

# 2019 Annual Report

# Appalshop





Appalshop envisions a world where the inherent value of all people is amplified and where they have the agency to create and sustain a diverse and equitable community.



**OUR MISSION IS TO ENLIST THE POWER OF EDUCATION, MEDIA, THEATER, MUSIC, AND OTHER ARTS TO:**

- document, disseminate, and revitalize the lasting traditions and contemporary creativity of Appalachia;
- tell stories the commercial industries don't tell, challenging stereotypes with Appalachian voices and visions;
- support communities' efforts to achieve justice and equity and solve their own problems in their own ways;
  - celebrate cultural diversity as a positive social value;
- and participate in regional, national, and global dialogue toward these ends.



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# WMMT



In the summer of 2019, miners previously employed with Blackjewel LLC in Harlan County took to the railroad tracks to block a coal train after they were left without pay due to Blackjewel's bankruptcy. WMMT and Ohio Valley Resource reporter Sydney Boles followed the stand-off between miners and the company for the 59-day strike. Her reporting amplified the strike to a national audience, including outlets such as Rolling Stone Magazine and NPR.

WMMT was selected by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting as part of the National Federation of Community Broadcasters "Community Counts" initiative. From this award, WMMT's program *Restorative Radio* was born. This program features stories from people that are imprisoned in areas that are local to Whitesburg and interviews with people on the outside about issues related to criminal justice.



Our after-school Appalachian music program, *Passing the Pick and Bow*, is often the only music education that our local children and teens get. In 2019 we celebrated the 17<sup>th</sup> year of the Pick & Bow program in our local schools. Our program is free and year-round, and puts banjos, fiddles, guitars and mandolins in the hands of nearly 100 students each year.

5,408  
hours of music programming

224  
hours of in house and community-produced public affairs programming

45  
community producers and volunteer programmers

1  
resident possum (responsible for any dead air or on-air mishaps)

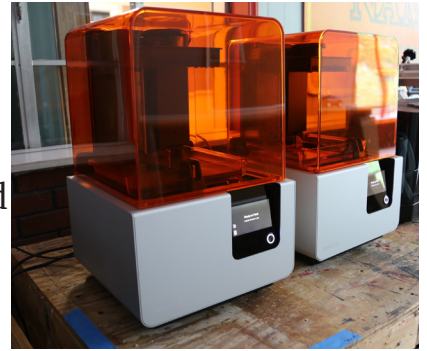


stream at [wmmt.org](http://wmmt.org)

# APPALACHIAN MEDIA INSTITUTE



AMI educator Eric VanHoose was awarded the S'Park Media Mentor Award by Ithaca College in 2019. The award recognizes those that ignite a passion for media in young people. Eric received this award after hosting a summer training camp on 3D printing at Appalshop. Eric created and led a 3D-printing pilot for six local apprentices, who learned how to design and create using 3D printers during the course of a seven week workshop.



The summer of 2019 marked the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Summer Documentary Institute for the Appalachian Media Intitute (AMI). The films produced by AMI's ten youth filmmakers covered the topics of addiction and recovery, reproductive health, and the ongoing mental health crisis in Appalachia. One of the AMI documentary films, "The Fallout," has had nearly ten thousand views online since its release. AMI was also able to hire three advanced peer trainers for the SDI camp. These peer trainers were young female artists from the region that have shown promise in media production.



In 2019 Ashley Vanover and Taylor Pratt, two AMI students, attended the Rural Women's Summit in North Carolina. Over the two and a half day conference, over 200 women and their allies gathered to articulate the civic, political, and cultural impact of women's leadership in rural America. The AMI students were able to attend workshops, speeches, and plenary sessions on topics ranging from women and caregiving to combating climate change to running for public office. This meeting helped our students to network with other women in rural America that are focused on similar goals in their communities.

