



2020 ANNUAL REPORT





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2020 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

OVERVIEW

Seattle Channel is the City of Seattle’s award-winning municipal television station that aims to engage, inform, and inspire the community with a mix of news, analysis, stories, and perspectives. Programming at the government-access cable channel includes series and special features highlighting the diverse civic and cultural landscape of Seattle.

In a year that taught resilience, empathy, and the importance of community, Seattle Channel told stories that celebrated the region’s victorious moments and reflected on the hard ones. In addition to the pandemic that touched every aspect of daily life, Seattle faced a reckoning with racism present and past, historic wildfires, and a polarizing presidential election. As the City of Seattle pivoted to remote work, the station shifted to cover the business of running the city in new ways. From live coverage of press conferences and city council meetings, to in-depth coverage of city and community recovery efforts, to virtual entertainment and events, Seattle Channel kept to its mission to tell stories of the faces and places that make Seattle home, and to connect residents with their city.

As the region reacted and adapted to the state of emergency on COVID-19, Seattle Channel documented the historic year. Stories emerged about a [local artist](#) who used 3-D printing equipment to create personal protective equipment (PPE) for health care workers during a shortage, how [live music venues](#) adapted to social distancing guidelines that forced closures of bars and clubs, and how events like [Pride Month](#) and [high school graduation](#) shifted to virtual celebrations. The station also told stories of the more challenging parts of the year, such as business closures, homelessness, and budget shortfalls.

Seattle Channel was nominated for [16 Regional Northwest Emmy Awards](#) and received [four Emmy Awards](#). The channel was named the “[best municipal TV station in the nation](#)” when it received the prestigious Excellence in Government Programming award from the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA). In addition to the top award, the city-operated station won 20 government programming awards, including 12 awards of excellence, six awards of distinction, and two awards of honor.

Online viewership more than doubled compared to the previous year. Several timely videos contributed to this increase. High performing videos include a 2018 talk by [Dr. Robin DiAngelo](#) about her book “White Fragility,” and a [press conference](#) covering the city’s response to protests following the death of George Floyd and President Trump’s threats on Seattle that received national attention.



HIGHLIGHTS

- As the pandemic took center stage, Seattle Channel produced a myriad of programs on the rapidly evolving topic. From coverage of Gov. Jay Inslee’s initial efforts to [curb the spread of the novel coronavirus](#) to the growing [expansion of COVID-19 testing sites](#), from the installation of a [U.S. Army hospital at CenturyLink Field Events Center](#) to the city’s response to [sheltering the unhoused](#), the station provided information and support to residents. And while Seattleites were stuck at home, the channel offered [fitness videos](#), online music and theater [performances](#), a [virtual tour of spring blooms at the arboretum](#), and three [360-degree video tours of museum and gallery spaces](#). The channel’s magazine show, *CityStream*, covered heartwarming and sometimes heartbreaking stories of the “new normal,” from [drive-by birthday parties](#) to [sewing masks](#), from [small business struggles](#) to one of the [pandemic’s most puzzling pastimes](#). *City Inside/Out*, a public affairs program, produced seven shows that zeroed in on the impacts of the pandemic on topics from [mental health](#) to [hunger](#) to [homelessness](#). *Art Zone with Nancy Guppy* brought the arts to the people with virtual gallery and [museum tours](#), [musical performances](#), [interviews with local arts organizations](#), and even an [artsy and gnome-rich walking tour](#) of Madrona.
- In addition to regular coverage of the Seattle City Council, mayor, and election business, Seattle Channel collaborated with other City of Seattle departments on a variety of projects throughout the year, including:
 - The City of Seattle’s annual 2020 [Unity Day](#) celebration was broadcast live from Town Hall on Feb. 28. The event was hosted by Isiah Anderson, and included a performance by the First AME Choir and a keynote address by bestselling author Ijeoma Oluo.
 - As the city’s pandemic response closed community centers, Seattle Channel filmed seven of [Seattle Parks and Recreation](#)’s Lifelong Recreation program’s fitness classes. The instructor-led videos, released in late March, featured line dancing, Pilates, yoga and Zumba, and were designed to help people stay fit and healthy from home.
 - While city residents were being asked to stay home, spring had sprung, and the Washington Park Arboretum was in full bloom. Seattle Channel partnered with Seattle Parks and Recreation, University of Washington Botanic Gardens, and the Arboretum Foundation to create a [narrated tour of the Arboretum](#) that was broadcast on Mother’s Day, May 10.
 - The year 2020 marked the [30-year anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#). Seattle Channel collaborated with TVW and King County TV to create a block of programming that was broadcast on July 27. Segments included a presentation on Universal Design, Rooted in Rights documentaries, and tips for creating more accessible content and events.



