

**WPLN (90.3 FM) / WTML / WHRS**  
**2021 3rd Quarterly Report**  
**Posted to the Public File on Oct. 10, 2021**

**Source Diversity Numbers**

Reporters ask sources to self-identify their gender, race/ethnicity, where they live/work, and other demographic and professional information that's relevant to the story. Our goal for 2021 is that 45% of sources are women each quarter and 35% are people of color.

**GENDER**

Female: 48% | Male: 49% | Nonbinary: 1% | Other/multiple people: 2%

**RACE/ETHNICITY**

Asian: 2% | Asian/White: 1% | Black: 19% | Latinx: 3% | Middle Eastern: 3% | White: 66% | Unknown/multiple people: 6%

**LOCATION**

Davidson County: 56% | Middle Tennessee (outside Nashville): 18% | Tennessee (outside Middle Tennessee): 12% | Outside Tennessee: 13% | Unknown: 1%

**Coverage Narrative**

Key topics for the quarter included:

- **A deluge of health care news:** In health care, the newsroom balanced returning to priorities such as medical debt while also covering the deadly COVID delta surge. It was one of the station's most productive periods for national health care pieces with a dozen broadcast nationally and many picked up by other media outlets, including stories about patient billing lawsuits and ECMO life support.
- **Waverly flooding:** In August, a massive flood killed almost two dozen people in Humphries County and left hundreds without homes. We sent reporters to cover the scene immediately afterward and have continued to go out there to keep track of the recovery process. WPLN's Caroline Eggers and Damon Mitchell were the key reporters on this story; Damon also looked into the hesitation that some residents feel about the possibility of rebuilding in a flood-prone part of the county.
- **Behind The Blue Wall:** WPLN's Samantha Max produced an investigation, in partnership with APM Reports, about how law enforcement treat their own. She took a year's worth of reporting and created an hourlong radio special that explores what's been described as a toxic culture of misconduct and retaliation within the Metro Nashville Police Department, and the disciplinary system that has allowed that culture to thrive. We will continue to track the impact of this story.

## **Key Numbers**

In total, WPLN News created:

- **323** local stories with sound, including **34** features (3:30 or longer in length) and **26** superspots (1:45 to 2:30 in length).
- **14** statewide stories, airing on WKYU, WUOT, WKNO, WKMS or WUTC
- **26** national stories and appearances, **48** national newscasts

## **National features and appearances:**

1. [From The Podium, High School Graduates Say What It Meant To Be The Class Of 2021](#) (Damon collected audio for this, All Things Considered, July 1)
2. [Tennessee Beauty School Teaches Importance Of Working With Black Hair](#) (Ambriehl, Weekend Edition, July 4)
3. [As COVID Vaccinations Slow, Parts Of The U.S. Remain Far Behind 70% Goal](#) (Blake, All Things Considered, July 5)
4. [Former Nashville Police Officer Takes Manslaughter Plea Deal In 2018 Killing](#) (Sam, Here & Now interview, July 6)
5. [After Controversial Statue Is Toppled, Concerns Remain Over What Could Replace It](#) (Paige, Here & Now, July 12)
6. [Amid GOP Pressure, Tennessee Halts All Vaccine Outreach, Not Just For COVID-19, To Adolescents](#) (Paige, Here & Now interview, July 14)
7. [Tennessee's Former Vaccine Leader Says She Was Fired Because Politics Trumped Science](#) (Paige, All Things Considered, July 15)
8. [New Tennessee Law Will Require Hairstylists To Recognize Signs Of Domestic Violence](#) (Natasha, Here & Now, July 15)
9. [What would rural health care from a discount retailer look like?](#) (Blake, Marketplace Morning Report, July 19)
10. [Experts Fear Partisan Disputes Over Vaccination In Tennessee Will Drive Skeptics Away](#) (Blake, Weekend Edition, July 25)
11. [A Health Care Giant Sold Off Dozens Of Hospitals — But Continued Suing Many Patients](#) (Blake, Morning Edition, July 26)
12. [Student Laptops For Virtual Learning Are Also Helping Parents Learn English](#) (Lexi, Aug. 2)
13. [Medical debt is hitting hardest for people in the South](#) (Blake, Marketplace Morning Report, Aug. 16)
14. [COVID-19 Surge Overwhelms Large Medical Centers In Southern States](#) (Blake, Morning Edition, Aug. 19)
15. [Religious Leaders Play A Key Role In People's Decision To Get Vaccines Or Wear Masks](#) (Paige, Weekend Edition, Aug. 21)
16. [22 People Are Dead After Recording-Breaking Rain Hits Tennessee](#) (Caroline, Morning Edition, Aug. 23)
17. [Search And Rescue Efforts Continue Monday After Flooding In Middle Tennessee](#) (Tony, Here & Now interview, Aug. 23)
18. [At Least A Dozen People Missing, 22 Dead After Flooding In Tennessee](#) (Caroline, All Things Considered, Aug. 23)
19. [Watching Afghanistan Fall Reminds These Veterans Of Who They Left Behind](#) (Paige, Morning Edition, Aug. 26)
20. [A Syrian Refugee Family Rebuilds Home In Tennessee](#) (Alexis, Here & Now, Aug. 30)
21. [A Nashville ICU Nurse On Surge Of COVID-19 Patients: 'It Eats Away At Your Soul'](#) (Blake, Here & Now, Sept. 1)

