In a World of Differences, We Make a WORLD of Difference.
A World of Difference

Today’s television landscape offers an unending assortment of choices – choices that, for the most part, merely offer a difference in degree. What sets public television apart in this landscape is its commitment to offering a different mindset – a mindset without lowest common denominators, shock value and the never-ending urge to titillate its audience. We in public television believe that our audience deserves respect – that it merits intelligent, informative content with actual relevance to today’s world. We believe that television can and should serve a much greater good, and act as a catalyst for positive change in our communities. In a world filled with differences, we believe that public television makes a world of difference.

Vision for the Future

VPT has long recognized the important role we play in Vermont’s communities, both geographic and demographic. Our programs, resources and services – enhanced by our broad statewide reach – aim to enhance quality of life for Vermonters. It is upon these strengths that we intend to build our future, working to bring people together and to promote the following positive outcomes in our communities:

• Understanding of one another.
• Life long learning.
• Children’s readiness to learn.
• Personal enrichment through arts, culture and entertainment.
• Appreciation and respect for the environment and working landscapes.
• Involvement and participation in community and civic affairs.

These core values serve as our guiding principles as we expand our community outreach activities and work to improve quality of life in the communities we serve.
A Community Partnership

Vermont Public Television (VPT) has traveled a long way since it first went on the air, as Vermont ETV, in 1967. From its modest beginning as a part-time educational service, Vermont Public Television has evolved into a highly respected, statewide public television network, serving as Vermont’s only PBS (Public Broadcasting Service) station.

Today, Vermont Public Television maintains a 24-hour-a-day broadcast operation with an extensive commitment to local programming and services, in addition to its core schedule of PBS programs. The station serves viewers in Vermont and Quebec, as well as in parts of New York, New Hampshire and Massachusetts. Working in partnership with the people it serves, Vermont Public Television has become an essential part of local communities – educating, entertaining and enlightening viewers of all ages and interests. Promoting an understanding of community and world affairs while enhancing quality of life, it has become a valued cultural and educational resource for all. To this end, our activities encompass the performing arts, history, public affairs and issue-oriented programming, and numerous forums for new ideas. We are always looking for better ways to serve our local communities and the region as a whole.

As time goes on, this focus on serving our local communities and working in close partnership with like-minded organizations has assumed an increasingly prominent role in the daily affairs of Vermont Public Television. VPT’s board of directors has worked hard to fine tune the organization’s mission, to examine its role in the community and to identify the difference that VPT intends to make in people’s lives. Out of that work has come a newly formed set of organizational goals that provide a valuable framework to guide Vermont Public Television into the future.

“I have long been a fan of public television and, since moving to Vermont, find that the locally produced programs provide a strong connection to the people and places in the state.”

– So. Burlington

Teamwork and community spirit are essential to Vermont Public Television’s mission.
Touching Our Communities

VPT’s community initiatives take many forms, focused on extending the reach and value of public television programming in ways that enhance our viewers’ quality of life. There are many ways in which Vermont Public Television’s on-going activities support the organization’s long-term goals and objectives:

• **Understanding of one another:**

Viewers count on Vermont Public Television to offer them a balanced worldview – and they trust what we have to say. News, documentaries and commentaries are thorough and thought provoking. National and international performing arts are skillfully showcased and highlight a rich cultural diversity. Local programs are well balanced, thoughtfully presented and geared to the interests of local residents.

Through its PBS affiliation, Vermont Public Television broadcasts such noted programs as *Nova*, *The NewsHour With Jim Lehrer*, *Frontline*, *Masterpiece Theatre*, *Great Performances* and *American Experience*.

Our locally produced programs are similarly characterized by quality and diversity. *Vermont This Week* offers a weekly analysis of news and public affairs, while *Profile* brings our viewers intriguing interviews with artists, writers and newsmakers. We also produce regular live specials such as *Call the Governor*, *Report from Montpelier* and *Report From Washington*, bolstered by our annual coverage of key legislative activity.