- As COVID-19 restrictions threatened Seattle Parks and Recreation’s annual [Big Day of Play](#), the city decided to hold the event online. The Aug. 15 all-day event, emceed by Seattle Channel’s Brian Callanan, was broadcast and streamed live with real-time Instagram stories and live tweeting on the channel’s social media.
- In partnership with King County TV and the Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission, Seattle Channel produced a Video Voters’ Guide for the general election. The [general election guide](#), launched in early October, featured short video statements from candidates for King County elected offices and proponents and opponents of King County charter amendments and ballot measures.
- On Oct. 9, the channel live streamed the Seattle Fire Department’s annual [Seattle Fallen Firefighter Memorial](#) event honoring firefighters who have lost their lives in the line of duty.
- For seven years, the City of Seattle has celebrated [Indigenous Peoples’ Day](#) with a day of live performances and talks at City Hall. Seattle Channel produced an hour-long program featuring a mix of new speakers and performances along with highlights from previous live events and aired Oct. 12.
- In December, the channel’s website hosted 120 videos of [The Creative Advantage Online Arts](#). The short video lessons by local teaching artists were produced by Seattle Public Schools and Seattle Office of Arts & Culture in response to COVID-19 to support students and families during school closures.
- In addition to Seattle Channel’s regular offerings and other City of Seattle productions and collaborations, the station added several new community-produced shows to broaden programming scope and expand audience. [Video Bebop](#), an MTV-style music video program featuring Pacific Northwest bands, is produced by Eva and Cedric Walker of The Black Tones. [Look, Listen and Learn](#) is a locally-produced early learning educational program focused on bridging the achievement gap for children of color. Pike Market Senior Center produced [AgeWise TV](#), a program featuring curated content for older adults that includes yoga and tai chi, art projects, and documentary films.
- [Seattle Channel General Manager Shannon Gee was inducted into the Silver Circle](#) of the Northwest Chapter of The National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (NATAS). Gee was honored for her 25-plus years of dedication to her profession and community during a virtual Northwest Emmy Awards ceremony on June 6. The award recognizes Gee’s lasting contributions to the television industry, which include a succession of award-winning documentaries featuring culturally diverse, community-driven content.
- The channel received the prestigious [Excellence in Government Programming](#) award (often referred to as “the best municipal TV station in the nation”) from the National Association



of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors' (NATOA). The recognition marked Seattle Channel's tenth programming excellence win in 13 years. In addition to the top award, the city-operated TV station won 20 government programming awards, including 12 awards of excellence, six awards of distinction, and two awards of honor.

- Seattle Channel was nominated for [16 Regional Northwest Emmy Awards](#) and [received four Emmy Awards](#). The winning programs offered a look back at a decade of *Art Zone with Nancy Guppy*; a *CityStream* feature on the Eat with Muslims project; a *CityStream* feature on Lance Mercer, a music photographer fighting lymphoma; and *Art Zone's* coverage of the opening night of the 2019 Seattle International Film Festival (SIFF). The station received Emmy nominations in program categories including health, politics, arts, cultural, historic, human interest, special event, and interview, and the craft categories of hosting, editing, and audio.

PRODUCTIONS

Seattle Channel completed more than 700 productions in 2020. Highlights include:

- 65 events with [Mayor Jenny Durkan](#) including press conferences, virtual town halls, State of the City address, and an annual budget address.
- 244 [Seattle City Council](#) programs including 12 episodes of [City Inside/Out: Council Edition](#), more than 200 council meetings and public hearings, 9 forums, and 14 press conferences. Council meetings are broadcast live, streamed online, and archived on the website for on-demand access anytime.
- 28 “digital shorts,” videos produced at a faster pace than regular shows and designed for use on social media. Sometimes these featurettes turn into full-length programs or segments in one of the station's signature shows, but often stand alone. Shorts produced in 2020 include a feature on the [U.S. Army field hospital](#) that was built at CenturyLink Field Events Center in March, the [COVID-19 test sites](#) at former emissions testing facilities, and a feature on the new [Fritz Hedges Waterway Park](#).
- 36 events, public affairs and cultural forums, community panels, and discussions. This category includes events such as [The State of Africatown 2020](#), [Transit Talk](#) events, [Indigenous Peoples' Day Celebration](#), and various Town Hall Seattle events. Seattle Channel collaborated with Town Hall Seattle on a live taping of an episode of [Life on the Margins](#), a podcast hosted by Enrique Cerna, Jini Palmer, and Marcus Harrison Green that aims to give a voice to historically marginalized groups.
- 80+ special productions. This category includes 17 general election [Video Voters' Guide](#) entries and two election debates, 7 Seattle Parks and Recreation [Lifelong Recreation](#) fitness

