

WVFS Brings Home National Award from CMJ

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Station leaders from WVFS Tallahassee 89.7FM travelled to New York City earlier this month to participate in the College Music Marathon, a five-day festival/conference/award ceremony hosted by the College Music Journal (CMJ) in hopes of taking home the Most Improved Radio Station Award.

For those of you who don't know, WVFS Tallahassee 89.7FM, or V89, is the 'Voice of Florida State,' a Tallahassee-based radio station that broadcasts from its on-campus headquarters at Florida State University. Established in 1987, WVFS broadcasts 24 hours a day, playing diverse and spontaneous programming, providing non-mainstream bands airtime and support.

Visiting the CMJ Music Marathon is a big deal for many college radio stations, as the event showcases the talents of stations otherwise unrecognized. For the annual event in NYC, CMJ brings in more than 1,000 artists to perform and provides professional development for participants via a variety of panels composed of broadcast industry representatives, supplying pointers for the respective departments within the stations' volunteer forces, and allowing for a networking experience unlike any other in college radio. Awards such as Most Creative Programming, Biggest Champion of the Local Scene and Best Use of Limited Resources are just a few of the specific awards presented to college stations from across North America.

For WVFS specifically, the event was a busy week full of informational panels that provided the department leaders with many new ideas to even further improve the station. The most exciting aspect of the whole five days was the WVFS win in the Biggest Improvement category. Individuals involved in the college radio scene and voted for by other stations and attendees of the CMJ Music Marathon nominated the radio station. Bringing this national award back to Tallahassee is a monumental achievement for the station and those who volunteer with it.

General Manager and Faculty Director, Dr. Misha Laurents, attributes the 'Most Improved' award directly to the new WVFS website, an achievement she says took nearly three years from securing funding to the finished product. She says "the consistency and quality of the radio station has always been and remains very high--and this is the direct result of the many people who work together to make WVFS such a stellar place."

Music Director David Wolfson accredits much of the station's success to "hard work and a willingness to compromise." He added, "For a station that's student-run on the strength of volunteers, the fact that our staff functions as well as it does is unusual." Having volunteered with the station for several years, Wolfson agrees that there has been some improvement. "If [you asked me] whether I think we really have improved a lot, I would say yes. Though nothing fundamental has changed, WVFS feels a lot different now from when I joined two years ago."

For more information about the radio station, including a list of specialty programs and ways to get involved, you can visit wvfs.fsu.edu. For more information about the CMJ Music Marathon or the rest of this year's winners, you can visit CMJ.com.