

Name: Johnny Gifford
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My name is Johnny Gifford, Executive Director of Brattleboro Community Television serving eight towns in Windham county.

Please support the Vermont Access Network with \$1 million in one-time funding, while a permanent funding source is discussed in the legislature. The way in which public access television is funded is becoming antiquated in the age of streaming & internet access, yet we have adapted with programming widely available on internet-based platforms.

I have been involved with public access TV stations in 13 of the 26 years I have been alive & I've seen the ways in which it brings people together firsthand. It's a way for underserved and underprivileged people to utilize their first amendment rights and artistically express themselves through multimedia. It is a platform for local governments, schools and press to deliver vital information to their constituents. It is a method for citizens to stay connected to their communities and to feel a sense of local belonging. It keeps eclectic cultures alive. In my eyes, these are all vital parts of what it means to be a Vermonter.

Working at a community media center is a great way to keep your mind open to new ideas, and you better believe that there are so many unique individuals with great ideas coming through our door. In the last month alone, I've seen four new members at my station who are all excited to pursue different projects using our resources like a talk show about healing from trauma, films of local live music shows, local youth sports coverage, and an artist creating music videos. We also serve the youth of our community through camps, internships and workshops, which help build artistic, technical, team building and career building skills.

Community media has quite honestly changed my life and a personal goal of mine is to share this impact with others. Offering state of the art technology and services are vital to keep stations thriving, and at the moment the way for us to keep up is to ask for your help. Please support the Vermont Access Network with \$1 million in one-time funding, while a permanent funding source is discussed in the legislature.