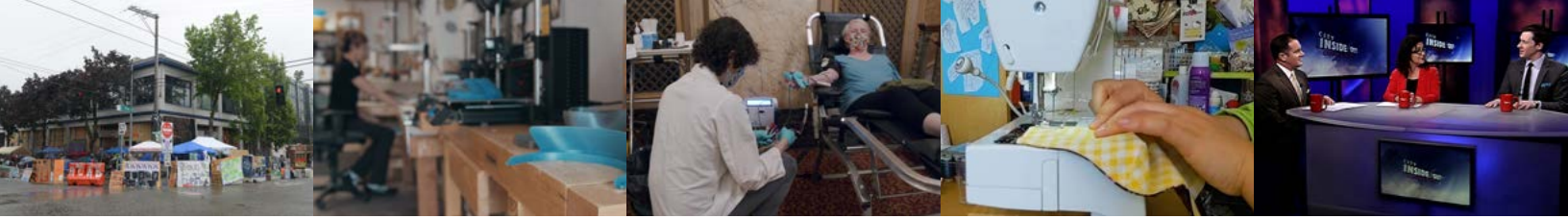


videos, 22 Seattle [Office of Hearing Examiner](#) meetings, 1 Department of Information Technology [surveillance technology public meeting](#), 8 [Ethics & Elections Commission](#) meetings, 1 [Seattle Parks and Recreation](#) public meeting, 14 [Seattle Public Library Board of Trustees](#) meetings, 3 additional City of Seattle department press conferences, and a stunning [virtual tour of the Washington Park Arboretum](#). The station also aired several special features and documentaries produced outside the channel, including a timely social distancing public service announcement music video by local musical group Miles and Karina titled “[Six Feet Apart](#),” a short animation about [how fashion helped suffragists gain voting rights](#), and “[Lifeblood](#),” a Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife documentary about communities working together to improve water quality and salmon habitat.

- More than 250 new episodes in Seattle Channel’s weekly and monthly series line-up including:
 - 16 episodes of [AgeWise TV](#). Produced by Pike Market Senior Center, each AgeWise TV episode is a compilation of curated content for older adults that includes yoga and tai chi instruction, art projects, and documentary films.
 - 23 episodes of [Art Zone with Nancy Guppy](#), a program highlighting local arts, entertainment, and cultural happenings. In response to the pandemic and public health guidelines, *Art Zone* temporarily morphed into “*Art Zone Phones It In*,” a scrappy DIY at-home version of the program with host Nancy Guppy’s housebound husband Joe Guppy behind the iPhone camera. The show featured self-recorded musical performances and quirky skits like a tour of the Nancy and Joe Guppy art collection and how to make the best peanut butter and jelly sandwich. *Art Zone with Nancy Guppy* continued production in this hybrid manner throughout the year. The show featured profiles of artists from every corner of the art world including artist/tinkerer [Arlo Keister](#), teen graphic designer [Alex Soukakos](#), and photographer [Berette Macaulay](#). Nancy Guppy conducted interviews with photographer [Mari Tamura](#), Seattle International Film Festival director [Beth Barrett](#), local celebrity Pat Cashman, author [Julia Quinn](#), and more. The show also featured studio- and self-recorded performances by musicians including [Benicio Bryant](#), [Mora Kennan](#), and jazz great [Bill Frisell](#).
 - 7 episodes of [Book Lust with Nancy Pearl](#), where America’s favorite librarian and bestselling author Nancy Pearl invites top writers from around the country to talk about books and the art of writing. Early in the year, *Book Lust* featured in-person interviews with authors [Tara Conklin](#), [Paul Yoon](#), and [Emily Nemens](#). Then, the pandemic brought production to a pause. When the show returned in October, the tables turned and put host [Nancy Pearl](#) in the hot seat to discuss her own newly published book, “The Writer’s Library.” Nancy rounded out the year with lively Zoom interviews featuring poet [Kathleen Flenniken](#) and two authors whose recent book releases brought much-needed levity, [Simon Stephenson](#) and [Natalie Zina Walschots](#).



