

N.C. State Student Media 2011-2012 Annual Report

Submitted by Jamie Lynn Gilbert, assistant coordinator

Summary

- In September 2011, Student Media acquired much-needed square footage from the former Student Government offices on the third floor of Witherspoon. This helped to alleviate the space concerns presented in the 2010-2011 annual report.
- The director and systems administrator positions were reclassified at a higher pay rate and the business manager and office manager positions are in consideration for a reclassification and pay raise. This increase in professional staff salaries for two and potentially four of the six full-time positions helps address our below-average salaries for professional staff members when compared to other Student Media our size across the nation, as presented in several previous annual reports.
- Our student staff members continue to be recognized at the national, regional and local level for the quality of the products they produce. The *Agromeck* yearbook was recognized by the Columbia Scholastic Press Association with a Gold Crown award and by the Associated Collegiate Press with a Pacemaker award, while *Windhover* literary and arts magazine was a Pacemaker finalist. *Independent Weekly* continues to name WKNC as the best college radio station in the Triangle. Just as critical, the students produced 154 issues of the daily newspaper, a 312-page yearbook, 20 issues of the weekly newspaper, a literary and arts magazine, kept a 25,000-watt radio station on the air 24/7/365 and produced numerous videos and photo slideshows all while engaging with interested readers, listeners and viewers via their websites and social media.
- Student Media will need a student fee increase in 2013-2014 to maintain its current level of operation and restore funding for the full-time production assistant position. We anticipate using our reserve fund to cover some \$20,146 in expenditures exceeding revenues in 2011-2012 and another \$78,135 in expenditures exceeding revenues in 2012-2013. Without a fee increase in 2013-2014 we will be unable to maintain the recommended cash reserve by the end of that fiscal year. If we continue without any fee increase we will have a negative cash balance by 2015-2016.

I. Programs

A total 330 students spent time with one or more of the Student Media at some point during the 2011-2012 academic year. At the end of the spring 2012 semester, 270 students remained in our records. *Technician* and WKNC maintain the largest staffs, with well over 100 students at any given time.

Technician produced 154 of 155 scheduled issues, failing to put out a newspaper the day before Homecoming because of a server failure. The staff also produced two "Red" special sections for football and basketball and a 9/11 10th anniversary issue. Fall 2011 advertising accounted for

27% of the average day's newspaper, while spring 2012 advertising averaged 28.17% of the paper's content. Spring 2011 averaged only 19% ads, so this marked a significant improvement. By the end of the spring semester, *Technician* had billed more than \$311,000 for print and online advertising. Statistics on deadlines, corrections, stories per page, and sources per story were discontinued this year. We printed 11,500 copies per day at a cost of about \$2,059 per issue including payroll, supplies, etc. in a budget of \$318,720.

