INTRODUCTION

The local, member-supported public media organization—Public Media Group of Southern California—was formed by a merger between KCETLink and PBS SoCal in 2018. The new community institution is led by the former CEO of PBS SoCal Andrew Russell and the Board of Trustees is chaired by former KCETLink Board chair and 38-year Disney veteran Richard Cook. The merged Board is comprised of 28 members, 14 from each original entity, with four unaffiliated positions to be filled.

As the flagship PBS organization for the region, Public Media Group of Southern California (PMGSC) utilizes the power of media for public good. We are creating a new public media model that is multi-platform, diversified, modern and built around high-quality content with distinctive brands. Through our three content services, KCET, PBS SoCal and Link TV, we provide our community with an essential connection to a wider world, curate and distribute content for each of our channels and provide experiences that open minds, lift spirits and connect people to each other and to the world. With a reputation for fostering a love of learning and culture, we operate to strengthen the civic fabric of Southern California and to share our distinctive perspective with the rest of the nation.

In 2019, PMGSC worked to make content available “whenever and wherever,” as is the trend in the broader media landscape. Our library of programs is available for streaming on any internet-connected screen, on KCET and PBS SoCal’s combined seven Southern California broadcast channels and on Link TV’s national satellite channel. With the rise of streaming, we made KCET and PBS SoCal KIDS content available to livestream through a partnership with YouTube TV via PBS National. On its website, Link TV also launched live linear streaming that highlights an international news block. In the coming year, PMGSC will continue working to transform our organization from a traditional broadcast television station to an agile public media organization that meets viewers wherever they are, via both broadcast and digital platforms, across all devices.

Content Overview

Public Media Group of Southern California is dedicated to telling stories that matter by creating original programs that reflect the diversity of our region and sharing the full schedule of PBS programs that viewers love and trust. Currently, we reach one of the most diverse populations in the country with the finest local, national and international programming—highlighting important stories that foster understanding of critical issues and spark dialogue. Our three channels continue to build from their current content and programming strategies and provide high-quality, culturally diverse programming designed to engage the public in innovative, entertaining and transformative ways.

KCET

The iconic Southern California public media channel is home to a richer and more inclusive California experience, helping residents to understand and connect with diverse communities and ideas. California has long been a global crossroads where cultures fuse, forming new ways of being and creating dynamic local communities. Through innovative and high-quality storytelling, KCET connects viewers to California and California to the world. Whether it be by showcasing little-known artists with Artbound, examining controversial food issues in Broken Bread, investigating critical regional news with the Emmy award-winning SoCal Connected, exploring Los Angeles’ hidden history with Lost LA, providing opportunities for local student filmmakers with Fine Cut, uncovering pressing environmental concerns with Earth Focus, or giving voices to indigenous cultures with Tending Nature—the original content created by KCET in 2019 continues to inspire audiences and win awards for excellence.

PBS SoCal

The trusted Southern California channel connects over 19 million people to the full PBS national schedule, transporting local audiences with programming that sparks curiosity and promotes a lifelong love of learning. By leveraging thought-provoking and educational experiences, PBS SoCal is a leader in children’s programming and the region’s go-to access point for...
family-friendly storytelling that educates and inspires Southern California families and viewers of all ages. In 2019, PBS SoCal worked with talented Los Angeles area producers on series relevant to Angelenos that included LAaRT, Cyberwork and the American Dream, Variety Studio: Actors on Actors (distributed to PBS stations nationally), VOCES (in conjunction with Latino Public Broadcasting), the annual L.A. County Holiday Celebration and the pledge special Dodgers Stories: 6 Decades in LA—telling important stories that add a West Coast perspective to the PBS schedule.

Link TV
The national independent non-commercial satellite television channel, which merged with KCET in 2012, is available to Dish Network and DirecTV’s 30 million subscribers as part of their basic packages. Link TV programming is also available on one of KCET’s three digital multi-cast channels in Southern California, providing viewers in the 11 counties of the Los Angeles market with access to Link TV’s news, documentaries and programming from around the world. In 2019, Link TV celebrated its 20th anniversary with a renewed commitment to delivering global perspectives that encourage cultural understanding. As a passport for the globally engaged, Link TV brings Americans closer to people and events beyond our borders. Leveraging its strong relationships with international distributors, it has become a place for sharing powerful human stories, international journalism, documentaries and scripted dramas. By conveying diverse perspectives and unfiltered viewpoints, Link TV works to bridge divides and facilitate conversation, understanding, empathy and action about important global topics.

Public media also makes a direct impact in local communities, promoting a love of learning and helping improve the prospects for a fulfilling life in a strong, inclusive, informed society for the next generations. A donor-supported community institution, Public Media Group of Southern California hosted over a hundred in-person cultural events, screenings and community conversations in 2019 to spark the sharing of diverse perspectives and engagement with local community members.

PMGSC is dedicated to delivering real social impact through an Early Learning service that prepares our most vulnerable children for school, as well as other special public service initiatives focused on parents, teachers and youth. These free educational resources and community events are open to all. In the coming year, PMGSC will continue its commitment to community engagement, early childhood education and social impact services as we are confident that the community will benefit from public media services made possible by a united and stronger public media organization for Southern California.

Looking Forward
Looking ahead we know that Public Media Group of Southern California continues to innovate and evolve so we can advance our mission long into the future. From our studios in both Burbank and Costa Mesa, we are maintaining the distinct services and brands of PBS SoCal, KCET and Link TV, while also finding exciting opportunities to share content and resources across all of our platforms and expand the possibilities of transmedia production and distribution. Our award-winning content covers a wide variety of important topics including news and information, arts and culture, science and technology, the environment, social justice issues and more. Over the next several years, PMGSC will continue to build a vibrant and strong institution—making significant contributions to the advancement of public media.

An overview of the Public Media Group of Southern California’s service to the community in 2019 is illustrated in the following pages.
LOCAL CONTENT

In 2019, Public Media Group of Southern California partnered with more local producers than ever before to broadcast more content for and about the region in which we live, while at the same time, creating content that resonates with the rest of the country. This year, we provided programming options that encouraged opportunities for community engagement and social action. Maintaining our commitment to telling stories that matter, we continued to produce and broadcast a rich array of award-winning programs that offered local and global perspectives.

