

2020 Annual Report

246 Market Street, Lowell, MA

www.LTC.org



Lowell's Media and Education Center

www.LTC.org



Board of Directors

City Manager Appointees

Jess Schumann Donaldson
John McDonough
Eric Sack

City Council Appointees

Vesna Nuon
Pavel Romaniko
Charlie Smith

School Committee Appointees

Connie Martin
Karen Sennott, Clerk

Member Representatives

Jennifer Aradhya	Brendan Flynn, Treasurer
Sue Kim	Elizabeth Noel
Lynne Lupien, V.P.	Fru Nkimbeng
Michael Reid, Pres.	Luz Vasudevan



The LTC Board of Directors, January 2020

LTC Staff

Soumita Acharya

Director of Community Projects

Wendy Blom

Executive Director

Pamela DeBarros

Municipal Meeting Producer

Daniel Bazarian

Access Coordinator

Kris Macneil

Director of News & Municipal Programming

Steve Manock

Facility Manager

Joanne McGilvery

Reception

Jose Negron

Municipal Meeting Producer

Matthew Nelson

Director of Municipal Programming

Sabrina Pedersen

Outreach Coordinator

Gloria Polites

Outreach Coordinator

Nary Tith

Administrator

Dan Toomey

Reception and Programmer

LTC said farewell to several long-time staff. Both Dan Toomey and Gloria Polites retired in the winter. Both had worked in multiple capacities for many years at LTC, and together managed the organization in the interim between directors. Joanne McGilvery, Front Desk Receptionist, and Matt Nelson, Director of Municipal Programming, also moved on. Happily, LTC also gained two new staff, Sabrina Pedersen, Outreach Coordinator, and Dan Bazarian, Access Coordinator. They bring lots of skill and enthusiasm to their work.



Farewell party for Gloria, Matt, and Dan in January 2020



Sabrina Pedersen and Dan Bazarian

Comments from the Executive Director - Wendy Blom



As I near the end of my 25 year career in public access TV, I feel fortunate to have witnessed the remarkable evolution of the field. In 1995 we shot video with heavy Umatic 3/4"

video cassette camcorders and did tape to tape analog editing. Programs were loaded by hand into decks for cablecast several times each day. Public access was first come, first served, member-produced programs and staff were facilitators, not producers. Free speech was the core mission and function. LTC's regular orientation sessions drew dozens of new members, as TV was the most valued mass medium and residents were eager to gain access to the channels to communicate with their neighbors.

Since then, technology evolved faster and faster and public access also evolved to meet the challenge of staying relevant and useful. At LTC it meant that staff became more involved with producing programs that served the particular needs of Lowell's diverse residents and nonprofits. Live City meeting coverage grew to an average of six meetings each week and we began streaming online as well. The pandemic has pushed us even further into Internet-based production techniques, with some producers going live from home and others uploading their shows to cloud-based servers. We could not have imagined these things back in 1995. However, the most important things have not changed a bit, including members communicating with their neighbors in Khmer, Portuguese, Spanish, and English, and the City government relying on LTC for transparency. I am confident that these things will continue long after I am gone.

I am so appreciative of the talented staff members I have worked with at LTC who

shared my vision of LTC service. And I appreciate the dedicated Board members who saw a bright future for the organization and welcomed changes to the Board structure that facilitated its work. I have met so many wonderful people in Lowell: member producers who taught me about their distinctive cultures, non-profit leaders, students, interns, artists, professors, and elected officials at all levels. I will certainly look back with fondness and will sorely miss producing programs and being involved with Lowell and LTC. I wish the organization all the best as it enters a new chapter of leadership.



With Chris Scott on "Hello Neighbor"



Election interview with Vanna Howard



M. Grooms and R. Forrant on "History in Lowell"

Comments from the Board President - Michael Reid



LTC continues to fulfill its mission as a community media and education center that empowers, connects and informs. In response to the pandemic, the LTC team successfully pivoted to ensure important City meetings were covered, and using virtual programming collaborations, LTC connected Lowell residents with needed services and information.