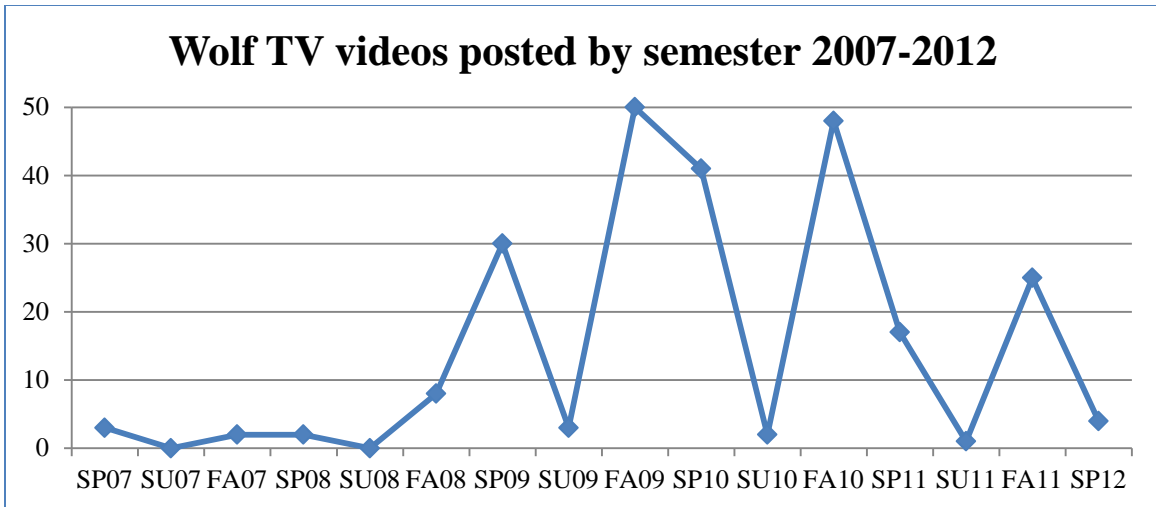
Taylor Cashdan and Sean Fairholm were first-time recipients of the *Technician* grant, while the grant was renewed for the fall for Joshua Chappell, Jeniece Jamison, Brooke Shafranek and Brooke Wallig. Jamison and Wallig were also renewed for spring 2012. There was much discussion as to the value of continuing the program, but we decided to continue it for at least another year and heavily advertise it to incoming students to help achieve the grant's original goal as a long-term recruitment and retention tool.

On Oct. 18, 2011 *Technician* editor-in-chief Laura Wilkinson received an email from the University of Maryland *Diamondback* editor claiming *Technician* viewpoint columnist Dileep Karpur had plagiarized a column published in the *Diamondback* four days prior. Investigation by Wilkinson, managing editor Taylor Cashdan and Student Media production assistant Tyler Dukes found blatant instances of plagiarism in all of Karpur's published columns. Karpur was subsequently terminated from staff and referred to Student Conduct. Because the plagiarism occurred outside the classroom, Student Conduct refused to take any action.

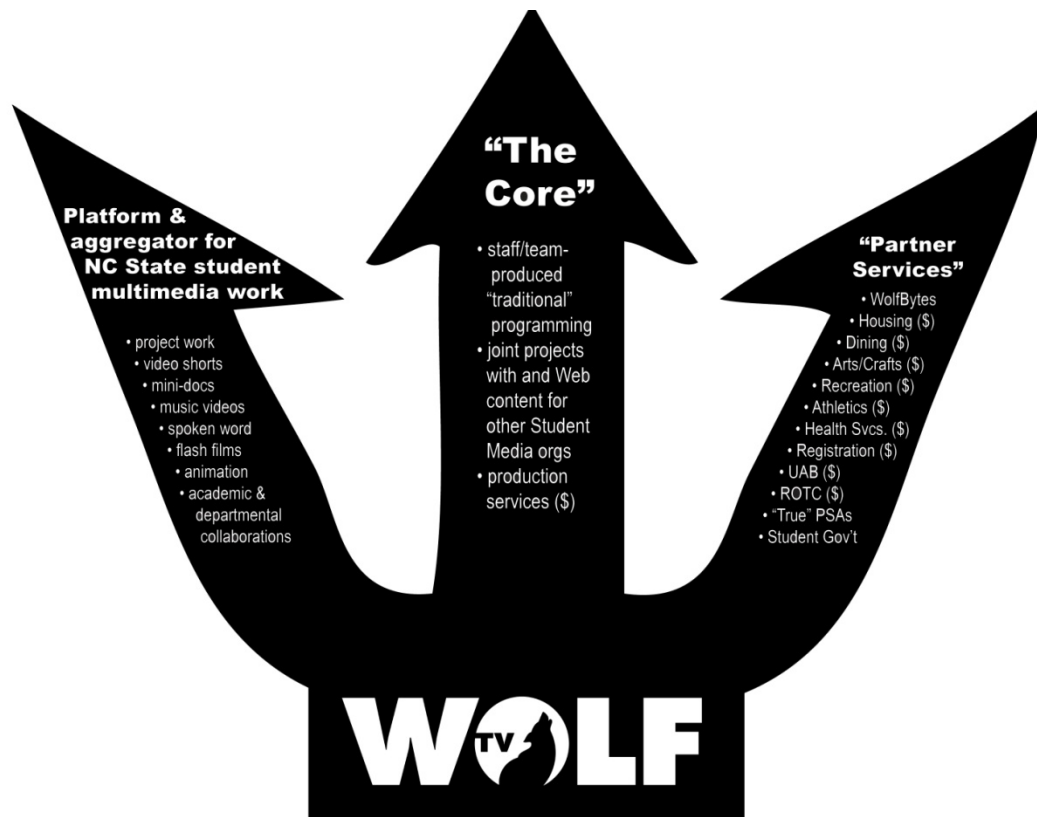
Technician received state and national recognition in photography, writing and design. Luis Zapata earned the paper's second-ever first-place individual award from Associated Collegiate Press with an environmental portrait of David's Duck and Dumpling chef David Mao. Susannah Brinkley also placed first in the informational graphic category in the Best Collegiate Design 19 with a design that was also honored by the Associated Collegiate Press in its Design of the Year contest.

