

NC State Student Media Board of Directors

September 2024 meeting minutes

Tuesday, September 10, 2024 • 7 p.m.

356 Witherspoon Student Center (African American Cultural Center Conference Room)

Members present: Dean Phillips, Christa Gala (via Google Meet), Jake Seaton, Robbie Williams (via Google Meet), Tyler Dukes, Scarlett Taylor, Garrett Gough, Julianna Lopez, Emma Scott, Allie Gervase, Alianna Kendall-Brooks, Rose Kelley, Bran Poster, Kate Denning, Patrick Neal

Members absent: Caleb Twigg, Madeline Renneker, Sydney Robbins

Staff and guests present: Carter Fields, Jamie Lynn Gilbert, Ben McNeely, Abi Barefoot, Ray Black III

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

In the absence of a chair, Patrick Neal called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. and asked the board members to introduce themselves.

ELECTION OF BOARD OFFICERS

Julianna Lopez offered to serve as chair of the board for a second year. Jake Seaton moved to appoint Julianna chair for 2024-2025 with Dean Phillips seconding the motion. It passed unanimously, and Julianna led the meeting from that point forward.

Bran Poster offered to serve as vice chair of the board for a second year. Dean moved to appoint Bran chair for 2024-2025 with Jake seconding the motion. It passed unanimously.

APPOINTMENT OF RECORDING SECRETARY

Alianna Kendall-Brooks agreed to serve as recording secretary for the meeting.

APPROVAL OF APRIL MEETING MINUTES

Tyler Dukes made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 9, 2024 meeting, Dean seconded the motion, and the board unanimously approved them. Those minutes were included in the meeting package and are made part of these minutes by reference.

2023-2024 FISCAL YEAR REVIEW

Jamie Lynn Gilbert briefly reviewed the year-end numbers for the 2023-2024 fiscal year, noting that she had twice sent the board an email outlining the year-end numbers on an organization-by-organization basis, once right after the fiscal year concluded in July, and again on Monday, Sept. 9. (That email is attached here and made part of these minutes by reference.)

SEPTEMBER 2024 BUDGET UPDATE

Jamie reviewed the September 2024 budget update, which was included in the meeting package and made part of these minutes by reference. She noted the following:

- No non-fee income has posted yet for Agromeck. Jamie noted that the bulk of Agromeck's income typically comes from outside ad sales in the spring semester. Student payroll is at 6% at 17% through the year.
- The Nubian Messages 's non-fee income is at nearly \$5,100, which breaks down to \$100 in ad sales and \$5,000 from its share of kiosk revenue. That brings the Nubian to 42% of its non-fee goal. Student payroll is at 5%. You will see a \$2,000 expense in fixed charges, which was an unbudgeted expense to move the Nubian website to SNO sites. Technician will also move to SNO at the end of the fall semester.
- Roundabout invoiced \$24,620 for the summer issue and all invoices have been paid. Combined with a few invoices from the spring, Roundabout is now at 81% of its non-fee goal. Roundabout is typically front-loaded in this category, as the bulk of its income comes from the summer issue. Student payroll is at 16%.
- Technician non-fee income is at \$12,400 for 25% of its total goal. \$5,000 is from kiosk revenue. Student payroll is at 6%.
- Windhover does not generate non-fee income. Student payroll is at 10%.
- WKNC's non-fee income is at \$7,500 for 20% of its total goal. Student payroll is at 18%.
- General Administration non-fee income is at \$5,000 for half of its total goal. Student payroll is at 7%.
- The Student Media Enhancement Fund is at \$10,900. The WKNC Enhancement Fund is at \$8,900. The Technician Century Fund is at \$51,000.

POLICY PROPOSAL REGARDING STUDENT MEDIA PAYROLL BUDGETS

Jamie said that over the summer, she, Patrick, the senior leaders and members of the professional staff had developed a draft payroll policy for organizations that overspend their payroll budget, noting that organizations that had done so in the past hadn't faced any consequences for doing so.

Jamie briefly outlined the way payroll is budgeted for each group using three different benchmarks: budgeted student payroll (the cost of paying every person every dollar budgeted), percent of payroll generally spent (budgeted student payroll adjusted to what that organization has historically spent) and a proposed third number representing a 15% overage.