# We're thrilled to have unveiled the largest net-metered renewable energy system in Eastern Kentucky.

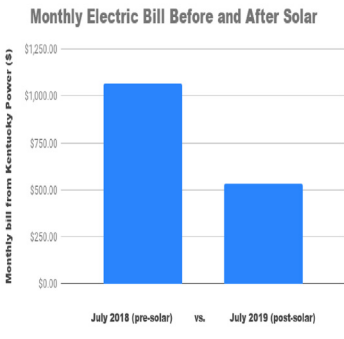
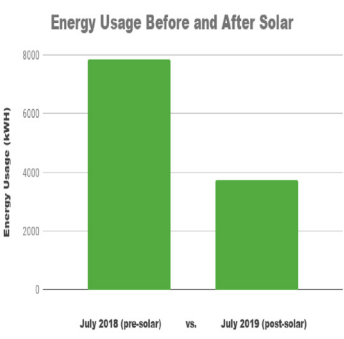
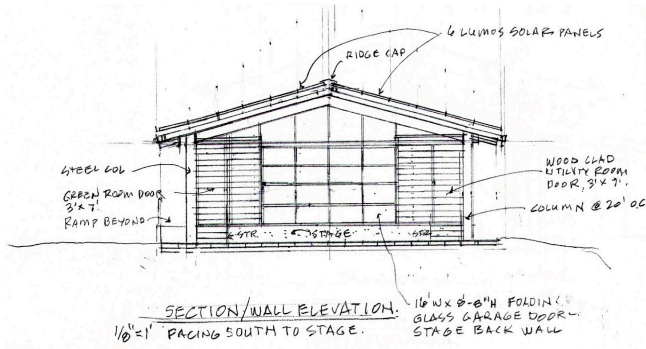
In 2019, Appalshop unveiled a free-standing "solar pavillion" on our grounds. Thanks to our pavillion and and more solar panels on the roof of our Boone building across the street, we're generating almost all of our own energy usage and demonstrating what's possible in the coalfields.

## Why Did We Go Solar?

In the last decade alone, energy costs have gone up by almost 50 percent, and they're expected to keep rising. We paid an average of \$1,200 a month for our main building's electricity before installing solar, and we know that in the next few decades that bill could double or more. That's unsustainable for us.

Installing solar allows us to stabilize and reduce our electricity costs. Since we unveiled the system in June 2019, we've seen drastically lowered energy costs.

We see solar as a powerful economic engine in Eastern Kentucky, and we want to pave the way for our neighbors to explore work weatherizing homes and businesses, installing efficiency measures, and constructing systems like ours. We believe it's almost impossible to be what you can't see, so to demonstrate what a renewable energy system is — how it works, what its benefits are — we built one.



# CULTURE HUB

**The Letcher County Culture Hub is a county-wide network of grassroots groups that are committed to economic development through collaboration, cooperation, and cultural celebration.**

Appalshop is one partner in the Culture Hub, which was founded on the principle that every community has latent assets they can turn into new community wealth if they can unbind their imaginations to tell new stories about themselves. Since its founding, the Culture Hub has incubated three new businesses and revived two major cultural institutions, which are now revenue-positive. It has supported festivals, and performances, promoted tourism and civic engagement by functioning as a “community bulletin board,” and continues to engage in energy-efficiency initiatives and a multimillion-dollar project to bring broadband internet to the entire county.



Besides Appalshop, the Culture Hub has also been a resource for others in the community to install solar panels. HOMES Inc., Hemphill Community Center, and Kings Creek Volunteer Fire Department have also gone solar. The Culture Hub has made the promotion of energy-efficiency a priority due to increased electricity bills in the community.



The Culture Hub has also engaged in projects like Hands Across the Hills, spending multiple immersive weekends in dialogue with voters in rural Western Massachusetts since the 2016 election. We use our famous “story circle” method to work to eliminate the media screen that divides us as red versus blue — just one of many programs by which the Culture Hub empowers community members and develops meaningful tools of cultural exchange.



# COMMUNITY MEDIA

Appalshop's Community Media Initiative (CMI) continued sharing stories of Appalachia's changing economy through Making Connections News, a monthly program on WMMT and an online story bank, now containing over 200 radio and video features. Stories this past year include: a report on women business leaders organizing to support one another in Harlan County, KY; environmental restoration and economic development efforts taking place around the region with support from the Abandoned Mine Lands Pilot Program; and the impact of the Whitesburg Levitt AMP Music series on the local economy and community wellbeing.



**Kentucky Public Health**

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

CMI is employing Appalshop's place-based storytelling methodology to produce Prevent Diabetes EKY with support from the Kentucky Department for Public Health. This multimedia series features the stories of eastern Kentuckians who are making lifestyle changes to prevent or control this deadly disease, which has such a high rate in the region.

2019 was the third year for All Access EKY, a collaboration between Appalshop, Kentucky Health Justice Network, and Power to Decide that works in ten Appalachian Kentucky counties to ensure young people have access to the full range of contraceptive methods. We combine storytelling, media making, youth empowerment, and community outreach to advocate for and increase access to all birth control options and reproductive health services. During the year we supported 30 fellowships for youth from the region who created media and participated in over 30 outreach and training events with health care providers, students, and community members in which we provided information on birth control options, and carried out clinical trainings.