Nubian Message had a very successful year under Editor Cordera "C.J." Guion. Each of the planned 19 regular editions was produced as scheduled, along with a special Symposium issue to mark the beginning of the academic year. The weekly multi-cultural newspaper continued to expand its news coverage with articles on President Obama's visits to North Carolina, the Trayvon Martin shooting, Amendment One, and domestic violence. A newly designed website, thenubianmessage.com, earned a third place best in show award for online news sites from the North Carolina College Media Association. Guion kept the website updated outside the paper's traditional publication schedule with breaking news and reports on N.C. State's trip to the NCAA men's basketball tournament. The fall 2011 addition of a *Nubian Message*-focused sales representative to the Business Office proved very successful, quadrupling the newspaper's anticipated income for advertising revenue. Google AdSense has also been incorporated into thenubianmessage.com, which adds an additional revenue stream.

Wolf TV had the least prolific year since its affiliation with Student Media began in 2009-2010. Just 30 videos were posted by Wolf TV from May 2011 to April 2012. While upwards of 20 students were maintained on an interest list at any given time, only a handful completed the necessary paperwork to qualify as a Wolf TV volunteer or employee.



A good emphasis was placed on planning for the 2012-2013 year and outgoing Wolf TV station manager Kenneth Hertling, incoming station manager Maurizo Lewis, incoming *Technician* editor Mark Herring and Student Media Director Patrick Neal formulated a three-pronged approach to moving forward, defining Wolf TV's core mission, partner services and a plan to become a platform and aggregator for N.C. State student multimedia work. Material is currently being collected to air on the Wolf TV channel and online at ncsu.edu/wolftv. No revenue was realized for Wolf TV, but those partner services identified with a dollar sign (\$) could be future moneymaking opportunities for Wolf TV.



We printed and distributed 2,500 copies of *Windhover*. The 94-page publication contained prose, poetry, photography, fibers, illustration, graphic design and industrial design from N.C. State students, faculty, staff and alumni. The first 250 copies included an audio CD, while the rest had a bookmark with a download code allowing for a one-time download of the CD for those with an NCSU email address. Printing for the book by Theo Davis cost \$6.65 per copy. Included all budgeted items (personnel, supplies, etc.), the magazine cost \$9.73 per issue to produce. *Windhover* editor Alanna Howard and the Business Office developed a sponsorship package for the annual publication. Although no sponsorships were sold this year, the material is now all in place for 2012-2013.

The 2011 *Windhover*, edited by Mollie Mohr, was a Pacemaker finalist. The literary and arts magazine also earned individual awards from the North Carolina College Media Association.

