

What You “Need to Know” About H el ene Biandudi Hofer

SAVE THE DATE

Review the volunteer opportunities below, save the date & be sure to join us!

UPCOMING EVENTS

2016 OPEN HOUSE
SAT., SEPT. 24th
WXXI Studios

WXXI will host its 2016 Open House on Sept. 24th. This event is a great way to show the community what WXXI has to offer! Introduce kids to PBS characters, point folks in the right direction and simply be yourself. Wear a smile —and a comfy pair of shoes! More details to follow this summer.

NEW MEMBERSHIP PERKS

WXXI PASSPORT
\$60+/yr. Members

At \$60+/year, you can access current or prior episodes of your most beloved WXXI and PBS programs. Learn how. Call (585) 258-0200.

CONTACT

Want to volunteer? Have questions? Email Carolyn Reynolds via volunteer@WXXI.org.

Thanks to Mark Becker and Christine G. Adamo for this newsletter.



H el ene Biandudi Hofer
Host & Producer, “Need to Know”
Thursdays 8pm | Sundays 11:30am

You may recognize H el ene (pronounced “Heh-jen”) Biandudi Hofer. The Host of “Need to Know” was recognized by The Teen Empowerment Center in May and covers a broad range of topics, often bringing together subject-matter experts and local folks impacted by the stories she presents. Here are a few things worth knowing about H el ene, “Need to Know” and your impact on both.

Who’s on the “Need to Know” team?

Martin Kaufman is Videographer, Editor and Producer. The “Need to Know” Director is Kris Nestle. News Director Randy Gorbman and Sr. VP of TV & News Elissa Orlando are also involved. I bounce story ideas off of them, they sometimes bring ideas to me and we get together to brainstorm ideas from time to time.

What value does NTK bring to the table?

“Need to Know” is a news magazine program, so we’re not talking about a topic for 2 min. We can spend anywhere from 8-15 min. or an entire show on a specific issue that impacts the Rochester region. This enables people to say, “I have a better idea of what this means for the community.”

It’s a chance to dig in, reveal the many layers

of a diverse group of topics (and) get to the bottom of why they matter. We also cover the arts and lighter stories, because there are a lot of heavy things going on in the world.

We really work to offer a blend of stories, so that there’s a nice balance of topics. The goal is to help you feel enlightened, impassioned and then interested in being part of the change; in doing something to address a particular topic.

Where do you find inspiration or topics?

I bounce ideas off of Randy, Elissa and Marty. They’ve given me great trust, allowing me to look at issues within our region and then run with them. Sometimes we decide to wait a few months until we can get good footage, good access and great interviews.

But the ideas come from everywhere. I may be watching a national news program (of interest locally). I’ll look into what further relevance it has and whether it’s been covered already. If it has, I ask myself if it can be covered differently or whether there was another angle to the story the community would benefit from.

People will (also) call or email and say, “I saw that you did this story and I thought this topic may be of interest of you.” We’ll vet it, asking: “Is this something that’ll work for us?”

There’s no shortage of things to cover. I have an editorial calendar with 100 ideas on it. I like to do three main topics per show. I look at that calendar and think, “This would make a great first segment. This works for the second. How about this one for the third?”



H el ene, pictured with Michele Norris, in March 2016.

What You “Need to Know” About H el ene (cont’d. – pg. 2 of 2)

WAYS TO TRULY SHINE AT WXXI

Volunteer@WXXI.org

Volunteers play a BIG role at WXXI — often the 1st point of contact for guests in studio, at The Little, at festivals and more. Review this list and join in the fun!

- ◆ As a docent, lead tours of WXXI.
- ◆ As a ReachOut Radio announcer, read to those with impaired vision.
- ◆ As a Radio or TV Pledge volunteer, process pledges.
- ◆ As a greeter or ticket taker, help out at The Little.
- ◆ As a greeter/guide, enjoy the WXXI Open House.
- ◆ As booth staff, hand out freebies at area festivals.
- ◆ ... or share your opinions on the VLC or another committee!

Contact Carolyn to find out about the range of opportunities available.

2016 is your year to shine!

WXXI values your help and brings you lots of opportunities to shine brightly. Ask Carolyn Reynolds for details!

I run into people at events, as well. We strike up a conversation. I find out what they’re doing or an initiative they’re working on. I’ll follow up and, boom, there’s a story! In the back of my mind is always, “Why should you hear about it and what is it you ‘Need to Know’?”

Why are partnerships important?

Partnerships (are) important for me and “Need to Know” because they open up an arena of stories that some mainstream media outlets neglect to cover.

They give us access to stories we may not have access to otherwise — incredible stories people should hear about. Our partners have this knowledge base and areas of expertise I don’t know anything about or our team may not know about.

It’s bridge-building that enables us to focus in on topics which need to be covered. And I absolutely love the “Move to Include” initiative. I’ve learned so much from it and viewers get so much from it. Outside agencies have so many ideas and they share them with us.

How long have you been with WXXI?

I joined WXXI in the Fall of 2010, after having worked on the CBS program “48 Hours: Mystery” in New York City. When I started, I was the Host of “All Things Considered.”

In addition, I produced radio packages and TV segments for “Need to Know.” In January 2013, I officially took over as Host/Producer. The program is my primary focus at WXXI.

Can we help promote NTK or be involved?

Yes. And yes! It’s funny because I still have people say to me, “Oh, I listen to you!” I still do write and produce morning spots or stories, but they don’t know I’ve transitioned over to the TV side.

WXXI volunteers are essential. They can help us spread the word and let people know about what we do. They can share information about the topics we cover. As for getting involved, it goes back to story ideas. Any ideas, any topics or any areas of interest – please, let me know what your ideas are and what it is you’d

like to see on “Need to Know.” What I’d also love to hear is:

- What do you like about the program?
- What’s good about “Need to Know”?
- And, what could be improved?

It’s important to hear what people enjoy about the program and which stories or interviews they view as informative. On the flipside, it’s also imperative that I know what people don’t like and am aware of any changes they may want to see.

Volunteer feedback and constructive criticism helps us produce a more valuable program.

If you could invite anyone on the show, who would it be and why?

People have been phenomenal, in terms of granting us access and coming on the show. Guest choices usually come down to issues we want to ensure are covered. I can tell you about an interview I did not too long ago for the show. It was one I’ve always wanted to do.

It was a discussion with area teens, covering topics of national and local importance — from their perspectives. This is a group we simply don’t hear from enough, yet the community benefits when the voices of our youth are heard. We had four teens from Rochester on that show. It’s definitely one of my favorites!



Tell H el ene what *she* needs to know: What matters to you? How can “Need to Know” be improved? Email HBiandudi@wxxi.org. Post comments on Facebook via the WXXI News page. On Twitter, use #ntkwxxi when tweeting.