

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Arlington Community Media, Inc.

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In the musical “Cabaret,” the main characters sing what’s called “The Money Song”...oh you know it, I’m sure... “Money makes the world go round, the world go round, the world go round” and of course, “money money money money.” Did I give you an earworm? Well, unfortunately, ACMi does not have enough “money money money money” to maintain our services to the Town Of Arlington at the same level we have over the last nineteen years. That’s because more people are “cutting the cord” and dropping their cable subscription. And since ACMi has traditionally received all of its funding from those subscriptions, there has been a drastic drop in our revenues that restricts our ability to operate as before. In addition, the staff at ACMi has been substantially reduced due to a retirement, a resignation and our continuing inability to hire needed additional personnel, due to the drop in funding. This has indeed been a tough year.

You’d never know by looking through this annual report that the staff is seriously spread thin. Over the years, ACMi has always tried to maintain high production standards, with the staff stepping up when necessary to fill temporary gaps. However, this is far more serious because the current gap isn’t temporary, and with reduced staff we now have to choose which town events we can afford to cover.

In an attempt to increase awareness of our situation, and to add funding from sources other than cable revenues, we developed several new marketing ideas. With the approval of the Town Manager, we designed and inserted an appeal “buck slip” into 13,000 water and gas bills that were sent to Arlington residents. Unfortunately, there was no response from the recipients in town. We designed and mailed a “Sponsorship” brochure to the entire Chamber of Commerce membership offering underwriting opportunities at ACMi, again with no response. We did receive a small response from an appeal slide with a QR code that was placed at the beginning of all programming produced by ACMi, including all government meetings and all sports programs. It must be noted that, even had we received an overwhelming response to these funding outreach activities, it would not be enough to substantially increase our operating budget. It became painfully obvious that we needed to ask the Town for \$200,000 in direct funding.

With this in mind, we had a meeting with the Town Manager, and made presentations describing our funding crisis to both the School Committee and the Select Board. We anticipate making a similar presentation to the Town Finance Committee in February or March of 2025. In addition, a warrant article has been filed to appropriate additional funds for ACMi. If approved at Town Meeting, this amount will allow us to hire the additional personnel needed to ensure that ACMi can continue to cover a broad range of town events, teach production techniques to students and residents, maintain a robust program for Arlington youth, and provide technical services to the Town.

Looking to the future, you can support ACMi most effectively by speaking to your town representatives, and donating whatever you can afford. And although we may not currently have the “money to make the world go round,” we are hoping to secure funding to continue to “make Arlington go round.”

Norm McLeod,
Executive Director

FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Board of Directors and I present to you the current Annual Report of Arlington Community Media Inc (ACMi). June 30, 2024 marked the completion of our eighteenth full fiscal year of operation as Arlington’s PEG (Public, Education, and Government) cable access station, providing universal public access to uncensored local community programming and local news coverage.

Usually in my letter for the Annual Report, I celebrate all of the excellent programming and services that ACMi and our staff have provided for the Town of Arlington, its students and residents over the past year. However, this year’s letter is different. This year, due to a dramatic decrease in our revenue because people are increasingly choosing to cut their cable subscriptions, ACMi does not have sufficient funding to continue to provide the same level of services to the Town of Arlington that residents have come to expect from us. We were also forced to close Studio B on Summer St., a facility that directly served the students of Arlington High School.

ACMi, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, continues to be in full compliance with IRS and Massachusetts regulations. The annual independent audit of our financial books and records demonstrated our excellent financial controls and oversight and, as always, that we continue to manage our finances to the highest standards.

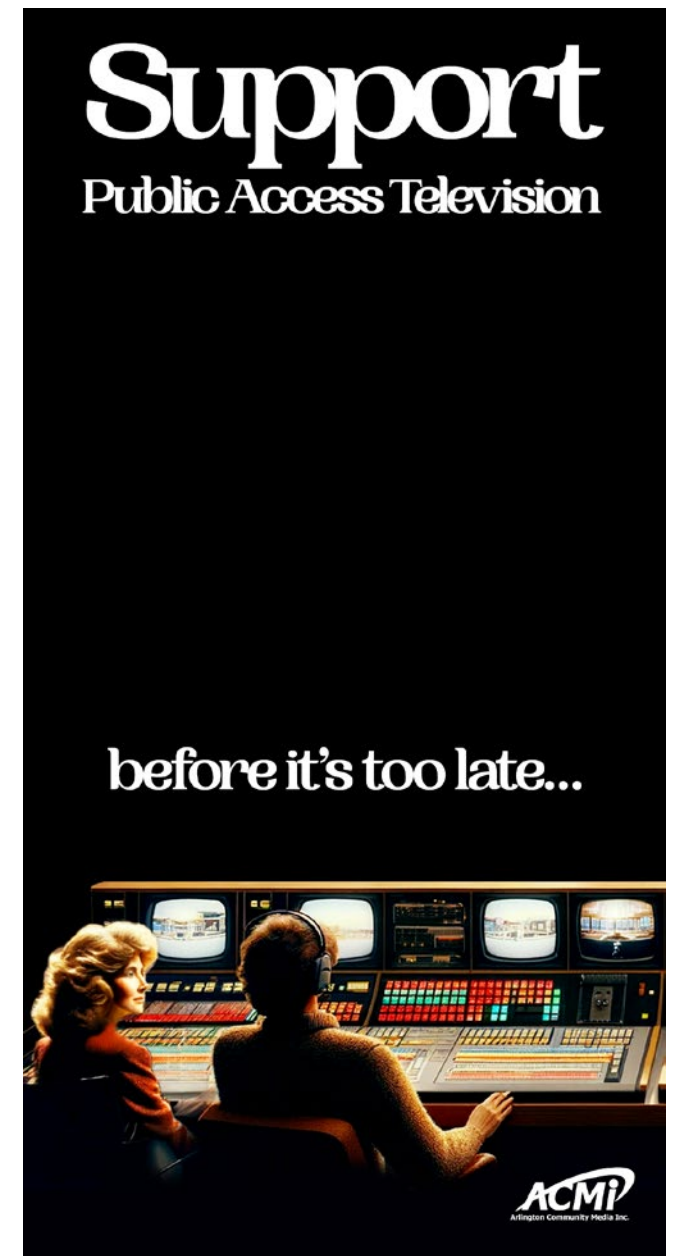
Even though our budget is extremely tight, the Board is pleased with the efforts of ACMi members and staff that have resulted in our high-quality first-run local PEG programming, and we are happy to continue to provide ACMi News for our community of viewers, albeit at a reduced level.