# ROADSIDE THEATER



In 2019, Roadside Theater's work brought together ordinary people in communities across the country, guided by theater artists and cultural organizations within their communities, to demonstrate how theater can create the conditions for all kinds of people to tell a new story about who they are, where they live, and what their future can be. Together with a growing group of national allies, we are building the cultural, civic, and economic power to transform these community-generated stories into reality!

Many of our national allies are represented in the Performing Our Future National Coalition (POF), convened by Roadside in 2018. This year, the coalition developed a comprehensive three-year strategy, a structure for governance and decision making, and a new website ([performingourfuture.com](http://performingourfuture.com)). Roadside Theater is honored to be in partnership with coalition members from across the country: the *Arch Social Community Network* in West Baltimore, *Black Belt Citizens Fighting for Health and Justice* in rural Alabama, *Rural Urban Flow* in Sauk County, Wisconsin and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and the *Letcher County Culture Hub*.



This year, Roadside Theater and the Arch Social Community Network (one of our partners in the POF national coalition) also began a collaboration with the distinguished Jamaican economists Donald Harris and Gladstone "Fluney" Hutchinson, leading Baltimore social justice theater ensemble WombWork, and representatives from area universities, banks, and development agencies, to develop a multi-year project that brings together community voices across West Baltimore. The first part of the process will be anchored in the making of a community play about the future of West Baltimore.

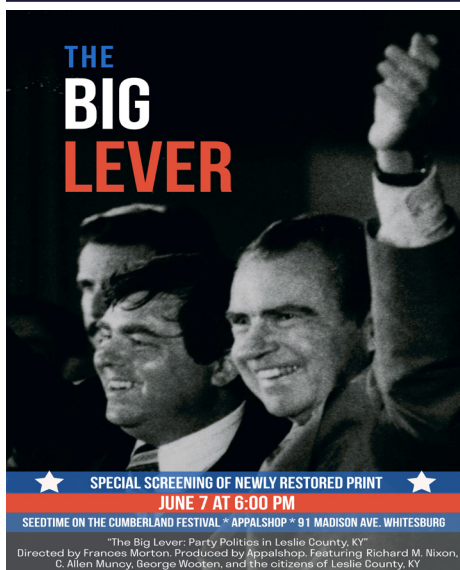
In 2019, Roadside began the multi-year process of creating Art in a Democracy, a project with two components: publication and dissemination of a two-volume anthology, *Art in a Democracy: Selected Plays of Roadside Theater*, and the development of a web platform, Art in a Democracy, that will allow anyone interested to trace and interrogate Roadside's 45-year theory and practice of new play creation, community cultural development, teaching, and advocacy.



# APPALSHOP ARCHIVE

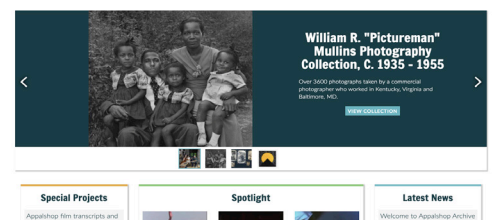
**Our state-of-the-art, climate-controlled vault holds thousands of hours of recordings, as well as photographs and print materials that span almost a century of life and history in Appalachia. Appalshop's professional archive embodies the core purpose of Appalshop itself.**

In 2019, Archive acquired Nancy Rudolph's Cumberland Plateau Photography Collection. Nancy Rudolph (1923-2017) was a prolific American photographer whose career took her around the world. While working for the Marshall Plan in Rome she documented post-WWII Italy and Germany. In the U.S. she covered a wide range of subjects from coal miners in Appalachia to members of the Coney Island Polar Bear Club. In 2019 the Rudolph family donated her collection of eastern Kentucky photo prints, negatives, audio recordings, exhibit statements, and other documentation of her work in the Appalachian region.



In 2019, Appalshop Archive was able to restore *The Big Lever: Party Politics in Leslie County, KY*, a 1982 Appalshop film directed by Frances Morton. *The Big Lever* is an incisive and often hilarious look at the machinations of party politics in rural Leslie County, Kentucky. The film, which includes original footage of Richard Nixon's first post-resignation public appearance, was preserved from master 16mm film elements with a grant from the National Film Preservation Foundation. 2019 screenings took place at Appalshop's Seedtime on the Cumberland Festival and Louisville's Speed Museum Cinema.

