



2014 LOCAL CONTENT AND SERVICE REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



“I thought it was really fun and very enthusiastic. It was cool to meet Arthur for the first time!”

-- Zachary Spiewak, age 10
Park Ridge, IL

Celebrating its 60th anniversary this year, WTTW provides distinctive programming that informs, inspires, educates, and entertains, and is one of the most-watched public television stations in America. Recognized for its award-winning local and national productions, WTTW is committed to presenting the very best in cultural, nature, science, public affairs, and children's programming to Chicago and beyond across its four distinct channels and online at wttw.com.



WTTW serves a vital role in the four-state area it serves: 1.2 million weekly households in Chicago and its suburbs, southern Wisconsin, northwest Indiana and southwest Michigan. We provide relevant quality programming and trusted news analysis, and local arts coverage to our diverse community across our [four distinct television channels](#) : our main WTTW11 HD channel; our WTTW Prime channel; V-me, our Spanish-language channel; WTTW Create/WORLD, our “how-to” and international channel, and at wttw.com, via our video [portal](#). Our [children's programming](#) is the most watched of any network by children aged 2-11 in Chicago.

In 2014, WTTW provided these key local programs and services to the communities it serves:

- [WTTW Readers are Leaders Tour](#)
- [WTTW Kids Great Food Fan Van](#)
- [The Grandparent Connection](#)
- [Antiques Roadshow Chicago](#)
- [American Graduate: Let's Make it Happen!](#)
- [The Golden Apple Awards for Excellence in Teaching](#)
- [Where in Chicago with Geoffrey Baer](#)
- *Public screening events for [The Roosevelts](#), [Downton Abbey](#), [Independent Lens](#), [Your Inner Fish](#), and other programs*
- [Chicago Tonight](#) -- our nightly newsmagazine offering engaging segments of vital interest to our diverse community. Content can be enjoyed both on television and [online](#), which includes an extensive video archive, blogs, and much more.

WTTW's array of local services had a substantial impact on viewers and event participants in the Chicago area.

Thousands of adults, children, parents, seniors, and caregivers were directly impacted by our public outreach [events](#), which promoted healthy eating, exercise, literacy, school readiness, the value of higher education, family connections, an informed citizenry, and enhanced knowledge of, and an appreciation for, the city in which we live and work. The community was kept engaged and informed on wttw.com, on [Facebook](#), and on [Twitter](#).

WTTW Kids Readers are Leaders Tour

The 2014 [WTTW Kids Readers Are Leaders Tour](#) traveled to seven Chicagoland counties and reached more than 8,000 children, parents, and caregivers at more than 40 events at Chicago public libraries and other locations. Each event incorporates adult and child physical activity, exciting dialogic reading, and interactive games. In summer 2014, each event also included a demonstration of WTTW's educational transmedia property [UMIGO](#), a U.S. Department of Education *Ready to Learn* interactive initiative designed to teach children ages 2-8 how to invent, build, and create through collaborative, interactive play. Children also receive a new book, courtesy of the Great Books Foundation, and other special learning materials, resources for parents and caregivers, and gift certificates for complimentary fruits and vegetables from ALDI. Many events take place at locations where educational outreach programs and resources are scarce.



WTTW Kids Great Food Fan Van

More kids, parents, and caregivers were entertained and educated during the 2014 [WTTW Kids Great Food Fan Van](#) tour. More than 10,000 people throughout seven counties in Chicagoland attended and enjoyed messages of fun and good health in our interactive, two-hour performances that include stretching, dancing, singing, healthy food sampling, and one-on-one guidance and education, including a demonstration of the [UMIGO](#) educational interactive game. The goal of the program is to combat childhood obesity, one family at a time, and to enrich the lives of children through basic knowledge of nutrition. All events take place in the parking lots of our grocery partners, which include Whole Foods Market, Mariano's, Jewel-Osco, Brookhaven Marketplace, Sunset Foods, Ultra Foods, and Strack & Van Til. Healthy vendor partners include Organic Valley Family of Farms, Traditional Medicinals Tea, Amy's Organic, Sambazon, Beanitos, and Mama Jess Pasta Sauce.



The Grandparent Connection

The WTTW [Grandparent Connection](#) program is designed to enrich the lives of senior citizens by providing a direct connection to youth. The series of programs takes place at senior living communities throughout the Chicago area where there is an elementary school nearby. The second and third graders and seniors share stories, enjoy interactive movement activities, and play interactive games together, including the [UMIGO](#) game. Studies have shown that a "grandparent connection" can improve the lives of seniors exponentially, and the involvement of a grandparent has been shown to lead to better-adjusted, mentally healthier teens. *The Grandparent Connection* provides an important, ongoing link between these two generations.



Antiques Roadshow Chicago

In July 2014, *Antiques Roadshow* [returned to Chicago](#) for the first time since the summer of 2003 to shoot three episodes at the city's McCormick Place Convention Center for the 19th season of this popular national series. More than 21,000 viewers from all over the area entered an online lottery for tickets, with 6,000 showing up on the appointed Saturday with a wide variety of fascinating objects for appraisal. WTTW staffers interacted heavily with attendees, shooting local content -- including several interstitials -- directing the participants, encouraging station membership, and also holding a raffle.



