

50
years



UNC-TV celebrates 50 years of life-changing television

UNC  **TV**

Since 1955 UNC-TV has used the power of television to change lives for the better.



Tonight, someone in North Carolina will sit down in front of the television, pick up the remote, and with the press of a button be swept up into a fantastic world of knowledge, experience, and emotion that will change the way that person perceives the world. That person will be watching UNC-TV.



Bandleader and UNC alumnus Kay Kyser

From arts and culture to history and science programming, along with a safe haven for children to learn and grow, UNC-TV brings the best that television has to offer into the homes of North Carolinians 24 hours a day, every day of the year. But it wasn't always so. It all began with a vision.



William C. "Billy" Carmichael, Jr. (L) and William Friday (R) share a dream with Kay Kyser and UNC President Gordon Gray

When the network's original station - WUNC-TV, Channel 4 in Chapel Hill - signed on the air January 8, 1955, as North Carolina's first "educational station" and the tenth in the nation, no one could foresee the statewide public television network it would become. The pioneers who were instrumental in getting the station off the ground had to overcome more than a few obstacles just to turn the dream of "educational TV" into a reality in North Carolina.

That opening night featured a sports telecast of the freshman and varsity basketball games between North Carolina and Wake Forest. To get a camera in, the production crew had to cut a hole in the second story of Woolen gymnasium. (For the record, Carolina won 95 to 78.)

Wake-UNC Game To Be Televised

CHAPEL HILL, Jan. 6—WUNC-TV, Channel 4, will televise the freshman and varsity games between Carolina and Wake Forest here Saturday night as part of its opening-day program.

The telecast of the freshman game will begin at 6:30 from Woolen Gym with the varsity game coming on the air at approximately 8 o'clock.

The program will be the first in the series of game telecasts which WUNC-TV, the Consolidated University of North Carolina's educational station, plans for the rest of the season.

Frank Waldman, sports director for WUNC-TV, will do the play-by-play announcing of

Local press clipping announcing UNC-TV's original broadcast



Early master control operators prepare an educational television production for in-school broadcast.





WUNC Channel 4 Television, part of the consolidated University of North Carolina, goes on the air January 8, 1955.

Gordon Gray, President of the then three-campus consolidated University of North Carolina. These men realized the potential of this new medium to reach beyond the boundaries of academic campuses with education for all ages, and when the Federal Communications Commission offered eight channels in North Carolina for noncommercial broadcasters in 1952, they recognized the opportunity before them.

President Gray convened a conference of deans and directors from the Raleigh, Chapel Hill, and Greensboro campuses to examine the potential educational uses of television. In May 1953, the University trustees approved the idea.



Chief Engineer Alan B. MacIntyre (L) works in UNC-TV's first mobile unit, a donated Carolina Trailways bus.



Carmichael, Kyser, and Friday toured the state and raised \$1.8 million in cash and donated services from more than 20 companies, foundations, and individuals, enough to build the station and

provide some operating funds. The North Carolina General Assembly also appropriated \$217,000 for the new venture, beginning its long-term support of public television in North Carolina.

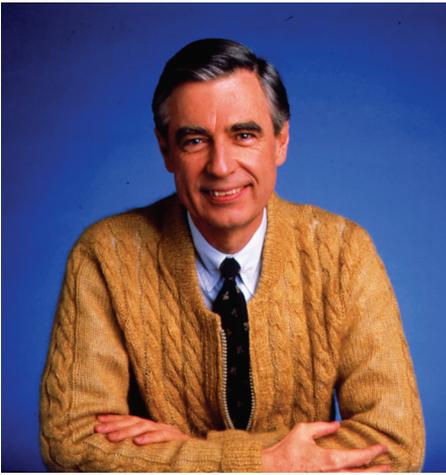
Initially, the station operated in three different locations, one on each campus. The Greensboro studio was a converted laundry facility. The studio at Chapel Hill was once a dining hall. Only the Raleigh studios were specifically built for television production. All three locations fed programs to the station's single transmitter and tower, which were located atop Terrell's Mountain in Chatham County. A donated Carolina Trailways bus was converted to serve as a remote unit, making it possible to cover events outside of the studios.



