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UpNorth Media Center to rebrand as Traverse Area Community Media

After 10 years, the name change reflects new program offerings for the region’s public-access media center amid an ever-evolving media landscape.

TRAVERSE CITY, Mich. – May 23, 2019 – The public-access television and video training center for northwest Lower Michigan is taking on some new program offerings — and a new name.

Traverse Area Community Media will replace the former UpNorth Media Center brand that has been in use for the past decade of operations under the nonprofit Land Information Access Association (LIAA) in Traverse City. According to leaders there, the name change is part of a natural evolution for the center and its programming as the media landscape continues to change.

“Since we introduced the media center in 2009, the ‘up north’ brand has proliferated in our region, even in commercial television,” said Matthew Kern, station manager for Traverse Area Community Media. “And when locals talk about ‘up north,’ we’re talking about the U.P., not our own backyards. We listened to our users and partners about the confusion this can cause, and we wanted to employ a name that is more direct and straight to the point.”

One lynchpin for the new name is the word “community,” which Kern says captures the essence of media center operations and also helps to differentiate public-access media from commercial channels and other non-commercial outlets like PBS.

“Public-access television and media are hyper-local; they are made by the local community and for the local community in which they serve,” Kern said. “We want our name to help spread that awareness right up front.”

Kern noted that the use of “Traverse Area” encompasses the local governments that make the Community Media operation possible — including the City of Traverse City and the Charter Townships of East Bay, Elmwood and Garfield — as well as the larger cable television viewing area, which serves both the Grand Traverse and Little Traverse regions.

Traverse Area Community Media is taking advantage of the name change to also roll out several new class offerings, from using your smart phone for video productions to lessons in documentary filmmaking.

“Congress created public-access television in the 1970s to give local citizens access to the same powerful media tools and outlets that are enjoyed by the government and commercial interests,” Kern said. “Today, technology is spreading out that playing field in new and exciting directions, and we’re working to keep Traverse Area Community Media at the heart of that, ready to teach and help.”

Kern said that the first big public rollout of the new Traverse Area Community Media brand will be during this year’s traditional live broadcast of the Cherry Royale Parade on July 6 at the National Cherry Festival. Viewers can watch the parade in its entirety on cable channel 189 and online at TACM.tv.

For information on classes, trainings and volunteer opportunities with Traverse Area Community Media, please call 231-929-4188 or visit www.TACM.tv.

About Traverse Area Community Media

Traverse Area Community Media (formerly the UpNorth Media Center) is the cablecast and online home of community media in northwest Lower Michigan, teaching local citizens how to use video to celebrate local culture, share community information, and provide educational content for the world to see.

Traverse Area Community Media provides video production facilities, equipment, training, and airtime on cable channel 189 for public use. Traverse Area Community Media additionally operates government-access TV services on cable channel 191 for four contributing municipalities, including Traverse City and the charter townships of Garfield, East Bay and Elmwood. Grand Traverse County also broadcasts many of its public meetings on channel 191. Online and on-demand viewing of both channels are available at www.TACM.tv.

Based in Traverse City, Traverse Area Community Media is hosted and operated by LIAA, a nonprofit civic engagement organization. To learn more about classes, volunteer opportunities and the many ways you can take advantage of community media, please call 231-929-4188 or visit www.TACM.tv.

About LIAA

Founded in 1993, the Land Information Access Association (LIAA) is a federally approved 501(c)3 nonprofit civic engagement organization that helps people make Michigan communities even better places to live, work and play.

Headquartered in Traverse City, LIAA provides innovative community-building and support services for governments, organizations and individual citizens across the state, including community planning and development; website, software and database development and IT support; geographic information systems (GIS) and mapping; community-access media and video production; natural resource management; and related training and education.

To learn more about LIAA, please call 231-929-3696 or visit www.liaa.org.