22. [Across The COVID-Ravaged South, High-Level Life Support Is Difficult To Find](#) (Blake, Morning Edition, Sept. 6)
23. [High pay for traveling nurses a symptom and cause of staff shortages](#) (Blake, Marketplace, Sept. 7)
24. [Unvaccinated ICU Patients Regret Not Taking The Vaccine](#) (Blake, Here & Now, Sept. 9)
25. [How An Organ Donation Continued Despite The 9/11 Attacks](#) (Blake, Here & Now, Sept. 10)
26. [Nursing schools struggle to fill the void left by pandemic](#) (Blake, Marketplace, Sept. 30)

**WPLN (90.3 FM) / WTML / WHRS**  
**2021 2nd Quarterly Report**  
**Posted to the Public File on July 9, 2021**

**Source Diversity Numbers**

Reporters ask sources to self-identify their gender, race/ethnicity, where they live/work, and other demographic and professional information that's relevant to the story. Our goal for 2021 is that 45% of sources are women each quarter and 35% are people of color.

**GENDER**

Female: 45% | Male: 53% | Nonbinary: 1% | Other/multiple people: 1%

**RACE/ETHNICITY**

Asian: 1% | Black: 27% | Latinx: 3% | Middle Eastern: 4% | White: 57% | Unknown/multiple people: 7%

**LOCATION**

Davidson County: 65% | Middle Tennessee (outside Nashville): 13% | Tennessee (outside Middle Tennessee): 10% | Outside Tennessee: 11%

**Coverage Narrative**

Key topics for the quarter included:

- **Vaccine expansion.** As the coronavirus vaccine became more widely accessible this quarter, the next step was exploring who opting out of it, and why. Health care reporter Blake Farmer reported both on vaccine hesitancy in rural parts of the state and on targeted efforts to reach certain populations, including Muslims during the holiday of Ramadan, Kurdish-Americans after the death of a prominent community member, and soldiers at Fort Campbell. Because of the national interest in this topic, many of these stories aired nationally as well.
- **Nashville's budget and community power.** The city's budget process is often dry and hard to follow, but the past year has brought renewed interest in community input into finances. Metro reporter Ambriehl Crutchfield created a new community engagement platform, *Nash In The Know*, to solicit questions about the Metro government, and then she created several easy-to-consume explainers for the web and radio on how the process worked. She also looked at the role that race played in this year's public discussions.
- **Follow-ups on local racial equity demands.** Around the anniversary of George Floyd's death and the subsequent protests for racial equity, producer Alexis Marshall checked in on a dozen demands that activists made last year to see how much — if any — progress had been made. We also created a [Race & Equity category page](#) on our website to allow people to find all our reporting on the topic.
- **The return to "normal."** The reopening of businesses and schools allowed many parts of local life to look similar to how they were before the pandemic — but it hasn't been quite so simple. Enterprise reporter Damon Mitchell created sound-rich stories on how high school students adapted to going back in person, while arts, culture & music reporter Paige Pflieger looked at the struggles of music venues who knew they could reopen soon but weren't quite sure how.

## **Key Numbers**

In total, WPLN News created:

- **326** local stories with sound, including **37** features (3:30 or longer in length) and **29** superspots (1:45 to 2:30 in length).
- **11** statewide stories, airing on WKYU, WUOT, WKNO, WKMS or WUTC
- **29** national stories and appearances, **22** national newscasts