By shining a light on the history and leadership of different cultures with programs celebrating stories of courage, commitment and strength, our programming team scheduled content that advances equality and understanding of our world’s diverse communities and their impact on our country and the world. From Black History Month in February through November’s celebration of the culture of Native peoples, PMGSC acquired and produced a rich selection of titles with a goal to celebrate the diversity of the human experience.

Most of the programming detailed below was accessible on the air locally (and in some cases nationally through distribution with the National Education Television Association), as well as available to stream at kcet.org, pbssocal.org, linktv.org and through the PBS app. Many programs were also available on Apple TV, Roku, Hulu, YouTube (as well as YouTube TV) and other OTT platforms. Additionally, multi-media content to support each program was produced and available on our websites and through our Facebook, Twitter and Instagram platforms.

**Programming highlights for 2019 are as follows:**

**News and Information Programming**

**SoCal Connected**—The weekly half-hour investigative news series provided substantive and engaging stories about the issues and events that affect Southern California. In its tenth season, **SoCal Connected** debuted long-form episodes focused on a single topic, allowing for a deeper exploration of critical issues. Producers took viewers behind the scenes of some of the biggest local headlines, challenging those in power with tough questions. Highlights from this season of this Emmy® award-winning series included a deep dive into California’s struggling recycling industry, public access to the California coastline and the college admissions process.

On the air since 2008, **SoCal Connected** has been recognized for its quality journalism and contributions to the Southern California community with the prestigious George Foster Peabody Award and two Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Awards, along with 33 Los Angeles Area Emmy Awards; 32 Golden Mike Awards from the Radio & Television News Association of Southern California; 53 Southern California Journalism Awards presented by the Los Angeles Press Club; and one national and five regional Edward R. Murrow Awards, among many more accolades.

**Bonnie Boswell Reports**—Featured in **PBS NewsHour Weekend**, veteran journalist Bonnie Boswell explored greater Los Angeles in this weekly series of community reports. Boswell’s stories revealed Los Angeles to be a place of culture, community and contrasts. Some of her featured 2019 reports included “Juvenile Justice,” “Healthcare for People without Homes” and “The Miracle Project.”
Arts and Culture Programming

**Artbound**—The Emmy® award-winning arts and culture series *Artbound* returned for its tenth season to examine the lives, works and creative processes of arts and culture innovators making an impact in Southern California and beyond through long-form documentaries. In 2019, the weekly on-air and online series captured the spirit of the burgeoning arts and culture community in our state and explored how it is shaping California as the creative capital of the world. Highlights from the 2019 series included:

“**Masters of Modern Design: The Art of the Japanese American Experience**” looked at the influence of Japanese American artists on modern design. A free premiere screening and discussion with the filmmakers was open to the community and took place at the Japanese American National Museum in Little Tokyo in downtown Los Angeles.

“**Heath Ceramics: The Making of a California Classic**” showcased the work of Edith Heath and the legacy of Heath Ceramics. In October, a screening of the episode took place at the prestigious College of the Arts San Francisco, as we worked to share the series statewide.

“**How Sweet the Sound: Gospel in Los Angeles**” explored the history of gospel music in Los Angeles by looking at the 1960s and 1970s. On October 4, the episode was screened at the Highland Park Independent Film Festival for cast and crew members who participated in the making of the film, as well as media and a diverse lineup of local influencers in the African-American community.

**Lost LA**—A co-production with the University of Southern California Libraries, the fourth season of the Emmy® award-winning historical documentary series hosted by public historian and writer Nathan Masters debuted with untold histories behind Griffith Park, Manzanar, Los Angeles’ prohibition tunnels, architect Paul Revere Williams, the Shindana Toy Company and the Mount Wilson Observatory. The series explored our region’s hidden past through documents, photos and other rare artifacts from California libraries and archives. USC hosted a preview of the new season at their annual Archives Bazaar while additional screenings included a prohibition-themed event at downtown LA’s historic Edison venue, and a preview and panel discussion at Pasadena’s Carnegie Observatories, the birthplace of astronomy.

**Fine Cut**—In the 20th year of producing KCET’s flagship program showcasing student filmmaking, the online submissions process garnered over 400 shorts submitted in the categories of Documentary, Animation and Narrative from Southern California film schools. In total, 16 short films (25 minutes or under) were selected as finalists in the categories of Documentary, Animation and Narrative. The winner of the Jack Larson Award received the opportunity to be a part of the American Pavilion screening at the Cannes International Film Festival in 2020. All short films selected as finalists were included in a series of half-hour broadcast episodes which premiered in the fall. Over 42 Southern California schools were represented in the submissions (34 collegiate level and 8 grade schools), 57% of the 16 finalists recognized at the event were female directors, 57% had a director that was a person of color and 29% included LGBTQ themes/characters. The awards ceremony was followed by a reception where student filmmakers were introduced to industry professionals and a day-long workshop was where the student filmmakers got to work with entertainment industry mentors to advance their careers.

**Variety Studio: Actors on Actors**—PBS SoCal and Variety partnered again to present the ninth and tenth seasons of the Daytime Emmy® award-winning series that took viewers inside the biggest Hollywood films and TV series of the year through candid conversations with today’s most acclaimed actors. Each season, the five one-hour specials brought together actors engaging in intimate one-on-one discussions about their craft and work. The series received pickup by 379 stations across the country for the film-centric version that was distributed in January 2019 and received pickup by 337 stations across the country for the television-focused edition distributed in June 2019. Both seasons were also available for streaming on pbssocal.org while full length conversations were available on Variety’s website.
LAaRT—PBS SoCal’s weekly arts series continued to bring the best of music, arts and culture from across Southern California to audiences in 2019. The series offered a unique look at the people and events involved in arts and culture in Southern California and beyond. Intelligent, diverse and at times surprising, LAaRT gave viewers an insider’s look into the creative process. Episodes included “Tyler Bate’s Studio and Raúl Julia’s Legacy,” “Chris Do, Lisa See and Mitchel Wu,” “Herb Alpert, Foster Youth and Macro Photo,” “Guo Pei and Contemporary Ballet in L.A.,” “Women Artists and Writing a Masterpiece” and “Hearst, Hen Furniture and Fine Brushwork.”

