

Interim General Manager's Report to the Local Station Board

July 2025

Update on Interim General Manager's Goal for this Quarter

I am in the final stages of completing the updated "Every Person" Handbook, which will be shared with all staff the week of August 4th. It will include a Declaration of Compliance with Station Policies and Procedures and every staff member will be required to sign it. The goal is to ensure that all staff know station policies and procedures, as well as the station's organizational and departmental goals.

Interim Program Director

On February 1st, KPFA welcomed its new Interim Program Director Jose Gonzalez. Jose came to KPFA in January of 2020 as an Operations Department Intern and was one of three interns who were able to complete their internship remotely during the beginning of the pandemic. Since that time he worked at the station as a fill-in Board Operator, Zoom AV Tech for the LSB, Assistant Engineer, News Tech for the Pacifica Evening News, and as Assistant to the Interim General Manager/Operations Coordinator. Jose quickly learned about the inner workings of the station, proved he was and is able to address urgent operational and programmatic tasks with speed and effectiveness, and most importantly, actively participated in resolving personnel issues with compassion and understanding. He also has a BA in Media Studies from UC Berkeley. Jose has proven himself to be a strong member of the KPFA management team and I look forward to the future and growth of the Programming Department under his leadership.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to introduce myself today.

My name is Jose Gonzalez, and I currently serve as the Interim Program Director at KPFA. Before I speak about my work here and the direction I hope to take us in, I want to share a bit about how I got here—because it's deeply connected to why I care so much about this station.

I was brought to the U.S. when I was five years old. I lived most of my life undocumented, navigating systems that weren't built to protect or uplift people like me. Only recently have I been able to adjust my status—and in many ways, that transition mirrors the journey I've taken from being a marginalized voice in society to now working at a station whose very mission is to amplify voices like

mine. Coming to KPFA feels like a full circle moment—because here, I get to help shape the kind of media I never saw or heard growing up.

As Interim Program Director, my core focus is making sure we do radio right. That starts with sound. We're a radio station—our sound is our calling card—so I've made it a priority to freshen up our promos, bumpers, and IDs. Not just for the sake of production polish, but to ensure we're telling listeners clearly: who we are, what we offer, and why it matters. When someone flips through the dial, they should land on KPFA and feel the difference.

But getting our message across doesn't stop at the FM band. My goal is to make sure KPFA's voice is consistent and strong across all platforms—our website, social media, newsletters, events, and community outreach. Every time someone interacts with KPFA, they should understand our mission, feel our values, and know how to engage.

Another key focus for me is revitalizing our archives. These archives are a treasure trove, but they need care and curation. That means complete episode descriptions, compelling images, and making our programming more accessible and engaging for today's audience—whether they're tuning in live or discovering us on demand.

And since KPFA is—and must remain—a community station, I'm working to ensure we're opening our doors wider. That means bringing back internships, expanding volunteer opportunities, and creating a street team or rapid response team. This group will help us stay visible in the community—at festivals, rallies, and public gatherings—and they'll also help us collect and share the sounds of the people. Because KPFA should not just report on the world—it should be in it.

This work is personal to me. I know what it means to be unheard. I know what it means to rely on community. And I know that KPFA has an incredible legacy—and an even more powerful future, if we keep leaning into the people who make this station what it is.

Thank you again for having me. I'm honored to be here and excited for what we can build together.

UPCOMING GOALS

1. Street Team / Rapid Response Team - Assemble a dedicated volunteer team to support outreach, promotion, and on-the-ground content gathering. This team will attend rallies, cultural events, and community actions to capture audio and

relay it back to the station—strengthening our coverage and feeding valuable content to our News Department and programming.

2. Reimagining Area 94.1 - Revitalize Area 94.1 as a dynamic hub for KPFA-exclusive digital content. The goal is to drive audiences from social media to our website by curating compelling podcasts, segments, and bonus material that expand KPFA's presence beyond the FM dial.

3. Community Outreach, Partnerships, and Live Broadcasts - Strengthen community ties through new partnerships, live remote broadcasts, and increased field coverage. This effort will be supported by the Street Team/Rapid Response Team and will prioritize amplifying grassroots voices and local stories.

4. On-Air Sound and Promotion - Continue producing fresh, engaging, and timely promos that reflect current issues and highlight the diversity of KPFA's programming. We also aim to update and reimagine our music blocks—especially weekend music—to keep the station's sound vibrant, relevant, and exciting.