We are very proud of our accomplishments over the past year, and we are gratified by the steady increase in scope, depth, and power of ACMi’s contribution to Arlington’s social and cultural community life. The Board and I thank you for your trust in us. We do need to ask for your financial contribution, and we encourage you to visit our website and make a sustaining monthly donation. We also ask that you contact the School Committee, the Select Board, Town Meeting Members, and the Finance Committee to request that they support ACMi through the Town Budget process.

ACMi - Arlington’s Community television/media station.

John D. Leone, President
Arlington Community Media Inc.

Arlington Community Media is dedicated to providing an electronic forum for the free exchange of information and ideas which reflect the talents, skills, interests, concerns, and diversity of the Arlington community



STAFF



Norm McLeod Executive Director Jeff Munro Operations Manager James Milan Communications Mgr. Katie Chang Prod. & Media Mgr. Sean Keane Gov. & Prog. Coord.



Jasper Hamilton Youth Coordinator Jeff Barnd News Director Jared Sweet Video Editor JoAnn Clinton Admin. Assistant

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



John D. Leone, Esq. President Michael Ruderman Treasurer Nancy Flynn-Barvick Member Philip J. Privitera, Esq. Member



Michael Jacoby Brown Member Kevin Cafferty Member Frank Auer Member

MEMBERS & SUPPORTERS

Members and More

Arlington Community Media Inc., (ACMi) is a member-based, 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization. Membership at ACMi is open to all who live or work in Arlington. A nominal annual membership fee gives access to all the features, benefits and resources ACMi has to offer. These include training in how to operate high-quality digital video production equipment and the ability to borrow and use the equipment outside of the studio; the use of the our studio, equipment, and editing facilities; and air time on our Public, Educational and/ or Government channels carried by Comcast, RCN and Verizon.

In 2024, ACMi memberships grew by more than 25 percent from the previous year. All 205 of our active members, student members, donors and supporters who worked with us over the past year deserve a heartfelt “thank you” for helping ACMi on such events as the A-Town Film Festival, the Arlington International Film Festival, AHS sports and school graduations, the Battle of the Bands, Arlington Town Day, and the Chamber of Commerce’s Holiday Stroll.

Interns

ACMi has continued to build a thriving internship program that serves students from a number of colleges and universities in the area, and sometimes beyond! Interns take direct part in producing programming across the board, including News, Public Affairs, Sports, projects with ACMi member-producers, promotional pieces for local nonprofits, and original creative fare.

We have been very fortunate to have strong rosters of interns year in and year out, and this year was certainly no exception. 2024 was a year of trying to do as much or more with fewer full-time staff, so we leaned on our interns to fully embrace the approach of “learn by doing” even more than usual, and they came through beautifully. Our heartfelt thanks go out to this year’s interns from the following colleges and universities.

Bryn Mawr College
Ava McBurney

Champlain College
Mohsin Syed

University of Massachusetts
Myles Donato

Emerson College
Martin Tran
Emma Wood
Morgan Wuhrl
Hongyi Ji

Emmanuel College
Henry Hamilton

Salem State University
Felson Andre

Tufts University
Julia Carpi
David Palamar
Quinn Sobieraj



MEMBERS & SUPPORTERS

Individuals

George Akerley
 Christophe Antczak
 Nick Antonakas
 Jonathan Applefield
 Michael Armanious
 Susi Barbarossa
 Mamadou Barry
 Greg Bartlett
 Janice Brodman
 Todd Brunel
 Cheryl Brusgulis
 Justin Chen
 Karen Dawson
 Peggy Fenner
 Nancy Flynn-Barvick
 Evan Fonseca
 Marco Franzoni
 John Gagan
 Joe Galeota
 Judy Geyer
 Carol Greeley
 Laury Gutierrez
 Alberto Guzman
 Susan Harrington
 John Harrison
 Charles Hartshorne
 Daisy Hernandez
 Janis Hersh
 Jonathan Hindmarsh
 Michael Jacoby Brown
 Rhea Koch-Sultan
 Karen Louise Puopolo
 Daniel Mayer
 Mary McCartney
 Michael McVey
 Jeffery Miller
 Toni Mueller
 Alec Nicholson
 Theodore Peluso
 Kristin Pennarun
 Don Phelan
 Charlotte Pierce
 Jeff Reusse
 Luca Rugiero
 Nicole Sammarco
 Tommy Shenefield
 Wenhua Shi
 Joseph Snodgrass
 Marissa Sobczynski
 Rajeev Soneja
 Jonathan Spiller

Eric Stange
 Shawn Szturma
 Andy Takats
 Alfonso Velasquez

Youth

Mazen Abukhalaf
 Anne Fleur Andrie
 Ada Bickmeier
 Derek Brandon
 Nathan Brooks
 Drew Carman
 Lettie Carswell
 Geneva Carter
 Matthew Casciani
 Ana Cristina Cervera
 Luke Chang
 Simon Cheung
 Elias Church
 Maxwell DePriest
 Myles Donato
 Donny Noah Felcsuti
 Nicholas Ferrara
 Liam Gallagher
 Jackson Gonzalez-Hart
 Lucia A. Grunko
 Kai Hare
 Alexander Hornak
 Greg J-S
 David Jagendorf
 Guixuan Jin
 Alexander Lee
 Sarah Liu
 Brendan Locke
 Ronen Oren-Ikeda
 Jack Magoun
 Holden Mckinnon
 Dillon Melin
 Tobias Michelsen
 Sarah Morgan-Zawilski
 Ezinne Onyemah
 Dustin Peabody
 Nicolas Pogozelski
 Frances Redford
 Nate Rosado
 Henrietta Rota
 Jiwan Ryu
 Ed S
 Cece Scull
 Abi Shapiro
 Ruhaan Sharma-Soneja
 Lily Sheehan