Archive has also launched an online version of its collection. Visit [appalshoparchive.org](http://appalshoparchive.org) to browse our collection of films, photographs, audio recordings, and more focused on all aspects of life in Central Appalachia.



# AROUND THE SHOP

In 2019 we kicked off our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary with the reunion of Appalshop's founding generation. The reunion was a time to catch up and relive memories from Appalshop's early days as an institution.



The Seedtime on the Cumberland Festival celebrated its 33<sup>rd</sup> year in 2019 with headliners Hubby Jenkins, Amythyst Kiah, Cornbread & Tortillas, and Lee Sexton. This marked the first Seedtime that was celebrated at the Solar Pavillion Stage on Appalshop's grounds.



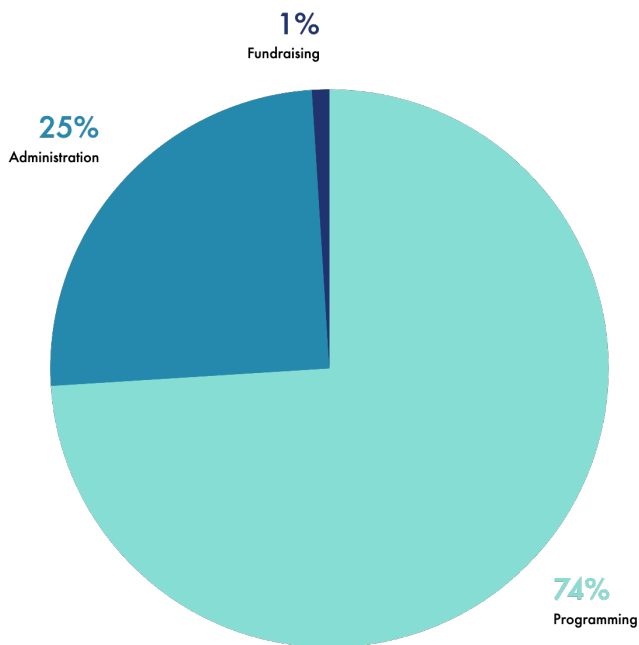
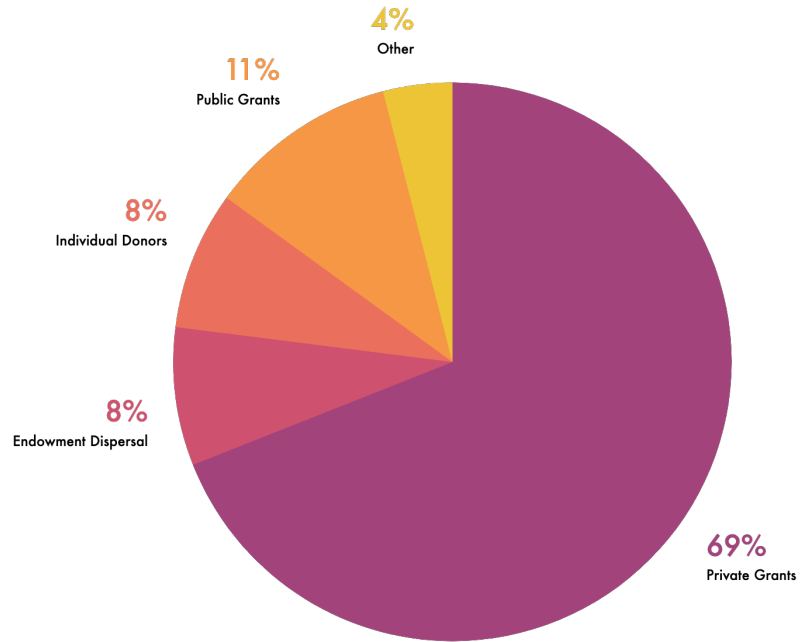
In December we renamed our theater, dedicating it to Bill and Josephine Richardson, two members of Appalshop's founding generation. Bill and Josephine moved to Whitesburg in 1969 from New York City with a truck full of film equipment. As Josephine tells it, they were only supposed to stay in the area for six months. Fifty years later, they're still calling Whitesburg home.



In January of 2020, Roadside Theater completed its transition to a new generation of leadership. Longtime Managing Director and Playwright, Donna Porterfield, retired from her full-time position, and Rebecca Finney, Kentucky native and ensemble-based physical theater maker, has been hired to anchor Roadside's new ensemble as Director. Rebecca will be reaching out to Appalshop supporters and allies in the near future, so keep an eye on our media to learn more about the continued evolution of Roadside's local and global work.