VOCES—Presented by PBS SoCal to 565 stations across the country, the fifth season of the acclaimed PBS documentary series VOCES featured new and established filmmakers who brought powerful and illuminating stories to a national audience. Produced by Latino Public Broadcasting, and supported in part by the National Endowment of the Arts and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the series was devoted to exploring the rich diversity of the Latino experience—and featured the best of Latino arts, culture and history, and shined a light on current issues that impact Latino Americans.

The new season was comprised of four documentaries, launching with a special co-presentation of VOCES and American Masters “Raúl Juliá: The World’s a Stage,” a revealing look at the brilliant and charismatic actor, from his native Puerto Rico to the New York stage to Hollywood. The season also included “Adiós Amor: The Search for Maria Moreno,” “Porvenir, Texas” and “The Pushouts” which followed Dr. Victor Rios—a former LA-based gang member turned celebrated professor, TED Talk speaker and author—as he mentors a new generation of young people. A private screening of “Adiós Amor: The Search for Maria Moreno” was shown on October 5 at Museum of Latin American Arts (MOLAA) in Long Beach for museum patrons and invited guests.

American Voices—The new 30-minute documentary special about choral music featured the personal stories of some of the leading contemporary choral composers in the country including Eric Whitacre, Frank Ticheli and Morten Lauridsen, each of whom figured prominently in the current concert scene. The most popular art form in terms of total participation, choral music reaches across the age divide as well as socio and economic boundaries. Filled with music and song from acclaimed and award-winning regional groups that included the Pacific Chorale and the Los Angeles Master Chorale, the film covered the trends, impact, changes and popularity of the music form.

60th Annual L.A. County Holiday Celebration—PBS SoCal and the Los Angeles County Arts Commission partnered once again to televise the live three-hour holiday tradition on December 24. Each year since 1959, the Los Angeles County Arts Commission has produced the free Holiday Celebration on behalf of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. More than 20 bands, choirs and dance companies from the many neighborhoods and cultures of the region celebrated the season. Highlights this year included the all-female, two-time GRAMMY award-winning Mariachi Divas de Cindy Shea who teamed up with their “brother” band Mariachi Espectacular and Jewish cultural revival band Mostly Kosher who shared the stage with Urban Voices Project, a choir made up of men and women surviving homelessness on Skid Row. This year’s show was live streamed on PBS SoCal and KCET’s websites and aired as an encore presentation on the KCET channel on Christmas Day.

Science and Technology Programming

Blue Sky Metropolis—The new original miniseries Blue Sky Metropolis, a historical documentary produced in partnership with the Emmy Award®-winning filmmaker Peter Jones (Johnny Carson: King of Late Night and the Peabody Award®-winning Inventing LA: The Chandlers and Their Times) was part of the PBS “Summer of Space” which commemorated the semicentennial moon landing anniversary. Blue Sky Metropolis looked at the past, present and future of aerospace in Southern California from multiple perspectives including science, culture, politics, race, business, labor, environment and gender. Blue Sky Metropolis followed the untold story of how aerospace was central to the growth of California and its emergence as an economic power. The documentary miniseries focused on the people behind the aerospace movement and featured many of the current major players in the aerospace industry in California, the hub of modern-day aerospace engineering. The documentary featured the lives and words of the men and women who created it: John Northrop, Glenn Martin, Donald Douglas, Amelia Earhart, Howard Hughes, Walt Disney and Wernher Von Braun. The miniseries consists of four one-hour episodes and was narrated by actor Tony Goldwyn (Scandal, The Last Samurai, Ghost). All four episodes aired back-to-back locally before becoming available to PBS stations across the country throughout the month of August.
Cyberwork and the American Dream—PBS SoCal was the presenting station for the one-hour documentary that was designed to spark a conversation about the impending transformation of jobs by artificial intelligence (AI). The documentary premiered at Loyola Marymount University where attendees witnessed a balanced debate among experts that included NPR’s Marketplace Tech Host Molly Wood, Chief Executive Officer of Skillful, Beth Cobert, Director of Career Pathways at Microsoft Joshua Winter, PwC Partner Amy Peirce, as well as the filmmakers. Starting with the Industrial Revolution, the film gave a historical framework for the impact of new technologies that sparked social turmoil, including the progression of steam, electrical and computer machinery. While new technologies increased wealth, freedom and life expectancy, they also automated jobs and destroyed outdated businesses. The film explored ways the U.S. workforce can best prepare for the challenges ahead as well as how both workers and employers can prepare for the impending disruption. The film received pickup by 310 stations across the country.

Tending Nature—Produced in partnership with the Autry Museum of the American West, the series shined a light on the environmental knowledge of indigenous peoples across California by exploring how the state’s Native peoples have actively shaped and tended the land for millennia, in the process developing a deep understanding of plant and animal life. The second season of the series aired during Native American Heritage month in November and examined how traditional practices inspired a new generation of Californians to find a balance between humans and nature. Four 30-minute episodes allowed viewers to hear first-hand from Native communities engaged in contemporary projects that revive their culture and inform western sciences. This season showcased the Paiute, Chumash, Yurok, Karuk, Hupa, Acjachemen and Tongva tribes who gave their time to guide content about subjects ranging from coastal conditions, holistic healing, river restoration and managing groundwater.

The unique partnership between KCET and the Autry that started with 2017’s Emmy® Award-winning documentary Tending the Wild has turned into a multi-year commitment to explore California’s Native stories and histories. The series connects to the Autry’s Human Nature galleries and garden spaces dedicated to the California environment, making for a multiplatform museum-media partnership—and one that furthers critical conversations related to the future of California.