Jolin Shi
 Harkeeret Singh
 Lex Skowronek
 Arson Stokes
 Mia Vakoc
 Ghulam Woolman
 Caleb Ji Young Choi
 Sol Yudowski
 Alice Z
 Grace von Zabern
 Nicholas Zaragoza
 Jasper Clare Zellmer
 Maiya Zhou
 Calvin
 Meredith
 Miles
 Percy
 Ruby



Nonprofits

Arlington Center for the Arts (Thomas Formicola)
 Arlington EATS (Andi Doane, Nicole Melnik)
 Arlington Educational Foundation
 Arlington International Film Festival
 Arlington Jazz (Daniel Fox)
 Armenian Cultural Foundation, Inc. (Paul T. Boghosian, Robert Pushkar)
 Cyrus Dallin Museum
 First Baptist Church of Arlington (Ian Jackson, Rev. Patrick McCorkle)
 Friends of the Robbins Library
 Learning About America (Sumeet Pareek, Christopher Miller)
 Les Dames d'Escoffier (Robin Cohen)
 Park Ave Congregational Church (Leah Lyman Waldron, David Morrisette)
 Philharmonic Society of Arlington (Larisa Miller)
 Sharing A New Song (Linda Shoemaker)
 True Story Theater (Tonia Pinheiro, Amber Espar)
 The Yoftahe Show (Yoftahe Gebru, Ermiyas Gebre, Makda Teklemichael)

Groups

Betsy Block Family (Maya Pockrose, Betsy Block)
 Brieus Family (Olha Brieus, Dima Brieus)
 Darius Naigamwalla Group (Darius Naigamwalla)
 Darius Nelson Group (Darius Nelson, Justin Nguyen)
 Plateau and Koh Group (Douglas Plateau, Jennifer Koh)
 Golden Cage Music (Deborah Henson-Conant)
 JATK The Band (Matt Jatkola)
 Kerry Abukhalaf
 Kevin Cafferty
 McKinnon Family (Carrie McKinnon)
 Melissa Carr Family
 Mosher-Marchant Family (Carrie Mosher, Robert Marchant)
 Nash-Webber Family (Dorothy Nash-Webber)
 The Variety Show (Stirling Smith)
 William Sullivan Family (Will Sullivan, Benjamin Cooper Riccio Gould)

Businesses

Body & Brain Arlington (Jeff Nielson, Barbara Maffeo)
 Derek Mola
 Evan Fonseca
 Howland, Gorham, Wolf- Productions (Robert Moran)
 Mary Beth Wilkes
 Richard Grandoit
 Roasted Granola (Emily Patel)

Town Agencies / Schools

Arlington Chamber of Commerce
 Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture
 Arlington Education Foundation (Laura Fuller)
 Arlington Fire Department
 Arlington High School

Arlington High School Building Committee
 Arlington Historical Society (Alan Jones)
 Arlington Housing Authority
 Arlington Police Department
 Arlington Public Library
 Brackett Elementary School PTO
 Brenda Mahoney
 Council on Aging
 Finance Committee
 Gibbs School
 MLK Jr Birthday Observance Committee of Arlington
 Ottoson Middle School
 Redevelopment Board
 Select Board
 Town Of Arlington
 Zoning Board of Appeals



2024 AWARDS

Foundation of Alliance for Community Media - Hometown Media Awards

About Access & Empowerment Student
"Community Media is Under Threat"
Michael Sullivan



Alliance for Community Media - Northeast Region Nor'Easter Video Festival

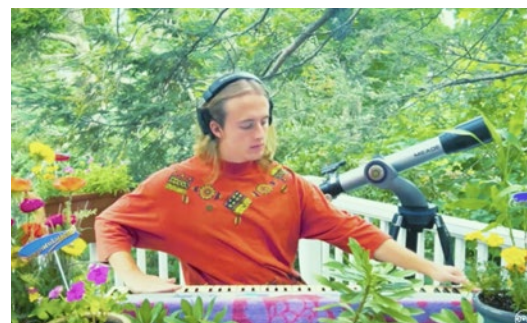
Third Place - Diversity Empowerment
"Celebrating Peoples Who Discovered Columbus"
Jeff Barnd, Jared Sweet



Third Place - News & Magazine Format
"ACMi Newscast - March 11, 2023"
Jeff Barnd, Jared Sweet



Second Place - Music and Performance
"SUNTIME"
Tommy Shenefield



HAPPY RETIREMENT JEFF BARND!



COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

Alliance for Community Media
 Arlington Art Lounge
 Arlington Bicycle Advisory Committee
 Arlington Board of Health
 Arlington Boys' & Girls' Club
 Arlington Center for the Arts
 Arlington Chamber of Commerce
 Arlington Children's Theatre
 Arlington Consumer Surveys
 Arlington Council on Aging
 Arlington Department of Planning and Community Development
 Arlington Education Foundation
 Arlington Fire Department
 Arlington Food Pantry
 Arlington Friends of the Drama
 Arlington Garden Club
 Arlington Historic District Commission
 Arlington Historical Society
 Arlington Human Rights Commission
 Arlington Jazz Festival
 Arlington Meetup
 Arlington Public Art
 Arlington Reads Together
 Arlington School Committee
 Arlington Select Board
 Arlington Sons of Italy
 Arlington Tree Committee
 Arlington Youth Health & Safety Coalition
 Autism House Pathways
 Black History Month
 Chillhop Records
 Covid-19 Relief Fund
 Cyrus E. Dallin Art Museum
 Department of Public Health
 Department of Public Works
 Double Take Arlington
 Fast and Furriest
 Fidelity House
 First Parish Unitarian Universalist
 Free Meditation Boston
 Friends of Spy Pond
 Friends of the Robbins Library
 Homeschooling Together
 Housing Corporation of Arlington
 James Houlares Early Learning Center
 Jason Russell House
 Knights of Columbus
 Little Fox Shop
 Metropolitan Area Planning Council
 Minuteman Bikeway
 Mystic Chorale
 Mystic River Watershed Association
 Arlington Community Media, Inc.