American Graduate: Let's Make It Happen!

Once again this year, WTTW participated in the national [American Graduate: Let's Make it Happen!](#) initiative, which was designed to raise awareness about the high school dropout crisis and efforts to combat it. Although graduation rates are improving here, this issue hits Chicago particularly hard. WTTW continued to collaborate on PSAs created in partnership with our youth media production partners, Free Spirit Media. We also created online links to numerous community resources. In September, WTTW broadcast on its main HD channel the national seven-hour *American Graduate Day*, and provided local inserts with organizations and non-profits working to support Chicago area youth and keep them in school. WTTW's nightly newsmagazine *Chicago Tonight* also presented several segments focusing on the dropout issue, reported by education correspondent Brandis Friedman.



Golden Apple Awards for Excellence in Teaching

For the 29th consecutive year, WTTW devoted a broadcast (and several rebroadcasts) to this [annual ceremony](#), which recognizes ten outstanding teachers from schools throughout the Chicago area. In addition to a trophy and valuable prizes (including an Apple computer and a sabbatical), each teacher was featured in an interstitial which included revealing footage shot at the school and heartwarming testimonials from students and parents. This year's awards show, taped at WTTW's Grainger Studio, featured the best 4th through 8th grade teachers from the city and surrounding suburbs. Geoffrey Baer emceed this year's broadcast.



Where in Chicago with Geoffrey Baer

In this new special which premiered in December 2014, host Geoffrey Baer took to the streets of the city and suburbs to test the knowledge of ordinary Chicagoans about their region. He and his camera crew camped out across a variety of locales across the city, challenging willing passersby to answer questions about all things Chicagoland. This lively program managed to be both educational and fun, and in some cases, entire families participated, learning a lot about the city they call home. The program's robust companion [website](#) included engaging quizzes across five different categories not seen on air, Geoffrey's production blog, and other web-exclusive surprises, plus a place to [view the entire program online](#).



Public Screenings and Special Events

[Public screenings and special events](#) were held in connection with our programming throughout the year, including events surrounding *The Roosevelts: An Intimate History* with Ken Burns at Francis W. Parker High School; a sold-out season five preview screening and tea for *Masterpiece Classic: Downton Abbey* at the Chicago History Museum; a meet-and-greet with the host and correspondents of our nightly newsmagazine *Chicago Tonight*; a well-attended event with the Kratt Brothers at Brookfield Zoo; *Your Inner Fish* with Dr. Neil Shubin; and monthly *Independent Lens* community screenings at the Chicago Cultural Center. Also, WTTW presented luncheon events/book signings featuring Ken Burns, Alan Cumming, and others.



Chicago Tonight

WTTW's venerable nightly newsmagazine [Chicago Tonight](#) was the city's destination for up-to-the-minute reporting on a wide variety of issues of vital interest to our diverse local community. The production continues to provide numerous fellowships and internships for many young aspiring journalists.

In addition to unbiased news reporting and analysis from top flight journalists, regular features on *Chicago Tonight* include [Cultural Connections](#), a weekly local arts segment, and [Scientific Chicago](#), made possible by the Elizabeth Morse Genius Trust. In 2014, the program provided extensive coverage of the elections for federal and state offices, which included live candidate forums, exclusive web features, free airtime given to candidates, and more.

Many of *Chicago Tonight's* other [2014 segments](#) supported unserved or underserved audiences in the community, including stories on such topics as the city's cold weather response, the Asian Carp problem, concealed carry, charter school expansion, the local housing market, Chicago River bacteria, voter registration, the pros and cons of vaccination, the public transit task force, municipal pension reform, the Affordable Care Act, ambulance shortages, Chicago's crime statistics, Common Core, medical breakthroughs, human trafficking, medical marijuana, and much more.

The program's content-rich and mobile-optimized [website](#) includes extensive video, blogs, special features, and other supplemental materials.

Chicago Tonight is made possible in part by contributions from viewers, corporate supporters, foundations, and individual donors.



In January 2014, program host Phil Ponce moderated a forum with GOP candidates for Illinois governor before an audience of high school students from the Mikva Challenge.

WTTW's award-winning nightly newsmagazine *Chicago Tonight* celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2014, reaching approximately 178,000 weekly households across Chicago's diverse communities.



WTTW is the Midwest’s premier public media organization, committed to creating and presenting unique television and digital media content. We are dedicated to bringing Chicago and the world together to explore the arts, sciences, humanities, and public affairs across four distinct television channels – WTTW11, WTTW Prime, the Spanish-language channel WTTW V-me, and WTTW Create/WTTW WORLD, and on wttw.com, where visitors can connect with others in the community and access a full library of local and national video content for kids and adults, interactive features, event and membership opportunities, and robust microsites and blogs dedicated to WTTW series and specials. Each week, WTTW reaches an audience of 1.2 million households over a four-state area, making it one of the most-watched public television stations in America.

Through our quality programming and community outreach initiatives in underserved areas, we have engaged with countless members of our diverse community to promote literacy for preschoolers, combat childhood obesity, boost the high school graduation rate, and furnish vital information about the civic and cultural life of our city and beyond – always encouraging continuing education as the path to a better life.