The proposed policy would work as follows:

1. The senior leader of a group that exceeds the percentage generally spent before the end of the fiscal year will be required to meet with Jamie, Patrick and their advisor to ascertain the reason for the overage.
2. If that group then reaches their budgeted student payroll before the end of the fiscal year, they will be required to develop a plan to address the situation and present that plan to the full Student Media Board of Directors.
3. If that group then exceeds its budgeted student payroll by 15% before the end of the fiscal year, the group will no longer be allowed to pay its members, and they will thenceforth all be working for the organization as volunteers.

Patrick noted that in the last 12 years, only one group would have exceeded the budgeted-student-payroll-plus-15% number, so he didn't expect the policy to be invoked frequently in the years to come.

A brief discussion followed. Alianna asked whether the overage on the part of the group Patrick mentioned was the reason behind the policy, and Jamie replied that it was, as the group in question had faced no consequences for its actions. Dean said keeping on top of payroll numbers was a key part of learning how to run any organization. Julianna asked for clarification of how often it had happened in the past and how often Jamie expected it to happen in the future. Jamie said it hadn't often been an issue in the past, and she did not expect it to be a problem in the future. Jamie also noted that if there were genuine extenuating circumstances, the policy made allowances for those circumstances.

With no further discussion, Julianna asked for a motion to modify the Student Media payroll policy to state that media outlets will be required to stop spending student payroll when they exceed their budgeted payroll by 15%, barring extenuating circumstances. Dean moved to adopt the policy with Jake seconding the motion. It passed unanimously.

PERSONNEL ANNOUNCEMENT

Patrick announced that longtime Business and Marketing Manager Zanna Swann was officially retiring from Student Media as of Sept. 20. Patrick congratulated Zanna on her retirement and said she had set a very high bar for her successor. Patrick said he planned to move as quickly as possible to fill the vacancy and hoped to have Zanna's successor in place by the October board meeting. To expedite the process, Patrick said Student Media had asked Human Resources if the department could conduct an internal search (i.e., advertise the position to current university employees only) as he believed that there was at least one university employee who would be a perfect fit for the position, and noted that if the internal search did not net three viable candidates then it would be posted publicly. He said he anticipated an expedited process with regard to identifying finalists for interviews and making the final selection.

Jamie asked where the posting was in the process. Patrick said DASA HR had sent the posting to University HR for its approval and that he was waiting for word that the position had posted. He said that Student Media's HR liaison at DASA had said that an Oct. 1 start date was probably feasible.

Kate Denning asked if students would be involved with the process as they had been for the Editorial Adviser and Visual Media Adviser positions previously. Patrick said that they would not, saying that time was of the essence in filling this particular position in the middle of political advertising season, but he assured Kate that the search committee would select someone the student leaders would be able to work well with.

STUDENT MEDIA BUSINESS OFFICE GM CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Patrick said Carter Fields, who the board had tapped as the 2024-2025 General Manager of the Student Business and Marketing Office in March, had since accepted a full-time internship with Hitachi Energy, and had thus had to step away from the position. Carter, who was present at the meeting, said that his experience at Student Media had been a key formative experience in his

college career both personally and professionally, and said he would cherish the memories he'd made as part of the Student Business and Marketing Office staff.

Patrick said that since Carter had announced his departure, senior media consultant Allie Gervase had stepped in to serve as General Manager, and Patrick complimented both Allie and Carter for a smooth, seamless transition. With that in mind, Patrick asked the board to officially name Allie as Interim GM. Tyler made a motion to that effect, with Dean seconding. It passed unanimously.

As for Carter's permanent successor, Patrick recommended that Student Media open up the position for applications for one week, from Wednesday, Sept. 11 through the end of business on Wednesday, Sept. 18. He said the Business Office Advisory Board could then meet to interview any candidates prior to the board's next regular meeting on Oct. 8. At that meeting, Patrick said the advisory board could make its recommendation to the full board and the board could accept or reject its recommendation at that time. Dean made a motion to open the position for applications Sept. 11-18, with Tyler seconding. It passed unanimously.