Old Schwamb Mill
 Park Avenue Congregational Church
 Philharmonic Society of Arlington
 Prayer Festival for World Peace
 Regent Theatre
 Retired Men's Club
 Robbins Library
 Saint Athanasius the Great Greek Orthodox Church
 Saint Vartanantz Church
 Society of St. Vincent de Paul
 St. Agnes Church
 St. Camillus Parish Community
 Stone Zoo
 True Story Theater

ARLINGTON JOB FAIR
 TUES. APRIL 30TH, 2-6PM
 TOWN HALL AUDITORIUM
[TINYURL.COM/ARLJOBFAIR](https://tinyurl.com/arljobfair)

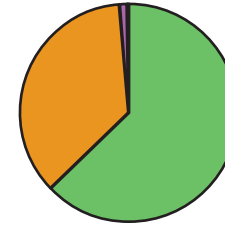
TOWN OF ARLINGTON & ARLINGTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRESENT THE
ARLINGTON BUSINESS SUMMIT
 Wednesday, November 20 at 5:30PM
 Arlington Town Hall Auditorium

REGENT THEATRE
 EST. 1916
THE CALAMARI SISTERS
 November 23rd @ 8pm & November 24th @ 2pm

WEBSITE & SOCIALS

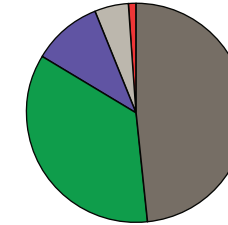
Website

- 18k active users during 2024
- Top landing pages: Homepage, ACMi Sports, Government Channel, School Committee, and ACMi News



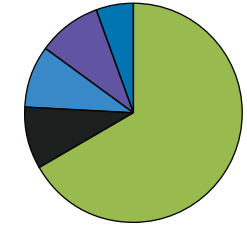
Active Users by Device:

11k desktop
 6.3k mobile
 216 tablet
 10 smart tv



Users go to the website:

directly (48%)
 organic search (35%)
 referral (10%)
 organic social (5%)
 organic video (1%)



Event count:

homepage 36%
 gov channel 5%
 public channel 5%
 sports 5%
 edu channel 3%

Compared to previous year 2023

ACMi Social Media

Average post engagement rate is up 10.13%
 Post impressions is up 17%

ACMi News Social Media

Followers increased 6%
 Average post engagement rate is down 8.57%
 Post impressions are up 14%



Youtube Channels - top videos



All-Town String Concert, AHS Graduation, Capitol Review Ep2 Inside Out 2
 15.4k watch time (hours) (about same as last year)



Ted Neeley & Yvonne Elliman Reunite at the Regent!, A New Arlington Monument to the Fallen Crown Soldiers, "Here They Are... The Beatles!" 60 Years Since the 2nd British Invasion
 5.1k watch time hours (8% less than last year)



7.1k watch time hours (8% more than previous year)

MEMBER FEATURES - MAZEN ABUKHALAF

Don't be fooled by his low-key demeanor, Mazen Abukhalaf is a true powerhouse. And his roots in videography and filmmaking go back a long way, back to his early youth in Alameda, CA, where he and his friends started using iMovie to make videos at the age of six! He moved across the country to Arlington just in time to join the Gibbs School's inaugural class of sixth-graders.

Moving into a brand new environment always presents challenges, and if we're lucky we find some activity to ease our transition. For Mazen that was the theater department at Gibbs. He quickly realized he wasn't very interested in the performance piece, but gravitated very naturally towards backstage work instead. That work culminated in Mazen's taking on the task of recording the end-of-year play, using two cameras he got from ACMi (!) to capture the performance. He did it all on his own (with a little help from ACMi's Jonathan Barbato), including the editing, as a sixth-grader who was brand new in town. A powerhouse, indeed.

Arriving at Ottoson the next year, Mazen immersed himself in the Ottoson Media Group, or OMG, a production group still led at that time by the legendary Edith Moisand. He built both his skills and his friendships throughout the year, all of which were threatened the following year of 2020, which might well be termed the Year of Universal Isolation, thanks to onset of the Covid pandemic. As was the case for many of us, Mazen's forward momentum came to a screeching halt, and as he headed off to Arlington High the following year, he felt that he'd lost the drive for even that activity that had most engaged him throughout his life - making films and videos.

Mazen (and the rest of us!) owe quite a debt to Kevin Wetmore, ACMi's Youth Coordinator at that time. Kevin refused to accept Mazen's initial reluctance to get involved with the high school production group, and ultimately convinced him to join the crew covering football and other fall sports. In no time flat, Mazen emerged as the lead editor of all the content they covered, and he began to exert his own particular form of leadership as well.

Mazen recently reflected on what he has learned over these last years about leading his peers. He initially had a stereotypical view of a director as "loud and extroverted and mean to their camera operators," but came to recognize the strengths of his own more measured, calmer, and more patient approach. He summed it up nicely, saying "it's not all about management, it's about collaboration."

Of course, like a lot of things, that's easier said than done, and Mazen acknowledges that "Mayor," the short feature he wrote and directed and that premiered at the ATown Teen Film Festival in Arlington in the spring of 2024, offered a number of personal challenges for him as he tried to balance adhering closely the vision in his own head while ensuring that his collaborators (friends) felt fully included in the process. That process was not always smooth, but he learned a whole lot of useful stuff, and still ended up with a short political satire he is justifiably proud of.

What's next for Mazen? Well, to begin with, Ithaca College, which has one of the strongest programs in the field (and which also follows a family tradition). "I hope to make a lot of movies in college," he says, brightly, and we certainly hope so too! In his deep creativity, in his desire to empower others, in his sturdy commitment to collaboration and clear communication, Mazen embodies a lot of what is at the heart of ACMi, and we feel lucky to have had this extended time with him, and intrigued to find out what the future holds for this gifted filmmaker.



NICK ANTONAKAS

Nick Antonakas has been here before, literally. Five years ago, on the eve of his senior year at Arlington High School, we featured him in our Annual Report. At that point, he had already accumulated enough real-world experience on ACMi sports crews and especially in the announcers' booth to be considered a "veteran." As Nick moved on to Emerson College, we looked forward to keeping up with what we believed would be another big step in his advancement towards the world of professional broadcasting. Lucky us, we didn't just get to monitor Nick's ongoing growth - we got to be part of it!