# FINANCIALS

## INCOME BY SOURCE



## EXPENSES BY FUNCTION



During Appalshop's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we are securing our organizational underpinnings, preparing us for the next decade of artistic and cultural community development efforts. In 2019, we launched our strategic plan to do just that.

Our strategic plan has three goals:

- Accelerate Appalshop's sustainability
- Support the next generation of artists, cultural workers, and educators who value place-based impact
- Advance partnerships that engage Appalshop's key constituents to influence practice and policy

Appalshop now needs to establish new financial instruments for continued stability and success. Alongside our permanent endowment, Appalshop is seeding the following reserve funds:

**1. Quasi-endowment** is an invested fund that provides bi-annual general operating support and governed by Appalshop's board. Goal of **\$3,500,000**.

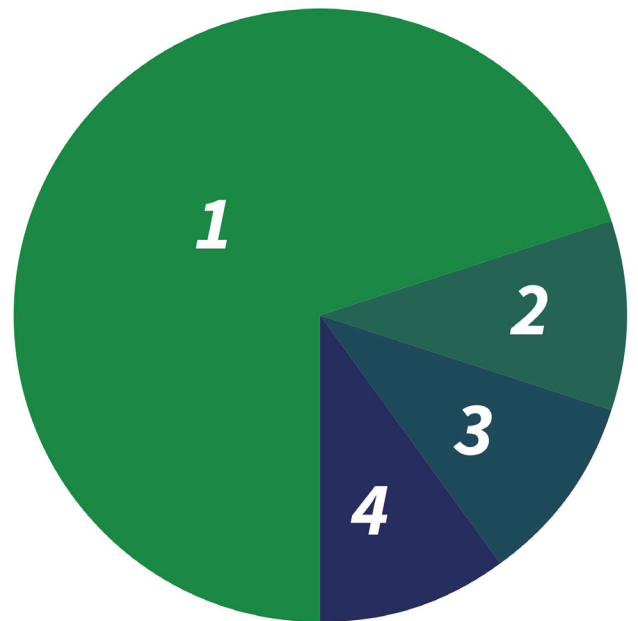
**2. Artistic Reserve** is intended to allow Appalshop to invest in new innovative programmatic opportunities without depleting working capital reserves for regular operations. Goal of **\$500,000**.

**3. Facility Reserve** is intended to allow Appalshop to make periodic investments in the upkeep of fixed assets without depleting working capital reserves. Goal of **\$500,000**.

**4. Working Capital Reserve** is designed to facilitate Appalshop's ability to cover cash flow related to current obligations such as existing payables with unrestricted cash. Goal of **\$500,000**.

With these reserves, Appalshop will be able to increase critical educational programming and production, enable urgent upgrades to facilities, and strengthen our network of support.

For Appalshop's next 50 years, we are interested in cohesively strengthening the fiscal health of Appalshop, securing Appalshop's ability to continue its trusted work as it has for the last five decades.



[WWW.APPALSHOP.ORG/50TH](http://WWW.APPALSHOP.ORG/50TH)