Environmental Programming

Earth Focus—The acclaimed original environmental series about our changing environment and how it affects people around the world launched a new season around the theme of adaptation, exploring how environmental changes are forcing all living creatures to adapt in order to survive. The series provided audiences with urgent local and global environmental coverage that spotlights in-depth reports on key issues such as endangered species, climate change, environmental health and sustainable practices. Launched in 2007 on Link TV, Earth Focus is the longest-running investigative environmental news program on U.S. television. The latest season of the series, co-produced by the Thomson Reuters Foundation, focused on the global concerns of protecting our oceans, explored the devastating environmental impacts of different communities and the growth of the solar industry with locations that included Alaska, Chile, Brazil, Kenya and Zanzibar. UCLA hosted a screening of the “Oceans” episode that included a panel featuring UCLA’s documentary film professor Kristy Guevara Flanagan as well as Tom Ford, Executive Director of The Bay Foundation.
Social Justice / Issues Driven Programming

**LA Foodways**—A new multi-platform documentary series *LA Foodways* examined the history of food in Los Angeles. Comprised of a one-hour documentary, six digital episodes and digital editorial stories, the series looked at the storied agricultural history of Los Angeles to understand present food waste challenges and opportunities to bring fresh foods to urban communities. From the importance of orange crops in the 19th century to the massive scale of food waste in the U.S., the series dove deep into the different manners in which local organizations are coming together to ensure the future of agriculture in the region and identified environmentally friendly solutions for the future. Actor/Filmmaker Raphael Sbarge was the executive producer for *LA Foodways* and helped spearhead the collaboration of a multi-organization screening event to promote the series.

**Broken Bread**—Co-produced by KCET and Tastemade and hosted by Chef Roy Choi, each half-hour episode of the new series *Broken Bread* profiled individuals and organizations who are making a difference in their LA-based communities through food. Known for his home-grown approach to conscious cooking and community-building, Chef Choi uncovered innovative culinary and agricultural practices that are currently transforming food access, food justice and community. The series explored neighborhoods across Los Angeles, telling the stories of the trailblazers in the social conscious food movement including Father Greg Boyle (Homeboy Industries), Robert Egger (LA Kitchen), Olympia Auset (Süprmarkt), Mar Diego (Dough Girl) and more. In each episode, Roy underwent a journey of discovery that challenges the status quo (and his own assumptions) about the problems facing our food system. *Broken Bread* explored some of the most pressing issues facing the food industry and our society: food deserts, food waste, immigration, and sustainability among others.

**NightShift**—Produced in partnership with Artifact Nonfiction, the hour-long documentary followed five Los Angeles residents in their routines as night shift workers. The filmmakers took viewers on an intimate and atmospheric journey to the world of people who work while the city sleeps to explain why jobs like these are growing. The documentary also explored the reasoning behind occupational choices, with each of the five subjects explaining their role in their communities, the necessity of their jobs and why the usual nine-to-five workday is not an option for them. Subjects of the film included a wholesale baker, an LA Stadium superintendent, a nighttime janitor, a wholesale producer owner and a single mom who is an employee of UPS.
EDUCATION

Public Media Group of Southern California’s work in the community is focused on inspiring people to fulfill their full potential as lifelong learners who are committed to culture and community. Necessary educational opportunities are often difficult to access, so PBS SoCal helps close the achievement gap through our local education and engagement initiatives. PBS educational content is developed specifically to build knowledge, critical thinking, imagination and curiosity. We bring this content to the community (for free) through educational tools and workshops for parents and teachers, as well as through partnerships and events in neighborhoods across the region. Together, our content, resources, and experiences help children and youth achieve success in school, career, and life.

In 2019, highlights from our early learning, foster youth, and youth engagement initiatives included the following:

Early Learning

**Early Learning Program**—In 2019, PBS SoCal’s Early Learning Program prepared children for kindergarten and beyond by providing the adults around them with training and resources, all the while creating fun and interactive learning experiences for the children. We partnered with schools, community organizations and over 50 nonprofits to improve access to early education opportunities in LA and Orange Counties. We made technology, curriculum, bilingual parent workshops, family learning events and educator training available to our partners—all of which strengthened services in the highest-need neighborhoods of Southern California. We empowered parents to be their children’s first teachers using age-appropriate mobile apps and hands-on activities. In 2019, some key early learning figures included:

- Over 19,678 parents and children received educational materials through direct service and light touch events and fairs where information was disseminated.
- 1,000 free PBS KIDS mobile apps were given to families to learn at home.
- 1,223 parents were trained on S.T.E.M. curriculum and PBS KIDS resources.
- 634 educators were trained on how to use high-quality PBS resources in the classroom.
- 55 local community partners worked with PBS SoCal to enhance our collective impact in the community.
Ready To Learn—PBS SoCal's Ready To Learn (RTL) initiative focused on parents, teachers, and community partners as we worked to make sure Southern California's 1.5 million children are prepared for kindergarten and reading on level by 3rd grade, and introduced to S.T.E.M. concepts at an early age. In 2019, PBS SoCal established a new Ready To Learn STEM neighborhood in East Los Angeles. With the support of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), PBS SoCal focused on East Los Angeles communities to achieve change in its educational systems through strong collaborative efforts at multiple levels within the neighborhood—incorporating residents, organizations, congregations, schools and libraries to improve community health outcomes. Other RTL highlights included:

**Outreach:** In 2019, Community Labs were stationed permanently at 12 nonprofit organizations and two schools. Additionally, this year “Mobile Labs” were dispatched to 56 parent workshops and 22 educator trainings and 38 community events were held, helping to deliver educational experiences to parents and children throughout Southern California.

**Partnerships:** Over the course of the year, PBS SoCal equipped the following partners with a Community Lab of 5 to 10 iPads loaded with PBS KIDS educational apps: Stephen C. Foster School in Compton Unified School District, Clinton Elementary School in CUSD, McKinley Elementary School in CUSD, Plaza Community Services, Mexican American Opportunity Foundation, Carson Street School in LAUSD, Project Access, THINK Together, Boys & Girls Club of Tustin, KidWorks, PACE Preschools, Santa Ana Library, Children's Institute Inc., Girls Club of Los Angeles, Crystal Stairs, Inc., SBCC Thrive LA, SBCC Thrive—Grupo con Decision Parent Leaders, and Compton Library.

**Community Feedback:** Survey results gathered from participants consistently showed that PBS SoCal workshops made a difference in the lives of their families. Ninety-seven percent of parents participating in STEM-centric workshops and Parent Academies reported increased STEM understanding. Of those same parent respondents, 99% reported positive attitudes toward at-home learning (up from 36% pre-workshop) and 97% felt more confident in their ability to select educational media for children (up from 21% pre-workshop).

