



On the air



David Linton (left) talks with Reggie Carson (center) and Aerek Stephens during the CIAA Tournament held at Norfolk State. Carson was responsible for play-by-play accounts, and Stephens provided colorful commentary over V-91 fm, ECSU's radio station, during the basketball season. Linton is the former General Manager of WRVS.

“Wonderful Radio Viking Style”

Station launching students' careers

WRVS provides training for students of broadcast

By Lisa Gregory

ECSU is especially proud of its latest rising star — WRVS.

The FM station serves as a major communication link between the University and northeastern North Carolina.

“We're one of the few urban contemporary college radio stations in North Carolina,” said Aerek Stephens, Student Program Director at WRVS.

“I basically keep up with the music we play, and make sure that we're in tune with what's hot and what's not,” Stephens said.

The 10,000-watt public service station is funded primarily through federal grants.

“Public service” means that the radio station is there to do just that,” said Stephens. “Unlike us, commercial radio stations have to compete for that advertising dollar.”

People who work at a commercial radio station face “a lot more pressure to conform,” according to ECSU sophomore Tracy Latrell Godbold—air name, Tracy Latrell. “You have to be sure to get the commercials on. In a sense, the commercials are more important than the music.”

Latrell, who also works at K-94, has high hopes for a career in broadcasting. “My goal is to earn up to six digits in radio,” she said.

WRVS has launched many students to the airways. The station has also given three ECSU students—Latrell, Stephens and Darius Morris—the necessary training to get jobs in area broadcasting jobs.

“Someone at K-94 heard me on the air at WRVS,” said Latrell. “Then they asked me to send them an air check (a taped on-the-air broadcast). The program director liked me, and asked me to work there.”

Morris, a senior business administration major, also landed a broadcasting job through his association with WRVS.

“David Linton told me that they were looking for help at 96-KIX and asked me if I was interested in working there. I said, ‘What—at a country station?’ Anyway, I decided to give it a try. So I did an air check there. The manager said I sounded good and gave me the job.”

“I wouldn't have been able to get the job at KIX if we didn't have the station here.”

Stephens, who worked at the local “oldies” station, WCNC, until it went off the air earlier this year, said he got into radio because his friends convinced him to take the broadcast training classes.

When WRVS was first launched at ECSU, the station advisors had to make sure that interested students got the proper training, and that they were licensed to be disc jockeys by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

The students attended a workshop class for six weeks and took a final examination upon completion of the class.

“We attended seminars on creative problem solving, and formation of a college radio station,” Stephens said. “We got a lot of helpful information about fund raising ideas, student motivation, student programs and making the radio sound better.”

Stephens said that he, too, plans a career in broadcasting. “I would like to get into record and artist promotions.”

Morris also has his sights set on a broadcasting career. “I don't care what I do, as long as it's in radio. I just want to get my feet on the ground floor and work my way up.”

WRVS operates under a special rotation system, as far as its programming is concerned. The music rotation relates to the specific order in which the different types of music are played.

Every disc jockey must follow the music rotation list.

“The disc jockey doesn't just pick out songs as he goes along,” said Morris. “At the top of the hour we have a station ID and then the DJ plays an ‘A’ song. Then a ‘B’ and so on.”

The station identifies songs as A, B, C, or D. An “A” song is very popular and high on the lists, said Morris. “The ‘B’ song may be something that has been popular, or is just on the way to the top. The ‘C’s’ are in between, and ‘D’s’ are the new songs.”

“The rotation is very important because you have to make sure that the music flows in order, to keep your listeners.”

Stephens said that WRVS played a vital role in developing his interest in broadcasting.

“My training and music background comes from WRVS. Mrs. Linton was so helpful in showing us the other side of the music business. It's a lot more than just turning records.”

Students cite benefits gained from WRVS experience

By Beverly Johnson

WRVS-FM radio station, located in Williams Hall, gives ECSU students and the public exactly what it stands for, “Wonderful Radio Viking Style,” with much more to offer.

“Most people know that ECSU's 10,000-watt public radio station serves Northeastern North Carolina and Tidewater Virginia with a variety of fine music, including jazz, urban contemporary, and gospel. But how many know that the station also serves a smaller, more special group?”

