

# WRHU to Go Worldwide on February 12–14

College radio station wants to shine on World Radio Day

By [Andrew Gladding](#) ·

Published: February 8, 2021 · Updated: February 12, 2021



*WRHU Station Manager Catie Egan With Cove City Sound Studios Owner Richie Cannata*

*The author is the chief engineer for Salem Radio's WMCA in New York, WNYM-Hackensack, N.J., and Hofstra University's WRHU in Hempstead, N.Y. He is currently working towards a Doctorate in Education at Hofstra University.*

Some time ago sitting in traffic in the Holland Tunnel, driving home from a routine maintenance visit to Salem Radio's WMCA 570 AM transmitter site in Kearny, N.J., I had a wild thought. [World Radio Day](#), the official UNESCO event celebrating terrestrial broadcast radio, was approaching in a few months. Wouldn't it be cool if I could help a team of students turn the ambitious college FM station where I work into a worldwide radio network for just one day? At the time, it seemed like a silly, impossible daydream. But then again, [WRHU](#) Radio Hofstra University 88.7 FM is a place built on dreams.

First signing on the air in the late 1950s, WRHU (formerly WHCH and WVHC) has grown from its small studios underneath the campus' Spiegel Theater to the broadcast powerhouse it is today. WRHU's FM signal covers all of Nassau County on Long Island and parts of New York City's five boroughs and the tristate area. Over the years, the station has won multiple Marconi Awards, enjoyed a high-profile relationship with the New York Islanders hockey team, and trained a multitude of passionate radio graduates who have worked their way into the New York broadcast market.

Housed in The Lawrence Herbert School of Communication at Hofstra University, the station is powered by its 200-plus student volunteers. And this year, the station reached a new height — receiving the World Radio Day Award from the

Academy of Radio Arts and Sciences of America.

General Manager Bruce Avery has spent the last 27 years of his career at the helm of WRHU. It was his passion for broadcasting and commitment to preprofessional development in an environment of mutual respect that helped grow the station to where it is today. Bruce has always stressed that WRHU is a student-run radio station supported by a diverse group of administrators, faculty, alumni and community volunteers.



*WRHU Reporter Derek Futterman*

To pursue this idea of a worldwide broadcast, I knew that the students would have to be in charge. I consulted with my

colleague, Operations Manager John Mullen, on the best way to approach this. John is no stranger to big, globally successful ideas, having been program director for WBLS and operations manager for Hot 97 and CD 101.9 during their heyday in the 1990s. John and I agreed that the students would be best served by a broadcast that was a celebration of live and local radio, and that it would happen in two parts.

The first would be an actual global broadcast. WRHU would reach out to stations across the United States and around the world to invite them to join us for our special World Radio Weekend broadcast on Feb 12, 13 and 14. Student reporters and DJs would have the opportunity to do a bidirectional simulcast with each partner station. To accomplish this, we would use all of our technological options — our connectivity choices include Comrex Access codecs along with Telos VX IP phones and QGoLive soft codec apps for smartphones. Our updated studios feature the latest Wheatstone gear and RCS automation — to connect the World Radio Weekend broadcast affiliates with WRHU's campus studios in Hempstead, essentially building an ad hoc network of international stations.

Finding interested affiliates was also easy. It turns out that radio geeks come in all shapes and sizes. WRHU alum and JVC Broadcasting owner John Caracciolo and Neversink Media Group's Bud Williamson were the first to offer us

airtime. We wanted to feature local stations that served their listeners with live and local programming. Established names like Pocono 96.7, Long Island News Radio, WKNY Kingston and WALL Radio seemed like a natural fit for the broadcast. From there the list grew longer. KBOO community radio in Portland, Ore., agreed to join us for a tribute to WCBS engineer and WRHU alum Marc Weiner, who passed away in 2020. Marc was a beloved technical mentor and friend of both stations, so it only seemed fitting to honor his memory as part of our joint broadcast.



*WRHU Reporter Crystal Bermudez*

Since then, the list of international and domestic stations has grown considerably. Bush Radio 89.5 FM, a community megaphone in Cape Town, South Africa, eagerly joined the program, along with Bradford City Broadcasting's 106.6 in the U.K.; Taipei, Taiwan's FM100; Florida Man Radio; South Seas Broadcasting's KKHJ in American Samoa; and GGFM in the Philippines. For the Spanish-language segment of the

broadcast, Hofstra University professor and Latin American radio scholar Mario Murillo will connect us with his partner station WIOX, Roxbury, N.J., where he produces a weekly Rumba music show.

The WRHU student team, led by journalists Derek Futterman, Rachel Luscher and Crystal Bermudez, has been hard at work preparing “WRHU’s World Radio Passport.” Listeners will have the chance to hear shows featuring music, voices and stories from stations around the world, all co-hosted by WRHU students.

“We want the listener to sit back and let the radio take them on this amazing voyage around the world,” said Futterman ’23, a journalism major.

More than 50 industry professionals were also interviewed as part of the production. WRHU students have spent the last two months gathering stories and radio experiences from radio’s household names such as 1010 WINS anchor Lee Harris, Q104.3’s Jim Kerr, WNYC’s Paul Cavalconte, ABC Radio’s Todd Ant, and MaryKate “MK” Burnell of the “More Music Please” podcast. Matching the students with professionals in their fields of interest proved to be very rewarding for both interviewer and interviewee.





*WRHU Reporter Rachel Luscher*

Students from the station's news and sports departments, led by Professionals in Residence Pete Silverman and Sara Hendricks, jumped at the chance to chat with some of the nation's top talents. Shayna Sengstock '22, a WRHU student technical engineer, loved having the chance to interview veteran CBS engineer Mitch Glider. "It was really exciting to have the chance to learn about these amazing professionals and what they do," she said. "They provided so much inspiration for my own career."

WDST's Lenny Bloch also enjoyed his interview with WRHU's Grant Francis '21, responding with "Great kid, great chat!" Even Long Island music legends Richie Cannata and Liberty DeVitto got involved, talking about the crucial role of local radio in the region's music history. Student Director of Music Programming Ed Mabeeza now has the challenge of scheduling the entire program in RCS Selector for the



weekend.

None of this would have been possible without the support of the Lawrence Herbert School of Communication and Dean Mark Lukasiewicz. Hofstra has given WRHU its support for over 60 years. On Feb. 12, we look forward to sharing WRHU with the world.

## **Subscribe**

For more stories like this, and to keep up to date with all our market leading news, features and analysis, sign up to our newsletter [here](#).