

## The Mel Johnson Media Center – Northwestern College & Radio

*“A New Home for Life”*



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# Northwestern College & Radio dedicates \$10.2 million Mel Johnson Media Center Sept. 12

SAINT PAUL, MN. – Northwestern College & Radio formally dedicates the \$10.2 million Mel Johnson Media Center in a private ceremony Friday, Sept. 12.

The 40,000 sq. ft. media center is the new home of Northwestern College Radio and Christian station KTIS, the academic department of communication and the FOCUS degree completion program. The dedication culminates a two-year building project largely financed by friends of Northwestern College & Radio.

“Northwestern has been engaged in broadcasting for 54 years and this is the first headquarters specifically designed for broadcasting,” says Dr. Paul Virts, senior vice president for media.

Featuring 70,000 digital electronic connections and over seven miles of wiring, industry experts say the state-of-the-art building surpasses many commercial radio stations.

“The Mel Johnson Media Center symbolizes the beginning of a new era at Northwestern College & Radio. We have the most technologically advanced professional and teaching facility for broadcasting and electronic media in the state of Minnesota,” says Dr. Alan Cureton, president.

### **It’s a wrap!**

The dedication features a giant 30-inch by 600-foot ribbon encircling the Mel Johnson Media Center. It was created from over 2,000 foot-long ribbons personalized and donated by friends of Northwestern College & Radio and pieced together by Northwestern students. The ribbons feature greetings from listeners, Bible verses and favorite Christian songs and artists. One honors a father serving in Iraq, another is from the funeral spray of a KTIS listener. Several are from wedding flowers and baby gifts. The ribbons come in dozens of colors from individuals of all ages, families, even an elementary school in Wisconsin. They have been stenciled, hand-stitched and adorned with lace and calligraphy.

MORE

## Mel Johnson Media Center, continued

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“The excellence of the Mel Johnson Media Center is in the details, right down to the wiring and connectors,” explains Alan Stricklin, freelance design and installation engineer. “We designed and built the facility to be ‘future flexible.’ It’s well-positioned to roll with technology that comes our way.”

Jon Engen, KTIS station manager, says the facility allows Northwestern to take several steps ahead in quality and quantity of production and programming. “It has opened up space for new equipment and growth we simply did not have before. There’s something energizing about working in a world-class facility that causes to ‘step it up a notch’ and really take opportunities seriously.”

**THE MEDIA CENTER** enhances Northwestern’s synergy between media and higher education. “What’s so unique about Northwestern is the relationship between media and education,” says Dr. Richard Long, director of academic technology. “Our students work alongside professional broadcasters sharing equipment, expertise and technology.”

The media center definitely raises the bar on media education, adds Mark Seignious, Northwestern broadcasting instructor with 20 years of experience in commercial radio. “We provide students with small classes, plenty of hands-on experience and access to the latest technology, a combination not often found in public universities, tech schools or community colleges. We don’t want our students to think like students, but like professionals.”

The facility also sets the stage for further global endeavors in addition to what Northwestern is already doing in Christian broadcasting and education. In 2001 Northwestern established a branch campus in conjunction with the HCJB-affiliated Christian Center for Communications in Quito, Ecuador.

“Quito was just the first step in our global impact,” Dr. Virts says. “We are studying opportunities in India and South Africa. “Ultimately, what we are most focused on is that this new facility – its technology, its programming and its staff – is used to communicate a message of hope and compassion to hurting people,” Dr. Virts emphasized. “We want to have a greater impact on the Kingdom of God.”

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