This balanced programming philosophy assures our audience of truly substantive, diversified programming of genuine relevance to the world today – programming that truly does make a difference.

• **Life long learning:**

Through its PBS affiliation, and through its local programs and outreach activities, Vermont Public Television offers extensive opportunities for life long learning. PBS’ national program service enjoys well-earned respect for its extensive history, nature, science, how-to and public affairs programming – imparting vital information while entertaining and enlightening its viewers.

Vermont Public Television supplements that line up with valued local programming. VPT documentaries bring our rich history and culture to life; weekly programs such as *Outdoor Journal* and *RFD* explore our region’s recreational and cultural diversity; and **electronic field trips** bring Vermont’s political and civic institutions into classrooms and viewers’ homes. VPT also

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*Each week, ‘Vermont This Week’ offers a balanced look at issues of concern to Vermonters.*

*“... one appreciates ‘Vermont This Week,’ that reports on events and doings of importance around the State... it makes a difference and helps us make a difference as informed Vermonters.”* — Randolph
periodically acquires and airs adult learning programs pertaining to such things as GED preparation, computer skills or learning a second language.

Along with these programming efforts, VPT carries on an assortment of non-broadcast activities – estate planning seminars for adults; career days and media workshops for teenagers; station tours for school groups; and media literacy workshops for educators. These efforts, often supported with extensive web-based resources, further the goal of life long learning.

- **Children’s readiness to learn:**

Helping prepare our children for success in school – and keeping them engaged as they grow – has always been a major focus and source of pride for public television. Through the years, that commitment has deepened, as evidenced by the steady stream of Emmy awards and other accolades that flow to PBS’ children’s programming.

VPT strongly supports this philosophy, and supplements PBS offerings with its own assortment of local events, resources and activities geared toward nurturing our children’s growth.

**Ready To Learn** – Vermont Public Television’s "Ready To Learn" (RTL) program is a powerful early literacy initiative whose primary objective is to use the reach of public broadcasting to help prepare young children to enter school with the basic reading skills and knowledge they need to be successful. We strive to meet this end through training, resources, workshops and ongoing support for parents and early education providers.

Recently, we’ve extended our RTL efforts even further, developing partnerships with the Vermont Department of Education’s HeadStart and EvenStart programs, the Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program and the Department of Corrections. Partnerships such as these enable VPT to use the power of public television to improve educational opportunities for Vermonters of all backgrounds.

**Educational Resources** – Side by side with Vermont Public Television’s RTL program are a wide range of educational resources, available for use by teachers, parents, homeschoolers and libraries throughout Vermont. In partnership with the Scholastic Consortium, VPT gives educators access to an extensive media library via its website (www.vpt.org). All of VPT’s local productions – as well as many PBS programs – are supplemented by additional learning resources, available through our website or educational outreach department.

“The children only watch VPT. We like the morning shows because they are not violent... and people solve problems. We appreciate that the problem solvers are all colors and ethnicities...”

– Worcester

Family-focused activities, and events for children, are an important part of VPT’s commitment to the community.
Children’s Programming – Of course, public television is renowned for the important role it plays in the education and development of children. Through such programs as Sesame Street, Barney and Dragon Tales, parents depend on Vermont Public Television to help their pre-schoolers begin school with an educational edge and enthusiasm for learning. Older children continue to receive important educational and life lessons through such award-winning programs as Arthur, Reading Rainbow and Zoom. All of PBS’ children’s programs are further extended by a rich menu of fun – and educational – online activities, also available through VPT’s website.

Family Is Key – As an extension of our children’s and family-oriented programs, VPT offers viewers an affordable Family Membership that includes three family-focused events each year. These events serve as an opportunity for families to have fun together and to learn more about the services offered by VPT. They also help to strengthen VPT’s connection with the community.