STUDENT MEDIA TRAINING DAY

Patrick briefly spoke about Student Media's all-organizations training day set for Saturday, Sept. 21 at Witherspoon. (An agenda for the training was included in the meeting package and is made part of these minutes by reference.) Patrick said that a track for Student Media's third annual training day had been added for the Student Business Office staff, which hadn't happened in the past. He said he looked forward to the day and encouraged the senior leaders to do everything possible to get their staffers to sign up for it.

STATE OF STUDENT MEDIA 2024-2025

As is customary for the first SMBOD meeting of the academic year, Patrick gave his State of Student Media remarks for 2024-2025. The text of those remarks is attached here and included as part of these minutes by reference. Following his remarks, members were invited to ask any questions they had, and a brief discussion period ensued. Of note from that discussion:

- In response to a question about the prospect of additional revenue, Patrick said that while the unit was always looking for new revenue streams, he said both newspapers were dealing with the same business model collapse all newspapers continued to face. On top of that, he said the last remaining sector of the local market that had been strong print advertisers – student-oriented apartment complexes – stopped buying print ads after University Housing had opened its off-campus housing portal for students transitioning from on-campus to off-campus living.
- In response to a question about non-print products, Patrick said that while Student Media had seen some success with ad sales for the groups' websites, he noted that the number of spots available was limited. He also noted that Technician's weekly email newsletter had been one of Student Media's most successful products in recent memory, and that its success had prompted the development of a second, sports-focused newsletter to be distributed each Friday.
- Ben emphasized how well-resourced NC State's student media groups were compared to the vast majority of its peers. He also urged the senior leaders to recognize the power their groups held on campus, and to leverage that power responsibly.

- Jamie asked Patrick when he expected the new guidelines for the various advisory boards to go into effect. Patrick said immediately, starting with the process of selecting the Business Office GM in the coming month. On a related note, he clarified that the member-at-large positions on the advisory boards should be “rank-and-file” members rather than editors or other senior staff members, and that an organization could have more than one member-at-large if there was that level of interest.
- Bran asked about the possibility of having banner ads on Roundabout’s website. Patrick said that while the Business Office had not discussed that, if the site was able to build its traffic and make it a good value proposition for clients, they would gladly sell those spots.
- Julianna asked about the possibility of having a fundraising campaign for Student Media. Patrick said any such campaign would have to be done with the permission of, and in coordination with, DASA Development. He did note the recent successes the unit had seen with the Student Media Enhancement Fund and the Technician Century Fund, and the addition of an enhancement fund for WKNC.

REQUEST OF DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

Patrick asked the board to approve two disbursements from the Student Media Enhancement Fund.

The first, for \$206.65, was for two lunches for the professional staff at their summer retreat May 7-8, one at David’s Dumplings and another at Chipotle. Patrick apologized for asking the board’s approval after the fact, saying that he did not realize when the retreat was scheduled that enhancement funds would have to cover food for it. Dean made a motion to approve the disbursement with Tyler seconding. The motion passed unanimously.

The second request, for \$600, was related to Student Media’s co-sponsorship of the RDU chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists’ annual Media Day on Saturday, Oct. 5 in the Washington-Sankofa Room at Witherspoon. Patrick said the group really wanted to have its meeting at NC State but was unable to afford the estimated \$1,200 in AV fees that had been quoted for the event. Patrick said he’d like to spend \$600 from the Student Media Enhancement Fund and \$600 from the Technician Century Fund to cover those fees as a cosponsor. (Patrick noted that the Century Fund disbursement didn’t require board approval, but he did want the board to be aware of the expenditure.) Tyler made a motion to approve the disbursement with Dean seconding. The motion passed unanimously.

ORGANIZATION UPDATES

Written board reports prepared for the September meeting were included in the meeting package and are hereby included as part of these minutes by reference. Updates to those reports included the following:

Emma Scott said Agromeck had worked with Balfour to resolve the delays in opening up online sales and marketing of the 2025 book. To make up for lost time, she said the early bird period had been extended until Sunday to make up for lost time.