# We want to thank all of those that donated to our 50th Campaign in 2019!

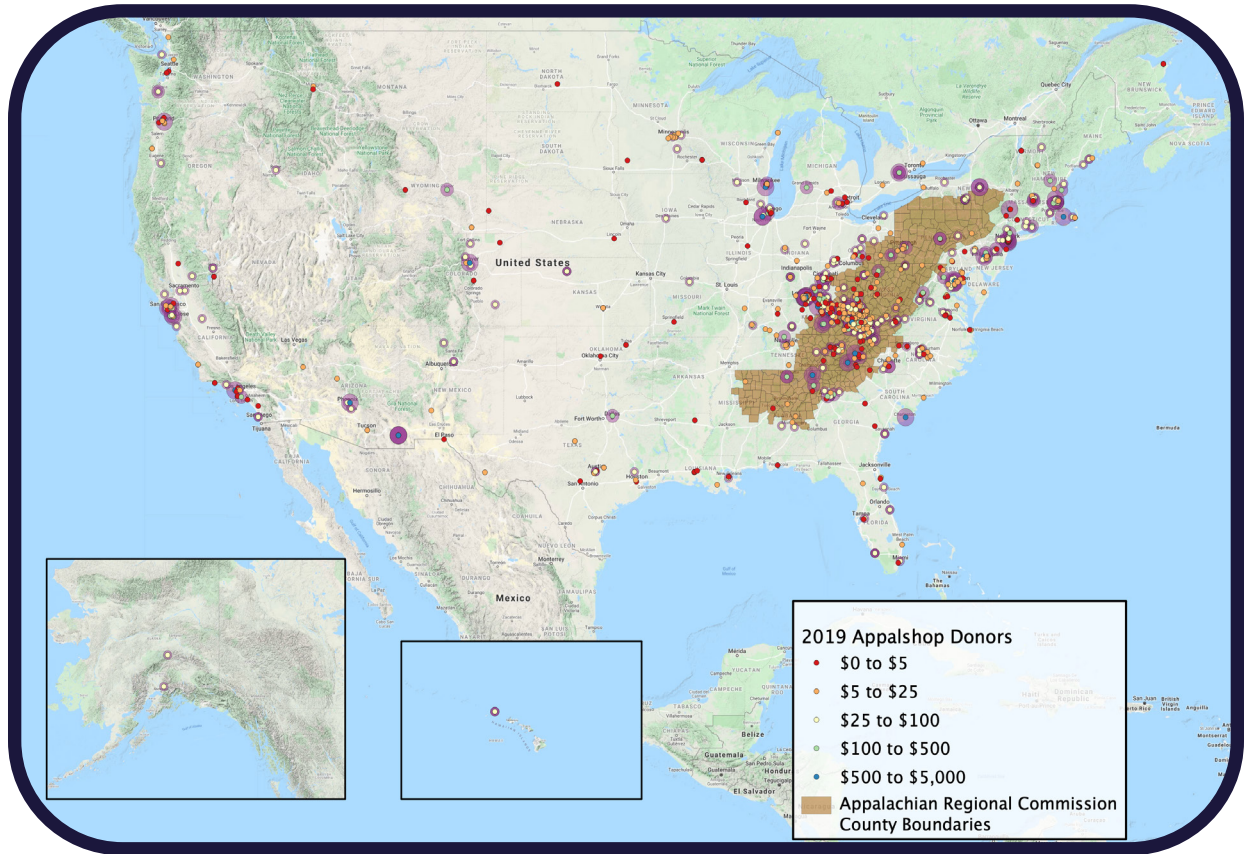
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Henry Allen  
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Morgan Atkinson  
Caron Atlas  
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Tona Barkley  
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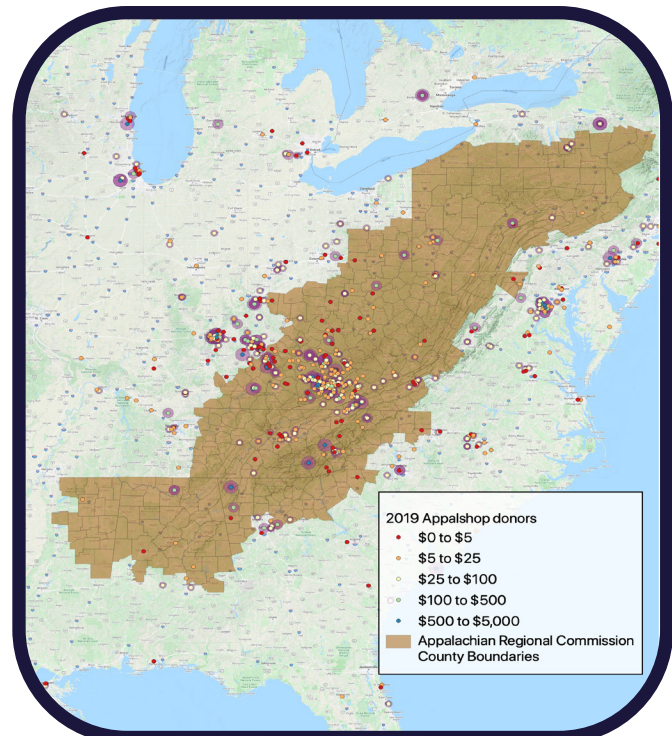
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Appalshop may call Whitesburg home, but we have friends all over the country!



Appalachian  
Regional  
Commission  
Counties





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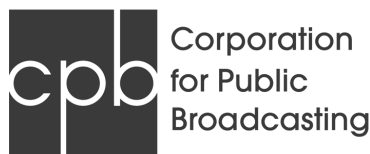


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