• **Personal enrichment through arts, culture and entertainment:**

No television broadcaster or cable provider can match the quality and breadth of arts and cultural programming that has long been a PBS staple. And Vermont Public Television bolsters that effort with a rich and growing assortment of regional entertainment programming. Live performance specials include such notables as the Vermont Youth Orchestra, the Montreal Chamber Orchestra, Wood’s Tea Company and Burlington, Vt.’s Blues Festival. Regular seasonal programming includes UVM sports, an annual Travel Auction, a regional film series and VPT’s weekly interview program, Profile.

All of these offerings are further enhanced by a variety of non-broadcast activities: VPT Family Days, Britcom Teas, international excursions and many other member-focused events all help to foster artistic and cultural exploration while engendering a strong sense of community with our viewers.

• **Appreciation and respect for the environment and working landscapes:**

Signature PBS programs such as Nature and Trailside help to foster a healthy respect for our environment, while extensive offerings from Vermont Public Television give a local slant to important environmental issues. Programs such as Outdoor Journal and Quest, and documentaries like The Long Trail, New England’s Great River and Discovering Lake Champlain pass on to our viewers the diversity and irreplaceable beauty of our natural landscape, while emphasizing its importance in the chain of life.

“... your new show ‘Outdoor Journal’ is great. I make it a point to sit down with my two kids and watch...”

– Essex Junction
Public affairs programs like In the Public Interest have tackled such topics as wind energy and value-added farming – topics that impact environmental planning and political decision-making – topics of vital interest to area residents. VPT is proud to play a role in helping to generate public discourse on issues of regional importance – and to help instill in our viewers an appreciation and respect for the working environment in which we live.

**Involvement and participation in community and civic affairs:**

Public affairs and informational programs play an important part in VPT’s local offerings. Political debates and election programs, candidate profiles, the gubernatorial inauguration, the governor’s weekly press conferences, call-in programs with legislators and live legislative hearings combine to offer the area’s most extensive – and in-depth – political coverage.

VPT bolsters that coverage with periodic call-in programs about public issues such as the state’s growing heroin problem or the sudden explosion in alternative medicine providers. Dovetailed with all this coverage is the station’s long-running Vermont This Week, a weekly analysis of the state’s top news stories. All of these programs serve the public with vital, contemporary information while enhancing civic discussion about issues that affect us all.

Beyond this busy production schedule, VPT also maintains an active non-broadcast presence in civic and community affairs. Student mock elections, journalism workshops and our Student Press Conference with the Governor all help to instill civic responsibility in our young people. We’ve also partnered with the Vermont Secretary of State’s office with on-air messages that stress the importance of voting.

Other endeavors such as VPT’s participation in local community events, our web-based community calendar, Red Cross blood drawings, school closing information and our participation in the national Amber Alert system help keep us involved in the community, and help underline the importance of community and civic responsibility to our viewers.

Our world is changing, and the need for understanding, tolerance and a balanced view of events – both locally and globally – is ever increasing. Public television is taking on that challenge, with a focus on intelligent, informative programming and services that enrich our citizens and our communities. By fostering understanding, by working to improve the quality of life in the communities we serve, and by taking our mission far beyond the limited spectrum of broadcast, Vermont Public Television hopes to make a positive difference in the lives of those we touch.
What’s In a Name?

Vermont Public Television is an established member of PBS, the Public Broadcasting Service – a name synonymous with quality, integrity and trust. In fact, in a nationwide 2004 RoperASW survey, PBS received the number one ranking for trustworthiness among national institutions that included courts of law, the federal government, Congress, newspaper publishers, and commercial and cable television. PBS also received high marks as an excellent use of tax dollars and, not surprisingly, ranked as the most trusted source of news and public affairs programming among all television networks.

At Vermont Public Television, we have a great deal of respect for the high standards to which PBS and its member stations are held. In like manner, we hold great respect for our audience – and in their ability to appreciate and make intelligent use of thought-provoking television. In all we do, we work hard to meet or exceed those standards and to maintain this public trust.

It’s no small effort, but in our continuing commitment to community, education and civic responsibility, VPT strives to always enhance our value to those we serve and, in accordance with our vision, to be a premier community resource for life long learning and enrichment.

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