Alianna shared a story of a student who had been featured on the cover of The Nubian Message. She said the student had been overjoyed at being featured in that way, and that she had shared it widely on social media.

Bran said Roundabout had filled its vacant Design Editor position.

ADJOURN

There being no need for an executive session, Julianna asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dean offered such a motion with Tyler seconding. It was unanimously approved, and the meeting officially adjourned at 8:27 p.m.

[mediaboard] Re: Student Media Budget Update and Notes: July 2024

1 message

'Jamie Gilbert' via NC State Student Media Board <ncsustudentmediaboard@googlegroups.com>Mon, Sep 9, 2024 at
12:13 PM

Reply-To: Jamie Gilbert <jlgilber@ncsu.edu>

To: ncsustudentmediaboard@googlegroups.com

Hi folks! I sent the email below back on July 1, summing up the end of Student Media's 2023-2024 fiscal year. To save some time in our meeting I won't rehash the entire thing tomorrow night but do want to ask you to take another look at it and I am happy to answer any questions you might have.

I will also be sending out Google calendar invites for the rest of the board meeting so everyone has them on their calendars.

Jamie Lynn Gilbert (she/her/hers)
Associate Director, Student Media
Adviser, WKNC 88.1 FM HD-1/HD-2
NC State University
919-513-1918 office

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Jamie Gilbert** <jlgilber@ncsu.edu>

Date: Mon, Jul 1, 2024 at 3:31 PM

Subject: Student Media Budget Update and Notes: July 2024

To: ncsu-student-media-board <ncsu-student-media-board@googlegroups.com>

Happy New Fiscal Year, everyone! We have finished 2023-2024 and are on to a blank slate for 2024-2025. The professional staff and student leaders met last week and discussed the budget (along with many other topics) so everyone can better understand how money moves into and out of Student Media.

I'll wait a week or so before declaring the budget final (as sometimes things change a little bit), but barring further communication consider this your fiscal year 2023-2024 year-end budget update and notes. It's going to be a little long, so feel free to skip to the Overall Summary at the end.

Agromeck

The best budget award goes to ... Agromeck yearbook! Overall, Agromeck spent 106% of its budget and had 106% in (fee and non-fee) income, ending the year at \$118.96 in the **black** (it made more than it spent).

Non-fee income was at 147% for an extra \$5,000. This was primarily due to higher-than-budgeted ad sales for the book. Temp payroll (aka student payroll) was a little over, at 106%. Expenses included a \$4,000 deposit on the 2024 book in current services, with the final book printing payment due in FY2425. Travel was only at 60%, as the summer retreat was not until the end of June and thus will be paid in FY2425.

Nubian Message

Nubian met 82% of its non-fee income goal, but the shortfall was entirely due to its share of kiosk sales and not Nubian print/online/social ad sales. Overall, Nubian spent 102% of its budget and had 90% in income, ending the year at \$3,931.60 in the **red** (it spent more than it made).

Temp payroll was at 89%. Travel is a bit over budget because it was more expensive this year to send the Nubian EIC to the National Association of Black Journalists in Chicago this summer than the College Media Mega Workshop in

Minneapolis. Fixed charges are more expensive due to an increase in contest entry fees.

Roundabout

Roundabout earned about \$3,000 more than its non-fee income goal, for 109%. Overall, Roundabout spent 154% of its budget and had 105% in income to end the year \$22,581.37 in the **red**. (I'll explain why in a minute.)

Temp payroll was at 147%, which is approaching (but not exceeding) the 15% over-budget cap. Roundabout's temp payroll is actually lower in FY2425 due to PEP funding put into the budget but not realized, so Roundabout may have trouble with its FY2425 temp payroll budget. I'll see what I can do about that. Current services are significantly over budget, at 172%, because the 2023 and 2024 orientation issues were both paid in the same fiscal year (July 2023 and June 2024). Without that expense, Roundabout would have ended the year \$2,902.56 in the **black**.

Technician

Technician more than doubled its non-fee income goal, earning 223%. Overall, Technician spent 113% of its budget and had 136% in income, to the end the year \$38,723.22 in the **black**.