In 2019, PBS SoCal advocated for the integration of RTL/PBS KIDS STEM resources at home and in the classroom, in both formal and informal learning settings. Much of our effort was centered on the Ready To Learn’s program model which provided the foundation to expand our collaborations in the city of Compton with a deeper focus on early learning math and laid the groundwork for a robust Family Math Initiative in that community.

6th Annual Summer Learning Day—With the 50th anniversary of the lunar landing, this year’s event focused on literacy and the love of all things space. Held at the Columbia Space Memorial Center in Downey, Summer Learning Day in 2019 drew approximately 2,500 guests. Using the PBS theme “Summer of Space” and national summer learning resources, along with tools from community partners like the LA County Libraries and others, families had the opportunity to sign up for library cards and receive free tools as well as tips for fostering a life-long love of reading. PBS SoCal and nonprofit partner the Columbia Space Memorial Center provided bilingual STEM resources and activities to serve Spanish-speaking families in the region. Families received information about local education and community services as well as enjoyed live music and photo opportunities with PBS KIDS characters.

PBS SoCal KIDS Writers Contest—Open to students across the state in kindergarten through third grade, the PBS SoCal KIDS Writers Contest showcased young students’ creativity and imagination, with the idea that everyone has a story to tell. Designed to promote the advancement of children's literacy skills through hands-on, active learning, the annual contest encouraged children to create and submit their own original stories along with illustrations. The 2019 Contest received 900 plus entries in the categories of fiction, non-fiction and poetry/prose story. Each submission was judged on creativity, originality, story structure, relevance, illustrations and overall quality. First, second and third place winners were selected for each grade level by
PBS SoCal education staff as well as a panel of community partners. In June, PBS SoCal held an Awards Ceremony at the Los Angeles Public Library which was hosted by KPCC public radio’s education reporter Kyle Stokes. The three winners of the 2019 contest had their short stories animated and shared online and on-air—brought to life by our production team—and featured the unique stories of “The Moldy Avocado,” “Girl of Fire” and “Friends Make Friends.”

Foster Youth Initiative

To Foster Change—In 2019, PBS SoCal’s social impact initiative aimed to inspire change in the realities and life outcomes of Southern California’s foster youth. By fostering community discourse and featuring powerful storytelling, we raised public awareness of the personal struggles, social dilemmas and systemic challenges that affect the ability of foster youth to fully flourish. TFC explored the people and issues involved from different points of view and expanded the narrative about foster youth to clarify any misperceptions about the foster care system. The initiative’s three key aspects included:

Media Training—A career-focused, media training program trained 25 youth in downtown Los Angeles. The program was run in partnership with Justice for My Sister, an advocacy-based media collective. Youth were introduced to a wide variety of careers including sound recording, cinematography and makeup. From that group, youth were selected to participate in the Youth Voices program.

Youth Voices—The program paired eight youth with industry professionals to craft and build a “Video Diary” that tells a story about the foster youth’s experience. Pieces created ranged from a visual representation of anxiety, to an autobiographical journey from a straight-A student, to a gang member, to a young professional working in tech. All pieces were housed on the PBS SoCal website and were debuted at a screening event.

On-air Content—In 2019, on-air interstitials highlighted the need for foster parents and mentors in January, May (National Foster Care Month) and November.

Youth Engagement

California Student Media Festival—The launch of the 53nd annual California Student Media Festival celebrated media and multimedia literacy among the Golden State’s kindergarten through 12th grade students. The festival is the oldest student media competition in the state and free for teachers of media and multimedia education to enter their students’ individual and group projects into the annual competition. Over the past two decades, the California Student Media Festival has awarded more than $145,000 to California schools and expanded its reach to accommodate the growing number of student contestants from elementary, middle and high schools across the state. In 2019, the festival received close to 200 submissions. In April, the Downtown Independent Theater hosted students, teachers and families for a ceremony where clips from nominees were shown and awards were presented to students and schools.

PBS NewsHour Student Reporting Labs (SRL) Initiative—This initiative is building the next generation of public media with a unique digital journalism curriculum, local PBS station mentors and the opportunity to tell important community stories to the world. In 2019, the program created transformational education experiences for middle and high school students in classrooms and after-school environments. Students engaged in a powerful form of journalistic inquiry, media production and student-centered learning that built critical thinking, problem-solving, teamwork, news literacy and communication skills. PBS SoCal served as a connector between schools and the PBS Newshour team. The station found mentors for schools, gave studio tours, and created opportunities for students to interact with their peers, PBS SoCal staff and other journalism professionals. By giving them a voice and the opportunity to reach millions of people via the PBS NewsHour broadcast and digital platforms, the program inspired youth to speak up and be part of the solution.
Examples of two student centered events included:

**Above the Noise Celebration**—Students from PBS NewsHour’s Student Reporting Labs (SRL) program at Etiwanda High School in Rancho Cucamonga and Northview High School in Covina collaborated with KQED to research, write and produce three episodes of the PBS Digital Series *Above the Noise*, a show that takes a deeper look at controversial and trending topics in the news. To celebrate this collaboration, PBS SoCal and KCET brought student participants to our Burbank offices on April 29 to reflect on this year-long project. Representatives from PBS NewsHour’s SRL staff and KQED joined the students to watch the episodes, discuss the impact of the pieces on their schools and communities, and talk with each other about their experiences. This event marked the culmination of this exciting pilot of youth-content creation.

**SRL Democratic Debate Watch Party**—100 high school students and teachers from local Student Reporting Labs classrooms took over St. Robert’s Auditorium at Loyola Marymount University to meet other students and watch the *PBS NewsHour + POLITICO* Democratic Debate. A student panel hosted by Univision’s Yarel Ramos followed the debate to hear what students thought about the candidates and issues discussed. Students from local high schools created a behind the scenes video and ran a livestream of the panel. The PBS SoCal and KCET Engagement teams supported the Student Reporting Labs staff in producing this event.
COMMUNITY EVENTS

Public media can be a powerful force in our communities, creating an environment where people are inspired to learn more about each other, do more to solve societal issues and become their best possible selves. As community conveners and expert storytellers, we also have the power to have real social impact by bringing light to and promoting action to solve critical issues faced by the local communities we serve. In 2019, we brought our content to life through experiences in neighborhoods across the region in partnership with local arts, culture, community and educational organizations. Combined, we hosted over 130 events between PBS SoCal, KCET and Link TV. Highlights included the following:

Independent Lens Pop-Up: Rumble—Over 325 guests joined PBS SoCal and ITVS at the Theatre at The Ace Hotel in January for a special screening and celebration of the Independent Lens documentary Rumble, which brought to light a profound and missing chapter in the history of American music: the Indigenous influence. The event featured clips from the film and performances from Raye Zaragoza, PJ Vegas ft. Indigenous Enterprise and Pat Vegas from the legendary native rock group Redbone. A panel discussion followed featuring musician and Executive Producer of Rumble Stevie Salas, actor Edward James Olmos, Director of California Indian Culture and Sovereignty at CSU San Marcos Dr. Joely Proudfit and Vice President of Education, Rock and Roll Forever Foundation Bill Carbone.