The fact that Nick ended up staying involved in ACMi Sports, continuing to provide commentary sporadically throughout his freshman year, and then ratcheting up his involvement dramatically starting in his sophomore year, was a delightful surprise for us, and for Nick himself! It was the result of a serendipitous confluence - his decision to commute to Emerson from his home in Arlington; his dedication to giving back to ACMi; and the abundant opportunities ACMi Sports gave him to further hone his skills, both in front of the camera and behind the scenes. The result was that Nick worked as an ACMi Sports intern as a sophomore, and then as a full-fledged Sports Producer in his junior year, not only providing increasingly professional on-air commentary, but also meticulously planning complicated shoots, supervising student crews, and troubleshooting technical issues on the fly.

It was not at all easy to balance this commitment with attending school full-time, taking on leadership roles in the school's broadcasting sphere, and oh yes, continuing to work at a local restaurant, but Nick insists that he wouldn't change a thing! He cites his increasingly assured on-air presence as one clear area of growth over these years, but he is perhaps even more excited about how deeply and genuinely his self-confidence has blossomed. Nick says he may have appeared to be fairly self-assured on camera in high school, but in fact he was just as prone to self-consciousness and second-guessing as any other teenager. Being an ACMi Sports Producer consistently put him in the position of being the person everyone was looking to for decisions, guidance, and calm stewardship. Nick proved more than up to the task!

There were a lot of highlights along the way, but Nick is particularly proud of spearheading the first-ever major production of an away football game. From the site visit, to loading up his car, to rousing his crew and scavenging seats for them on the football bus and the cheerleader bus...Nick just beams with pride in recalling everything that went into what was a crowning achievement, both technically and as a crew leader.

It was not, however, the only triumph Nick has to celebrate from recent years and, when prompted, he cites being taken under the wing of Channel 5 news anchor Maria Stephanos during his internship at that station, and "the highlight of his life" (so far) - interviewing Robert Kraft and Jerry Rice on the red carpet during the 2024 Super Bowl Week, which he was selected to attend as part of Emerson's coverage team. (What's more, he'll be going back to the Super Bowl AGAIN in 2025!)

So what lies ahead for this very talented young man? Well, the aforementioned Channel 5 has already hired him as a part-time Assignment Editor, and has even set him up with a Reporting Fellowship at an affiliate station (WMUR) in New Hampshire. Nick plans to, as he puts it, "go in there and work hard and keep my head down," knowing that it just might turn into his first professional reporting job right out of college. What we can all say with great confidence is that, whether it's WMUR or another station, Nick's first professional gig is just around the corner, and will be just the first step in what promises to be an exciting career in broadcasting. Luckily for us, what exists between Nick and ACMi is a mutual admiration society, so we can count on the fact that, however far he ventures, he will always hold ACMi close. Reach for those stars, Nick!



FACILITIES & EQUIPMENT

Services

Master Control, ACMi's shipping and receiving dept. of live feeds and broadcast signals, has received a major upgrade to the heart of its operation. The Castus playback, live streaming, and on-demand server drives all three of our PEG Channels, and now most of our online services as well. Boasting 16 terabytes of storage, multiple input and output formats, variable bitrate livestreams, and so much more, the system is very robust and powerful. It is programmed by ACMi staff to push out all three channels 24/7. Content is organized in folders and in playlists, which are curated into daily and weekly schedules. It features a cloud backup, along with countless web services, including the connectivity of various media to ACMi.TV, subtitles and translation for live streams, and other media items, all servicing a future ACMi on Roku devices. A new SDI multiviewer will allow for easier monitoring and troubleshooting inside Master Control.



Resources

Among the portable production resources available to ACMi members are six Sony FX30 cinema cameras. Most are kitted with audio handles, lenses, Small Rig cages, and a hard case. They can be matched with DGI gimbals or handheld rigs to allow for additional V mount Battery assemblies and chargers to power mini monitors, wireless transmitters and other accessories as needed.

Audiophiles will delight in the two Rode mobile lav kits, shotgun mics with boom poles, and a new Zoom F3 two-channel, two-track field recorder with 32-bit float technology that enables more dynamic audio level recording.

A RodeCaster Pro 2 is being well used by our growing number of podcast-producing members. Four announcer headsets were purchased to be available for both sports and for podcast console users. A case for a donated Allen and Heath audio console was purchased and put into production this fall for the ACMi Sports setup in the press box at Peirce Field. A series of web presenters and streaming bridges were added to increase streaming capabilities for the various kits across all ACMi creation stations.

ACMi's Edelkrone robotic systems now include a motorized slider module with app controls for greater ease of use. And ACMi sports productions are enhanced by a Rodecaster Video Switcher all-in-one production console that includes an integrated audio mixer and headphone outputs, and can switch up to four HDMI and another two digital USB video sources. The internal live streaming encoder makes this the perfect companion for multicam podcasts, as well as live coverage of sports and special events. An Elgato Stream Deck + kit with USB Hub will allow for a technician to control various settings for both audio and video without having to switch between multiple windows during a live production. A second set of four Acsoon WiFi wireless transmitters and receivers will allow for both the cinema kits and the older JVC kits to be wireless.

With the regrettable decrease of our funding sources, we had to pack up and relocate some of the gear at Studio B (now closed) into Arlington High School's Music Tech production studio. Smaller items are built into custom kits and/or combined a la carte, depending on the requirements of any particular production. In the spring of 2024, we provided live coverage of our first Spy Ponder Baseball game using multicam (including Sony cinema cameras at the field), wireless, and with the control room



set up in front of the Boys and Girls Club. With the ACMi field gear split into a series of portable cases, depending on the season, the control rooms can occupy the press box in fall, the gym and ice rink in winter, concerts in the high school auditorium, and the Battle of the Bands over at the Regent Theater. The crew has grown, with more student volunteers to run replay, graphics, and for some games even to operate as sideline announcers.

Our newest portable studio boasts Blackmagic Design's ATEM Television Studio HD8 ISO video switcher, capable of recording all eight sources to a fast SSD hard drive. The 8-input unit features an internal live streaming function, replay and roll-in controls with macros. This system has been used primarily in the AHS production studio for the Pondercast, and in the auditorium for live streaming and multicam concerts.

ACMi News is making use of a new drone for a number of news segments across town. These added shots give a literal birds' eye view of Arlington and provide breathtaking vistas. The production staff has been conducting flight lessons by request on Friday flydays in the summertime.

