

WAMU 88.5 American University Radio
Quarterly Issues-Programs Report
January 1, 2024, through March 30, 2024

Overview

WAMU 88.5 American University Radio is Washington D.C.'s NPR station serving the District of Columbia, Northern Virginia, and Suburban Maryland. The listening area comprises a population of six million people. The station has consistently ranked among the country's top public radio stations in audience share and size. Nielsen ratings put WAMU at the top of radio stations that serve the Washington D.C. region. The station supports diverse, equitable, and relevant award-winning programming, and puts us among the most respected and trusted voices in the world of traditional and emerging media.

Issues of importance addressed by locally produced programs.

The 1A Program

1A is a show about a changing America. Every weekday, host Jenn White convenes a conversation about the most prominent issues of our time. The show takes a deep and unflinching look at America, bringing context and insight to stories unfolding across the country and the world. Issues of local importance are inherent in the discussions because the nation's capital is the heart of our listening area.

With a name inspired by the First Amendment, 1A explores prominent issues such as policy, politics, technology, and what connects us across the fissures that divide the country. The program also delves into pop culture, sports, and humor. The goal of 1A is to function as a national mirror, taking time to help America look at itself and to ask what it wants to be.

On Fridays, the 1A Program features a two hour “News Roundup - Domestic and International”. Guests include subject matter experts in news gathering, politics, economics, and international relations.

The 1A program is produced by WAMU and distributed by NPR to over 445 public radio stations throughout the United States. During this reporting period, there were four issues of importance that accounted for a substantial amount of programming time. They are detailed below with examples of the programs that addressed those issues.

Arts, Culture, and Entertainment

January 10: 10:20 AM 28 minutes: The 1A Book Club returns with ‘You Dreamed of Empires’ by Álvaro Enrigue. ‘You Dreamed of Empires’ is the latest book from Mexican author Álvaro Enrigue, translated into English by Natasha Wimmer. It’s a retelling of the colonial conquest of Mexico City and the clashing of two cultures. Little is known about what happened once Hernan Cortes stepped foot in Tenochtitlan (modern-day Mexico City) and that historical gap is where the novel takes place. It’s less of a play-by-play of historical events and more of a reimagining of the conquest of this great empire. It’s dark, twisty, and funny too — with psychedelic rock and magic mushrooms playing a pivotal role. Guests are **Álvaro Enrigue**, author of ‘You dreamed of Empires’ and **Natasha Wimmer**, translator of ‘You Dreamed of Empires.’

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January 31: 11:06 AM 46 minutes: The 1A Record Club, Gen Z, and the resurgence of jazz. When you hear the word jazz, what sounds come to mind? Maybe it's the sweet and savory notes from a saxophone, played by the likes of the legendary John Coltrane. Or the authoritative trumpets of pioneers like Miles Davis and Freddie Hubbard. Maybe it's the sweet vocals of Ella Fitzgerald or the plinking of the ivories by Robert Glasper or Thelonious Monk. No matter what comes to mind, the soulful genre, born in New Orleans about 100 years ago, has [always been popular](#). In recent years, young jazz artists like [Samara Joy](#) and [Laufeay](#) are finding a [loyal audience in Gen Z](#), while carrying forward the genre's rich tradition to critical acclaim. The 1A Record Club explores how teens and young adults are falling in love with the nostalgic sounds of jazz and what the future of the genre holds. Guest are **Marcus J. Moore**, Music journalist at the New York Times, **Isaiah J. Thompson**, Jazz Pianist and composer, and **Kristin Robinson**, Senior writer at Billboard.

