Aggie Radio ready to make waves

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Student radio station to apply for FM license after long wait

By Mariah Noble  staff writer

Aggie Radio, USU's student-run radio station, has plans to apply next week for a license from the Federal Communications Commission to broadcast on FM radio, something they've been waiting years to do.

MowefaEastmond, a disc jockey for the station and a sophomore majoring in business, said he feels the student-run station would be able to produce a quality program that could compete in the local FM market.

"It's imperative to get the students' voice out there," Eastmond said.

He said by the absence of a college FM station, students wanting to go into the field of radio broadcasting are denied opportunities they should have in order to get a hands-on education.

Eastmond and others from the station said they feel their station could fulfill a need many people in Logan have — knowing what's happening in the lives of students.

"We want to become a main tool for campus and for all the colleges," said Brady Stanger, Aggie Radio's station manager. "Our goal is to capture USU as a culture. We are more applicable to the day-to-day life of students by talking about what's going on and capturing personalities on campus. We can talk about the stuff you don't know but care about."

But the process is not an easy one.

Zak Ricklefs, the event coordinator and off-air program director, said after applying and being approved, the station would be awarded a construction permit, which allows 18 months for the station to get everything set up and running.

"The FCC doesn't open up for applications very often," said Ricklefs, a junior majoring in marketing. "This license would be for a low-power FM frequency. It's the first time in at least five or six years they've opened up for this kind of thing."

Another factor that could slow their plans is the current federal government shutdown. On the official website of the FCC, there is a notice that says the FCC is currently "limited" in what they can do and its "online systems will be unavailable until further notice."

"Unfortunately, we will have to wait it out," said Stanger, a senior majoring in international business. "I would assume that the FCC will change the opening of the application process to a time in which they will be open. At the point, we will apply."

Still, members of Aggie Radio said they feel enthusiastic about the potential change. They expressed the need for support from fellow students in order to have success.

"I think it's really important that students know that the more support from students we get, the closer this could be to becoming a reality," Eastmond said. "We are the only university in the whole state that has a college radio station but doesn't have FM."

According to these representatives, the best way to support the station right now is to listen through internet radio, the Aggie Radio app or HD signal. The station's official website is radio.usu.edu.

Anthony Pittl, a freshman in graphic design, said he already has Aggie Radio as a preset through the HD signal in the car.

"I think it'd be a really good thing for them (to have FM radio)," Pittl said. "It would broaden their audience and expand their reach. I can see other students listening to it more."

Ricklefs said as the process continues, they will have a greater need for fundraising and will create events to do so.

"Going FM is not cheap," Ricklefs said. "It's not cheap at all. It's kind of a down payment for opportunities in the future."

Stanger said the physical cost will be around $10,000, not including variable costs, but he and the others feel hopeful for the future.
“This is the first step in a very long and difficult road we have to follow here,” Ricklefs said. “But in the end, it’s gonna be worth it.”

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