Temp payroll ended the year at 105%, which is still well below the 15% payroll budget cap. Supplies are at 246%, mainly to cover mailing tubes and envelopes for the ACC Championship and Final Four editions. Current services are also over budget, at 147%, due to increased printing costs of those ACC Championship and Final Four editions.

Windhover

Windhover spent 51% of its budget and had 97% in fee income, ending its year with \$16,510.90 in the **black**.

Temp payroll was at 65%, Current services (i.e. printing) were only at 35% as we were able to change how the book was printed for substantial savings this year and moving forward

WKNC 88.1 FM HD-1/HD-2

WKNC earned 121% of its non-fee income and spent 69% of its budget to end the year \$39,481.63 in the **black**.

Temp payroll was at 62%. No line item was over budget.

General Administration

GA earned 78% of its non-fee income (its share of kiosk revenue). Overall, GA was at 96% of its total income goal and spent 103% of its budget to end the year \$114,453.87 in the **red**.

Temp payroll (business office + photo mentor) was at 71%. Capital outlay was over budget due to the new equipment lockers and travel was over budget, partially due to \$1,700 in extra coverage travel.

The Student Media Enhancement Fund ended the year with \$10,700. Technician Century Fund stayed at \$51,700. WKNC Enhancement Fund stayed at \$14,500.

Overall Summary

Still with me? Awesome! When we submitted our FY2324 budget we planned to be \$75,000 in the **red**. We ended up \$35,916.01 in the **red**, which means we did better than expected. So what does that mean?

Let's start with income.

We budgeted for \$852,300 in student fees. For the second year in a row, we didn't achieve that number. Instead, we only got 97%, or \$827,900. That left a shortfall of \$24,400.

Each year we receive interest payments that aren't budgeted, so it's a fun little bit of extra money. This year we had \$6,700.

Four of the six fee-earning groups exceeded their income goals, which more than made up for the minor shortfalls of the other two. We budgeted to raise \$160,000 in non-fee income, but actually deposited \$234,100.

Adding all that together, Student Media had \$1,068,800 in income, but only budgeted for \$1,012,400. That's \$56,400 extra - or to put that into perspective, the combined budgets of Nubian Message and Windhover.

Now expenses.

Student Media overspent its also overall budget, spending \$1,104,700 when we only budgeted to spend \$1,087,400 - about \$17,300 more. But we originally budgeted to overspend by \$75,000.

\$75,000 minus an extra \$56,400 in income plus \$17,300 in overspending is \$35,900 - how we ended the fiscal year.

Jamie Lynn Gilbert (she/her/hers)
Associate Director, Student Media
Adviser, WKNC 88.1 FM HD-1/HD-2
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 **Monthly Update 070124.pdf**
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State of Student Media 2024

Remarks to the NC State Student Media Board of Directors

Tuesday, September 10, 2024

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, and thank you for coming this evening. I want to give a special welcome to our new board members and a special thank you to all of you who have returned to the board for another year. NC State Student Media is fortunate in many ways, but in my dozen years here our board has been the rock that supports the entire enterprise, and I feel confident that given the depth and breadth of experience represented here tonight we are primed for another excellent year.

We have a full agenda, so I will be as brief as I can, but I do want to take just a few minutes to take a look at where we stand as we head into the 2024-2025 academic year.

Last year is going to be a hard act to follow. We added two absolutely outstanding advisors in Abi and Ray. We set another record for membership and participation. All of our organizations won accolades for their work at both the state and national levels, and that work continues to bring all our groups the recognition they so richly deserve. Revenues significantly exceeded expectations. And I never thought I'd see the day when our print publications – the physical, tangible, ink-and-paper objects we produce – would literally cause hysteria by being the most sought-after objects on this campus, but I'm glad I was here for it and play at least some small part in it.

It's sometimes said that the past is prelude, and in many ways the things that made last year so special – our professional staff, our membership, our awards, our revenues, our products – will be the very same things that decide our fate this year and over the next several years to come.

