

December 9, 2024

Behind the Scenes at LTVEH: A Conversation with Executive Director Michael D. Clark

by [Shay Siegel](#) in [Featured, Spotlight](#)



LTVEH Executive Director Michael D. Clark with Operations Manager

Ellen Watson | Photo by Phil Merritt

LTVEH (Local TV, Inc. East Hampton) is a non-profit organization serving the East End with public access television, live events and entertainment, and educational programs. The organization has become a staple for quality content and media in the Hamptons and is made possible by the community who supports them.

LTVEH has several upcoming performances with Playwrights' Theatre of East Hampton that showcase local talents. They also host the celebrated broadcast series East End Underground, along with other events, educational programs, and endeavors. LTV has a summer intern program where students can learn about filmmaking and broadcast, they have a community intern project in partnership with East Hampton High School that focuses on local impact and issues, and they offer a community scholarship for high school seniors pursuing education in film, media, broadcast, or radio. More information about their events, programs, and education can be found on the LTV website.

Executive Director of LTVEH, Michael Clark spoke more about what LTVEH is all about, its history and mission, and how the community can get involved.

What is LTVEH all about and what is the mission?

MC: Local TV, Inc. (LTV) is a 501(c)3 Not-For-Profit Public Access Television Station. We allocate channel space and time to East Hampton Town residents, non-profit organizations, educators, and governmental bodies to cablecast their programs. We record and live broadcast the meetings of the East Hampton Town and Village Boards, Zoning Boards, Review Boards, Trustees & School Boards. LTV began taping Town Board Meetings in 1980. By the time LTV was incorporated in 1984, the government and the people had grown to depend on the camera and the Town Board Meetings became LTV's most watched show.

LTV's overall goal continues to be to ensure public access to quality content and media services that educate, inform, and enlighten. We encourage community participation in media services focused primarily on East Hampton town. We also provide event and performance space for community theater, musical events, forums, lectures, and other activities that benefit and educate the East End community. We are home to the Playwrights' Theatre of East Hampton and the yearly Hamptons Festival of Music. We are also the community performance space for South Fork Performing Arts and Our Fabulous Variety Show.

Can you talk a bit about the history of LTV?

MC: LTV began taping as many Town Board Meetings as possible in 1980 and utilized a garage by the Town Dump as the first studio. By the time LTV was incorporated in 1984, the government and the people had grown to depend on the camera and the Town Board Meetings became LTV's most watched show. Judith Hope was the first Supervisor to really recognize the benefit of LTV taping meetings and Tony Bullock was the first Supervisor to host a show: *On the Line With the Supervisor*. The schools also got involved. The East Hampton High School Bonac Broadcasting aired games and a news show, the student produced Springs School In Action aired weekly. Students came to LTV on field trips and many high school and Southampton College students signed on as interns.

In 1992, LTV embarked on an ambitious fund drive and relocated to its present location on Industrial Road in Wainscott. Here, on land leased from the Town, a huge building went up, which today houses editing suites, “talk show” style studios, a well equipped kitchen studio, a tech shop, the archive library and Studio 3, a large, free-form “black box” for public forums and performance dedicated to the late Frances Ann Dougherty for her financial support.

Can you discuss your background a bit and how you got started with LTV?

MC: I have been at LTV since October of 2019, so I just reached my 5-year anniversary. Prior to that, my family owned and operated Crossroads Music—an instrument and music education store that started in East Hampton then moved to Amagansett before closing in 2016. I was already a producer at LTV, so I interviewed for the Executive Director job and was lucky enough to be selected.

How has LTV evolved since you started as Executive Director?

Hamptons Festival of Music in Studio 3 Performance I Photo by Phil Merritt

MC: In the past 5 years, LTV has grown significantly in community participation and facility use. We now boast 7 working studios including our large Studio 3, which is unmatched in size, scope, and flexible use on the East End of Long Island.

Why do you think LTV is so important to the East End community?

MC: As outlined by our founder, Frazer Dougherty 40 years ago, LTV is “By the People, For the People” and those words speak volumes.

LTV programs more shows per week than any other public access station on Long Island. LTV belongs to the people of this town. And thanks to the Founders, LTV’s Board of Directors, the forward thinking of East Hampton Town and Village, and countless producers and volunteers over the years, we do today what we promised to do 40 years ago in providing our community access to its own television channel on which they can connect and create for the community.

In LTV’s archive there are over 25,000 tapes created by the people of East Hampton ranging from serious debate to the eccentric and experimental. These tapes document a more than 40-year span of the life of a town that has seen enormous changes. LTV is now in partnership with the East Hampton Library in digitizing this important historical local programming and making it available to all.

The website www.ltveh.org provides live streaming of both channels. Everything you need or want to know about LTV is also there – including a Producers’ Portal with everything a producer needs to start cablecasting their show on LTV. We also host a busy YouTube channel displaying our meetings, shows, and recorded events.

That is just the benefit on the studio show side of the house. We also have affordable space available for public forums, films, debates, and performances. Some of these events are filmed and displayed on our channels. This has proven important so other community organizations can highlight and communicate their important work.

Can you highlight any past events or programs that stood out?

Kenny Harris and Bosco Michne taping an East End Underground session in Studio 1 I Photo by Michael Clark

MC: There are many but my favorite (and a community favorite) is “East End Underground.” It started in 2015 by our Operations Manager, Ellen Watson, and me to promote local musical acts. With the help of staff members, Jason Nower and Jody Gambino, we’ve produced close to 100 shows highlighting the amazing musical talent on the East End and beyond. They are all available for viewing on the LTV YouTube channel.

How would you encourage the community to get involved or show their support for LTV?

MC: There are many involvement opportunities available on many different levels at LTV. The most obvious is to have your own show or get involved with the development of other shows. If you are a resident of the Town of East Hampton or the Town of Southampton, you can produce your own show for a nominal fee to get your message out to the local community.

You can be involved in our Intern Programs either as an intern or as a volunteer. You can also volunteer for assisting on events held at LTV and your volunteerism gets you free access to that event.

As a 501(c)3, we are always seeking sponsors and underwriters for our shows. You’d be supporting the community and LTV through this tax-deductible support. If you are more “hands on”, you can submit your name to be considered for our Board of Directors and be involved in the strategic and creative plans. We’d love to have you on board.

To learn more about LTV, their programs, and how to get involved, [click here](#).