On behalf of the LTC Board of Directors, I extend our gratitude to LTC's Executive Director, Wendy Blom, for her tireless efforts throughout her tenure fulfilling the organization's mission and ensuring LTC remains a valued resource within the community. The Board sends our best wishes to Wendy as she retires. We look forward to working with a new Executive Director who will explore new directions while continuing to support LTC member producers.

Comments from the Treasurer - Brendan Flynn



I am pleased to report that LTC finished fiscal year 2020 in a strong financial position. Revenue for the year exceeded expectations, while our expenses came in lower than budgeted. These outcomes are a result of prudent management of LTC's operations, and I am grateful to the Executive Director and the staff for their efforts in this area. As we look forward to 2021, we continue to monitor LTC's share of franchise fee revenue and its sustainability. Efforts to find more diverse funding sources will be ever

more important as a way to meet this challenge and offset potential reductions in revenue. We will also continue to investigate new partnership opportunities within the community, and new technologies to create efficiencies where appropriate.

LTC continues to be a valuable resource within our community. Your support makes a difference, and will continue to provide the diverse programming that we have come to count on. If you're interested in learning more about LTC, or becoming a member, please visit LTC.org and click on "Membership".

FY 20 Programming and Usage Statistics

Channel 8	2,658 hours of original programming
Channel 95	2,483 hours of original programming
Channel 99	752 hours of original programming
Total Hours	19,165 hours of local programming, both original and repeats
Equipment Usage	Members and staff checked out cameras 105 times
Studio Usage	The studios were used 771 times
Visitors to LTC	3,359 visitors during the year until closed on 3/15/20
LTC \$ Value	\$760,525 in equipment and facility usage

LTC Adapts to the Pandemic



LTC crew for the Lowell Abolition Tour

In March 2020 when the COVID 19 pandemic hit Massachusetts, Governor Baker issued directives to close down public spaces, offices, schools, and events. LTC quickly complied and adapted the work to continue remotely.

The City meetings immediately transitioned to Zoom and LTC was able to direct the live Zoom sessions through the Studio B switcher to Channel 99 and the Web. LTC Producers were encouraged to videotape at home and send in their shows via the LTC video server and Dropbox. Some used zoom, others used cellphones and video cameras to continue producing their important programs for their neighbors. Staff worked from home to keep the channels on the air, community needs met, and the bills paid.

Virtual events put on by community organizations and elected officials were broadcast live to keep residents informed about available services, food distribution, and health issues. Socially distanced festivals and rallies were videotaped for air, including the Puerto Rican Flag Raising.



Bill Garr on "Recovery Matters"