World Affairs

January 10: 10:06 AM 18 minutes: Children in Gaza are facing increasing rates of disease and malnutrition. Israel's war with Hamas has left millions displaced and thousands dead in Gaza. The Palestinian health ministry in Gaza is reporting around 23,000 deaths, with 70 percent of those being women and children. Children are also facing high rates of malnutrition and disease. United States Secretary of State Anthony Blinken is visiting Israel this week. In his fourth visit to the Middle East since October 7th, he said a United Nations assessment mission to north Gaza has been planned, to survey the damage and plan for the return of displaced Palestinians. We check in with Steve Sosebee, founder of the Palestine Children's Relief Fund and HEAL Palestine about how non-profits in Gaza are reaching children in need. The guest is **Steve Sosebee**, Executive director of HEAL Palestine

February 22: 11:06 AM 46 minutes: Ukraine aid is at a standstill. What does that mean for the war? It's been nearly two years since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine began, With Putin's forces making strategic gains in the eastern part of the country, there's increasing international pressure for the U.S. to step up its military aid. America has provided more than \$47 billion in support to Ukraine since the war began. But a new package of aid is stalled in Congress. Last week, the Senate passed a foreign aid package that included \$61 billion for Ukraine. That was blocked by the Republican-controlled House which insisted it include a border security package. We hear from NPR's Ukraine bureau chief about the situation on the frontlines. Guests are **Joanna Kakissis**, Ukraine bureau chief at NPR, **Dame Karen Pierce**, British Ambassador to the U.S., and **Mikhail Zygar**, author of "War and Punishment, Zelensky, and the path to Russia's Invasion of Ukraine."

Politics

January 8: 10:06 AM 46 minutes: What the Trump lawsuits mean for the 2024 Election. The stakes of the 2024 presidential election just got higher. On Friday, the Supreme Court said it would hear a case that would determine whether former President Donald Trump will appear on Colorado's primary ballot due to his efforts to overturn the results of the 2020 election. The original decision is based on language from the Fourteenth Amendment. Maine's secretary of state issued a similar decision. Trump

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appealed both rulings last week. The court's decision to hear the appeal has major implications for the 2024 election and beyond. The former president also faces a slew of other legal challenges, including four criminal cases and multiple civil suits. What does all this mean for the country's democracy? We unpack this with two legal experts. Guests are **Mary McCord**, Executive Director at the Institute for Constitutional Advocacy and Protection, and **David Becker**, executive director and founder of the Center for Election Innovation and Research.

March 27: 10:06 AM 47 minutes: The Supreme Court considers the future of mifepristone. The Supreme Court is hearing a case that will determine access to a widely-used abortion pill. At the center of the FDA v. the Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine is the drug mifepristone. It's been approved by the FDA for over 23 years. It's commonly used in a two-drug combination for medication abortion. It's the first abortion case the court has heard since it overturned Roe v. Wade. More people than ever are relying on medication abortion since states have imposed bans and restrictions on access to the procedure. A group of anti-abortion doctors and organizations brought the case against the FDA saying the drug is unsafe. The group is also asking to roll back telemedicine and mail access to pharmaceuticals. But the case could have wide-reaching effects beyond abortion access. The FDA's authority is also at stake. What did we learn from the oral arguments and what comes next? Guests are **Mary Ziegler**, professor at UC Davis, **Shefali Luthra**, health care reporter at the 19th, and **Dr. Nisha Verma**, obstetrician-gynecologist with a specialty in complex family planning.

Relationships and Health

January 25: 10:06 AM 46 minutes: In Good Health: Cancer patients are getting diagnosed younger. Why? A number of studies in the past few years have shown that cancer rates in the U.S. and around the world are rising for younger people. While the majority of cancer patients are still over the age of 65, the share of cancer patients between the ages of 50 and 64 and under 50 represent a growing share of cancer diagnoses. Researchers have noted in particular higher rates of breast, colorectal, and cervical cancers, beginning as recently as three decades ago. We speak with researchers who've studied this rise in cancer diagnoses and clinicians who treat cancer every day. Guests are **Rebecca Siegel**, senior scientific director of surveillance research at the American Cancer Society, **Dr. Kimmie Ng**, director of the Young-Onset Colorectal Cancer Center at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, and **Dr. Anjali Malik**, breast imaging and intervention radiologist.

