Connecting Listeners.
Reflecting Lives.
At SCPR, we reflect your stories – from the everyday to the extraordinary, connecting Southern Californians to each other and empowering you with insight and information that enriches your lives. We build networks of people committed to a common goal: advancing our democracy and improving the place we call home.
“One of greater Los Angeles’ crowning cultural achievements has been the democratization of beauty – making a version of ‘paradise’ globally accessible.”
Letter from Leadership

One of our highest aspirations at Southern California Public Radio is for our programming and journalism to hold up an accurate mirror to the imperfect paradise that is Southern California. Throughout this year’s annual report, you’ll find examples of how we realize this aspiration.

The etymology of the word “paradise” goes from English to French to Latin to Greek and even to ancient Persian, and it stems from the notion that paradise was a walled garden whose beauty was restricted to royalty. One of greater Los Angeles’ crowning cultural achievements has been the democratization of beauty – making a version of “paradise” globally accessible.

But, as every Angeleno knows, Southern California’s great natural beauty and Hollywood myths are counterbalanced by aspects of life here that make it a far cry from paradise. In the pages that follow, you’ll read about Priska Neely’s profoundly personal reporting on the region’s shamefully high rate of black infant mortality and Jacob Margolis’s in-depth coverage of the looming post-earthquake crisis in The Big One.

You’ll also read about Angelenos who are committed to moving our region closer to realizing the promise and potential that make greater Los Angeles an important center of global commerce and culture. For example, Jane and Ron Olson were present at the creation of SCPR – Ron was SCPR’s founding Board Chair – and now they are leading the charge for SCPR to create a permanent center for investigative journalism. You’ll also meet Nancy Stark and Guy Primus, two newer members of the SCPR Board who are extending the tradition of leadership through governance that Ron helped establish.

Additionally, you’ll learn how SCPR continues to be a regional and national leader in public service journalism with its acquisition of the digital news site LAist.

All of SCPR’s accomplishments in 2018 – and for the past two decades – come against a backdrop of unrelenting bad news for local journalism in Los Angeles. Throughout this century, local newspapers either eliminated hundreds of jobs or folded altogether while broadcasters scaled back newsgathering, increased partisan political rants or both. At the same time, SCPR has filled the void: expanding its newsroom; increasing its capacity for high-quality, in-depth reporting; creating more opportunities for civic engagement across political, economic, cultural, ethnic and other divides; and connecting with Angelenos on a wider variety of media platforms than ever before.

We have been able to accomplish all of this because so many Angelenos refuse to take our imperfect paradise for granted. They understand that if greater Los Angeles is to become a better place for our children and grandchildren, then we must invest in our ability to understand what is happening in our communities – and to understand one another. Tens of thousands of SCPR members, sustainers, Leadership Circle members, philanthropic foundations and public-spirited corporations come together each year to support SCPR’s unique and compelling public service mission. For this, we offer you both our thanks and our commitment to more fully realize this mission in the years to come.

Sincerely,

Ana Valdez
SCPR Board Chair

Bill Davis
SCPR President and CEO
“KPCC highlights important challenges facing our region. Through these stories, we can bring awareness and change.”
During nearly a decade in journalism, Priska Neely has come across her fair share of eye-popping statistics. But when she heard that black babies were two times more likely to die before their first birthday than their white counterparts, she found herself catching her breath. Drilling down into the numbers, she became even more alarmed: In LA County, the mortality rate for black babies is three times higher.

“It hit me hard because, as a black woman, I suddenly realized I was part of the story: My own sisters had lost infants, and my nephew was born two months early and weighed just two and a half pounds,” Neely recalls. “I never knew what happened to them was part of a larger public health crisis affecting thousands of people.”

For Neely, Southern California Public Radio’s early childhood education and development reporter, it was a wake-up call to investigate. The result: a hard-hitting series on the structural and institutional racism at the root of black infant mortality.

“We started getting calls immediately after the story aired from women wanting more resources and organizations looking to partner with us,” says Raena Granberry, program manager at Black Women for Wellness, an LA-based nonprofit focused on health education and empowerment. Granberry, whose work was featured in Neely’s piece, had her own connection to the story: She had also lost a baby – at just 20 weeks.

“I was bleeding and cramping, and I kept telling my doctors something didn’t feel right, but they insisted it was all normal. In retrospect, I recognized I wasn’t treated properly; women who looked like me didn’t receive the same attention as white women at the Beverly Hills medical clinic where I sought care,” Granberry says.