The Puerto Rican Flag Raising ceremony

Highlights of the Year: July 2019 - June 2020

- *LTC hosted a Public Matters session on Local Media
 - *Youth Media workshop with the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell funded by a grant from the MA Cultural Council
 - *Dinner in the Park raised \$8,000 for LTC
 - *LTC covered events for Girls Inc. of Greater Lowell and GLCF
 - *Produced live coverage of the 2019 Lowell Folk Festival
 - *Produced live coverage of the 2019 Southeast Asian Water Festival
 - *2019 local election coverage: recorded two-minute statements by candidates for City Council and School Committee. Hosted five candidate debates in the studio in collaboration with the Lowell Sun, Khmer Post USA and the CMAA. On election day LTC set up a remote studio at the Blue Shamrock to report the election results as they came in with local pundits
 - *Interview with Democratic candidate for U.S. President Joe Sestak
 - *Produced a documentary on the 2019 Lowell Kinetic Sculpture Race
 - *Covered the CTI Youth Homelessness Summit
 - *Covered the DIY Community Idea Summit
 - *Produced a program for Learning City on the Beatles.
 - *Recorded a talk about Gandhi at the LNHP Visitors Center
 - *Covered an election system forum held by the City Manager at the Senior Center and a Spanish language election system forum.
 - *Covered the Merrimack Valley Smart Growth Forum
 - *Covered the UTEC 20th Anniversary Gala
 - *Hosted a farewell party for three departing LTC staff members, Dan, Gloria, and Matt
 - *Hosted a meeting of the Iraqi community in the Gallery
 - *City of Lights Parade
 - *City Council and School Committee Inaugurations
 - *Recorded a lecture on Olmstead in Lowell at the LNHP
 - *Produced 13 short census promotional videos in multiple languages with trusted community members in eight languages: English, Spanish, Portuguese, Swahili, Hindi, Bengali, Khmer, and Arabic.
 - *Covered the "State of the Waters Conference"
 - *Covered the Community Development Block Grant presentations at the Senior Center
 - *Covered Lowell Women's Week Breakfast
 - *Worked with the City Election office to record multi-lingual audio translations for voting machines.
 - *Created a PSA for the Lowell Green Community Partnership
 - *Covered the MLK Celebration
 - *Covered Winter Fest
 - *Recorded three Travelogue Lectures at the LNHP Visitors Center
 - *Covered a discussion session with Presidential candidate (R) and former MA Governor Bill Weld at Lowell High School
 - *Covered the ribbon cutting at the CTI Homeless Youth Center
 - *Covered the opening of the Recovery Café
 - *Broadcast all pandemic-related town hall meetings put on virtually by Rep. Lori Trahan and announcements from Manager Donoghue.
 - *Launched the "Favorite Places in Lowell" video contest
 - *Collaborated with LLAMA on a 90-minute Zoom forum on resources during the pandemic
 - *Produced a fundraising video for Mill City Grows
 - *Produced a series of programs for Earth Day
 - *Taped the Racism is a Public Health Crisis Rally in JFK Plaza
- And more!



The 2020 MLK Celebration

Member Series Programs

Angkor News	Khmer Lowell
African Hour	Khmer Meditation
Cambodia Community News	Khmer Post USA
Cambodia Town	Khmer Refugee
Cambodian American Christian TV	Khmer Sentimental Show
Cambodian Baptist Church	Khmer Talk
Cambodian Women Learning Project	Khmer Tradition
Chamber Chat	Living in Cambodia
Chanting	Lowell Cambodian-American TV
Charity in Cambodia	Lowell Train
City Life	New Buddhist Temple
CMAA TV	On the Move
CMAA News	Peters Principles
Colores Latino TV	Recovery Matters
Community of Khmer Buddhist Monks	Resurrection Revival
Conoce Tus Derechos	Talking Sports with Ronny and Donny
Dhamma Talk	Temple News
Discourse	Temple Outreach Program
EC@CTI	Thinking Out Loud
ESP TV	Tiempo De Paz
5th Street Baptist	The Bob Show
Fresh Outpouring TV	Trip to Cambodia
Glory Buddhist Temple	Understanding Buddhism
Good News	Visiting Asia
History, Culture, Politics	Voice of Cambodia Community
Iraqi Refugee	Voice of Democracy
Jivit Thmei	Voice of Khmer Americans
Khmer Angkor	Voice of Khmer Lowell
Khmer Buddhist	Voz do Atlantico

Staff Produced or Assisted Series

Beacon Hill Buzz	History in Lowell
Chamber Chat	Issue At Hand
Discussing Dementia	Keeping Up w/ the Cops
Dollars and \$ense	LTC News
Financial Literacy	On The Move
Good Works w/ NPA	Recycle Right
Green Connection	Thinking Out Loud
Healthy Living in Lowell	Women and Wine
Hello Neighbor	



"Good Works" with Nonprofit Alliance of Greater Lowell

Social Justice and Civic Engagement In Lowell

LTC collaborated with groups seeking social justice and a healthy planet. Staffers Soumita Acharya and Sabrina Pedersen worked closely with the Lowell Sustainability Commission to promote recycling, renewable energy, and clean water. They produced the series programs "Recycle Right with Guther Wellenstein" and the "Green Connection," covered The "State of the Waters Conference" on the health of the Merrimack River, and created virtual events for Earth Day.