March 12: 10:06 AM 46 minutes: How to become a supercommunicator. Imagine you're at a dinner party and the conversation turns to the latest news. Everyone has a different opinion. People begin raising their voices. You notice the person beside you isn't talking, they're just watching. They turn to you and make a joke and you immediately relax. You hadn't even realized how tense you were. They then ask what you think about the news. When you respond, they're attentive. When they look at you, you feel seen. They ask you another question and another. Before you know it, an hour has passed, and the arguing has died down around you. Your dinner party partner is what journalist Charles Duhigg calls a supercommunicator. In his new book by the same name, he explores what makes conversations work and how we can all be better at them. Guests are **Charles Duhigg**, contributor at the New Yorker ; author, "The Power of Habit" and "Smarter Faster Better, and **Jenn White**, host of 1A.

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Other notable 1A Programs that address issues of importance include:

January 3: 11:06 AM 47 minutes: 2024 is the year of the ballot box.

January 30: 10:06 AM 46 minutes: Mass shootings and accountability.

February 22: 10:06 AM 46minutes: 1A Remaking America: Understanding youth homelessness.

February 26: 10:06 AM 46 minutes: Local News is dying. What's killing it?

March 12: 11:06 AM 47 minutes: The recent rise of islamophobia in America.

March 28: 10:06 AM 46 minutes: How we can transform child protective services.

The Politics Hour with Kojo Nnamdi

This program focuses exclusively on issues of importance in our listening area and connects the dots between events happening in Washington DC and the state houses in Annapolis, Maryland and Richmond, Virginia. With resident analyst Tom Sherwood, the program maintains a vital forum for the public to engage with elected officials and hold them accountable.

On Fridays in this reporting period, Kojo and resident analyst Tom Sherwood hosted governors, statewide office holders, city and county elected officials, regional appointed officials, and candidates for public office. There were eleven locally produced editions of The Politics Hour totaling 531 minutes of programming.

In addition to probing the guests on their views, listeners are encouraged to call in and ask questions directly of the guests.

Examples of programming to address issues of local importance include:

Local Politics

February 2: 12:06 PM 49 minutes: 50 years of D.C. Home Rule and what comes next. As part of a weeklong series of stories, we're marking 50 years of Home Rule in the District. President Richard Nixon signed the Home Rule Act on December 24, 1973 granting D.C and its residents to right to elect its own local government, which they did in November 1974. But Home Rule was and remains limited. For example, D.C. still does not have voting representation in Congress. Historian and co-author of *Chocolate City: A History Of Race And Democracy In The Nation's Capital* George Derek Musgrove gets behind the mic to discuss the compromises that led to the passage of the Home Rule Act. He will be joined by Arrington Dixon, who was elected to the very first D.C. Council to talk about what it was like to take on this historic responsibility. Then, WAMU's criminal justice reporter Jenny Gathright will discuss how today's political moves to limit D.C.'s autonomy follow an old playbook. Finally, President of the D.C. Young Democrats and co-founder of 51 for 51 Jamal Holtz talks us through the fight for D.C. representation in Congress and what comes next for D.C. self-governance. Could statehood be on the horizon?