Satellite Facilities

The ACMi Control Room at Town Hall is where connectivity between meeting spaces can be coordinated and recorded, and then live streamed to our Park Ave Master Control Center for cable and web distribution. A new network transmitter and record deck replace aging units, which will increase the quality of recordings and streams. Town Meeting is now utilizing advanced audio systems with WiFi iPad controls and custom speaker mixes for various rooms. A new Broadcast MeetingPix video switcher that controls network robotic cameras and routing signals to and from the auditorium and control room will enhance the experience of Annex Meeting Room attendees.

ACMi Youth Program

The resplendent spirit of the youth program is strong and very much a producing force, and it continues to be a shining star for ACMi, as it has for many years. ACMi youth members of the class of 2025 were determined to ensure that the loss of the brick and mortar location of Studio B would not diminish their experience with ACMi. They also weathered the resignation of their experienced Youth Coordinator, Jasper Hamilton, and refused to let it dampen the momentum and productivity of the team. Doubling down on the portable studio projects they had learned to love as part of the annual Town Day and Battle of the Bands coverage, this group leveled up by increasing the quality and the quantity of live programs this past year.

It all came together in the standout triumph of the year, the highly successful premiere of "Mayor" at ACMi's annual ATown Teen Film Festival. Written and directed by long-time ACMi youth member Mazen Abukhalaf, and executed from start to finish by a crew composed of his fellow members of Focus Media (the high school production group), the film debuted to a cheering crowd at the festival. The introduction of a new film studies course at AHS led by Mr. Adam Gooder increased the number of offerings from AHS students at ATown, and we look forward to even closer collaborations with this class in the future.



PUBLIC CHANNEL

Workshops

Staff organized a series of seven workshops throughout the spring of 2024. The series kicked off with an Orientation for new members, followed by a Meet and Greet (and cake!) for all. Following classes covered: Basic Camera, Advanced Camera, Video Editing, Color Correction, and Lighting. ACMi News Director Jeff Barnd led a workshop on Interviewing / Writing for News. In the fall, meetups after Town Day included an Orientation, an invite for a behind-the-scenes look at ACMi Sports, podcasting, and a discussion on the future of ACMi News.

Networking Party

Our spring workshop series ended with an evening event where members met and connected with other like-minded individuals over light refreshments. A speed networking activity was presented, and allowed members to meet one-on-one for quick elevator pitches. Those in attendance left inspired about new projects, and in some cases with new friends as well!

Concert Coverage

Staff, members, and volunteers captured a wealth of live music throughout Arlington this year: multiple concerts of music composed by Arlington's own Alan Hovhaness; the Mystic Brass Ensemble; the Menotomy Concert Series; performances sponsored by the Friends of Robbins Library; and Sharing a New Song, a choral group that includes a number of Arlington residents. Also, the Lunar New Year Celebration at Town Hall in February was live streamed for the second consecutive year, and was a delight for all involved.



Arlington Community Media, Inc.

Show Highlights

Member Yoftahe Gebru was busy producing this year for his series "The Yoftahe Show," which covers subjects ranging from mental health to current topics of concern for the Ethiopian community. A few episodes were filmed in-studio (including some poetry written and performed by Yoftahe himself!), but he also filmed many of them on his own. The variety of the subject matter, the depth and candor of the conversations, and number of episodes Yoftahe produced throughout the year is certainly impressive.

ACMi staffer JoAnn Clinton began producing movie reviews under the title "5 Star Review." In each episode, she succinctly and articulately provides her honest review of a film, without giving away any spoilers. As a first-time producer, JoAnn has done spectacularly well in accomplishing so much, from script to screen!

Margaret Credle Thomas, the DEI Director of the Arlington Public Schools, and her colleague Katie Hodgkins produced a monthly series on DEI observances. This program highlighted the diversity of holidays and observances that take place each month, and helped educate the audience in the process. These productions made good use of the green screen and over-the-shoulder graphics, and our fantastic interns supplied the vital editing that was required..

CrowdSourced

For the sixth year in a row, ACMi participated in Crowdsourced Boston, a project organized by the Brookline Interactive Group. A team of 11 worked together over the course of multiple evenings to recreate a 3-minute scene from the classic, Home Alone. Filmed at the Whittemore Robbins House, actors braved stunts and a compressed time frame to create something everyone is proud of. The screening of the entire Crowdsourced film took place on December 9th at the Coolidge Corner Theater.

Podcasting

For over two years now, a Podcasting Meetup Group has been honing their interviewing skills and editing a complete season (9 episodes) of the "ACMi Podcast Show." Topics have included summer jobs to origin stories. Available wherever you get your podcasts!

Movie Mondays

This summer, ACMi hosted a series of summer-themed films in the studio. Air conditioning and popcorn, as well as the quality of the movies, drew in members to enjoy "In the Good Ol' Summertime," "Some Like it Hot," and "Grease."



EDUCATION CHANNEL

ACMi's youth program has enjoyed a long record of success, and 2024 began with more of the same. Youth Coordinator Jasper Hamilton (an alum of ACMi's youth program himself) and Operations Manager Jeff Munro were firing on all cylinders, working with students to produce their own film projects, hosting the annual ATown Teen Film Festival, and teaching technical workshops that included lighting design, advanced filmmaking techniques, editing, and color grading.

Dramatic changes were coming, however, beginning with Jasper's decision in the spring to devote himself full-time to his passion for filmmaking. That, combined with the precipitous decline in revenues from cable subscriptions that ACMi has depended on for its funding, resulted in us not being able to hire a new Youth Coordinator. The balance of 2024 saw Jeff doing the best he could to continue sports and concert productions with a talented group of youth volunteers.

Budget constraints also forced ACMi to close Studio B, a satellite facility that had existed in various locations for more than 12 years, and that had functioned as the base of operations for youth group activities. Various teachers and department heads at Arlington High School have provided space and support to keep the youth program operating, and school officials recognize the value that ACMi has provided for students over the years. As 2024 came to a close, Arlington's School Committee was considering a proposal to provide direct funding to ACMi, with the goal of returning the youth program to its former robust productivity.

