

WBAI-FM Reopens with the Best of the Pacifica Network

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New York , 10/7/2019 – Beginning today, Monday October 7th, the nearly 60 year old stalwart of New York’s progressive radio, WBAI 99.5 FM, will be transformed into an outlet for the best of the nation’s progressive stars, including Democracy Now! with Amy Goodman, the Thom Hartmann Show, Sojourner Truth with Margaret Prescott and the top programs from across the national Pacifica Radio Network.

The Pacifica Across America network service will provide the best news, talk and music programming gathered from the 4 Pacifica stations, affiliate members and independent producers.

The program change was necessitated by the serious and persistent financial losses at WBAI. The Pacifica Foundation was forced to lay off the staff of its Brooklyn-based station. "This is a painful moment for us, especially for the WBAI staff and volunteers who have done their best to keep it going. As soon as financially and logistically possible, a plan will be drawn up to address how we can rebuild our NY station into a vibrant local going operation" Pacifica Board Vice Chair, Sabrina Jacobs said.

Pacifica Board Member Jan Goodman said "WBAI has had to repeatedly call on other Pacifica stations to help fund its payroll and other operating expenses. We can no longer keep taking money for essential services from our stations in LA, SF Bay, Houston and DC communities to cover WBAI's continued shortfalls. This practice is endangering the entire Foundation."

"We want to be a bigger and stronger network" says Quincy McCoy, Consulting Programmer of Pacifica Across America. "PAA is a progressive, independent radio network whose mission is to provide a platform for independent voices, unfiltered news and analysis and diverse cultural programming that entertains and targets issues concerning our communities." McCoy continues, "the variety of programming on PAA will help WBAI grow new listeners and fulfill Pacifica’s mission at lower costs, with some of the best programming our network offers, including local content, while providing listeners with under-reported news, in-depth public affairs, and cultural shows that New Yorkers can't hear anywhere else."

Pacifica Interim Executive Director John Vernile said, "Pacifica’s mission of providing a space for peaceful, informed dialogue has never been more needed - from the unfolding climate catastrophe, to the mounting immigration tragedy, the rise of fascism and white nationalism, and the very real threat to democracy, there has never been a greater need for an effective progressive radio network. As a native New Yorker I know that the people of NY want, need and will support an intelligent and compelling local Pacifica voice. I am eager to see us begin our local rebuilding efforts as quickly as possible."