That group consists of the approximately 30 ECSU students who work at WRVS, as programmers, news and sports announcers, writers and producers.

Students cite numerous benefits gained from their work at WRVS.

“Working at WRVS has helped me gain hands-on experience in my chosen career field,” said ECSU students news director, Traci Latrelle Godbold. Traci also works at K-94.

“Working at WRVS has given me a jump on a lot of other people in the communications field,” said Richard McIntire, a sophomore news media major who has worked at WRVS for almost a year. “I consider it a skillful and challenging hobby, which I love, but I also know there is a great responsibility to keep the station on the air when I'm working, too.”

Freshman Leamon Pearce, who also works at WRVS, agrees that the radio station provides an enjoyable hobby. “WRVS was a major factor in my decision to come to ECSU,” Pearce said.

Students who work at WRVS say that the station is a valuable campus asset to anyone interested in broadcasting and similar fields. “One should know how to speak clearly and to have a good voice control while reading as fluently as possible,” McIntire said.

“Sharpening the basic communication skills of reading and writing, and taking public speaking classes will enable one to develop into a professional,” said David Linton, WRVS's former

manager. Linton recently left WRVS to work for Warner Brothers Records in Dallas, Texas.

Linton's urban contemporary format at WRVS has been quite successful with the station's listeners.

“I chose to program urban contemporary simply because I'm black, and ECSU is a historically black university,” Linton said. “But most of all, it is a format that can win the marketplace. The format also has allowed us to market the University to its

primary recruiting population, without alienating new groups we want to attract.

“WRVS isn't just an urban contemporary station,” Linton continued. “We also play jazz and gospel and we give major emphasis to public affairs and educational programs.”

Linton said that he, too, enjoyed his time working at WRVS. “Starting a radio station from nothing, and making it number one has been one of my greatest challenges.”

A recent survey by Northeastern High School's communication class revealed that WRVS is the most listened to radio station in Elizabeth City.

WRVS signed on the air on March 18, 1986. The University hired Linton Feb. 1, 1985, to oversee the construction and operation of the station. Linton was the one who gave the station the name, WRVS—“Wonderful Radio, Viking Style.”



(Right) Freshman Dennis Blount receives some pointers from seniors Darius Morris and Aerek. (Above) Blount runs his airshift alone.



Linton resigns for Warner Bros. job; WRVS loses first General Manager

By Richard McIntire

David C. Linton has resigned his position as General Manager and Program Director of WRVS-FM to take a job with Warner Brothers records in Texas.

Paula Sutton has been named acting General Manager/Program Director.

“A unique opportunity presented itself,” said Linton, who will go to work as Promotional Manager for Warner Brother's R & B Music, in Dallas.

Linton described his new position as an “entry level executive job. But it's in the top market areas, which makes it challenging. The Dallas-Ft. Worth area is ranked fifth in the nation for commercial marketing.”

Linton said he would be ex-

“It's the biggest gamble of my career,”

David C. Linton



periencing “a new side of the music industry,” in his new job, which will require “a greater pressure to perform.”

“It's the biggest gamble of my career,” Linton said, “but the pay off can be excellent.”

Linton said he would be working with many top Warner Brothers stars, including Prince, Morris Day, Al Jarreau, Donna Summer, and the Winans, at the retail and radio levels. He said he hopes to one day be a vice-president at Warner Brothers Records.

Linton, 30, is a graduate of Shaw University and of North Carolina Central in Durham. He came to ECSU from WSHA in Raleigh, where he was also General Manager and Program Director.

When Linton arrived at ECSU in March 1985, the University had filed an application with the FCC and ordered broadcast equipment.

“I learned no challenge was too big,” said Linton, in recalling how he helped get the ra-

dio station launched. WRVS went on the air in March of 1986.

Linton thanked the Elizabeth City community and Viking family for their support. He said he also appreciated those who said WRVS would fail. “They were the main catalyst for extra drive and motivational force.”

Linton said he envisions WRVS growing to encompass an even larger share of the market. He has presented a 3-year plan to the Chancellor, which will ensure continuous growth for the popular radio station.

“The University has made the best investment in 'RVS,” Linton said, “an investment that gives power and influence that will work for the benefit of the university, its students and the community.”