Agromeck began the year with the May 2, 2011 resignation of Editor Stephanie Doss. The yearbook staff met the following day and decided Susannah Brinkley, 2010-2011 *Agromeck* editor, would remain in the editor position through June 30. Kathryn Glaser would begin duties as interim editor on July 1 until a permanent editor could be hired. The Student Media Board hired Glaser as permanent editor in September.

We printed 1,000 copies of the book using a dedicated \$0.50 in student fee money and distributed the copies free to graduating seniors. Initial distribution began with an April 23 reception in Witherspoon and continued with distribution events in Caldwell Lounge, D.H. Hill Library, Centennial Campus and the McKimmon Center.

A total of 1,399 names appeared in the 2012 *Agromeck*, with 591 students taking senior portraits. We calculated this number by taking the full index and then removing any entry not referencing a person. This is the second-lowest number of names in the book since 2004, but because it is unclear how names were counted in previous years the comparison may be invalid. Recalculating the number of names in the 2011 book using the same method, for example, produced 1,996 names instead of the 2,613 number reported in the last annual report.

- 2004: 1,491, 384 pages including directory
- 2005: 3,307, 416 pages including directory
- 2006: 2,907, 400 pages including directory
- 2007: 1,379, 272 pages (5.07/page)
- 2008: 1,487, 232 pages (6.40/page)
- 2009: 2,408, 328 pages (7.34/page)
- 2010: 2,604, 344 pages (7.57/page)
- 2011: 2,613, 376 pages (6.95/page)
- 2012: 1,399, 312 pages (4.48/page)

Agromeck met its \$9,000 advertising goal and sold 22 copies of the book.

Agromeck dominated awards competitions across the country in 2011-2012, winning a Pacemaker for the 2010 book edited by Michele Chandler and Bryant Robbins and a Gold Crown for Susannah Brinkley's 2011 book. The 2011 *Agromeck* is also a Pacemaker finalist and earned dozens of awards from the Associated Collegiate Press, Columbia Scholastic Press Association,

North Carolina College Media Association, College Media Association and the Society for Collegiate Journalists.

WKNC had a successful year under General Manager Molly Matty. Renovation of the main studio to take out the newsroom wall in July added much needed performance space and made the room handicap accessible. We broadcast live from "Wristband City" at the Hopscotch Music Festival for the first time and celebrated our 45th anniversary as 88.1 FM in October. A day party was added to Double Barrel Benefit and the popular Fridays on the Lawn concert series continued. The station's FCC license was renewed in December with no incidents. Technical problems presented themselves on Christmas Eve, which eventually resulted in decommission of our Comrex remote broadcasting unit and the installation of a new STL (studio-to-transmitter link).

WKNC continues to reduce its reliance on student fees. By the middle of May, WKNC raised more than \$42,000 of the \$51,100 in non-fee revenue budgeted. WKNC's revenue projections have doubled since Jamie Lynn Gilbert began as the station's first full-time adviser in May 2006 and its reliance on student fees from 61% of the total budget in 2006-2007 to just 14% of the total budget in 2011-2012.

WKNC was once again named best college radio station in the Triangle by the readers of *Independent Weekly* and was a finalist for best nonprofit radio station. The wknc.org website continues to receive national recognition from College Broadcasters, Inc. and the Society for Collegiate Journalists.

The Student Media Business Office put on a fall living expo, co-sponsored the spring housing fair and produced the spring living guide and fashion advertising insert. Krystal Pittman and Patrick Neal have partnered *Technician* with the Duke *Chronicle* and University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill's *Daily Tar Heel* to form a mini-advertising agency of sorts to allow for clients to purchase advertising in all three daily newspapers. The university power buy is expected to begin with the fall welcome back edition and will target North Carolina-based businesses like grocery store chains, department stores and car dealerships that do not traditionally advertise in college newspapers.