LA Public Library Screening Series—In partnership with the Los Angeles City Historical Society and the History Department of the Richard J. Riordan Central Library, PBS SoCal and KCET participated in the 27th Annual Marie Northrop Lecture Series. The screening series explored the impact that public television has had on our community through the narratives of three acclaimed series and their creators.

In February, the partnership kicked off with a tribute to KCET’s beloved and iconic Visiting host Huell Howser who was dedicated to preserving the culturally diverse and rich history of California. A panel with the show’s producers and cameraman Luis Fuerte followed. While in April, fans of Mr. Rogers—some wearing their favorite cardigans in his honor—attended a screening of the film “Won’t You Be My Neighbor.” One of the documentary’s producers sat down with LA City Archivist Michael Holland to talk about the making of the film, including going through extensive archival material. The screening celebrated the public media tradition of teaching and inspiring children.

The final edition of the series took place in June, when 105 guests attended a special screening and discussion celebrating the launch of the Lost LA Curriculum Project tracking the journey of the project from a story idea to a teachable curriculum. A panel discussion followed with the producers and the Director of the UCLA History-Geography project Daniel Diaz as well as El Rancho High School history and ethnic studies teacher Emily Waldron who were part of the team that created the Lost LA curriculum.

Minding the Gap Screening—In March, PBS SoCal, POV and Inner-City Arts partnered for a screening of the Academy Award®-nominated documentary “Minding the Gap.” Students from Aspire Ollin University Preparatory Academy, Central City Value High School and the non-profit community center A Place Called Home screened the film and participated in a Skype conversation with Director Bing Liu and a panel discussion with POV’s Chloe Gbai and Director of the SPACE arts center, former filmmaker and mentor for PBS SoCal’s foster youth initiative Hope Perello. The panel was moderated by Inner-City Arts teaching artist Marissa Herrera.
Finding Our SoCal Roots—USC’s Cammilleri Hall played host for a genealogy-inspired evening. The event, co-presented with USC Libraries, featured clips from the fifth season of Finding Your Roots and was followed by a panel conversation about the importance of researching less-visible histories and how exploring diverse stories allows communities to reveal their histories. “L.A. as Subject” Coordinator for USC Libraries Liza Posas hosted the conversation with representatives from local minority-focused genealogical societies. Panelists included: Author of the “The Family Tree Toolkit” Kenyatta Berry, President of the Chinese Family History Group of Southern California Michael Ho and Genealogical Society of Hispanic America’s Colleen Robledo Greene.

BOSS: The Black Experience in Business Screening—
Over 200 guests packed into the Nate Holden Performing Arts Center on April 16th for a special screening of Stanley Nelson’s new film BOSS: The Black Experience in Business, a film about the untold story of African American entrepreneurship. The event, co-produced by PBS SoCal and Firelight Media, began with a reception catered by local, black-owned restaurants and a resource fair for guests to network and meet with local organizations specializing in professional and business development. Following the film, guests heard from a panel featuring the filmmakers and several prominent local business leaders that included the President & CEO of the Brotherhood Crusade Charisse Bremond Weaver and the Co-founder of the African American Board Leadership Institute Virgil Roberts Weaver.

Cyberwork and the American Dream Screening—
The premiere screening for the documentary Cyberwork and the American Dream, the first of eight screenings across the country, was held at the Loyola Marymount University School of Film and Television in Playa Vista. The event started off with opening remarks from Associate Professor and Chair of Animation Tom Klein that was designed to spark a conversation about the impending transformation of jobs by artificial intelligence (AI), the topic of the film. A balanced debate was held post-screening by a panel on how both workers and employers can prepare for the impending disruption. Guests included LMU students, the Silicon Beach community, PBS SoCal major donors and cast/crew from the film. PBS SoCal hosted a Facebook Live streaming of the panel discussion that was moderated by Marketplace Tech Host Molly Wood and featured the filmmakers as well as experts in the field including Chief Executive Officer of Skillful Beth Cobert, Director of Career Pathways at Microsoft Joshua Winter, PwC Partner Amy Peirce.

Norman Mineta and His Legacy—PBS SoCal hosted a special evening honoring former U.S. Secretary of Transportation to George W. Bush and Bill Clinton, Secretary Norman Y. Mineta, which included a screening of the documentary Norman Mineta and His Legacy: An American Story on April 23 at the Japanese American National Museum’s National Center for the Preservation of Democracy.

Country Music—The Autry Museum of the American West, Los Angeles Times, KCET and PBS SoCal hosted a special sneak peek of the eagerly anticipated eight-part documentary series Country Music which was produced and directed by award-winning filmmaker Ken Burns. Over 1,500 guests enjoyed an outdoor screening/concert that started with acclaimed country music DJ Chris Morris as well as a live performance from Austin McCutchen and the Western Stars. Guests were treated to food trucks and a “Western Wear” contest for dogs prior to the screening.