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March 29: 12:06 PM 50 minutes: A D.C. comeback: Why the Washington Wizards and Capitals are staying in the District. It's game over for the Alexandria arena with the Washington Wizards and Capitals now poised to stay in the District. On Wednesday, D.C. councilmembers, Mayor Muriel Bowser, and Monumental Sports owner Ted Leonsis announced a deal to keep the sports teams at Capital One Arena in D.C. until 2050. It came weeks after a proposal to move the teams to a new arena in Alexandria fell apart in the Virginia General Assembly and only hours after the City of Alexandria said it ended negotiations with Monumental Sports to build an arena and entertainment complex in Potomac Yard. On this week's Politics Hour, we brought together several of the major players involved in this region-defining reversal. Alexandria City Councilmember John Chapman said that the city's decision to end the project was largely based on the disapproval they heard from residents. "A good number of people were not happy with the proposal," he said. "The biggest concern for everyone was traffic and what transportation would look like." D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser explained how D.C. was able to convince the teams to stay. She said she kept meeting with Leonsis, despite the ongoing negotiations he was having with Virginia officials. Bowser says she knew it was not a done deal and that's why there was a hope the decision would be ultimately reversed. "We decided not to give up and just let our teams go across the river to what we thought was at best a risky proposition for them," Bowser said. "It was risky... to get approved. We thought it was risky to get delivered. And we thought it was a huge risk to the Monumental brand if the fans would follow or not." D.C. Council Chair Phil Mendelson explained that the \$500 million being offered to renovate Capital One Arena doesn't come at the expense of social services. "We have two budgets. One is the operating budget and the other is the capital budget. The operating budget is where social service programs are, public safety programs, public education programs so forth. The capital budget is very different. Prince George's County Councilmember Krystal Oriadha also spoke with Kojo and Tom about budget troubles, crime, and school absenteeism. Oriadha connected increasing rates of crime and truancy, saying many of those committing crimes are young people. Because of that, the Prince George's County Council is prioritizing keeping kids in classrooms. "We started a work group focused on truancy because what we realized is a lot of repeat offenders, when we had a meeting with the State's Attorney if they pulled their transcript, were truant," said Oriadha. "We realized we didn't have an actual mechanism that triggered an early warning system with that young person early enough." She also talked about Prince George's County Executive and U.S. Senate candidate Angela Alsobrooks's budget proposal calling for freezing hundreds of jobs, cutting agency budgets, and drawing from the rainy day fund to close a \$171 million budget gap.

Government

January 19: 12:06 PM 49 minutes: Cannabis, casinos, and the proposed Alexandria arena with Virginia State Senator Adam Ebbin. The Virginia General Assembly's 2024 session is in full swing as lawmakers consider legislation on casinos, cannabis, and data centers. State Senator Adam Ebbin (D-39) joins the show to discuss what's on the docket in Richmond. Plus, we get his thoughts on the proposal to move the Wizards and Capitals to a new arena in his district in Alexandria. The Prince George's County Council reconvened this week with a budget shortfall and potential spending cuts at the top of its list. Washington Post reporter Lateshia Beachum gets behind the mic to walk us through what to watch for from the council. Plus, who might be planning a run for County Executive? Metro's budget crisis has the entire region on edge with big service cuts potentially in store. The Metropolitan Washington Council of

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Governments Executive Director Clark Mercer talks with Kojo and Tom about how local leaders are banding together to prevent this from happening.

March 21: 12:06 PM 50 minutes: Maryland's budget dilemma, VA governor's vetoes, and the D.C. AG threatens Monumental Sports. On Friday's Politics Hour, resident analyst Tom Sherwood broke news that D.C. Attorney General Brian Schwalb sent a letter earlier in the week to Monumental Sports saying that Wizards and Capitals are legally bound to the District until 2047. In a since publicly-released letter, the District's Attorney General accused Monumental Sports and owner Ted Leonsis of breaking promises laid out in a lease extension for Capital One Arena when they announced a deal to move to Alexandria in December. The teams are legally obligated, according to Schwalb, to remain playing at Capital One Arena until 2047. "To be clear, the District very much prefers not to pursue any potential claims against MSE," Schwalb wrote in the letter. "It remains committed to maintaining and growing its partnership with MSE and to keeping the Wizards and Capitals at the Arena until the end of the existing lease term in 2047, if not beyond." In response to the letter, Monumental Sports spokesperson provided this statement: "We fundamentally disagree with the Attorney General's opinions, which are contradicted by the DC General Counsel as recently as 2019 when the city ratified the Ground Lease." Also on the Politics Hour, Virginia Delegate Paul Krizek (D-Fairfax County) criticized Governor Glenn Youngkin for how he's handled Senate Democrats blocking the deal to build a new arena in Alexandria. While Youngkin hasn't explicitly said it, some Democrats believe the potential record-setting number of vetoes the governor has wielded so far is related to the scuttled arena deal. "I don't think he understands the dynamics of the way the General Assembly works," Krizek said. "He's probably not used to having a Board of Directors of one hundred forty Delegates and Senators." He also talked about a bill that could bring slots-like gaming machines to convenience stores, laundromats, and restaurants across the state and is hope that legislation that would finally create a retail marijuana market isn't up in smoke. Additionally, Maryland State Senator Will Smith (D-Montgomery County) joined Kojo and Tom to talk about crossover day in his state's General Assembly. He said the biggest challenge for legislators is balancing the state's budget. The House is proposing a \$1.2 billion dollar package that would increase taxes, tolls, and fees. The Senate, instead, wants to pull from the state's rainy day fund and not raise taxes. Smith acknowledged that the Senate and House has "taken a fundamentally different path" to solving the budget gap, but believes it will be solved without increasing taxes. "In this time of when Marylanders are just coming off high inflation and raising prices for core items like groceries and gas," said Smith. "The last thing we want to do in Maryland is raise taxes on Marylanders." Plus, Senator Smith took calls from concerned residents about juvenile justice legislation that could change how the courts deal with kids charged with certain crimes.