The Business Office is also launching a new marketing team this summer that will revitalize the Student Media brand. The team will handle all campus sales and work to better market Student Media by engaging campus departments, complete surveys to gather demographic information about our readers and listeners and help campus departments with event marketing.

II. Initiatives

The Brick has moved under the direct control of Student Government, with Student Media contracted for design work and ad sales.

Student recruitment and retention continues to be an important initiative. During the summer 2011 recruitment efforts:

- 335 individual students expressed interest in at least one medium during the recruitment period (down from 389 in 2010 and 399 in 2009).

- Reached 219 freshmen during New Student Orientation.
- Reached 19 new transfer students during transfer orientation.
- Reached 23 new graduate students during graduate orientation.
- Reached 74 students of indeterminate class status at Campus Crawl and the Student Media open house.
- Overall, 705 unique contacts were made with 335 students (down significantly from 905 contacts in 2010).
- 97 individuals attended the Student Media open house, making a new record. The previous highest attendance was 81 individuals in 2008.
 - 49 of the 97 individuals who attended the open house expressed interest at a prior recruitment effort (50 percent of open house attendees).
 - 34 of the 97 individuals who attended the open house joined a medium's staff (35 percent of open house attendees).
- The number of students contacted by an editor/manager by the Monday following each week's efforts was 95% during the five weeks of New Student Orientation and transfer orientation. This is by far the greatest compliance rate, likely due to the addition of a new editor's leadership training session that stressed the importance of recruitment and retention.
- 10 of the 26 individuals selected for the WKNC training class expressed interest at one of our recruitment efforts, with six attending the open house.
- 47 of the individuals who expressed an interest in Student Media joined the staff (14 percent, the average recruitment level from 2006-2011).
- 39 of those individuals who expressed an interest were retained (12 percent of total recruited, less than a percentage point above the average retention level from 2006-2011 and the highest level since 14 percent retention in 2007 and 2006).

Academic progress is another perpetual initiative. At the end of fall 2011, we had 229 students in our records, including volunteers. This number excluded any fall 2011 graduates. There were 151 students (66%) with greater than a 3.00 cumulative GPA, fulfilling one of the requirements for membership in the Society for Collegiate Journalists. There were 89 students (39%) with greater than a 3.50 GPA for the semester. This represents a steady increase of two to three percent each year since fall 2007. There were 18 students (8%) with a 4.00 GPA for the semester and 13 (6%) with a cumulative GPA of 4.00. There were six students with below a 2.00 cumulative GPA. Three are first semester freshman. In accordance with our policy, as amended in January 2010, "Such freshmen may, if they desire, be placed on probation for one semester and shall develop a plan in conjunction with their media adviser." Of the student leaders who are specifically targeted by the campus-wide policy: Two had below a 2.50 for the fall 2011 semester; Zero had below a 2.50 cumulative; and three had a 4.00 for the semester and three maintained a 4.00 cumulative.

At the end of spring 2012, we had 234 students in our records. This number excludes 37 spring 2012 graduates. There were 153 students (65%) with greater than a 3.00 cumulative GPA, fulfilling one of the requirements for membership in the Society for Collegiate Journalists. There were 90 students (38%) with greater than a 3.50 GPA for the semester. There were 23 students (10%) with a 4.00 GPA for the semester and 15 (6%) with a cumulative GPA of 4.00. There were five students with below a 2.00 cumulative, who will all be dismissed from staff until they meet the 2.00 minimum. Of those student leaders who are specifically targeted by the

campus-wide policy: Seven had below a 2.50 for the spring 2012 semester; Three had below a 2.50 cumulative; and four had a 4.00 for the semester and three maintain a 4.00 cumulative.

III. Diversity

Technician's Time Out for Diversity study was discontinued. *Nubian Message* hosted a panel discussion on diversity in the media in February.

IV. Staff

Systems Administrator Brian King left his position on July 1. The coordinator position was reclassified at the director level. Production Assistant Tyler Dukes announced he would be taking another job effective Nov. 4. This left three of six full-time staff positions vacant at one time.

