

DONOR STORY

Laetitia Mizero Hellerud

Born in Burundi, a country in East Africa, Laetitia spent her early days living as a refugee in France, Rwanda and Burkina Faso. Her family resettled in the United States in the fall of 1998, and she has lived in North Dakota since. She married Mark, a Minnesota native, and their blended family includes two adult children, Yann and Nicole, and a springer spaniel named Laurel.

Laetitia currently works for the Jeremiah Program Fargo-Moorhead Campus, a holistic program whose mission is to disrupt the cycle of poverty for single mothers and their children, two generations at a time. She also serves on one of the Minnesota Public Radio (MPR) Regional Advisory Boards.

Laetitia has been a dedicated listener and member of MPR for decades.

“I don’t know exactly when I joined MPR as a member, all I know is that it happened as soon as I *could* do it,” said Laetitia. “I lived paycheck to paycheck for many years as a single mom, but as soon as I had a little extra money, I started giving back to the community that had supported me as a new transplant. MPR was one of the entities I started supporting early in my philanthropic journey mostly because of how I connected to much of the programming.”

Laetitia says she enjoys listening to almost anything on MPR, but she is an avid consumer of the news. As someone who likes to travel and has lived in multiple countries, *BBC World Service* and *BBC News Hour* help her stay connected to what is happening in other parts of the world. She also enjoys listening to



(Credit: Lens View Studio)

In Focus particularly because she gets to hear multiple hosts take turns exploring a particular issue in depth. She finds the *TED Radio Hour* not only informative, but inspiring. As a writer, she loves listening to *Talking Volumes* with Kerri Miller and for comic relief, she enjoys *Wait, Wait...Don't Tell Me* with Peter Sagal.

While listening, she often finds her story reflected in many of the diverse voices featured by MPR.

“As a Black, female, former refugee, someone who has lived in poverty, overcame several life hurdles, and is now considered “established” I often hear stories that speak to one of my many identities or life experiences. Anytime that happens, I am reminded that I am not alone, for better or worse.”

Laetitia says she always feels better informed and better connected after listening to MPR programming that she trusts for accurate, up-to-date, and balanced information. “I am simply grateful that we have such quality public radio with eclectic, inclusive and forward-thinking programming.