"Recycle Right"



"The Green Connection"



The D.E.I. Rally against racism



Black Lives Matter rally

In the Spring, the COVID 19 pandemic exposed racial disparities in health, and the murder of George Floyd pushed Black Lives Matters supporters to advocate for changes in policing in Lowell. On June 24, LTC went live from the Lowell Senior Center where residents and community leaders spoke from the heart to elected officials about their experiences of racism. LTC also covered Lowell's Juneteenth event, BLM rallies, and allegations of racism in nonprofit leadership. On July 14, LTC videotaped the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consortium rally in the JFK Plaza to to urge the Lowell City Council to declare that racism is a public health crisis.

LTC was an active member of Lowell Votes, an organization that provides nonpartisan election information to residents. LTC partnered with Working Cities Lowell on increasing civic engagement in the Acre neighborhood, and collaborated with LLAMA, a mutual aid group that helps Lowell residents get the resources they need during the pandemic.



The LLAMA food distribution center

Training

LTC taught 40 students in 18 classes.

Basic Editing with Final Cut Pro X
Youth Media with the Boys & Girls Club
Podcasting
Video Field Production
Video Production for Organizations

Total Tuition: \$1,240



A scene from "The Multiverse"

Additional funding from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a State Agency for an LTC youth media program in collaboration with the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell. LTC Instructor Jose Negrón led a workshop of six students who took the roles of the cast, crew, and editors of an original drama, "The Multiverse."



Interns

Andrew Sullivan
DJ Cremin
Nasir DeCruz
Amelia Maguire
Gautier Kunstler
Chris VanCamp



Workshop on Video Production for Organizations

Production Services



Shooting a House of Hope interview

LTC was contracted to produce professional videos for local non-profits to help them with virtual fundraising events and tours during the pandemic. Clients included Mill City Grows, House of Hope, and the New England Quilt Museum.

Membership

Individual Members: 234

Member Organizations: 47

350 MA of Greater Lowell
Alternative House
Alzheimer's Association
Angkor Dance Troupe
ASALEX
Boys & Girls Club
Burlington Community Financial Center
Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association
Canal Place 3 Condominiums
Center for Hope & Healing
Center for Negotiation & Meditation Training
Christ Jubilee International Ministries
Coalition for a Better Acre
Community Teamwork Inc.
Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley
Enterprise Bank
Fifth Street Baptist Church
Frasier Graphics
Free Verse
Girls Inc. of Greater Lowell
Greater Lowell Community Foundation
Jubelee Arts
Khmer Post USA
Kiwanis Club of Greater Lowell

Latinx Community Center for Empowerment
Lowell Celebrates Kerouac
Lowell Community Health Center
Lowell Conservation and Trust
Lowell Housing Authority
Lowell Sun
Market Gallery Condominium Trust
Merrimack Housing Partnership
Merrimack River Watershed Council
Middlesex Community Charter School
Middlesex Community College
Mill City Dance and Arts
Mollers's Lofts Condominium Trust
New England Quilt Museum
Peniel Christian Ministry
Perras Studio
Plenus Group
Pollard Memorial Library
Thrive Communities
University of Massachusetts Lowell
Voice of Khmer Americans
VOKA
Whistler House Museum of Art

Comments from the Municipal Director - Kris Macneil

Channel 99 entered 2020 like any other year, but things radically changed on March 15, 2020 when the State was partially shut down due to the outbreak of COVID-19. However frightening a reality that presented, the wheels of local government must still move - and did move. Government transparency and the accessibility of information are inherently important tenets, but in the face of this pandemic, they've become even more critical. People were looking for information, updates, answers, and hope. Channel 99 helped connect residents with information while they were unable to attend meetings in person.