Patrick Neal, associate director for Student Media at Clemson University, began his role as director of N.C. State Student Media on Dec. 6. His immediate priority was a reclassification of the systems administrator position as a technology support analyst and an official employee of Student Affairs Technology Services. Douglas Flowers began working March 1. The production assistant position will remain vacant for at least the 2012-2013 year while we request a student fee increase.

Assistant Coordinator and WKNC adviser Jamie Lynn Gilbert was honored as a College Media Advisers Honor Roll Adviser for Four-Year Broadcast at the National College Media Convention in October. She was one of seven honorees this year and one of only 13 broadcast advisers to ever be recognized by CMA. At the convention Jamie and Richard Gainey of Ohio Northern University presented the session "50 Valuable Broadcast Websites in 50 Minutes." Jamie, WKNC Program Director Mason Morris and Lisa Marshall of Muskingum University also presented "From Classroom to Airwaves: Training the New Student DJ." Jamie was also reelected to another three-year term as College Broadcasters, Inc. secretary.

Business Office Manager Krystal Pittman led two roundtable discussions, "Getting along with editorial" and "Strategies for circulation" at the College Newspaper Business & Advertising Managers (CNBAM) conference in Miami in March. Students Susannah Brinkley and Alex Sanchez also led courses in design and photography and design at the North Carolina Scholastic Media Institute in June 2011, while Alex and Production Assistant Tyler Dukes taught at Virginia Tech's JCAMP in July.

V. Recommendations and Concerns for Future

Budget remains a primary concern for Student Media. The first area significantly impacting overall expenditures budgeted for 2012-2013 is EPA and SPA salaries. The salaries for the Director and Systems Administrator positions were increased in 2011-2012 in order to hire top tier candidates. A reclassification of two SPA staff positions has been proposed for 2012-2013 in light of expanded duties and expectations for the Business Manager and Office Manager positions, in order to prevent having to create an additional position. Altogether, those salary changes, including associated benefits costs, will have a net impact of approximately \$48,000 annually from 2012-13 forward. We are requesting a fee increase in 2013-2014 to provide a

permanent, ongoing funding stream for these needed staffing changes. Until that time, increased expenditures in EPA and SPA lines from reclassifications will be taken from cash reserves.

The second area of significant impact is capital outlays, all of which are related to WKNC's transmitter infrastructure. At present, WKNC's transmitter on the 10th floor of D.H. Hill Library is operating in conditions it was never designed to endure. The space is extremely dusty, and in the summers, the temperatures there rise to well above the transmitter's recommended operating temperature. As a result, our 13-year-old transmitter, which is designed to last for some 20 years, is already beginning to show signs of wear and breakdown normally seen in transmitters much closer to the end of their useful operational lives. To increase the longevity of the current transmitter – and to enable us to remain compliant with all FCC regulations governing WKNC's operations – we must build a climate-controlled enclosure for it atop the library. That enclosure, along with related HVAC and rewiring costs, will cost an estimated \$30,000. Since there is currently no dedicated capital expenditure line in our budget, this expenditure will be from excess cash reserves. With new leadership under the direction of Patrick Neal, we plan to conduct a comprehensive assessment and develop a long-term capital plan to ensure adequate, ongoing budget dollars allocated for ongoing infrastructure needs.

In September 2011, Student Media acquired much-needed square footage as it moved into the former Student Government offices on the third floor of Witherspoon. This placed the business office and professional staff in the same area, allowing for increased collaboration. Wolf TV was able to expand into former professional staff offices, while *Windhover* took over Wolf TV's former space in the *Agromeck* suite. Nubian Message moved from its former location inside the African American Cultural Center to space formerly used by the business office. We are still waiting for half of the former coordinator's office to be converted into a photo office and a door to be installed to connect WKNC to its new office in room 336.