ACMi, and the Arlington community, have already felt the impact of thinning resources and staffing. The loss of Studio B and the Youth Coordinator has meant less coverage of school events and less support and teaching of professional-level production skills for students. This is a real detriment to the Arlington youth who are nurtured by ACMi, a number of whom have gone on to pursue film and broadcast college majors and careers (such as the two young men profiled in this Annual Report). ACMi remains committed to Arlington's youth, who also learn life skills outside of the classroom, including teamwork, planning, troubleshooting, and communication. All of this will only be possible, of course, if ACMi's funding can be restored to previous levels.



Sports:

Together, Jeff and Jasper designed systems that allowed for more effective sports coverage and live-streaming, including implementing new components for ACMi sports broadcasts such as sideline commentating, instant replay, and highlight reels, as well as real-time graphics. All of these additions made sports coverage even more enjoyable to watch and more fun for the students to film. For the Fall sports season, Jeff was able to continue live streaming and capturing many AHS games with a group of dedicated youth volunteers. Parents and coaches stepped up to livestream and record games that the students were not available to cover. It was an effective way to continue coverage of these popular events in the short term, but it is unlikely to be sustainable into the future.



Concerts / Performances

Most concert performances at the high school and the middle school were live streamed with the help of youth volunteers and teachers. If no students were available, then ACMi staff would do their best to make sure the event was still covered. One highlight of 2024 was the coverage for Battle of the Bands. Jasper worked with the youth to interview each band, create graphics, and meticulously plan the entire production. These strategies and techniques are being used again in ACMi's 2025 coverage of Battle of the Bands, which promises to once again be an outstanding production.



PUBLIC CHANNEL

New Shows:

- 2Hot4Dog
- 5 Star Review: 5
- ACA Artist's Statement: 2
- ACMi Sports Interviews Metro Boston Flag Football
- Founder Jacob Groshek
- Age Differently: 9
- Alan Hovhaness Tribute Concert
- All Things Natural: 2
- Annual General Meeting 2024
- Armenian Vistas Concert
- Behind the Curtain: 5
- Cambridge Rise (mini-doc)
- Childrens Music Network Presentations: 3
- Fox Branch Library Tour
- Geo Power! Exploring Networked Geothermal for East Arlington & Beyond
- Leaf Prints on Gelli Plates
- Let's Talk About...: 3
- Luca Rugiero Shows: 8
- MLK Day 2024
- Primary Care in Crisis
- Producer Profile: 1
- Pumpkin Painting
- Spring Training at Spy Pond Mini Documentary
- Starry Night Cafe Dating Show
- WOW WHAT! AN ECLIPSE?
- Yoftahe Poems: 4
- Yoftahe Show: 7

Old Shows (New Episodes):

- AHS Music Tech Choral Concert 2024
- DEI Matters: 1
- DEI Observances: 8
- Fandom 101: 1
- Friends of the Robbins Library: 2
- Holiday Show 2024
- Menotomy Concert Series: 3
- Michael Armanious Shows: 8
- Music Gazing: 2
- Newscasts: 44
- Ready, Row! USA - Head of the Charles Sneek Peek
- SANS Concerts: 2
- Scenes of the Seasons: 35
- Sonic John Presents: 2
- Studio Sessions: 4
- Talk of the Town: 9
- The Nicole's Review: 3
- We Hold These Truths: 5

EDUCATION CHANNEL

- AHS Jazz Band | Arlington Jazz Festival
- AHS Music Technology Collaborative Concert
- All-Town Chorus Concert 2024
- Arlington All-Town String Concert 2024
- Arlington High School Graduation 2024
- Arlington High School Pops Concert 2024
- Arlington High School Winter Concert 2024
- Battle of the Bands 2024
- Choral & Music Technology Concert 2024
- Espirales Project (Live Cuban Ensemble) 2024
- Guns & Hoses 2024
- Ottoson Middle School Winter Concert 2024
- Patriots Day 2024
- Pondercast
- You View

ACMi Sports:

- AHS Boys & Girls Soccer
- AHS Boys Varsity Basketball
- AHS Boys Varsity Hockey
- AHS Girls Varsity Basketball
- AHS Girls Varsity Hockey
- AHS Varsity Baseball



GOVERNMENT CHANNEL

ACMi's Government Channel (Comcast 22, RCN 15, RCN HD 6-14, Verizon 26) features content covering the Town of Arlington's many government bodies, agencies, boards, and committees. Arlington is a community with a strong interest in government transparency. For this reason, ACMi provides a particularly valuable service by broadcasting meetings such as the Select Board, School Committee, the Annual Town Meeting, and various other boards and committees, live on our channel and streaming on our website. Interested viewers who miss the live versions can easily access these sessions either when they air on the channel throughout the week or via ACMi's online Video-On-Demand (VOD) service.

In fact, all of the Government Channel's content, which also includes coverage of local elections, debates, and public forums, is continuously available on VOD. With more than 301 hours of content created this year alone, we strive to make it as convenient as possible to keep up with local politics, policies and proceedings in the Town of Arlington.

As we do every year, ACMi worked with candidates to create video profiles outlining their positions and the reasons to vote for them, as well as covering the annual Candidates' Night sponsored by the League of Women Voters. Even in uncontested races, the candidates outlined their positions and their plans for their upcoming terms.

This year we added even more meeting coverage to our offerings, guided by topics that garnered community engagement throughout the year. Since it is a long-term and expensive community investment, we covered the Artificial Turf Study Committee as they weighed the pros and cons of artificial turf vs natural grass fields. Along the same lines of environmental engagement, we also began regular coverage of the Conservation Commission.

The pandemic made them a necessity, and now hybrid and remote meetings have become a fact of life and an invaluable feature of town committees and local governance. ACMi continues to assist the town with its A/V tech needs and the dissemination of meeting recordings to keep residents informed.

