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Bill Lueth to Retire from Classical California SF

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Bill Lueth, president of Classical California San Francisco, will retire at the end of June, concluding a 38-year career in radio focused on expanding the reach of classical music broadcasting.

Lueth has played a key role in the growth of classical radio in California, helping transition the format into a broader public media service with a wider and more diverse audience. He has spent nearly three decades in leadership roles at KDFC-FM and has worked closely with KUSC-FM over the past 15 years.

During his tenure, Lueth helped bring KDFC and KUSC together into a unified broadcast and digital platform. The combined network now reaches more than 2 million listeners, making it the largest classical music radio service in the U.S.

Lueth began his career in 1986 at KUCV-FM in Lincoln, NE, and later joined San Francisco's KKHI-FM as a morning host and program director. He also held news roles at KPIX-FM and CBS Television before joining KDFC in 1997, where he helped the station become the highest-rated music outlet in the San Francisco market by 1999.

Following KDFC's acquisition by the University of Southern California in 2011, Lueth was named president and oversaw its transition to a nonprofit model. He later led a \$7.5 million fundraising campaign to expand coverage into San Jose and Silicon Valley and directed the integration of programming with KUSC.

He was inducted into the Bay Area Radio Hall of Fame in 2021 and has received multiple National Association of Broadcasters Marconi Awards for excellence in classical radio.