- 25 episodes of [City Inside/Out](#) with host Brian Callanan, the weekly public affairs show focusing on thoughtful, in-depth reports and discussions about local issues. The year started out with coverage of top issues such as [renters' rights](#) and [gun legislation](#). Then, as COVID-19 took center stage, the program produced seven shows that zeroed in on the impacts of the coronavirus on issues from [mental health](#) to [hunger](#) to [homelessness](#). Then, returning after a summer of protests over police brutality and systemic racism, *City Inside/Out* produced a show about the [future of policing](#) in Seattle. The program went on to provide robust coverage of local and state elections including a discussion about a landmark law that would require [sex education](#) in public schools. *City Inside/Out* rounded out the year with coverage of the [city budget](#), [social equity in the cannabis economy](#), and [rent relief](#) as state and national eviction moratoriums neared expiration.
- 16 episodes of [CityStream](#), Seattle Channel's magazine show that looks at what fuels Seattle's vibrancy and keeps abreast of how the city is growing and changing. The program started out the year drawing attention to stories like the fight to save [Seattle's National Archives](#) and the popularity of [makerspaces](#). Then, as the COVID-19 outbreak grew into a pandemic, *CityStream* turned to coverage of how Seattleites were stepping out to "[make a joyful noise](#)" in support of health care workers, one woman's efforts to [deliver meals to those in need](#), and how first responders brought "[Friday Night Lights](#)" to city neighborhoods. The program also looked at how performers were adapting to new guidelines in new ways, turning to the outdoors like [Whim W'Him Contemporary Dance Group](#) did, or moving online like [ArtsWest](#) and the annual [Figgy Pudding holiday caroling event](#). *CityStream* profiled aspects of the economic impacts of COVID-19, including the closure of longtime downtown business [Baby & Company](#), [Elliott Bay Book Company](#)'s pivot to keep their business alive, and the [city's new sidewalk café and street closure permitting](#) efforts aimed at helping small businesses and residents stay connected. The program also featured moving stories such as Greg Roth's Obliteride [ride for cancer research](#) and World War II veteran Gene Moy's receipt of the [Congressional Gold Medal award](#).
- 7 episodes of [Civic Cocktail](#) hosted by Joni Balter featuring conversations with community leaders, elected officials, and journalists on timely topics. *Civic Cocktail* began the year by [introducing four new members of the Seattle City Council](#). This was followed by a show featuring the hardest working AG in America, Washington State [Attorney General Bob Ferguson](#). With the pandemic in full swing, *Civic Cocktail* put away the cocktail shaker and went virtual for the rest of the year. In June, the program responded to local and national protests following the death of George Floyd with guests [Mayor Jenny Durkan and Andre Taylor](#) discussing current events. In October, as Senate Republicans pushed to confirm President Trump's conservative Supreme Court nominee, *Civic Cocktail* brought in [Senior U.S. District Judge Robert Lasnik and State Sen. Manka Dhingra](#) to talk about the possible impacts. The second half of the program featured [journalists Omari Salisbury and Ted Warren](#), who offered their insider's perspectives on media coverage of protests.