Ken Burns himself greeted the fans and introduced a 45-minute clip reel from the film followed by a panel discussion with Los Angeles Times Staff Writer Randy Lewis, Producers Dayton Duncan and Julie Dunfey. The panel was moderated by two-time Pulitzer Prize winning Los Angeles Times columnist Patt Morrison and the program was presented as part of the Los Angeles Times’ Ideas Exchange conversation series. Guests included President and CEO of Public Media Group of Southern California Andrew Russell, President and CEO of The Autry Rick West, PBS Chief Programming Executive Perry Simon, Chair of CPB’s Board of Directors Bruce Ramer and Los Angeles Times Chief Operating Officer Chris Argenti.
Broken Bread World Premiere—On Cinco de Mayo, KCET and Tastemade partnered with the Los Angeles Times Food Bowl to host a free premiere screening that was open to the public for the new series Broken Bread. Hosted by social activist, restaurant entrepreneur and acclaimed chef Roy Choi, over 1,200 guests lined up around the block to get into the historic venue in LA’s Koreatown. The free community event began with a reception catered by a variety of LA’s most engaged community organizations including Süprmarkt, Beyond Meat, PopCultivate, Hank & Bean, Homeboy Industries, Dough Girl, Seeds of Hope, Dough & Arrow, FoodCyle LA, Chefs to End Hunger, Food Forward and Bracken’s Kitchen where they hosted an interactive exploration of the power of food with samples offered up by Roy Choi’s Kogi Truck, Mariscos Jalisco and GD Bro Burger all set to the music of DJ Dan the Automator.

The audience was moved by the complex social justice issues explored in the episode as well as the inspiring individuals and organizations who use food as a platform for activism and a catalyst for change. Following the screening, a panel moderated by KCET’s Chief Creative Officer Juan Devis featured Choi and some of the heroes highlighted in the series including activist Aqeela Sherrills, Süprmarkt’s Olympia Auset, Dough Girl’s Mar Diego and Gangsta Gardener’s Ron Finley.

NightShift Screening—In October, LA’s Natural History Museum (NHM) screened NightShift as part of their “Night in the City” series. The episode was subtitled in Spanish and bilingual headsets were passed out for the panel discussion which included State Labor Commissioner Lilia Garcia-Brower, two of the film’s subjects and filmmaker David Grabias moderated by former SoCal Connected reporter Cara Santa Maria. Several of the attendees were from labor organizations SEIU and MCTF.

Dodgers Stories: 6 Decades in LA event—In November, 250 Dodgers fans attended the premiere of PBS SoCal/KCET’s pledge documentary program Dodgers Stories: 6 Decades in LA at the Los Angeles Central Library. Following the screening, a panel that included Dodgers historian Mark Langill, former Dodgers center fielder Kenny Landreaux, the film’s producer Maura Daly Phinney and former LA councilmember Rosalind Wyman drew questions from the audience before breaking for a reception that offered up Dodgers rally towels to all attending guests. As a pledge special, the show raised $21,7000 from 172 pledges and will return to air in February 2020 timed to Major League Baseball’s spring training.

LA Foodways—On January 30, Food Forward and five of the city’s most recognized local food organizations featured in LA Foodways co-hosted a premiere screening of the film at the Arhya Fine Arts Theatre in Beverly Hills, followed by a panel discussion. Panelists included Tim Alderson (Seeds of Hope and Solutions for Urban Agriculture), Clare Fox (Los Angeles Food Policy Council), Rick Nahmias (Food Forward), A.G. Kawamura (Former Secretary, California Department of Food and Agriculture), Rachel Surls (UC Master Gardeners of Los Angeles County) and Tim Watkins (Watts Labor Community Action Committee). Food advocate and actor/writer/producer Lakisha May moderated the conversation. Ticket proceeds went to supporting the partner organizations depicted in the film.
“Summer of Space” Event / Blue Sky Metropolis Premiere—In July, KCET and PBS SoCal held a sneak peek of PBS upcoming space themed programs at Pasadena’s Huntington Library, which celebrated the 50th anniversary of the lunar landing and the latest advances in space exploration. Members of the Southern California aerospace and space community attended (see highlights below), all of whom were treated to clips from American Experience: Chasing the Moon and NOVA: The Planets as well as a first look at the KCET Original documentary miniseries Blue Sky Metropolis. A panel discussion followed with various talent from Blue Sky Metropolis that included filmmaker Peter Jones, Director of Jet Propulsion Laboratory (2001-2016) Dr. Charles Elachi, VP of Space Systems Division for Northrop Grumman Sarah Willoughby and Los Angeles Times Journalist Ralph Vartabedian (Moderator). Following the screening and panel, guests enjoyed a champagne and dessert reception featuring a timeline of significant moments in space/aerospace history as well as display models of the B-2 Spirit, E-2D Advance Hawkeye, Advanced Extremely High Frequency (AEHF) satellite and the James Webb Space Telescope provided by Northrop Grumman.

Guests from the aerospace industries included Astroparticle Physicist Sophia Gad-Nasr, Program Manager for the James Webb Space Telescope Scott Willoughby, Senior Advisor of Prize Operations at XPrize Jacqueline Morie, Senior Research Scientist Emeritus of Jet Propulsion Laboratory Richard Woo, Astrophysicist and Winner of the 2018 NASA Exceptional Achievement Medal Dr. Jessie Christiansen, Cal Tech Executive Director of the Keck Institute for Space Studies Michele Judd, Cal Tech Astrophysicist George Djorgovski, NASA Chief Engineer Robert Manning, Former NASA Historian and USC Scholar Layne Karafantis, Cosmologist and Assistant Professor of Physics at North Carolina State University Dr. Katherine Mack, Mars Lander Project Scientist Leslie Tamppari and Cassini Titan Orbiter Science Team Co-Chair Trina Ray.

Fine Cut Film Festival—An awards ceremony was held in the fall to announce the winners of the 20th annual Fine Cut Film Festival at West LA’s Landmark Theatre where nominees and judges gathered to unveil the winners in four categories. KCET celebrated the work of the regional student filmmakers who submitted their films for recognition by inviting local film school professors, press, celebrity talent and the student filmmakers’ friends/families. Four winning short films were announced and screened by an industry judging panel comprised of notable film and television talent such as film/TV producer Effie T. Brown, actress/writer/composer Marianne Jean-Baptiste, story artist Michael Herrera, Deadline’s Chief Film Critic/KCET Must See Movies Host Pete Hammond, animator/writer/producer Van Partible, Variety Senior Editor/KCRW “Screengrab” Host Mike Schneider, International Documentary Association’s (IDA) Director of Programming and Policy Claire Aguilar and documentary filmmaker Kimmie Kim.

