

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

October 1, 2020



MEDIA CONTACT: Jack Conely,
Senior Vice President of Operations
P: 813.739.2964
E: jconely@wedupbs.org

WEDU PBS Launches Digital-First Docuseries *Greater Sarasota*, Online and On-Air October 8 *Hyperlocal, Region-Wide Storytelling Initiative Explores the People and Organizations Making Tampa Bay Greater*

Tampa Bay, FL (October 1, 2020) — WEDU PBS will launch a new, region-wide, hyperlocal storytelling initiative with the premiere of, ***Greater Sarasota*, Thursday, October 8**. The digital-first ***Greater*** docuseries will debut **online at wedupbs.org/greater at 6 p.m.**, with the short-form video stories encoring in a special **on-air presentation on WEDU PBS at 8 p.m.**



GREATER Special Premiere on WEDU:
SARASOTA Thursday
October 8
6 pm Online • 8 pm On-air
[Watch the trailer at wedupbs.org/greater](http://wedupbs.org/greater)

Photo: George Nickson and Samantha Bennett, Co-Artistic Directors of ensemblenewSRQ, pose with a diverse array of instruments.

“The ***Greater*** series will celebrate the power of local community in a new way — with timely, impactful storytelling that highlights the best of our area,” said Paul Grove, President and CEO of WEDU. “We expanded our commitment to hyperlocal storytelling a little more than a year ago, when I returned to WEDU PBS as the new CEO. In these times when viewers are staying closer to home and exploring their home towns even more, local stories that connect people are more important than ever.”

Greater Sarasota is produced by WEDU PBS in partnership with the **Community Foundation of Sarasota County**, with generous funding from the Muriel O’Neil Fund. The partnership has allowed for the development of five ***Greater Sarasota*** episodes in the multiplatform docuseries, which will roll out monthly online and on-air. ***Greater Sarasota*** highlights artists whose organizations are pivoting to bring their craft to the community with the social distancing challenges presented by Covid-19.

“The arts have a unique way of connecting us through stories where we can all find a part of ourselves and learn about others, hopefully ultimately allowing us to better understand one another,” says Roxie Jerde, President and CEO of the Community Foundation of Sarasota County. “It is our privilege to steward the charitable legacy of Muriel O’Neil in this partnership with WEDU PBS, and bring awareness to the timeless importance artists and performers give to our quality of life.”

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WEDU PressRoom: www.wedupbs.org/press

WEDU Video Portal: <http://video.wedupbs.org>

WEDU on Facebook: www.facebook.com/WEDUPublicMedia

WEDU on Twitter: [http://twitter.com/wedupbs](https://twitter.com/wedupbs)



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Each month, WEDU PBS will premiere a new **Greater Sarasota** story:

Online - 6 p.m. wedu.org/greater

On-air - 8 p.m. WEDU PBS

Thursday, October 8 – ensemblenewSRQ

The debut **Greater Sarasota** episode follows **George Nickson** and **Samantha Bennett**, Co-Artistic Directors of **ensemblenewSRQ**, as they strive to continue their trademark immersive musical experiences through genre-defying contemporary classical music concerts.

Thursday, November 12 - Florida Studio Theatre's Improv

The actors powering **Florida Studio Theatre's Improv** program demonstrate how to find glimmers of humor and light in the darkness.

Thursday, December 10 - Sarasota Contemporary Dance

Sarasota Contemporary Dance performers inspire stepping toward the unknown with a fearlessness that comes from within.

Two additional episodes will round out the **Greater Sarasota** season on January 14 and February 11, 2021. While the initiative begins by highlighting Sarasota, WEDU PBS already has plans to expand the project to more communities in the 16-county viewing area it serves. Watch for stories highlighting **Greater Clearwater**, **Greater Lakeland**, **Greater Ybor City**, and more cities to join the **Greater** docuseries.

The short-form, digital-first format will allow WEDU PBS to gather the many intimate, immersive stories of local people and organizations who are making a big impact in their communities and create an online, digital neighborhood connecting viewers to a community of committed citizens making our region even **Greater**.

***Greater Sarasota** is produced by WEDU PBS in partnership with the Community Foundation of Sarasota County, with generous funding from the Muriel O'Neil Fund.*

[Please visit greater.wedu.org/press for promotional photos and toolkit assets for Greater Sarasota.](http://greater.wedu.org/press)

ABOUT WEDU PBS

WEDU is West Central Florida's PBS station reaching 16 counties through media platforms including on-air programming and online experiences that broaden horizons, transport and transform and open gateways to new ideas and new worlds. Financially supported by the community, the organization offers a wealth of award-winning inspirational, educational and enlightening content over a variety of multi-media platforms including: television programming, station website, www.wedu.org and various social media platforms, monthly member magazine *Premiere*, educational outreach activities and a myriad of special events. WEDU's focus on the local community has resulted in the station being regarded as a beacon of trust for men, women and children of every walk of life no matter their age, ethnicity or socio-economic status. WEDU is a treasured community resource; a window to the world for the homebound and a vital educational source for the youngest members of society. WEDU prides itself on its position in the Tampa Bay community as a leader, partner, informed citizen and a member of PBS, the most trusted institution in America (ORC International's DualFrame CARAVAN, January 2019). For more information, program schedules or to support WEDU visit www.wedu.org; WEDU Public Media on Facebook and Twitter (@wedupbs) or call (813) 254-9338.

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