

# WQFS to share the air?

## Triad group pushing to split the non-profit frequency

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WQFS, Guilford's student-run radio station, is in danger of merging with an outside station. Student managers are presently battling a proposal that would take full control of the station away from Guilford students.

An organization called Triad Radio Project Inc. (TRP) gave WQFS the proposal last semester, asking if WQFS was interested in forming a partnership to create a non-profit community radio station for the Piedmont Triad, including students and community members as staff.

The managers of the '94-'95 WQFS staff relayed this proposal to the semester's d.j.'s and the d.j.'s unanimously showed disinterest in the proposal. However, the matter remained open for future discussion if necessary.

At that point in time, the proposal should have gone before the Student Senate for review, but due to the proximity of the proposal to the end of the school year, the review was postponed until the Fall '95 semester.

The matter was scheduled to be discussed further after the return of the students from summer vacation, but before a discussion date was scheduled, a new letter of proposal was delivered on September 14 to the Provost and Board of Trustees.

In the letter addressed to the Provost, TRP Inc. states, "Our work to create a cooperative effort between Guilford College and the Triad Radio Project Inc. has not been fruitful. Still, we are deter-

mined to pursue our goal of a community station in the area."

In response to the letter, the General Manager of WQFS, J. Kelly Davis, replied, "My understanding of the situation at the end of the school year was that WQFS and TRP Inc. were going to continue discussion working towards some sort of agreement."

Davis continued, "I saw many good things in the proposal that could help both the station and the students, but there were several logistical problems that needed to be worked out. No one from Triad Radio Project has talked to me or any student representatives since the end of school, so I don't understand why they have deemed our efforts fruitless."

The remaining portion of the letter verifies TRP Inc. as a capable non-profit organization to share the frequency currently used by WQFS. It goes on to propose a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) policy known as "time-sharing" that "allows two different entities to operate on the same frequency (at different times), without any connection other than an agreement on broadcast schedules."

The proposal would allow the two groups to use completely separate facilities, transmitters, and towers while operating on the same frequency, sharing different hours.

The letter then formally requests "the cooperation of the Board of Trustees of Guilford College, as licenseholders for WQFS, in determining a reasonable agreement on broadcast hours under the FCC." The letter further requests

the Board to come to a decision about the issue before the last day of October, 1995.

The Triad Radio Project recognizes the fact that there may be opposition to the proposal, but the TRP implores the board to work with them because they feel it would be "mutually beneficial" to both parties involved. If the Board chooses to decline the proposal, then the letter reports that TRP does have the option to file an application with the FCC.

In response to the "time sharing" proposal, Davis states:

"Since the station is student-run, we have a fluctuating schedule conforming to the college's academic calendar. This means that our broadcasting has not been consistent at times for the general public. Although not able to broadcast a maximum of 24 hrs., the station has always met the FCC broadcast requirements."

Davis went on to say that his "concern is that if WQFS gives a block of time to TRP, then there will be times in the future where students are not able to do shows. This limits programming and limits students on the whole. I fear that TRP, with all its good intentions, may fail to recognize the impact that "time sharing" would have on WQFS."

Andy Ahearn, a music manager for WQFS, is concerned as well. In response to the proposal Ahearn

states: "Triad Radio Project wants to kill something that is essential to this community. WQFS has been student-run and operated since its conception, and I feel that any cancellation or change would be disastrous to the Guilford community and student body."

Ahearn also commented, "WQFS was ranked third in the nation by Princeton Review for college-run stations two years ago. I feel that WQFS will be number one and that can only occur if it remains student-run, because the students, managers, and d.j.'s at Guilford College convey what we want to hear, and no one else can do better."

The matter is currently being discussed amongst the WQFS staff and the administration, although the Provost of Guilford College, Daniel Poteet, shares similar views

with Davis and Ahearn.

Poteet states, "The college's position continues to be that WQFS should remain an independent radio station and would lose its identity by merging with TRP."

Poteet goes on to say that "A merger with any organization would sacrifice student control, influence, and educational opportunities that go along with this idea."

No decision regarding the proposal has yet been made.

The staff at WQFS would appreciate any student feedback or support concerning this issue; since it is one that affects the students directly. If you would like to give input or feedback, please either write WQFS or call the station at 316-2352. Student involvement is what has kept WQFS operating since it was conceived, so please call or write to share your opinions.

## News Brief

### Board of Trustees to meet this weekend

Provost Dan Poteet reports the following are on the agenda for the Trustees' meeting this weekend.

- 1) Presidential Search
- 2) Continuing campaign for fundraising for the future
- 3) This year's & next year's budget
- 4) Retention rate
- 5) Update on summer facility work
- 6) Military recruitment on campus
- 7) Various other agenda items

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