College Behind Bars—In October, PBS SoCal partnered with the Michelson 20MM Foundation and #Cut50 for a screening of Lynn Novick’s new film College Behind Bars at Los Angeles City Hall, which was staffed by Homeboy Industries and Anti-Recidivism Coalition (ARC) volunteers. Approximately 200 people attended with opening remarks from Deputy Mayor for Economic Opportunity Brenda Shockley, Founder of Michelson 20MM Foundation Dr. Gary Michelson and the 4-part series Producer Sarah Botstein. Executive Director of the Bard Prison Initiative Max Kenner, Senior Director of the Prison Graduation Initiative Taffany Lim and two of the film’s subjects participated in a panel discussion that followed which was moderated by KJLH Radio Host Dominique DiPrima.
Lost LA Season Four Premiere—Also in October, The Edison in Downtown Los Angeles was the perfect venue for a prohibition-themed event that took inspiration from one of the season’s new episodes, “Bootlegger Tunnels: A Journey Through LA’s Prohibition Lore.” The event immersed over 150 regional influencers, talent featured in the series, community partners and fans of Lost LA into a steampunk nightclub experience where guests showed off their Roaring Twenties attire. KCET’s Chief Operating Officer Jamie Annunzio Myers welcomed the crowd and acknowledged notable partners from Lost LA’s Curriculum Project that brought interactive history lessons into K-12 classrooms based on the unique topics of each episode of the show. Public historian, writer and Lost LA Host, Nathan Masters of the USC Libraries, stressed the importance of the show’s archival discoveries and shared a preview of the upcoming episode which explored the subterranean myths of Prohibition-era Los Angeles, crawled through bootlegger tunnels and visited some of the city’s oldest speakeasies.

SoCal Connected’s “Recycling” Screening—In November, community members learned more about California’s recycling industry by attending SoCal Connected’s screening/panel discussion of “Life in Plastic: California’s Recycling Woes” at the Pasadena Public Library. Panel moderator and recycling expert Jill Replogle (KPCC/LAist) led the discussion between panelists Gina Pollack (KCET producer), Amy Hammes (Specialist at Burbank Recycling), Anna Cummins (Co-Founder 5 Gyres) and Assemblymember Laura Friedman. The screening and discussion shed light on what can be done about plastic manufacturers who continue to spread misleading information about recycling, while spending big on lobbying efforts to keep their products on the shelves.

KCET Cinema Series—Screening the best of Hollywood, independent and festival films prior to their release in theaters for 25 years now, film fans had the unique opportunity to preview the most anticipated films of the season and meet the on-screen talent and filmmakers. The KCET Cinema Series is hosted by Deadline’s Chief Film Critic Pete Hammond who offers audience members an in-depth conversation with the film industry’s top talent following each weekly screening. Recently screened films and talent have included: Bombshell with director Jay Roach, 1917 with cinematographer Roger Deakins, A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood with actress Susan Kelechi Watson, Marriage Story with actress Laura Dern and Ford v Ferrari with director James Mangold. Hosted by the historic Aero Theatre in Santa Monica during the summer and fall series, and the ArcLight Sherman Oaks during the winter (always sold out due to the Oscar® nominated films) and spring series, members sign up for a full season of films though select films offer general admission seating.
Community Advisory Board—Public Media Group of Southern California’s Community Advisory Board (CAB) works to ensure that we are serving the needs of diverse populations across our region. Additionally, CAB members actively participate in the efforts to help engage the community around our programming. In 2019, the combined PBS SoCal and KCET 35-member CAB convened 5 meetings throughout the year, including an onboarding in August. In between formal meetings, committees convened to push forward various initiatives that included Local Heroes nominations, integration efforts and a fall programming preview.

Local Heroes Initiative—Spearheaded by CAB, the Local Heroes initiative broadened its reach in 2019 by nominating 17 worthy names from the community. Each nominee was highlighted online with links to their individual organizations’ websites. After much discussion and several rounds of votes, two heroes were selected. Pastor Stephen Cue Jn-Marie was selected for his role as founder and pastor of the Row LA, The Church Without Walls, which serves the homeless of Downtown LA’s Skid Row, as well as for his work advocating for the rights of homeless people, immigrants, Muslims and other disenfranchised individuals. Alison Suffet Diaz was chosen for her work as founder of Environmental Charter Schools (ECS). Under Diaz’s leadership as the Executive Director and CEO for the last 20 years, ECS has flourished into an award-winning educational institution with a dynamic team of commended staff members. Both heroes had videos profiled on the Local Heroes webpage in December 2019 and these profiles were also broadcast as interstitials on KCET and PBS SoCal. The videos made their debut at the Inaugural Holiday Community Celebration Dinner at the Los Angeles City Club which brought together the Board of Trustees, the Community Councils and the Community Advisory Boards for both KCET and PBS SoCal. The event allowed all the members to meet, share ideas and celebrate the accomplishments of 2019. Awards were presented honoring the accomplishments of individuals who are dedicated to making a difference in the community: recognizing activists, educators, community leaders and visionaries doing critical work that often goes unrecognized in the Southern California region. Additional 2019 honorees named at the event were Donald P. Williams III and Daniel Polanco as the 2019 recipient of the Community Spotlight Award for their work on the D.A.D. Project, a non-profit organization committed to empowering fathers to play an active role in their children’s education and encourage them to lead their families and community.

Community Councils—Since their inception in 2012, our community council members have generously volunteered their time, insights and efforts to support our mission. Our community councils consist of leaders from business, civic, arts and educational institutions as well as nonprofit organizations that represent diverse communities within Southern California. In 2019, members introduced us to local business leaders, entrepreneurs and professional development organizations to support a screening of BOSS: The Black Experience in Business. The council also supported us through grassroots promotion of projects like Broken Bread and VOCES, as well as supported and attended events throughout the year.
CONCLUSION & LOOKING FORWARD

Public Media Group of Southern California is committed to informing, entertaining and engaging the communities that we serve through its three content channels, PBS SoCal, KCET and Link TV. Our organization combines PBS SoCal’s beloved PBS content and excellence in community engagement, KCET’s passion for creating smart, award-winning content that tells the stories of our region and Link TV’s commitment to conveying diverse perspectives to the globally engaged.

Together, we are working to close the opportunity gap for young children across California, to grow our storytelling efforts to share the California ethos with the country and to transform ourselves from a public television station to a public media organization that is a cornerstone institution for our community.