercises allowed both generations to stretch physically, while conversations and paired games allowed them to form relationships. This interaction was designed to give a further sense of purpose, reduce the likelihood of depression, and aid in cognitive stimulation with the goal of better overall well-being, on both sides.



WTTW Kids Grandparent Connection



Golden Apple Awards for Excellence in Teaching 2017

### **Golden Apple Awards for Excellence in Teaching 2017**

For the 32nd consecutive year, WTTW produced and aired this annual local 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. The awards show, taped at WTTW's Grainger Studio and hosted by Brandis Friedman, shone a spotlight on each teacher (and one school principal) with specially produced interstitials, and the hour-long special aired several times on WTTW.

### **My Neighborhood: Pilsen**

WTTW's year-long, cross-platform initiative *My Neighborhood: Pilsen* gave viewers and readers an intimate look inside Chicago's Mexican-American Pilsen community, exploring the intricacies, challenges, and voices that make up the neighborhood's rich, historic tapestry. The project included a 60-minute documentary, a rich and ongoing digital initiative, community screenings, partnerships with Pilsen community organizations, and a student film/video production workshop with buildOn's Chicago Service Learning Program. The broadcast premiere of the film was followed by a live town hall with residents, co-produced by WTTW and the city's Spanish-language television station, Univision Chicago.



My Neighborhood: Pilsen



Chicago Tonight

### Public Screenings, Special Events, and Panel Discussions

WTTW and WFMT hosted a wide variety of public events in connection with our content throughout the year. Among these were free monthly *Independent Lens* community screenings at the Chicago Cultural Center, which also included panel discussions. The costumed character Nature Cat engaged with kids and families at a wide variety of venues around the Chicago area, including Lurie Children's Hospital, and there were also several major events with Ken Burns and Lynn Novick in connection with *The Vietnam War* (including a public screening that attracted an audience of more than 3,000); author luncheons at the Union League Club; screening events for *Victoria on Masterpiece* and the digital series *Urban Nature*, plus fun and engaging WTTW Trivia Nights that engaged attendees across a wide age range. Representative talent from WTTW also hosted *On the Table* events, part of the Chicago Community Trust's city-wide initiative to bring groups of community-minded citizens together for a friendly meal and constructive discourse.

### Chicago Tonight

WTTW's award-winning nightly newsmagazine *Chicago Tonight* was the city's destination for up-to-the-minute coverage of a wide variety of issues of vital interest to our diverse local community. In 2017, the program reached almost 400,000 monthly households across the region, and its production continues to provide numerous fellowships and internships for young aspiring journalists.

*Chicago Tonight's* content-rich and mobile-optimized website, at [wttw.com/chicagotonight](http://wttw.com/chicagotonight), included extensive video, blogs, special features, infographics, and other exclusive supplementary materials. The program was streamed live on Facebook each evening, making it accessible to an audience far beyond our traditional viewing area.

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. Many of its segments supported unserved or underserved audiences in the community, including stories on Chicago's status as a "sanctuary city," increased gun violence and how youth outreach programs attempted to address the crisis; fracking; cyclist laws; recycling; Chicago public school closures and "Safe Passages" routes for students, the controversial "soda tax" and its subsequent repeal; how the state budget stalemate affected social service agencies; the new Chicago Police Union president and his plans to combat excessive force by

law enforcement, how the community will be affected by the proposed Obama Presidential Center in Jackson Park, how to safely view the solar eclipse, and many others of vital interest to our diverse community.

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

## Summary

WTTW has long been committed to enhancing the lives of our local audiences through quality on-air and digital content, and through community outreach initiatives in underserved areas. We have engaged with countless members of our diverse community to promote literacy for preschoolers, combat childhood obesity, and boost the high school graduation rate; foster creativity and curiosity about the world outside our door and beyond; facilitate participation in civil discourse and our electoral process; and furnish vital information about the civic and cultural life of our city – all to set them on the path to living richer and more fulfilling lives.



*"I just wanted to thank you and WTTW for the programs you're putting on. I took my three small kids a few weeks ago, and with everything that is going on around them and us, it was a breath of fresh air. You guys are making learning fun!"*

**COLLEEN WILSON** – Beverly, Illinois