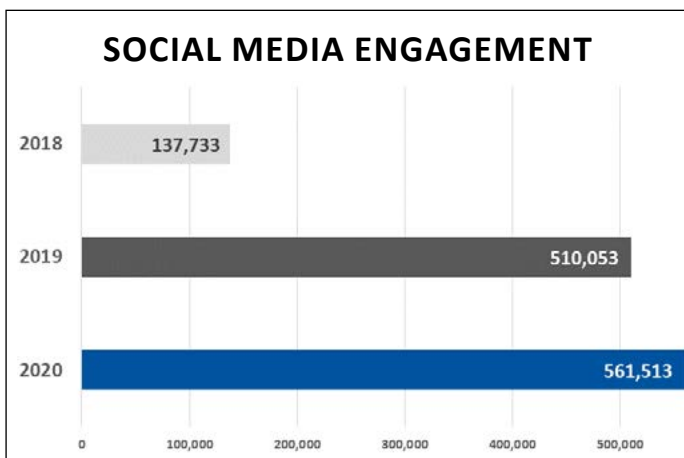
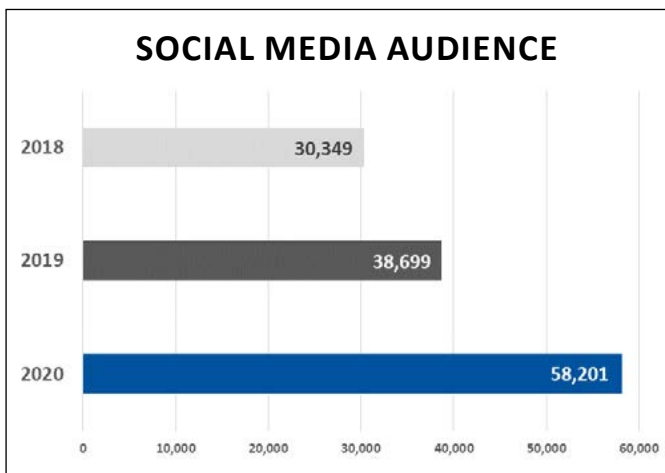
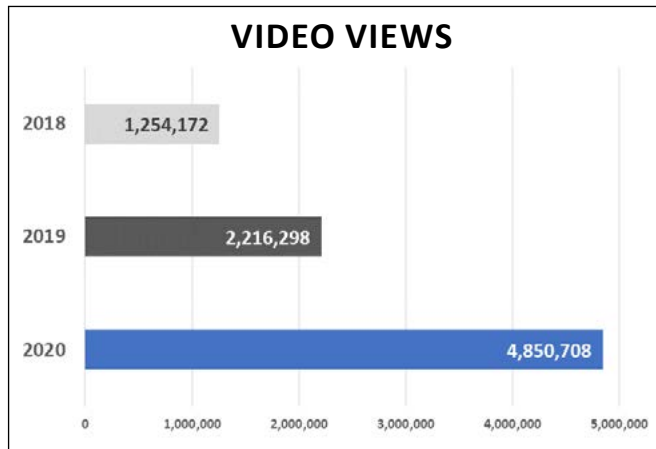


- 5 episodes of [Coping During COVID-19](#), a limited series exploring how we can help ourselves and each other during the pandemic. Topics included handling [stress and anxiety](#), [dealing with isolation](#), and [coping with substance abuse](#).
- 120 episodes of [The Creative Advantage Online Arts](#). Seattle Channel's website hosted 120 short videos produced by Seattle Public Schools and Seattle Office of Arts & Culture. Videos featured lessons by local teaching artists in a variety of disciplines and were created to support students and families during school closures brought by COVID-19.
- 4 [Front Row](#) programs, a show that highlights local performances. In a year that normalized virtual performances, Seattle Channel presented four of the finest including [Charlie Albright](#) performing Grieg at the National Nordic Museum, [Smokey Brights](#) at the Tractor Tavern, and the annual [Ampersand LIVE](#).
- 13 full and 3 short episodes of [Look, Listen and Learn \(LL+L\)](#). Seattle Channel began airing this locally-produced program in 2020. *Look, Listen and Learn* is an early childhood education program that aims to inspire and advance early learning in young children of color. Episodes focused in on themes such as [courage](#), [setting boundaries](#), and [leadership](#), and feature reading, art projects, cooking, and other activities.
- 8 [Town Square](#) programs covered important community conversations, lectures, debates, and forums recorded around the city from partners such as Downtown Seattle Association, Folio Seattle, Age Friendly Seattle, Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, Town Hall Seattle, Seattle CityClub, Seattle Human Rights Commission, and The Seattle Times. Topics ranged from [elections](#) to [economic recovery in the arts](#) sector to a panel featuring Black voices discussing the [social awakening](#) that the events of 2020 sparked.
- 10 episodes of [Video Beboop](#), an MTV-style music video show hosted by twins, Eva and Cedric Walker of the Black Tones. Each episode features a handful of music videos from Northwest musicians.



COMMUNICATIONS & OUTREACH

The station freshened up promotional videos and marketing materials with updated imagery and expanded on the 2018 “Channeling Seattle” campaign. The channel’s annual advertising mix included spots on public radio, digital and print ads in local media outlets, and an in-kind campaign featuring a 30-second video spot running on cable TV as part of the City’s cable franchise agreement with Comcast.



WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Online viewership more than doubled compared to 2019. About a third of those views (just over 1.6 million) came from one YouTube video - a 2018 talk at Seattle Public Library by Dr. Robin DiAngelo about her book “White Fragility.”

Seattle Channel’s outreach methods include a [weekly e-newsletter](#), [YouTube](#), and the [Take 21 blog](#), as well as regular postings to [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and occasionally [TikTok](#). In 2020, the overall combined audience on these platforms grew 50% to just over 58,200 followers. The biggest jumps were seen on YouTube, with an increase of 154%, and Instagram, with a 46% increase.

Social media reactions (or engagement) is an important metric, since it most accurately reports how well content is resonating with viewers. The year saw overall engagement receive a modest 10% bump, with half of the 561,513 reactions occurring on YouTube.



TECHNOLOGY

The biggest challenge in 2020 was adapting to COVID-19 protocols. Coverage of Seattle City Council meetings is a critical mission for the station. As the council began to work remotely and hold online audio and video meetings, the channel adjusted workflows to broadcast the virtual meetings. To accommodate virtual interviews for programs and meetings, Seattle Channel utilized Zoom, Skype, Microsoft Teams, and Cisco Webex. Studio productions were revamped to allow for web-based and, occasionally, socially distanced interviews. The station was already well-positioned for working remotely via company-issued hardware and software, and through remote control of critical infrastructure and processes. This aided staff as city employees were asked to telecommute as much as possible.

The station replaced crucial end-of-life equipment such as studio cameras and lenses and portions of the video playback system. Important upgrades also included a video switcher, a graphics generator for live council meetings, and video editing computers.

AWARDS

The station received [16 Regional Northwest Emmy Awards nominations](#) and [four Emmy Awards](#). During the virtual awards ceremony, [Seattle Channel General Manager Shannon Gee was inducted into the Silver Circle](#) of the Northwest Chapter of The National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (NATAS). The award recognizes Gee's contributions to the industry, which include a succession of award-winning documentaries featuring culturally diverse, community-driven content.

Seattle Channel received the prestigious [Excellence in Government Programming](#) award (often referred to as "the best municipal TV station in the nation") from the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors' (NATOA). In addition, the station won 12 awards of excellence, six awards of distinction, and two awards of honor.

EMMY AWARDS

Arts/Entertainment – Program/Special: [*Celebrating a Decade of the Arts on Art Zone with Nancy Guppy*](#)

Historic/Cultural – Program Feature/Segment: [*CityStream: Eat with Muslims*](#)

Human interest – program feature/segment: [*Lance Mercer's New Focus*](#)

Special event coverage (other than news or sports): [*Art Zone: SIFF Opening Night 2019*](#)



NATOA AWARDS

Overall Excellence in Government Programming

NATOA AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

Edited Community Event Coverage (Long Form): [Art Zone: SIFF Opening Night 2019](#)

Interview/Talk Show: [5 conversations on Art Zone with Nancy Guppy](#)

Election Coverage: [City Inside/Out: 2019 City Council District 3 Race](#)

Ethnic Experience: [CityStream: Ayako & Family Jam](#)

Arts and Entertainment: [Art Zone with Nancy Guppy](#)

Public Health: [City Inside/Out: Vaping Ban](#)

Profile of a City/County Dept. or Employee: [City Stream: Power, Perseverance & a Blast from the Past](#)

Profile of a Person, Business or Organization: [Art Zone: Aerialist Tanya Brno](#)

Community Awareness: [Art Zone: Decade of History](#)

Innovative Use of Video: [CityStream: UFO's: Do You Believe?](#)

Municipal Channel Promotion: [ClickDown 21: 2019 Favorite Clicks](#)

Editing: Seattle Channel production staff

NATOA AWARDS OF DISTINCTION

Seniors: City Stream: [Universal Design & Aging in Place](#)

Performing Arts Program: [Art Zone: True Loves Live at the Neptune](#)

Profile of a Person, Business or Organization: [CityStream: First & Pike News Closes](#)

Magazine Format Series: [CityStream](#)

Videography: Seattle Channel production staff

Video Journalism: Seattle Channel production staff

AWARDS OF HONOR

Public Affairs: [City Inside/Out: Gun Bills](#)

Public Service Announcement: Video Voters Guide

