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news release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PBS WESTERN RESERVE: A STUDY IN PERSISTENCE to Premiere on Jan. 3

Kent, Ohio — Dec. 15, 2023 — Advancements in technology and industry can change the world seemingly overnight — from the advent of television to the creation of the Public Broadcasting Service. PBS WESTERN RESERVE: A STUDY IN PERSISTENCE, which traces the groundbreaking history of public television through the lens of this local station, premieres on PBS Western Reserve (WNEO 45.1 / WEOA 49.1) on Wednesday, Jan. 3, at 8 PM.

Documenting the ups and downs of 50 years on air for WNEO (Alliance/Youngstown) and 48 years for WEOA (Akron/Canton), the production examines the dedicated efforts of PBS Western Reserve to bring outstanding programs and lifelong educational services to neighborhoods across Northeast Ohio.

Through insightful interviews, archival photos and cinematic reenactments, it details how public television persevered with the help of Mr. Rogers, local heroes and loyal staff members. “This is an intriguing production detailing the complexities that PBS Western Reserve consistently overcame during 50 years of humbly serving our vast and loyal community,” said Ryan Donchess, programming and production manager. “Viewers will discover how this organization came into existence and how it handled many of its challenges and successes.”

Technology has evolved from when television sets weighed more than 25 pounds to the current era, where you can stream your favorite programs in high quality on a device small enough to fit in your back pocket. PBS Western Reserve has evolved, too. “Stations have come and gone; others have changed greatly, but NETO has persisted,” said Mark Auburn, the organization’s former chair of the board of directors.

The documentary is produced and directed by W. Drew Perkins of Rubicon Productions, with retired PBS Western Reserve President and CEO Trina Cutter serving as executive producer. Margie Lenhart is narrator. Members of PBS Western Reserve provided production support. For additional air dates and times on PBS

Western Reserve and Fusion (WNEO 45.2 / WEAO 49.2), and information on free viewing on demand following the premiere, visit PBSWesternReserve.org.

About PBS Western Reserve

PBS Western Reserve is the brand name of Northeastern Educational Television of Ohio, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. A trusted community resource, PBS Western Reserve uses the power of commercial-free television and related services to enrich the lives of people through high-quality programming and educational services that teach, illuminate and inspire. It serves the largest population of Ohio's eight PBS member stations.

PBS Western Reserve (WNEO 45.1 / WEAO 49.1), a service of the organization, is the only broadcast television service that reaches all of Northeast Ohio. It is available to 4.9 million people in the Cleveland and Youngstown designated market areas. In an average month, more than 1 million people tune in. The organization also operates two standard definition channels: Fusion (WNEO 45.2 / WEAO 49.2) and FNX (WNEO 45.3 / WEAO 49.3).

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