It is important to note here that the establishment of WUNC-TV would have been impossible without the generosity of Joseph Bryan, then president of Jefferson Standard Broadcasting. He planned to apply for the license for Channel 4 to extend



UNC-TV benefactor Joseph Bryan

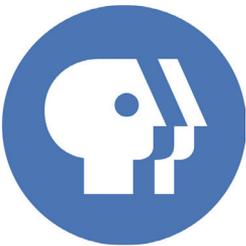


Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood, the first color television program on UNC-TV, aired in 1968.

Jefferson Standard's presence into the Triangle. But when he learned the University was interested in acquiring Channel 4, he not only withdrew his request but turned all the paperwork connected with the application over to the University, saving thousands of dollars in research, engineering, and legal fees.

On May 8, 1957, William Friday, one of educational television's biggest boosters, was inaugurated as president of the consolidated University. His quiet efforts behind the scenes made a big difference for UNC-TV over the next 30 years and beyond. In fact, he continues to be an important presence at UNC-TV even now. His program, **North Carolina People**

With William Friday remains the longest running show on UNC-TV. (The network's on-air identity as "UNC-TV" was not formally adopted until 1993, but to avoid confusion, we will refer to it by that name throughout this document.)



After ten years operating the original single station, President Friday, other University officials, and the North Carolina General Assembly saw potential for greater service to the state's citizens, and began to plan for a network that could take the benefits of educational television to all 100 North Carolina counties. By 1962, four more stations were planned with transmitters in Columbia, Linville, Asheville, and Concord, and once those transmitters were completed, UNC-TV reached more than 60 percent of the state.

The year 1967 was important for public television stations all over the country. The initial *Carnegie Commission Report on Public Broadcasting* was issued. It was the first time the educational stations were referred to as "public television." This act also established the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), a quasi-governmental corporation to encourage and foster development of public broadcasting and receive Federal funding. CPB, in turn, set up the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) to manage the national distribution of programs.

Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood made its debut in 1968. **Sesame Street** began its long run one year later. Programs such as **Masterpiece Theatre**, **NOVA**, and **Washington Week** (originally called **Washington Week in Review**) went on the air, showing the potential of public television to enlighten, entertain, and educate at the same time.



UNC-TV's first director, Dr. George Bair

In 1969, the Office of Director of Educational Television was established within the University, ending a period of independent operations at the separate locations in Greensboro, Chapel Hill, and Raleigh. The first person to hold this post was Dr. George Bair. During his tenure, three more stations were added to the network – Wilmington in 1971, Greenville in 1972, and Winston-Salem in 1973.

In 1979, the University of North Carolina Center for Public Television was established by the UNC Board of Governors, the first step toward combining the growing network's studio operations and administrative headquarters in a single location. A 22-member Board of Trustees was appointed



The Center

to serve in an advisory capacity representing the public. John W. (Jake) Dunlop, former head of Vermont Public Television, became the new director in 1980. The network's reach continued to increase with the establishment of stations in Jacksonville in 1982 and Roanoke Rapids in 1985.

A highlight in UNC-TV's history occurred in 1989 with the opening of the Joseph and Kathleen Bryan Communications Center in Research Triangle Park. Within UNC-TV's gleaming white tile walls, the University finally realized the dream of centralizing the network's studio operations in a single location for the first time.

Here again old friend Joseph Bryan helped out with a \$1 million gift to encourage the General Assembly to come up with the needed money for the \$8.3 million facility.

The move to RTP signaled UNC-TV's transition into the modern era of broadcasting. The North Carolina Association of Broadcasters acknowledged the significance of this step forward when it elected Jake Dunlop to its Hall of Fame in 2000.

From its humble beginnings, UNC-TV had transformed into a major media presence in North Carolina, serving one of the largest audiences in all of public television. The educational station with a single transmitter had grown into a major state resource

ready to be taken to the next level. In 1986, when C. D. Spangler, Jr., succeeded William Friday