While the School Committee started on Zoom in March, City Council and other committees chose to go audio-only. We conducted the meetings for some time this way, changing images on the screen to show who was talking when. Eventually the City Council and other committees moved to Zoom. The School Committee also became the first to go back into the Council Chambers in the Summer. We adapted the technology to allow for hybrid meetings, where some participants were in the Chamber, and others joined virtually. City Council made its way back into the Chambers in the Fall, utilizing the hybrid system to allow the public to join in from home. We continue to adapt to these unprecedented conditions as the pandemic creates serious health concerns. The show must go on!

Lowell City of Learning



The 2019 Lowell Kinetic Sculpture Race documentary was a Learning City program.

LTC, in partnership with the City of Lowell and a variety of organizations in Lowell, celebrated the first Virtual Lowell City of Learning Festival from September 29 to October 2, 2020. From dance moves to science discovery to building a small business, the Lowell City of Learning Festival offered a free collection of documentaries, discussions, and virtual events to the public on LTC Channel 8 and on-line.

LTC staffers Soumita Acharya and Sabrina Pedersen were integral partners in planning the event, producing three videos, packaging multiple programs for air, and doing social media marketing.

In unison with the Cork Learning City in Ireland and other United Nations UNESCO-designated cities across the globe, Lowell celebrated this week-long festival in the hopes of becoming the first UNESCO Learning City in the United States.

Municipal and National Election Coverage



Wendy interviews former Gov. Bill Weld



Election night crew Matt, Steve, Kris, Soumita



City Council Candidate Debate

LTC was the place to go for local 2019 election information. LTC recorded two-minute speeches by the primary election candidates for City Council and School Committee. The speeches were compiled into two programs that were cablecast on Channel 8, and the individual speeches were uploaded to YouTube. In addition, LTC hosted five debates live in the studio in collaboration with the *Lowell Sun*, *Khmer Post USA*, and the CMAA. On election day, LTC set up a remote studio at the Blue Shamrock on Market Street to cover the results live with local political pundits on Channels 8 and 99 and streamed on Facebook.

In advance of the 2020 elections, U.S. Presidential Primary Candidates Joe Sestak (D) and Gov. Bill Weld (R) came to Lowell High School and gave one-on-one interviews for LTC. LTC hosted candidate interviews and a debate for the primary election for State Representative.

The 2020 LTC Award Winners

Community Spirit: Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association

LTC Spirit: Alan Baillargeon

Producer of the Year: Jim Wilde for *Smart Homebuying*

Channel 8 Show: *Talking Sports with Ronny and Johnny*

Channel 95 Show: *Cambodian Women Learning Project*

Pandemic Resiliancy Award: Narong Hul for *Khmer Talk*

Lifetime Achievement: Danielle McFadden



Thavy Hout on "CMAA News"



Allan Baillargeon, Producer of
NewEARSPro podcast



Pedro Tavares on
"Smart Homebuying"



Ronny Perrin and Johnny Descoteaux on
"Talking Sports with Ronny and Johnny"



Bory Kem on "Cambodian Women
Learning Project"



Danielle McFadden hosting
"Chamber Chat"



Narong Hul hosting "Khmer Talk"

The LTC Gallery

Donna and Larry Cahill - "Vehicle Photos" July 2019
Rhode Island Threads Group - Fiber Art "Walls"

August 2019

Nancy Lessard - "Paintings" September 2019

Amy Roberts - "Paintings" October 2019

Gary Field and Pete Donovan - "Photography"

December 2019

**Julia Pintzopoulos, Niki Giraffo, Krystal Gratta,
Hong Man** - Personal Narratives "Apologies to My
Ancesters" February 2020

