At Public Broadcasting Atlanta, we want to create a more informed, enriched, connected Atlanta community. We seek to exchange knowledge across cultures and generations, so we can all rise together.

When we share our stories, we can recognize our commonalities, celebrate our differences, and truly understand each other.

Together, our perspectives are more complete.

Together, we inspire change.
Public Broadcasting Atlanta uses authentic storytelling, and the power of our TV, radio and digital platforms, to raise awareness of the news and culture that shape our city. In 2018, we continued to shine our community engagement spotlight on important and unreported issues in Atlanta, while also aiming to reach new audiences. An increasing effort to engage with young adults and people of color, two groups often underserved by public media, led to audience growth not seen before.

Events continue to have an interactive component, and partnerships were once again a cornerstone of our efforts to connect with our community.

PBA tells Atlanta’s stories; this year saw in-depth coverage and community engagement on stories ranging from disparities in education and healthcare to the water flowing through our pipes. Features on the 50th anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the personal stories of Vietnam vets were told through the lens of people who experienced these moments first-hand. We didn’t forget to have fun either: partner events with the Atlanta Science Fest and Atlanta Public Schools gave us a chance to bring community engagement to our youngest fans.

In 2018, we once again increased local engagement, inviting audience members to join the conversation at 15 different community events. We focused on broadening our audience and increasing opportunities to receive feedback. We told previously untold stories—and retold familiar stories in new, often surprising ways. By reflecting the diversity, creativity, and unique spirit of Atlanta in our work, we educated, entertained, empowered, and ultimately enriched our community.
Starting on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s birthday, January 15, WABE’s mid-day show “Closer Look with Rose Scott” examined the life, legacy, and mission of Dr. King, fifty years after his death through the “ATL ‘68” project. The four month-long series featured conversations, profiles and behind-the-scenes recollections of the civil rights movement. The PBA digital team created an immersive, complex, multi-faceted look at Atlanta in 1968 using maps, images, and videos of the time, which can be found at mlk.wabe.org.

As the series concluded on April 3, the eve of Dr. King’s assassination, we held the We As A People event at the Center for Civil and Human Rights honoring local individuals and organizations who are preserving Dr. King’s mission and the tenets of his dream. 150 community members came out to join us in celebrating the great work being done in our city.

Our honorees included local non-profits, small business owners, educators, and the daughter of civil rights activist Hosea Williams.
In September 2017, Ken Burns’ 10-part documentary, *Vietnam*, was released. As companion programming, ATL PBA produced *Atlanta Voices: Memories of Vietnam*. PBA invited Vietnam War veterans to share their stories through video and saved photographs, to tell their stories of the war and what it means to them. The PBA digital team collected these stories and presented them together at [www.pba.org/vietnam](http://www.pba.org/vietnam).

**From Vietnam to Atlanta**

Through a grant from WETA, a promotional tour of clips from the Burns documentary, along with *Atlanta Voices* was taken to six veterans groups throughout the metro Atlanta area with over 400 audience members seeing our presentation. Vietnam vets were given a chance to respond to the two films and in a discussion session with Vietnam vet and local writer/storyteller Pete Mecca. Many veterans in the audience spoke during these events, and a surprising number mentioned that it was the first time they had ever shared the stories of their time serving.
In 2018 WABE joined forces with Pulitzer Prize-winning author Hank Klibanoff to start a new podcast: *Buried Truths*. In its first season *Buried Truths* was one of Apple’s top 25 podcasts, with listeners in every state and over 118 countries.

*Buried Truths* tells stories from the Georgia Civil Rights Cold Cases Project. Based at Emory University, where Klibanoff is also a professor, the project engages undergraduate students to examine unsolved and unpunished racially motivated murders from the modern civil rights era in Georgia.

In the classroom and in the field, students use primary evidence and secondary readings to go beyond the who-done-it and explore the history and meaning of the Jim Crow South from the inside out.

In March, Klibanoff (right) and producer Dave Barasoain (left) joined an audience of over 150 people comprised of former students, WABE supporters, and VIPs at the Center for Civil and Human Rights to debut their work ahead of the release of the inaugural episode.
State of Healthcare

Throughout the year, WABE reporter Elly Yu and senior editor Susanna Capelouto increased their focus on healthcare around the state of Georgia with help from a grant received from the Healthcare Georgia Foundation. They toured facilities in rural areas and in the metro region, to report on healthcare disparities faced by Georgians related to income and geography.

Elly hosted an event in partnership with the Morehouse School of Medicine to present findings. Our highly distinguished panel included Robert M. Mayberry, M.S., M.P.H., Ph.D., Professor and Vice Chair, Department of Community Health and Preventive Medicine; Nathaniel Smith, M.S., Chief Equity Officer for the Partnership for Southern Equity; Jeanette Diaz, M.A, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology at the University of West Georgia; and Jemea Dorsey, M.S., the CEO of the Black Women's Wellness Center.

Our audience of 225 people included fans of WABE, healthcare professionals, and students from some of Georgia’s premier medical institutions, who responded with thoughtful questions and gained insights to inform their future.
In January 2018, the WABE newsroom took a look at the inner workings of the Georgia General Assembly with nearly 150 WABE fans at State Government Matters Too: A Crash Course On The Georgia Legislature.

WABE political reporters Johnny Kauffman and Elly Yu, and senior editor Susanna Capelouto hosted an interactive evening explaining Georgia’s State House of Representatives and State Senate; their powers, their limitations, and how decisions are made. A younger, more diverse audience was targeted through social media and the evening included an engaging Q&A, voter registration, and “What’s my district?” activity.

Politics from a Different Perspective

Veteran Atlanta political reporter Denis O’Hayer hosts Political Breakfast, a podcast birthed from a regular segment during his time as host of Morning Edition.

