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Community Access Television (CATV)

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CATV'S Executive Director to Retire

Robert (Bob) Franzoni of Community Access Television (CATV) has announced his plans to retire in May 2017, following 24 years of service to the organization. Located in White River Jct, VT., CATV serves the towns of Hartford, Hartland and Norwich, VT; and Hanover and Lebanon, NH. A PEG (Public, Educational, and Government Access) channel airing on local 8 and 10, CATV allows the community to debate local issues, showcase artistic expression and celebrate school and community happenings.

Bob Franzoni started working at CATV in 1993. Under his direction, CATV has invested heavily in the educational component of PEG (Public, Educational, and Government Access) and is the only PEG station that airs and receives funding from multiple states.

A teacher at Thetford Academy in Vermont for fifteen years, Franzoni's background in education led him to bring CATV to what it is today. He first became involved with the organization when the Norwich, VT select board asked him to act on the CATV Board of Directors—Franzoni took the position of Technical Director in 1993 and Executive Director in 2005.

One of the initial programs Franzoni started was teaching video production to the students at the Hartford Area Career Technology Center (HACTC). A 2005 move from Hanover, NH to CATV's current home at the Tip Top Building in White River Junction, VT gained the station another channel specifically for educational offerings and provided the opportunity for expansion. (The idea for a public access television channel started in the town of Hanover, NH and CATV's initial location was in a room in the old Hanover Library at Hanover High School). With the move to White River Junction, Franzoni transformed CATV's offerings to include a range of educational opportunities including video camps, in-school programs, and annual video competitions, offered in partnership with organizations across the Upper Valley. In addition, he led CATV from being the smallest station in Vermont to becoming the fifth largest station in the state.

Sophie Bodnar, Assistant Director at CATV, states: "Bob Franzoni has exhibited unwavering commitment to bringing diverse media education opportunities to the Upper Valley. From summer

video camps, in-school elective programs, and annual community film competitions, Bob has developed education programs that encourage creativity, community, leadership, and fun both inside and outside the traditional classroom. Bob has created a culture at CATV that values collaborative education opportunities for media makers of any age."

One of many projects Franzoni has spearheaded is instructing the Hartland, VT students in video studies. Developed initially as an afterschool offering, this program shifted to become a class offering at the school and the students have participated in a variety of opportunities attending media related conferences and events. The class recently participated in the Alliance for Community Media Annual Conference in Boston, MA. Jeff Moreno, former principal of Hartland Elementary School states: "At Hartland Elementary School we believe in developing the whole child and CATV presents a great way for us to accomplish that mission. Our CATV students confidence, speaking skills, planning skills, and collaborative skills are a few of the aspects of the program we have noticed improve the most through working with CATV."

An important component of CATV is giving the community the ability to watch programming after an event has occurred. Public programs are streamed online and aired on channels 8 and 10, and CATV currently has over 5,000 programs available for viewing. CATV gives community members the opportunity to produce their own shows as well as the ability to view Upper Valley events such as local readings, talks and presentations by other organizations. Linda Carbino, CATV Board Member, is a producer of a self-advocacy and awareness show called *Walking Through Life*. Carbino started her show in 2005 after sharing her ideas with Franzoni and calls him "a great mentor" and states that his "love for CATV is obvious and outstanding."

CATV also provides the opportunity for the community to watch government meetings live and on demand. Taped meetings include school board, select board and town council meetings.

In announcing his plans to retire, Franzoni says that he "would like to thank everyone who made CATV what it is today from the original Board of Directors, to all the volunteers, the government boards, the staff and all the students. I will miss you all and especially our current staff members."

About CATV:

Community Access Television (CATV) serves the towns of Hartford, Hartland and Norwich, Vermont and Hanover and Lebanon, New Hampshire. CATV allows us to debate local issues, showcase artistic expression and celebrate school and community happenings. CATV also provides access to local political issues through the recording of government meetings.

CATV is a community building organization that enables open public dialogue and government transparency by providing access to the expanding world of media.