Judith and Paul Bessette - "Reflections From Our Road" March 2020



"Apologies To My Ancesters" Reception

Podcasting



NewEARS Prog Show

LTC Member Alan Baillargeon began recording his NewEARS Progressive Rock podcast in 2014 with the goal of creating a community of music enthusiasts dedicated to sharing and promoting progressive rock in New England. When he heard about LTC's new podcast studio in late 2018, he jumped at the opportunity to use the new equipment and comfortable space. Since then, Alan and his crew have come in to the LTC Podcast Studio every week to record interviews with musicians around the world via Skype and Zoom. Besides talking about music and playing music, he also provides information for his listeners about local show cancellations, how to get refunds, and rescheduled performances due to the pandemic.

Lowell Counts for the Census

LTC helped to make Lowell one of the most successful cities in the Northeast Region of the United States for Census participation. As a member of the Lowell Counts Committee that included staff of many community service and religious organizations, LTC created social media and channel outreach campaigns in multiple languages to promote the Census as safe, easy, and important. LTC recorded 13 PSA's in 8 languages with community leaders.



*Fru Nkimben for the
Census*



*Congresswoman
Lori Trahan*

Statement of Financial Position as of June 30, 2019 and 2020

	2020	2019
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 1,003,993	\$ 733,803
Short-term investments	-	49,387
Accounts Receivable	270,000	304,800
Prepaid Expenses	14,344	10,850
Total current assets	<u>\$1,288,337</u>	<u>\$1,098,840</u>
Fixed assets		
Leasehold improvements	1,199,190	1,199,190
Studio equipment	558,111	515,615
Computer equipment	96,594	96,594
Office equipment and furniture	7,846	7,846
Total fixed assets	<u>1,861,741</u>	<u>1,819,245</u>
Less: accumulated depreciation	<u>(1,709,281)</u>	<u>(1,573,509)</u>
Fixed assets - net	<u>152,460</u>	<u>245,736</u>
Total assets	<u><u>\$1,440,797</u></u>	<u><u>\$1,344,576</u></u>
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable	\$ 3,456	\$ 5,309
Accrued payroll and vacation	26,996	15,232
Deferred rent liability	-	4,795
SBA/PPP Loan	94,700	-
Total current liabilities	<u>125,152</u>	<u>25,336</u>
Net assets		
Without donor restrictions		
Undesignated	1,015,248	1,018,503
Board designated	300,000	300,000
Total without donor restrictions	<u>1,315,248</u>	<u>1,318,503</u>
With donor restrictions	397	737
Total net assets	<u>1,315,645</u>	<u>1,319,240</u>
Total liabilities and net assets	<u><u>1,440,797</u></u>	<u><u>1,344,576</u></u>

Statement of Activites

	2020	2019
Support and revenues		
Franchise fees	\$ 539,238	\$ 578,012
Franchise fees- capital funding	55,000	50,000
Production Services	163,431	158,631
Grants	23,599	3,800
Other income	18,819	22,914
Memberships and contributions	7,915	9,614
Interest income	4,774	3,980
Underwriting income	24	2,058
Net assets released from restrictions	816	190
Special Events	12,412	11,585
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Total support and revenue	<u>\$ 826,028</u>	<u>\$ 840,784</u>
Expenses		
Public Access	\$ 472,142	\$ 538,297
Municipal Programming	145,435	149,226
General and Administrative	202,487	209,555
Fundraising	9,219	9,989
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Total operating expenses	<u>\$ 829,283</u>	<u>\$ 907,067</u>
(Decrease) Increase in net assets	(\$ 3,255)	(\$ 66,283)
Net assets - beginning	<u>1,318,503</u>	<u>1,384,786</u>
Net assets- ending	<u><u>\$ 1,315,248</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 1,318,503</u></u>

Lowell TeleMedia Center

**LOWELL'S COMMUNITY MEDIA
AND EDUCATION CENTER**

246 Market Street

Lowell, MA 01852

978-458-5400 LTC.org