

**PRESS RELEASE:**

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## **WFAE and Charlotte Mecklenburg Library to Produce Community Podcast Training with \$20,000 from Reemprise Fund**

**Charlotte, N.C. (Dec. 18, 2019)** – In January, WFAE and the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library will launch the Queen City PodQuest Workshop Series and Academy, made possible by a \$20,000 grant from the Reemprise Fund.

The program will offer beginner podcast workshops at 10 library branches across Mecklenburg County to reach racially, geographically and socio-economically diverse audiences. Workshop participants also will be eligible to take part in more advanced podcast training through the academy, which will help them develop their podcast ideas and create a trailer for their podcasts, which can help them attract audiences and potentially find financial support.

This new podcast training series builds on the WFAE’s very successful “Queen City PodQuest,” a community-wide podcast competition designed to inspire Charlotte-area residents to tell their own stories. In 2019, that program drew nearly 400 entries, and 36,000 supporters who voted for their favorite ideas with close to 100,000 votes.

“Based on the overwhelming response from the PodQuest, we knew we needed to do more to support community-based storytelling,” said Ju-Don Marshall, WFAE’s chief content officer. “We believe that everyone has a story to tell and that while the media plays an important role in telling those stories and providing the larger context for them, we are not the only way for communities to share their truths. These workshops are designed to empower residents to take ownership of their own narratives and in the process build connections to the larger community.”

Podcast workshops will start in early 2020. Advance training sessions will begin in the spring and continue through the summer. The program will culminate in the fall with a podcast festival with debuts of podcast trailers from academy participants. The festival would also include live recordings, panel discussions and vendors.

“WFAE and the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library are both committed to the community’s success in providing quality information as well as providing the tools and experiences that lead to further learning and expression,” said Seth Ervin, Charlotte Mecklenburg Library’s chief innovation officer. “The Library has been providing podcast kits to the public since 2018, and we are excited about this partnership as a natural value-added extension of that service.”

Charlie Elberson, trustee of Reemprise Fund, a donor-advised fund held at Foundation For The Carolinas, said, “WFAE has long been a highly respected and important organization in our community. With the new energy and emphasis, they’re fostering meaningful relationships through podcasting. I knew this was a timely and hyper-relevant opportunity to help strengthen connection.

Plus, our investment helps support the synergy of partnership with the Library. It's been a remarkably easy decision for Reemprise and I'm proud to be involved."

### **About WFAE**

WFAE 90.7 FM is a nonprofit public radio station, licensed to the University Radio Foundation Inc. With 90.3 in Hickory, 106.1 in Laurinburg and 93.7 in Southern Pines, WFAE serves more than 320,000 monthly listeners and 200,000 monthly readers in the greater Charlotte region with an award-winning mix of local, national and international news, and entertainment programs from NPR® and other content partners. Listen online at [WFAE.org](http://WFAE.org).

### **About Charlotte Mecklenburg Library**

Charlotte Mecklenburg Library is one of America's leading urban public libraries, serving a community of more than one million citizens in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina. Through 20 locations, targeted outreach and online resources, the Library delivers exceptional services and programs, with a mission to improve lives and build a stronger community. For more, visit [cmlibrary.org](http://cmlibrary.org).

### **About Reemprise Fund**

The Reemprise Fund is a donor-advised fund held at Foundation For The Carolinas. Its goal is to apply focused resources toward specific opportunities that have the prospect of being leverageable in generating defined impacts. It supports initiatives that reflect creative thinking about a need, problem or opportunity, and that propel an organization and its audience in in profound ways.

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