Neely’s reporting gave critical exposure to countless stories like Granberry’s across all platforms – social media, in person and online. “Typically, reporters wait until a story is done before they share it. But Priska posted what she was learning on social media as she was learning it. This enabled people to engage on the topic from the get-go and helped build an audience early on,” notes SCPR’s Chief Content Officer Kristen Muller.

One of the people engaging online was Nicole Vick, a local public health professional. “I was doing some research for work and came across an article Priska had written before the series was broadcast on the radio,” Vick remembers. “It resonated with me because I’m a black woman who has given birth to a premature baby. She’s 21 now, but she was born eight weeks early and weighed three pounds, and she could easily have been one of the statistics in this story.”

Vick is grateful to KPCC for its coverage of the issue. “KPCC highlights important challenges facing our region,” she says. “Through these stories, we can bring awareness and change.”

For her part, Neely feels lucky to have had the backing of a news organization dedicated to fostering dialogue and advancing the public interest. The series showcases SCPR’s willingness “to dig into areas that aren’t often covered in an in-depth way.” She says it takes that kind of sustained commitment to make a difference in people’s lives. “KPCC shines a light on how we can strengthen the fabric of our community.”
"It's new territory for us: advancing our public service mission by highlighting something that hasn’t happened yet but that will clearly have a significant impact on every aspect of our lives."
Earthquakes are a frequent plot device for Hollywood depictions of life in Southern California. But, despite their hold on the popular imagination, earthquakes are little understood by the vast majority of people who live here.

Enter The Big One: Southern California Public Radio’s future-focused podcast examining what happens when – not if – a major tremor hits the region. “We know intellectually the Big One is coming but, for so many people, the idea of preparation is really just theoretical,” notes Kristen Muller, SCPR’s chief content officer. “This series, which is the station’s first science-oriented podcast, walks listeners through what Southern California will look like in the aftermath of the quake. It’s new territory for us: advancing our public service mission by highlighting something that hasn’t happened yet but that will clearly have a significant impact on every aspect of our lives.”

The Big One examines a 7.8 magnitude earthquake’s potentially far-reaching effects, from basic city services (think transportation, water, power) to commerce, recreation and more. The picture it paints is a projection based on meticulous research and expert input. “In 2008, the U.S. Geological Survey released a 312-page report about earthquake preparedness in Southern California that had more than 300 contributors,” says Jacob Margolis, host of the podcast and KPCC’s science reporter. “We went back and interviewed many of those people to find out just how ready we actually are.”

The answer: not very. “We discovered, in talking to residents of our region, that most of them didn’t even know where to start in terms of getting organized,” observes Arwen Champion-Nicks, The Big One’s executive producer. “We created this show to be a practical guide – from telling people what they should have in their earthquake kits to equipping them with context and knowledge that will keep them from panicking when the quake actually strikes.”

The in-depth format of a podcast allows The Big One to convey the information necessary for such a weighty topic. To this end, each of the podcast’s nine episodes includes a tips section, offering listeners concrete advice on how to survive a catastrophic seismic event. “We also have a digital tool that lets you type in an address to see whether your location is at risk of liquefaction,” says The Big One’s lead producer, Misha Euiceph.

Providing this type of actionable information is a hallmark of reporting on KPCC. “People know they can rely on us as an honest, accurate resource in Southern California,” Margolis points out. “It’s what keeps them engaged and, ultimately, what enables us to make a positive difference in our community.”
“Our goal is to make the stories you hear on the radio really come alive on the screen, and vice versa. At SCPR, our emphasis is always putting the audience first, and having both platforms allows us to connect with more people in a way that speaks to them.”
Southern California Public Radio has long been a local and national leader in broadcast excellence. But with the acquisition and relaunch of venerated local news website LAist last June, SCPR brought its signature sensibility to new audiences across the region.

“We’ve always been proud of our reporting, and radio storytelling is an important part of what we do. But we believe our work should find other outlets as well,” says Megan Garvey, SCPR’s managing editor. “LAist enables us to reach more people who care about the work we’re doing to elevate public accountability journalism.”

It was also a tremendous undertaking. “We had to build a strategy from the ground up – deciding how to develop LAist’s previous audience and connect it with KPCC’s radio listeners, as well as what kinds of stories we would tell. But equally complicated was helping everyone at SCPR navigate the digital transition,” remembers LAist Senior Digital Editor Melissa Leu. “We knew from the outset that we wanted the site to be an integral part of our newsroom, which meant rethinking how we do content for the radio so that it translates to the web.”