The format is a conversation between strategists from the right and the left. Democratic strategist Tharon Johnson and Republican strategist Brian Robinson bring their personalities and passion to the table for an informed, respectful and lively discussion. The discussion only becomes more lively when we mix in a live audience of 115 fervent politicos! The team went to the Jimmy Carter Presidential Library in December to talk about the big issues, and provided a two-way conversation with the audience. As always it was a fun and informative evening.
As stadiums have become a part of Atlanta’s skyline, how have those facilities affected the neighborhoods they call home? WABE News reporter Stephannie Stokes hosted a panel of experts for a discussion on sports stadiums and their impact with around 100 neighbors from the areas most impacted by their construction.

Stephannie Stokes hosted the event at the Atlanta University Center’s library, just blocks from the newly constructed Mercedes Benz Stadium. The event featured a Q&A, with many audience members saying it was the first time that developers, community leaders, and local politicians had been brought together to answer questions.

Local Issues

Metro Atlanta is the longtime home of global companies like The Home Depot and Delta Air Lines, and regularly welcomes strong brands like Mercedes-Benz USA, but what does this mean for Atlantans looking for work?

As talks of Amazon’s HQ2 began to heat up, WABE investigative reporter Jim Burress hosted a panel of experts to ask what our workforce needs to move forward, what metro Atlanta needs to keep flourishing, and what does the influx of new businesses and new people mean for Atlanta’s ever-changing identity?

We attracted an audience of 75 mostly millennials and young professionals, our target demographic, and partnered with a co-working space, Industrious, to hold the Community Conversation: “The Future of ATL Jobs.”
In early 2018, many Georgia politicians discussed ‘turning around’ low-performing schools, leading to the passage of the “First Priority Act,” a plan meant to help those schools improve.

WABE education reporter Martha Dalton spent two weeks at a South DeKalb elementary school exploring the challenges schools face when students are hampered by poverty and instability, and sharing them with listeners in a series called “Making the Grade.”

Education

Every day Atlanta turns to public broadcasting for news, music, arts, and entertainment. Yet few people realize that public broadcasting began as “educational television”—a learning resource. As a broadcast service of Atlanta Public Schools in partnership with the Atlanta Educational Telecommunications Collaborative (AETC), PBA has never lost sight of its original mission. Education remains at the core of our operations at every level, from preschoolers to our elders.

PBA partners with Atlanta Public Schools on its largest initiatives. At the annual Back-To-School bash we bring mascots from PBS Kids and help kids get excited about the new school year. In Junior Achievement’s 3DE program we coach students through a project on media, and welcome them to our studios to join in the work first hand. Plus, PBA is working through a major initiative to support students and their parents as they work
The study of science can feel daunting and unapproachable, but PBA finds ways to engage younger audiences and give them a chance to experience science first-hand.

In April, WABE partnered with the Atlanta Science Festival, and reporter Molly Samuel welcomed five scientists to give 75 audience members of all ages a chance to “Ask A Scientist.” Our scientists (from left to right, with Molly Samuel appearing first) were Misty Bentz, Astrophysics-Georgia State University; Kim Cobb, Paleoclimatology-Georgia Tech; Hadiyah-Nicole Green, Nanobiophotonics-Morehouse School of Medicine; Tamara Johnson, Urban Ecology-US Fish and Wildlife Service; and Gil Weinberg, A.I. Robotics-Georgia Tech.

Science for Everyone

In May, Molly Samuel returned with another science-focused event with ripple effects into the political and legal realms.

For nearly three decades, Georgia has been involved in a dispute over water with Florida and Alabama. It escalated to the U.S. Supreme Court in January 2018, with arguments in Florida v. Georgia. Molly brought together an audience of more than 100 water enthusiasts as she detailed the complex history, present issues, and future possibilities in a Community Conversation we called “Water Wars.” This was another step in the years of award-winning reporting Molly has done on the subject, and we were proud to be hosted by community partner Trees Atlanta.
Public broadcasting’s audience knows the importance of lifetime learning, and we are committed to encouraging the love of learning from a very young age.

To celebrate World Oceans Day in June, ATL PBA partnered with the Fernbank Science Center to host a screening of a special episode of the PBS Kids show, *Splash and Bubbles*. 100 kids and parents watched the show on the big screen, and then joined us for crafts and games at our *Reeftown Rangers* activity stations. Attendees also were given a ticket to visit the Science Center after our morning event.

![ATL PBA event poster](image1)

**Love of Learning**

Just one week after the *Splash and Bubbles* screening, ATL PBA continued a summer of fun partnerships by joining the Atlanta/Fulton County Public Library System for an event at the Create & Discover Lab featuring *Nature Cat*!

Young children were inspired to explore, investigate, and develop an understanding of nature using ATL PBS Kids' very own recipe of Connect, Create, and Discover.
Great cities are known by their museums, theaters, symphonies and parks. But the greatest impact on a city’s cultural life radiates invisibly through the air.

For Atlanta, that cultural force is Public Broadcasting Atlanta.

Public Broadcasting Atlanta has grown to be a community connector in 2018 with our events focusing on topical and relevant issues for our community. We will continue to be an important resource—and the only independent media outlet focused on our metro area.

As we continue to forge deeper bonds with the community, PBA will broaden our audience by connecting with them where they are, both ideologically and geographically. We’ll target programming for diverse audiences, especially those who are regularly underserved by public media. We’ll focus on local issues like affordable housing and state elections. We’ll partner with national programs to bring Atlanta’s issues and interests to the forefront. Most of all, we’ll be listening to people of color, young professionals, and those further from the center of our broadcast area, and provide an interactive forum to share ideas, inspire and educate one another.