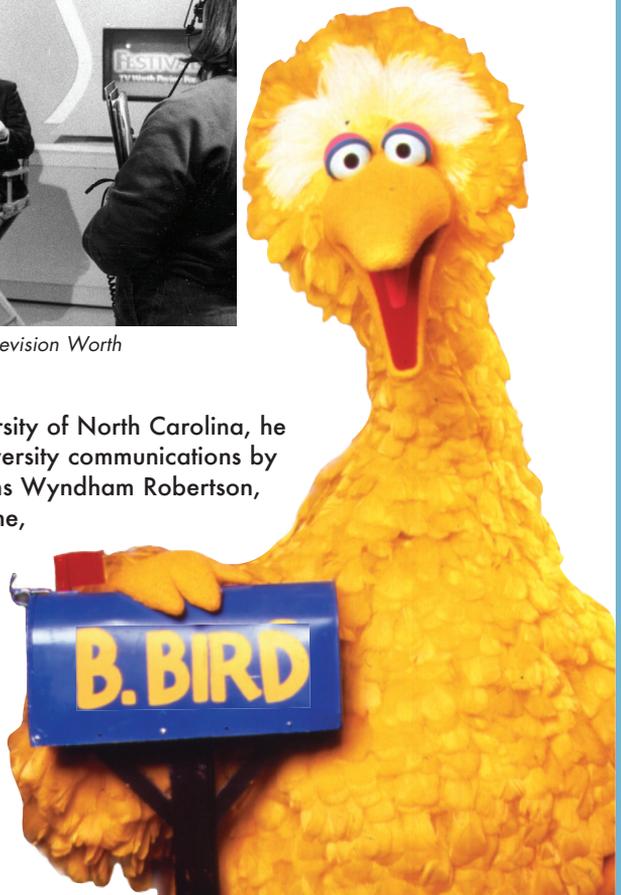
UNC-TV Director John W. (Jake) Dunlop pitches "Television Worth Paying For" on the set of FESTIVAL 1985.

as president of the now 16-campus University of North Carolina, he decided to place a new emphasis on University communications by hiring as vice president for communications Wyndham Robertson, formerly an editor with *FORTUNE* magazine, to oversee University communications activities, including UNC-TV. With a keen eye for quality and highly developed journalistic instincts and skills, Robertson devoted herself to improving UNC-TV's programs. When Dunlop retired,

Sesame Street and Big Bird debuted in 1969.



UNC-TV production staffers Jimmie Bullock (Top) and Claude Debnam (R) with a 1970s studio crew.



she decided the highest priority in his replacement would be finding someone with expertise in, and a commitment to programming excellence. Spangler and Robertson agreed that it was time to refine the vision for UNC-TV with greater focus on producing original programs that would serve the needs and interests of North Carolinians.

To execute this mandate, they hired Tom Howe as UNC-TV's director and general manager in 1992. Howe brought vast experience to the position with a background as a station manager, production executive, programmer, producer, and director. With the support of the University, Howe set about increasing the quality and quantity of original programming and local services.



Tom Howe, UNC-TV's director and general manager



A major milestone occurred on January 17, 1994, when **North Carolina Now** made its debut. The ambitious goal for the weeknightly series was to become the most important source of information about the state for North Carolinians. More than a decade later, the program is still going strong.

To bring more depth to UNC-TV's coverage of the state legislature, **Legislative Week in Review** was introduced in June 1994. A

new emphasis on original programming about North Carolina was taking shape.

Howe, a believer in strategic planning, developed a rolling five-year plan with UNC-TV's management team and board of trustees, spelling out the commitment to local service. This increased emphasis on planning has produced measurable results. For example, member support now provides UNC-TV with approximately one-third of its annual budget, student enrollment in distance-learning telecourses has grown to nearly 20,000, and original production of North Carolina programming has increased from 183 hours in 1992 to more than 400 hours today.

In 1996, the eleventh and final station in the network – WUNU, Channel 31 in Lumberton – was dedicated, making public television available for close to 100 percent of the state.

When Molly Corbett Broad took the helm as president of the University in 1997, it became immediately clear that, like her predecessors Friday and Spangler, she would be enthusiastic about the potential of UNC-TV.



North Carolina Now hosts Shannon Vickery and Mitch Lewis



Indeed, President Broad is widely recognized nationally as a leading visionary in the use of technology to advance education, and quickly understood the role that public television could play in that effort.

It was shortly after President Broad's arrival in North Carolina that UNC-TV confronted its greatest challenge. In 1997 the FCC issued a Report and Order requiring all television broadcasters to convert to digital technology. As a statewide network with 11 transmitters, UNC-TV faced a daunting \$65 million price tag to make the mandatory change.