First, a few words about safety, security and preparing for the worst. Our longtime board members will know that this has been an area of particular focus for us over the past several years, and we've continued to make incremental improvements year over year. For this year we've added card access units to both The Nubian Message and Agromeck offices, so now all of our groups are behind at least one door that only our members can open – though I would remind everyone that as a security feature, this only works if the door is closed. I would also remind our senior leaders that every member's card now works on every door so that no matter where they are on the third floor, they can get behind a locked door in a hurry if they need to – though I would again remind you all that as a security feature, this only works if those students have their IDs with them at all times. Otherwise, at every appropriate opportunity – including our all-organization training coming up later this month – we will be devoting a few minutes to safety, security and what to do in a worst-case scenario, because as the headlines from just this past week show, tragedy can strike anywhere.

Second, let's talk about revenues and expenditures. This is, of course, an election year, and we are in a critical swing state, so in addition to all of the coverage opportunities that presents, it also presents opportunities for us financially. Voters from 18-25 years old will again be a critical voting bloc in this election, and there are organizations willing to spend significant money to reach that demographic. We are, of course, happy to help them do that, and as you heard Jamie mention previously, we've already seen that with regard to our outdoor advertising, which is

booked solid all the way through the election. We will continue to try and make the most of these opportunities; after all, if you are in a swing state as we are, a once-every-two-to-four-year revenue boost has to be part of a plan for long-term sustainability.

And while we're talking about long-term sustainability, I want to give you all a brief preview of something Jamie and I will be sharing with you at our October meeting. I've been very proud that over the last dozen years we've been able to beat our budget expectations by tens of thousands of dollars in all but one year, when we missed it by less than \$3,000, or a fraction of a percentage point, because the whole world shut down due to COVID. But we are not on a sustainable course, and two years from now – the 2026-2027 academic year – we're going to go off a fiscal cliff if we don't see either a significant increase in revenues or significantly cut our costs.

The reasons for this are several. Let's talk about costs first. First, the cost of producing our products has increased dramatically over the past three years, and those costs are never coming down again; that ratchet only moves in one direction, and it's not in our favor. Second, we've grown so significantly since COVID that we've had to beef up our professional staff by one position to accommodate all of the administrative behind-the-scenes work that such growth demands. Third, our professional staff members received the same legislative increases that all other state employees received both last year and this year, which means that both professional staff salaries and benefit costs increased. That's not just a good thing, that's an excellent thing – none of us will ever get rich doing this work, but even so I want to see all of our advisors not just survive, but thrive at Student Media – but the fact remains that we must account for it in our budget.

Now let's talk about revenues. For budgeting purposes, we're projecting essentially flat revenues for the next five years. The print advertising revenues enjoyed by newspapers as recently as some 15 years ago are never coming back. Our inventory for both our digital products and our outdoor advertising is finite, and while we've incrementally increased our pricing for a number of our products this year, those will never fill the crater left by the collapse of the traditional newspaper business model. It gives me no joy to say any of this – you're never going to meet anyone who loves ink and paper more than I do – but these are the facts in front of us, and we can't pretend otherwise.

There is only one way to solve our revenue conundrum for the long term, and that's asking for an increase in student activity fees. Unfortunately, at this moment it isn't at all clear that such a request is in the cards for us this year. We should, however, have a much better idea of what's feasible on that front by this time next month, and the answer to that question will largely shape our conversation in October.

But that's two years from now, which means that it's mostly a concern for future students and future boards, and I know this year's senior leaders want to hear about this year. So let's talk about that.

Barring unforeseen catastrophe, this year's student leaders and their staff members can expect operations to continue largely unchanged. We need to be mindful of keeping those costs we can control in check – primarily printing and payroll, which we've already talked about – but no one's budget was cut. Our senior leaders all have at least the same resources available to their organizations as their predecessors had. We're still investing in conference travel and leadership

development opportunities for all our groups. I've said in the past that we are extremely fortunate here at NC State compared to virtually all of our peers, even those at universities as large or larger than this one. I still feel that way, and I don't want this year's students to be preoccupied with something that might or might not happen two to three years from now. But to this year's senior leaders, I will say this: If you want to help Student Media in the long run, do your best work this year. Every student you meet, up to and including yourselves, pays \$26.25 to help subsidize Student Media. Do everything you can to make that investment worthwhile. Inform your audiences. Entertain them. Enlighten them. Strive to make every reader and listener feel smarter after spending time with your medium. Beyond that, give them a place and an opportunity to share their own work and hone their own skills. Remember always, ABC: Always Be Crootin'. Yes, handling membership growth is a challenge, but that's a challenge we should always welcome. I've been gratified to see the tremendous turnout we've seen for our various interest events so far this year, and I'll be even more gratified to report another record membership year when we gather for our last meeting of the year in April.