A FEW ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE

1. Promo Production - Created well over 100 on-air promos to keep KPFA sounding fresh, timely, and compelling. Notably, one of the promos caught the attention of the Los Angeles Times, leading to a mention of KPFA in a recent article—highlighting our continued relevance and creative impact.

2. Listener Feedback Campaign - Launched a multi-promo campaign encouraging listeners to share what they love about KPFA, what they'd like to see improved, and what they don't like. The response was thoughtful and constructive. Key takeaways included:

- A desire for more local content
- Interest in alternative viewpoints and deeper analysis
- Requests for more live events and live broadcasts
- Suggestions for a more varied, uplifting schedule with programs on home improvement, gardening, motivation, arts & culture, poetry, and literature

3. Social Media Presence - Following the departure of our previous social media coordinator, I stepped in to maintain—and grow—KPFA's visibility across platforms. Recognizing that no one else had the bandwidth to take it on, I made it a priority to keep us active daily on:

- **Instagram**

- **Facebook**
- **X (formerly Twitter)**
- **Bluesky**

The tone has been intentional—random at times, a little sassy, but always informative and community-driven. Posts regularly highlight daily programming, encourage tuning in, and reflect KPFA’s voice.

In addition, I’ve been experimenting with tools to create audiograms—short video snippets that tease segments and point viewers back to our website. I’m now hoping to bring others on board to help elevate this approach and make our digital presence even stronger.

4. Programming & Show Onboarding - *Successfully onboarded the last four new programs—including The Electronic Intifada—with a focus on long-term self-sufficiency. Each show now fully understands what KPFA requires of them, particularly in maintaining complete, up-to-date, and engaging program pages and archives. This streamlined onboarding approach has helped keep our programming fresh, organized, and sustainable.*

In Solidarity,

Jose Gonzalez
Interim Program Director

News Director

I am proud to introduce KPFA’s new News Director Lauren Schmitt, who comes to us from KMUD, Redwood Community Radio, which broadcasts in Humboldt and Mendocino Counties. It was a privilege to introduce Lauren at this year’s National Federation of Community Broadcasters in Salt Lake City, Utah, and there is renewed excitement with KPFA working with and helping bring together news rooms from other affiliate and sister stations to share reporter resources and possibly have a Pacifica-wide News Program.

Hello Board Members,

First, I want to thank you all for your dedication to KPFA. I know firsthand how vital it is to have a local board who truly cares and supports a beloved nonprofit. While I’m new to the Bay Area, I’ve been a longtime fan of KPFA and deeply admire its legacy of independent journalism and public service.

I recently joined KPFA as News Director after nearly a decade at Redwood Community Radio in Humboldt County, where I served as News Director for seven years. My spark for community media and grassroots journalism was ignited there, three hours north of the Bay, and it's only grown stronger over time.

At KMUD, I led a small but mighty newsroom that produced daily newscasts and broke critical stories while responding in real time to wildfires, earthquakes, power shutoffs, and floods. I helped create and lead the station's Emergency Preparedness Team, developed youth journalism programs with local schools, and secured funding to keep the station on-air during outages. My work helped grow KMUD's digital reach and deepen trust with listeners across the North Coast.

I began my radio journey as a volunteer broadcast engineer and local talk show host, and eventually launched The Standing Rock Report during the #NoDAPL movement to amplify Indigenous voices from the frontlines. That experience cemented my passion for community-driven audio journalism and in-field reporting. Over the years, I've reported on immigration, queer issues, and environmental justice—often contributing freelance work to KPFA, KZYY, KHHA, and This Way Out.

I've had the honor of teaching high school students and training youth interns, and I bring to KPFA a strong background in live broadcasting, emergency response, sound design, and mentorship. Above all, I bring a fierce belief in the power of independent radio to serve, inform, and mobilize communities.

I'm thrilled to be part of the KPFA family and I look forward to working closely with staff, volunteers, and listeners to carry forward Pacifica's mission.

Warmly,

Lauren Schmitt
News Director

Summer Fund Drive

- Tuesday, July 22nd to Thursday, July 31st.
 - Goal is \$230,000

Upcoming Events

Event information will be on KPFA.org

- California Historical Radio Society's Radio Day by the Bay - today, Saturday July 19th in Alameda, CA.
 - KPFA currently has a booth at the event up until 4 pm today.
 - Berkeley Pride - Saturday, August 16th in Downtown Berkeley.
 - Produced by the Pacific Center, a non-profit 501(c)3 organization, KPFA is a proud media sponsor of the event.
 - Stern Grove - Sunday, August 17th in SF
 - KPFA is a proud media sponsor of this concert with guest artist Diana Ross.
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