Because of her firm belief in the potential of digital television to serve all North Carolinians, President Broad, with the endorsement of the UNC Board of Governors and the leadership of the General Assembly, decided to include funding for UNC-TV's digital conversion in the Higher Education Improvement Bond referendum, which was on the statewide election ballot in 2000. It was a bold proposal, with the \$3.1 billion total making it the largest bond issue in the history of American higher education. The referendum passed with the support of 73 percent of the electorate.



UNC-TV enters the digital age with a state-of-the-art Network Operations Center.

With the new digital technology comes even greater opportunity for service to the state, and certainly UNC-TV's focus on local programming continues. The latest additions to the broadcasting schedule include **North Carolina Weekend** and **Our State**. The value and impact of UNC-TV's efforts have not gone unnoticed in the television industry. UNC-TV has won recognition from CPB, PBS, regional networks and statewide organizations for its production, promotion, outreach, and development activities. Through the end of 2004, UNC-TV had received more than 100 industry awards. UNC-TV's overall accomplishments were perhaps best recognized through two awards bestowed on Howe – the 2003 Distinguished Service Award from the North Carolina Association of Broadcasters and the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Board of Governors of the Nashville/Midsouth Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. These prestigious industry awards are reflections of the excellent work of every individual connected with UNC-TV.



Today, UNC-TV's digital conversion is complete. North Carolinians now enjoy a family of digital public television services, including UNC-TV; UNC-KD, a 24-hour children's channel; UNC-ED, a dedicated educational channel; UNC-HD, featuring all high-definition programming; and UNC-NC, a channel that provides a mixture of local, educational, and public affairs programming.

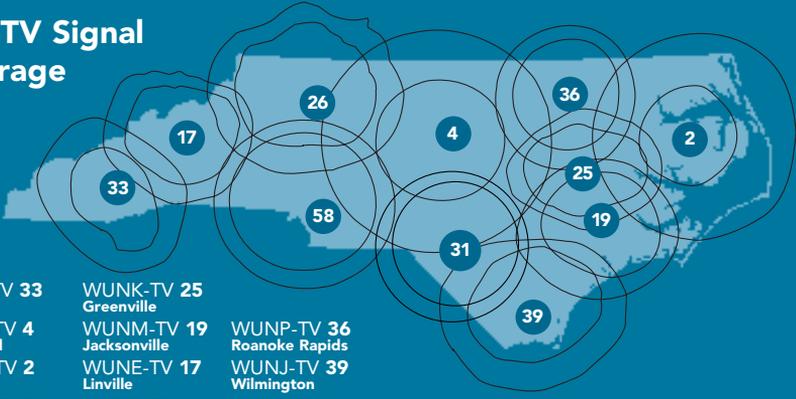


Our State



Our State took to the air in 2004.

UNC-TV Signal Coverage



WUNF-TV 33 Asheville	WUNK-TV 25 Greenville	WUNP-TV 36 Roanoke Rapids
WUNC-TV 4 Chapel Hill	WUNM-TV 19 Jacksonville	WUNJ-TV 39 Wilmington
WUND-TV 2 Columbia	WUNE-TV 17 Linville	WUNL-TV 26 Winston-Salem
WUNG-TV 58 Concord/Charlotte	WUNU-TV 31 Lumberton	

Of course, the true measure of any public television network's value is in how well it serves the needs of those who use its services. As UNC-TV moves forward in the twenty-first century, it does so with an appreciation of its proud history, but also with a mission that has been rewritten to bring focus on the needs of the future. Carefully developed by the UNC-TV management team and Board of Trustees, the new mission statement that guides North Carolina's statewide public television network provides a fitting conclusion for this history – which is, after all, still very much a work in progress.

The UNC-TV Mission

Television has the power to change lives. Public television has the responsibility to changes lives for the better: a child far from urban resources is inspired to become a scientist, a high school dropout earns a GED, a homebound senior citizen remains connected to the world of arts and culture, the family of an Alzheimer's patient finds strength and support. UNC-TV's unique programs and services provide people of all ages with enriching, life-changing television.



50 years of
life-changing TV

UNC TV
www.unctv.org