Speaking of recruitment and outreach, I wanted to mention two events in the works where Student Media as a whole will be working to bring both prospective students and members of the media industry to campus so that we can showcase our program and build awareness of the many opportunities we offer. On October 5, the RDU chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists will host its annual Media Access Workshop here in Witherspoon, down in the newly renovated Washington-Sankofa Room, and we'd like to cosponsor that event by paying for the group's room and AV fees. In a few minutes I'll be talking a bit more about what that will entail before asking for the board's support for it. Later on that month, on October 15, we will be hosting the North Carolina Scholastic Media Association's J-Day event in Talley, which will bring 250 high school students and their advisers to campus for a variety of workshops and guest speakers, including our own Tyler Dukes speaking about the intersection of artificial intelligence and journalism. By putting our best foot forward with events like these, we hope to attract the state's best and brightest to come and be a part of what we've built here.

And finally, I want to talk about one housekeeping matter that will affect our senior leader hiring process moving forward. Back in May, the professional staff spent a couple of days sequestered at Hill Library to go through a long list of items that needed work and discussion, and our hiring process – specifically the role our advisory boards play in that process – was at the top of the list. We eventually came up with a list of changes, principles and guidelines that we plan to follow moving forward. These are as follows:

- The advisory board for Agromeck, Windhover and Roundabout will now be called the Visual Media Advisory Board. The names of the other advisory boards – Newspaper, Broadcast and Business – will remain unchanged.
- Starting this year, every advisory board will include an “at-large” member from each group as a voting member of the board. These will be volunteers, correspondents or flat-rate staff members selected by the full staff to represent them on the advisory board.
- Every advisory board will have at least one voting member of the full Board of Directors on it, and at least three voting members of the advisory board – including at least one full board member – will need to attend every interview. Similarly, we will make every effort to ensure the presence of current editors-in-chief and general managers at those interviews. We will also encourage our advisers to attend as many of the meetings as

possible, even if it's just for the question-and-answer portion of interviews for groups they do not directly advise.

- Once the public portion of the interviews have concluded, the voting advisory board members (including the current EICs and general managers) and their advisers will adjourn into executive session to discuss the candidates' relative merits and arrive at a recommendation for the full board. During those executive sessions, our advisers and senior leaders will need to be candid to ensure the other board members have good, honest, firsthand information to make the best decision possible.
- While the advisers will lead the interviews and be a part of the executive session discussions for the groups they directly advise, they will henceforth abstain from voting, even in the case of a tie. If no candidate receives a majority of the advisory board members' votes, that decision will fall to the full board.
- We're also going to be more thoughtful in scheduling our senior leader interviews. In years past, we've often scheduled several at the same times on the same nights. We need to make every effort to avoid that moving forward.
- Similarly, we're going to avoid asking our advisory board members to sit for more than two interviews in a row. We already ask a lot of our board members during interview season, but in the future we will no longer ask them to sit for hours on end in a single sitting.
- We are also going to try to schedule at least one advisory board meeting each semester. While the spring meetings will likely continue to focus solely on interviewing candidates, we hope the fall meetings will provide our editors and their staffs a "check-in" time with their boards to see how their years are going, and how the professional staff and the board can better support them.
- Finally, we need to look at the makeup of each advisory board to ensure that there are a variety of viewpoints represented during the hiring process. We don't have enough people of color on our boards, especially the Newspaper Advisory Board, so I'd encourage you all to think about all the industry professionals and program alumni you know, and which of those people would help us make the best hiring decisions we can possibly make.

This concludes my prepared remarks, but if anyone has any questions about anything I've spoken about here – or anything else I didn't mention – I'd be happy to try and answer them now.