Total Government Programming = 301 hours of content

Government Meetings (recorded by ACMi Staff and Volunteers):

Town Meetings & Events:

Select Board Meetings - 26 Meetings
= 52 hours of content

School Committee Meetings - 22 Meetings
= 32 hours of content

Redevelopment Board Meetings - 23 Meetings
= 37 hours of content

Finance Committee Meetings - 22 Meetings
= 39 hours of content

Town Meeting - 12 Meetings
= 28 hours of content

Zoning Board of Appeals - 24 Meetings
= 51 hours of content

Artificial Turf Study Committee - 14 Meetings
= 22 hours of content

Conservation Commission - 10 Meetings
= 29 hours of content

Everything Else:
= 11 hours of content

Public Forums and Public Hearings:

MBTA Communities Working Group - July 25, 2023
Arlington Land Trust - May 14, 2024

Other Public Events:

Arlington Veterans' Day Parade 2023
Arlington Memorial Day Ceremony 2024
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday Observance 2024

Election Events:

League of Women Voters Candidates' Night 2024
Candidate Profiles for Town Elections

ACMI NEWS

As it was across ACMI's operations, 2024 proved to be a year of unpredictable transition for ACMI News. The bedrock remained the same - producing a weekly newscast that is hyper-focused on covering notable events and newsmakers, as well as presenting important local stories, current affairs, and human-interest pieces, all while breaking new ground in compelling storytelling. Beyond that, however, the changes came fast and furious, leaving us all a little breathless in their wake.

It is always rewarding to have a chance to look back on a year of news coverage for Arlington and beyond, because the pace of news throughout the year generally does not leave any space to pause and reflect. Some of the top stories covered by News Director Jeff Barnd and his team in 2024 include:

- News Intern Junru Tao covered the second annual Lunar New Year celebration at Town Hall, and the event was even more multifaceted this year, engaging and reflecting a host of different Asian cultures and practices. The news team captured both the variety and the excitement of the evening.
- Building on the ambitious oral history project about Arlington's renowned sculptor, Cyrus Dallin, that was described in last year's Annual Report, ACMI News expanded its focus to highlight a number of other municipalities where Dallin's works are featured, including Plymouth, Concord, Cambridge, Woburn, Scituate, and Boston's North End.
- Prominent Arlingtonian Bill Hayner saw the Dallin project and proposed a new series that began in late spring - oral histories from Arlington Veterans. Residents who served in World War 2, Korea, Vietnam, the Gulf Wars, and Iraq and Afghanistan were interviewed over almost a dozen episodes, with various segments being shown at Arlington's Memorial Day event and Town Day.
- It was quite a packed agenda for Town Meeting 2024, and our audience appreciated ACMI News providing timely highlights of what was resolved in each session.
- While the story of the demise of Arlington's iconic clock tower was a generally sad one, ACMI News provided footage of the process of removing it that gave viewers an up close and personal view they could not have seen anywhere else.



In many ways, the biggest news item of the year for ACMI News was about...ACMI News. Jeff Barnd, whose two stints at ACMI covered most of the last six years, made the decision to begin his long-anticipated retirement sooner rather than later. We all heartily support that choice, and wish him the very best in his new life of leisure in Brazil - he richly deserves it!

That decision, however, has come at a cost for ACMI News. Our well-documented funding woes meant that we were not in a position to hire a new News Director, so Communications Manager James Milan took on the role in addition to his own duties. As a result, over the balance of 2024 we were able to continue with a newscast (almost) every week, although it has understandably been reduced in both scope and ambition. That didn't stop ACMI News from producing a number of quality stories throughout the fall, with one standout being our profile of Massachusetts Foreign Language Teacher of the Year, Na Lu-Hogan, a Mandarin instructor at the Ottoson Middle School.

We have a strong drive to return ACMI News to the level that earned us First Place for community media news operations in the country two years in a row (2022, 2023), but the financial uncertainties of our present and future make it rather hard to predict what is going to happen. What is NOT hard to predict, however, is that ACMI's commitment to providing Arlington with the most comprehensive, fair, and accurate coverage of local events of interest will remain deep and strong. And that's a wrap.



FINANCIAL STATEMENT (AUDITED)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION June 30, 2024	
ASSETS	
Current Assets:	
Cash and Equivalents	160,870
Restricted Cash	25,436
Contracts Receivable	185,092
Investments	697,231
Prepaid Expenses & Other Assets	110
Total Current Assets	1,068,739
Property and equipment, net	204,498
Other Assets:	
Right-of-Use Asset	108,204
Total Other Assets	108,204
TOTAL ASSETS	1,381,441

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	
Current Liabilities:	
Accounts Payable	7,329
Accrued Expenses	21,810
Lease Liability - Current Portion	74,585
Total Current Liabilities	103,724
Other Liabilities	
Lease Liability	33,619
Total Other Liabilities	33,619
Net Assets	
Without Donor Restrictions	
Undesignated	416,872
Designated	555,000
With Donor Restrictions	272,226
Total Net Assets	1,244,098
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$1,381,441

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES For the year ended June 30, 2024	
Operating Support & Revenue	
Program Service	614,842
Capital Contributions	83,166
Other Income	21,681
Membership Dues	2,084
Total Operating support and revenue	721,773

Expenses:	
Program Services	575,702
Support Services	
Management and General	258,703
Fundraising	8,535
Total Program & Support Services	842,940
Change in Net Assets from Operations	(121,167)
Nonoperating Activities:	
Net realized and Unrealized Gain on Investments	99,280
Interest and Dividends	10,650
Change in Net Assets from Nonoperating Activities	109,930
Change in Net Assets	(11,237)
Net Assets, Beginning	1,255,335
Net Assets, Ending	1,244,098

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS For the year ended June 30, 2024	
Cash Flows from Operating Activities:	(11,237)
Decrease in Net Assets	
Adjustments to Reconcile Change in Net Assets	
to Net Cash Provided by Operating Activities:	
Depreciation Expense	59,644
Net Realized and Unrealized (Gain)	(99,280)
Loss from Investments	
Increase (Decrease) In:	
Contracts Receivable	10,526
Prepaid Expenses and Other Current Assets	520
(Increase) Decrease In:	
Accounts Payable	4,699
Accrued Expenses	(5,013)
Net Cash Used in Operating Activities	(40,141)
Cash Flows from Investing Activities:	
Purchase of Property and Equipment	(103,237)
Proceeds from Sale of Investments	256,929
Purchase of Investments	(170,235)
Interest and Dividends Reinvested	(10,650)
Net Cash Used in Investing Activities	(27,193)
Net Decrease in Cash and Equivalents and Restricted Cash	(67,334)
Cash and Equivalents and Restricted Cash, Beginning	253,640
Cash and Equivalents and Restricted Cash, Ending	\$186,306



CREW