



# Jesse White Awards More Than \$365,000 in Radio Information Service Grants

by Chris Rhodes, Reporter  
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*Funds Provide Support for Radio Stations for Residents with Print Disabilities*

Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White awarded \$365,449 in FY20 Radio Information Service (RIS) grants. The RIS grants support 11 radio stations, ensuring that Illinois residents who are unable to read standard print material due to a disability have equal access to information published in newspapers and magazines.

“By providing audio versions of printed material, residents who have visual or physical disabilities can access printed information for educational, informational and recreational purposes,” said White. “The service keeps people engaged in their local communities.”

RIS-grant recipients include:

- MindsEye Radio in Belleville: \$51,777
- Southern Illinois University in Carbondale: \$21,353
- Chicago Lighthouse in Chicago: \$68,599
- Northern Illinois University in DeKalb: \$28,273
- Lewis and Clark Community College in Godfrey: \$17,438
- Western Illinois University in Macomb: \$36,968
- Wabash Valley College in Mount Carmel: \$27,185
- Bradley University in Peoria: \$27,550
- Augustana College in Rock Island: \$27,700
- University of Illinois at Springfield: \$28,455
- University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign: \$30,151

Many informational service programs are broadcast daily and include hours of local programming. Local newspapers are read and usually include pieces of news not generally heard in typical news broadcasts. A variety of topics are available including comics, grocery ads and obituaries. RIS stations also produce public affairs programs and listener call-in shows. Programs are broadcast on a special radio called a sideband receiver. These receivers are distributed at no cost to qualified recipients. Anyone who has a visual or physical disability that impairs his or her ability to read may be eligible to obtain the radio.

For more information about the Radio Information Service, contact Sharon Ruda at 217-782-9435 or [SRuda@ilsos.gov](mailto:SRuda@ilsos.gov). Information also is available at: <http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/TBBS/ris.html>.