## **National features and appearances:**

1. [In Rural Tennessee, Conservatives Voice Vaccine Hesitancy](#) (Blake, April 2, All Things Considered)
2. ['Mule Fest' Vs. 'Mule Day' — A Tennessee Town Is Taking Sides](#) (Paige, April 5, All Things Considered)
3. [How Joy Oladokun's Career Bloomed In An Uncertain Year](#) (Jewly, April 7, NPR Music)
4. [Why COVID vaccinations are lagging in Tennessee's rural white and urban Latinx communities](#) (Blake, April 8, PBS NewsHour)
5. [Incarceration touches millions with loved ones behind bars. And it's making many of them sick](#) (Damon & Samantha, April 9, WHYY's The Pulse)
6. [Mental Health Takes Center Stage As Pandemic Devastates Nashville's Live Music Scene](#) (Blake, April 14, NPR Music)
7. ['It's Not A Never Thing' — White, Rural Southerners Hesitant To Get COVID Vaccine](#) (Blake, April 15, NPR's Shots blog)
8. [Pandemic lockdowns fueled domestic violence worldwide, report says](#) (Natasha, April 16, Marketplace)
9. [With All U.S. Adults Eligible, How Can More Be Convinced To Get Vaccinated?](#) (Blake, April 19, Consider This)
10. [What We're Learning From The U.S. Vaccine Rollout](#) (Blake, April 20, On Point)
11. [Open Up And Say... 'Huh?': Nashville Venues Grapple With City's Lack Of Reopening Plan](#) (Paige, April 21, NPR Music)
12. [Police Officers In Nashville May Wear Religious Head Coverings](#) (Samantha, April 25, Weekend Edition)
13. [Nashville flooding renews federal push to tear down homes](#) (Blake, April 29, Marketplace)
14. [Nashville Nonprofit Shifts From Financial Help To Mental Health](#) (Blake, May 2, All Things Considered)
15. [A Prominent Loss Spurs Nashville Kurds To Get COVID-19 Vaccines](#) (Blake, May 4, Here & Now)
16. [For Kurdish Americans In Nashville, A Beloved Leader's Death Prompts Vaccine Push](#) (Blake, May 4, NPR's Shots blog)
17. [A flood-damaged Kurdish market begins to recover with community support](#) (Alexis, May 12, Marketplace Morning Report)
18. [Houses Of Worship Grapple With The Vaxxed And Unvaxxed Divide](#) (Blake, May 14, Morning Edition)
19. [Nashville Songwriting Program Helps Teenage Girls Through A Challenging Year](#) (Paige, May 25, Here & Now)
20. [Singer Allison Russell Shares Personal Saga Of Trauma And Triumph On 'Outside Child'](#) (Jewly, May 26, All Things Considered)
21. ['It's Specifically Cruel': Multiple Anti-Trans Bills Considered In Tennessee](#) (Kendall, May 27, All Things Considered)
22. [Nashville music scene navigates reopening](#) (Paige, May 31, Marketplace Morning Report)

23. [Why Are Southern States Lagging In Vaccinations?](#) (Blake, May 31, Morning Edition)
24. [Nashville works to diversify its city-appointed boards](#) (Ambriehl, June 7, Marketplace Morning Report)
25. [Southern Baptist Leaders Meet To Reckon With Issues Like Sexual Abuse In The Church](#) (Blake, June 15, All Things Considered)
26. [Southern Baptists Elect Moderate Ed Litton As New President](#) (Blake, June 16, Here & Now)
27. [Southern car plants are humming, but worker vaccinations have stalled](#) (Blake, June 21, Marketplace)
28. [As some states forego federal pandemic benefits, workers weigh their options](#) (Blake, June 23, Marketplace Morning Report)
29. [Composer turns to NFTs for “complete control” over her work](#) (Paige, June 29, Marketplace Morning Report)

**WPLN (90.3 FM) / WTML / WHRS**  
**2021 1<sup>st</sup> Quarterly Report**  
**Posted to the Public File on April 9, 2021**

**Source Diversity Numbers**

Reporters ask sources to self-identify their gender, race/ethnicity, where they live/work, and other demographic and professional information that's relevant to the story. Our goal for 2021 is that 45% of sources are women each quarter and 35% are people of color.

**GENDER**

Female: 45% | Male: 54% | Other/unknown: 1%

**RACE/ETHNICITY**

Asian: 1% | Black: 25% | Latinx: 3% | Middle Eastern: 1% | White: 65% | White/Asian: 1% | Unknown: 4%

**LOCATION**

Davidson County: 67% | Middle Tennessee (outside Nashville): 16% | Tennessee (outside Middle Tennessee): 14% | Outside Tennessee: 4%

**Coverage Narrative**

Key topics for the quarter included:

- **The aftermath of the Christmas Day bombing.** In January 2020, as the city was reeling from a damaging explosion in downtown Nashville, many people started to ask the question: "How did this happen?" We dug into whether the police made critical errors in preventing the attack and how AT&T's infrastructure allowed such a massive power outage to happen.
- **Tornado anniversary package, "The Disaster Year."** In a newsroom-wide effort, led by editor Tony Gonzalez, we tracked the physical and psychological rebuilding of the region one year after tornadoes caused widespread damage. (Of course, the year since that disaster has been anything but healing.) The digital package included an interactive map, photos and a dozen stories about Middle Tennessee's "disaster year."
- **Spotlighting Black art & culture:** January brought the opening of the National Museum of African-American Music, a long-awaited institution that's infusing Black culture into a historically white Lower Broadway. WPLN's Metro reporter Ambriehl Crutchfield explored the meaning of location in her story about the first Black-owned restaurants to open in the same development, and our partnership with sister station WXP brought profiles of groundbreaking artists like Joy Olakudan, Yola and Allison Russell.
- **The legislative session.** The legislature reconvened in January and started introducing a slew of anti-LGBT legislation, which has become one of the focus areas of our coverage. We connected these proposals to a nationwide effort to reframe the conversation around LGBT rights. We also followed the governor-backed "constitutional carry" measures.
- **Vaccine rollout.** The big national story with a huge local impact was the increasing availability of COVID-19 vaccines. Our reporting strived to be a basic source of information on how to access the vaccines, while also holding state and local governments accountable for their commitment to prioritize equity in their rollout. Health care reporter Blake Farmer's reporting also was relied

upon by the national networks as they tried to make sense of how the rollout was different across the country.

### **Key Numbers**

In total, WPLN News created:

- **341** local stories with sound, including **53** features (3:30 or longer in length) and **26** superspots (1:45 to 2:30 in length).
- **26** statewide stories, airing on WKYU, WUOT, WKNO, WKMS or WUTC
- **24** national stories and appearances, **37** national newscasts

### **National features and appearances:**

1. [States Struggle To Administer Their Doses Of COVID-19 Vaccines](#) (Blake, Jan. 5, Morning Edition)
2. [Are You Old Enough To Get Vaccinated? In Tennessee, They're Using The Honor System](#) (Blake, Jan. 9, WATC & Shots blog)
3. [America's Vaccine Plan: What's Working — And What Isn't](#) (Blake, Jan. 11, Consider This)
4. [Logistical challenges just beginning for nation's vaccination drive](#) (Blake, Jan. 18, Marketplace)
5. [Nashville Resilience Tested As City Rebuilds After Bombing](#) (Damon, Jan. 24, Weekend Edition)
6. [Biden Administration: 'It Will Be Months' Before Widespread Vaccine Availability](#) (Blake, Jan. 27, Consider This)
7. [Last-minute COVID vaccine appointments raise questions about equity](#) (Blake, Feb. 1, Marketplace Morning Report)
8. [Training program drives more women to become auto mechanics](#) (Damon, Feb. 9, Marketplace Morning Report)
9. [Should hospitals prioritize their own patients for COVID-19 vaccinations?](#) (Blake, Feb. 9, Marketplace)
10. [Biden Administration Recruits Community Clinics To Help Solve Vaccine Inequities](#) (Blake, Feb. 11, Morning Edition & Shots blog)
11. [In Nashville, An Effort To Strengthen Black Political Power](#) (Ambrieht, Feb. 15, All Things Considered)
12. [African American music museum joins Nashville's downtown lineup](#) (Colleen, Feb. 15, Marketplace)
13. [With All Eyes On Country Music, Will Black Nashville Get The Reckoning It Deserves?](#) (Jewly & Andrea Williams, Feb. 19, NPR Music)
14. [Questions Abound In Nashville Christmas Day Bombing Case](#) (Samantha, Feb. 25, Here & Now)
15. [A year after a deadly tornado in Tennessee, people weigh the decision to rebuild](#) (Blake, March 3, Marketplace)
16. ['Life's A Vapor, A Very Fragile Thing': Grief And Rebuilding A Year After Tornadoes](#) (Tasha, March 3, All Things Considered)
17. [Rebuilding Historically Black North Nashville, 1 Year After Deadly Tornado](#) (Damon, March 3, Here & Now)
18. [Accidentally Trashed, Thawed Or Expired: Reports Of COVID-19 Vaccine 'Spoilage'](#) (Blake, March 4, All Things Considered / Shots blog)
19. [Taking Our Best Shot](#) (Blake, March 5, The Pulse)
20. [A Sister Gets Vaccinated As She Mourns Her Sister Lost To COVID-19](#) (Blake, March 9, Here & Now)
21. [Nashville's iconic Lower Broadway gets its first Black-owned businesses](#) (Ambrieht, March 10, Marketplace Morning Report)
22. [Near-Record Levels Of Rainfall Cause Deadly Flooding In Nashville](#) (Nina, March 29, Here & Now)



23. [Nashville Sees Worst Flooding In Over A Decade. A Least 4 People Dead](#) (Samantha, March 29, Morning Edition)
24. [Should Masking Last Beyond The Pandemic? Flu And Colds Are Down, Spurring A Debate](#) (Blake, March 31, Morning Edition)