“Digital news hasn’t always been a first thought at SCPR. But now how our stories are going to appear online is a main part of the conversation,” agrees Lisa Brenner, LAist’s associate editor. “Our goal is to make the stories you hear on the radio really come alive on the screen, and vice versa. At SCPR, our emphasis is always putting the audience first, and having both platforms allows us to connect with more people in a way that speaks to them.”

Of course, before it could speak, LAist had to develop its voice. Its idiosyncratic sound – a combination of the original site’s quirky, LA-centric tone and KPCC’s highly-regarded journalistic rigor and professionalism – enabled it to carve out a unique space on the web in record time. “We’ve taken the best of both organizations to create LA’s homepage,” Leu notes. “It’s news and culture by people in LA for people in LA. This is where you can come to find out what to do this weekend and also to learn about what’s going on with the housing crisis.”

The approach is already yielding interest. “It’s been a great experiment so far, and early results are encouraging,” observes Kristen Muller, SCPR’s chief content officer. “We’re seeing people spending more time on our local content than ever before.”

As they focus on growing their audience, the LAist team is optimistic about what lies ahead. “We plan to keep fine-tuning things to broaden our reach,” Brenner says. “We’re excited for as many people in our region as possible to know what kind of resource they have available to them.”
“When we were growing up, most major cities had a well-funded newspaper that could serve the public good. Today, that model just doesn’t exist, and I can’t underscore enough the importance of outlets like SCPR in keeping us informed and engaged.”
New listeners sign up to support Southern California Public Radio every day. But for donors Ron and Jane Olson, their investment dates back to the very beginning.

“I got a call from the CEO of Minnesota Public Radio, asking for my help to launch a new station in Los Angeles, and he invited me to be the inaugural board chair,” Ron recalls. “We had the first ever meeting and fundraiser for SCPR in our living room.”

The Olsons were no strangers to philanthropic involvement. Ron, a named partner of powerhouse law firm Munger, Tolles & Olson, has a distinguished history of service to nonprofit organizations ranging from Caltech and the RAND Corporation, to the Council on Foreign Relations and the Rose Bowl. Jane chaired the international board of Human Rights Watch and has received numerous awards for her service to the community including the Eleanor Roosevelt Award from Feminist Majority, the Silver Achievement Award from the YWCA of Greater Los Angeles and the Community Achievement Award from Public Counsel.

Despite their busy schedules, both Ron and Jane made it a priority to help build SCPR and advance its public service mission. “When we were growing up, most major cities had a well-funded newspaper that could serve the public good,” Ron notes. “Today, that model just doesn’t exist, and I can’t underscore enough the importance of outlets like SCPR in keeping us informed and engaged.”

Jane is equally emphatic about the critical role SCPR plays in Southern California. “KPCC stays true to its promise of ‘No rant, no slant,’ and people depend on it for balanced and truthful reporting,” she says. The longtime Pasadena resident is especially proud of the station’s local roots. “I think SCPR is one of the greatest gifts Pasadena offers to Southern California.”

As Ron sees it, the station’s enduring resonance is a result of its success in becoming what he calls “a centering institution” for our region. “We have sought diversity on our board and in our coverage, and we’ve created a place where the diverse people of Los Angeles can have a common conversation,” he says.

Today, the Olsons are focused on enhancing SCPR’s capacity in the area of investigative reporting. Through a significant gift establishing a new Special Reports Unit, they are bolstering SCPR journalists in their efforts to hold local government officials and other institutions accountable to the residents and communities they serve. “I majored in journalism in college and worked at several newspapers in the Midwest,” Jane shares. “I learned that investigative reports can put a human face on current events and give context to stories. In an era when the veracity of media is often under attack, in-depth investigative reporting provides a firm foundation of research upon which to base assertions of fact.”

The couple are proud of their contributions to establish and strengthen SCPR, but they are quick to point out they could not do it alone. “KPCC’s staff is incredible, and the generosity, commitment and vision of the volunteers on our board of directors has been unparalleled,” Ron points out. “I’m confident we have a dedicated team in place that will continue to improve and enhance the station for many years to come.”
Guy Primus has moved around a lot, but Southern California Public Radio is one place he always feels at home. A distinguished entrepreneur whose education and career have taken him from his native Pittsburgh to Atlanta, Boston, Seattle, New York and Los Angeles, Primus is a long-time public radio fan who values SCPR’s commitment to bridging local and national news.