Crime

February 9: 12:06 PM 49 minutes: The D.C. Council advances a major crime bill; Alexandria arena debate continues. The D.C. Council advanced a major crime bill earlier this week, but not without a few changes. A second and final vote is expected in a few weeks as the Council continues its debate about the Secure D.C. omnibus bill. D.C. Council Chair Phil Mendelson joins the show to give us a behind-the-scenes look at the discussions going on with the bill. Plus, the Council voted in favor of moving forward

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with a restaurant relief bill. WAMU reporter Amanda Michelle Gomez breaks down the legislation for us.

March 1: 12:06 PM 50 minutes: D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser discusses crime, the Commanders, and her 'Comeback Plan' for downtown. On Friday, D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser joined the show to discuss the future of the RFK Stadium site, a major crime bill, and the mayor's \$400 million plan to revitalize downtown. Bowser also talked about the massive crime bill that the D.C. Council is set to vote on next week. She praised Ward 2 Councilmember Brooke Pinto for introducing the legislation and encouraged the council to vote yes on it. However, she took issue with two amendments included in the bill prior to the first vote in early February, and asked councilmembers to reverse them. The first amendment makes the pre-trial detention provision temporary to allow time to study its impact on curbing crime. The provision would make it easier for judges to hold adults in jail pending trial for violent offenses if they have a history of committing violent crimes. She says the expansion of pretrial detention first introduced in the emergency public safety bill enacted this past summer is one reason crime rates are down by about ten percent over the first two months of this year. "I firmly believe part of the reason we are seeing fewer assaults with a deadly weapon – and that's largely guns – is because we've taken a lot of shooters off the streets in the last six months." She also asked the D.C. Council to reinstate the proposed expansion of DNA collection from felony suspects.

WAMU also produces **The Big Broadcast** with Murray Horwitz and **Hot Jazz Saturday Night** with Rob Bamberger.

Arts and Culture/history

The Big Broadcast is WAMU's longest-running program and in 2024 will celebrate its 60th year on air. The show features a collection of radio from the golden age, the 30s, 40s, and 50s, hosted by Tony-Award winning playwright, lyricist and director Murray Horwitz. The show is co-produced by Jill Ahrold Bailey. Each Sunday night you'll hear shows like Gunsmoke, The Jack Benny Show, The Lone Ranger, Suspense, Fibber McGee and Molly, and Dragnet all woven together with historical tidbits — and links between the shows and entertainment today.

Hot Jazz Saturday Night originated on WAMU in 1980. Each week, host Rob Bamberger celebrates the great American music of the early twentieth century, playing vintage jazz, swing and big band recordings from the '20s, '30s, and '40s. The program was selected for preservation by the Library of Congress in its collection of significant locally produced radio programming.