Primus’ affinity for media goes back to his early years, growing up in a house that valued education and put a premium on being informed and engaged. “It was a gift my parents gave me – one that’s traveled with me throughout my life,” he observes. Their passion sparked his interest in National Public Radio, which ultimately led to a gig as a consultant for the organization over two decades ago. He went on to build a highly successful career working for Starbucks and Microsoft before co-founding The Virtual Reality Company, the world’s leading studio for cinematic virtual reality experiences.

Today, public radio is still a family affair for Primus. “My wife and I both put in a lot of drive time, and KPCC is how we stay informed,” he explains. As a result, “Our young kids are constantly exposed to the station’s educational programming.”

Whether Primus is listening on the road or online, KPCC keeps him connected to the community. “The station is a fantastic resource, no matter what you’re interested in or where you are,” he says.

For the past two years, Primus has been serving as a member of SCPR’s Board of Trustees, a role he has taken on with relish. “This is a place that offers so much to our region, and it’s growing by leaps and bounds,” he notes. “I’m honored to be part of that.”

“My wife and I both put in a lot of drive time, and KPCC is how we stay informed. Our young kids are constantly exposed to the station’s educational programming.”
TRUSTEE PROFILE

Nancy Stark

As a member of the Southern California Public Radio Board of Trustees, Nancy Stark has an insider’s perspective on what sets the station apart from its peers. But her relationship with KPCC began like many other Angelenos – she turned on the radio.

“My involvement started as a listener and supporter,” she recalls. “I feel strongly about SCPR’s dedication to public service journalism and its commitment to in-depth, unbiased reporting.”

For Stark, having a trusted source of information is invaluable in an era of reductive, repetitive news coverage. “KPCC is my sanity saver! I love the deep dive into important issues that gets me out of the recurring news loop,” she says. She is also grateful for the station’s local focus on Los Angeles and Southern California. “There are abundant outlets to get national and global news, but KPCC is unusual in its attention to stories and issues that affect communities throughout our region,” she points out.

It’s a region Stark has grown to love in the 35 years since moving here from Toledo, Ohio. “The vibrancy in diversity and culture makes this an exciting place to live. SCPR helps me access it – informing me about a wide range of topics and giving me the opportunity to hear other people’s perspectives,” she observes. The ability to benefit from those perspectives is a major draw. “The station’s listeners are extremely smart, and it’s great to be challenged by and learn from them,” she says.

Stark, an Executive Vice President with American Realty Advisors, a private equity real estate firm, is grateful to be in a position to help advance SCPR’s nonprofit mission. “I am a believer in the power of the individual to have an impact,” she affirms, “and I feel privileged to be an advocate for an organization like KPCC.”
FISCAL YEAR 2018

Financial Activities

We take pride in SCPR’s ability to embrace change, be it a new website like LAist or creating new ways for our audience to hear our stories through podcasting. One important change in Fiscal Year 2018 was a shift in how SCPR accounts for its Sustaining Membership program, which provides vital support for our programming through recurring monthly payments from individuals. SCPR now records revenue as it is received each month, instead of recording the total amount of an annual pledge from Sustainers. This change was necessary to support new gift-processing technology and to meet the evolving philanthropic expectations of our donors.

From a financial reporting perspective, this action caused a one-time decrease of $3.8 million in Listener Support and Change in Net Assets. While this change did result in a one-time reduction in revenue recorded in FY 2018, it did not in any way alter the actual level of support from the Sustainers or affect the amount of cash flow provided by our Sustaining Members.

In Fiscal Year 2018, SCPR spent $19.6 million directly toward our programming, live event, digital, on demand and broadcast activities. Our financial position continues to be strong. A consolidated balance sheet shows total assets of $32.9 million with total liabilities of $6.8 million.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
As of June 30, 2018 - Stated in Thousands

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<td><strong>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</strong></td>
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### OPERATING REVENUE

- **52%** Individual Contributions
- **6%** Government Contributions
- **4%** Foundation & Grant Contributions
- **37%** Corporate Contributions & Underwriting
- **63%** Programming & Operations

### OPERATING EXPENSES

- **22%** Fundraising & Corporate Underwriting
- **15%** Administrative
- **1%** Other Revenue
SCPR is grateful to the following donors, whose gifts, multiyear commitments, and special campaign support were received between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018.

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