KTRU off the air pending 'reorganization'

by Mariel Yam and Elizabeth Jardina
THE RICE THRESHER

KTRU went off the air 8 a.m. Thursday morning. Regular programming has been replaced by satellite content from the World Radio Network. The station is locked, the code lock broken. DJ bumper stickers have been removed from the office door; and a sign on the door says, "No Admittance: Violations subject to Code of Student Conduct."

Student volunteers will not be allowed to return to KTRU until the station is "reorganized," Vice President for Student Affairs Zenaida Camacho said at an open meeting yesterday evening. Camacho, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs John Hutchinson and about 50 students and community members, as well as several local news organizations, covered the issue crammed into Sewall Hall, Room 301 for the hour-long meeting.

Camacho explains shutdown
Camacho said he did not detail what the reorganization would mean, but he said the university is committed to a student-owned, student-operated station. The day-to-day operation of KTRU would in general remain the same as it was before the shutdown, he said. The difference would be that a committee would determine policy regarding programming.

The shutdown is a way to resolve this conflict that's been going on for months and months and has to stop... I didn't know how else to do it," Camacho said.

He said Thursday evening the shutdown was not intended to punish KTRU.

However, on Thursday morning, see SHUTDOWN, Page 4

KTRU forum
KTRU Station Manager Will McKeel, KTRU DJ Chris Valdez came up with the idea. Rees "was behind it all the way, so she

700 people sign KTRU protest petition

Students have shown their support for student control of the radio station in different ways, most significantly in a KTRU-sanctioned petition signed by about 700 people and given to Vice President for Student Affairs Zenaida Camacho after last night's meeting. Tommy Belanger, a Will Rice College sophomore who has been a KTRU DJ for three semesters, wrote the petition and helped coordinate its circulation Thursday.

The petition is addressed to "Rice University and KTRU Advisory Committee" and begins, "We request the return of control of KTRU programming in the student body. KTRU is an organization built by the students and for the students. Although Rice University has added in the process of creating KTRU, co-authorship does war growth.

The petition says the KTRU Oversight Committee, with "unequal representation," and the suspension of KTRU operation "blatantly and deliberately express Rice University's disregard of student concerns, opinions, and affairs."

Belanger joined the petition to the KTRU listeners and asked for volunteers to pass the petition around during lunch at the colleges and around campus. DJs counted 676 signatures but left several sheets uncounted because they felt that almost 700 signatures was sufficient, he said.

Belanger estimated that about 95 percent of the signatures came from undergraduates, with the rest from graduate students. Belanger estimated that 10 professors signed although the petition was not directed toward them. He said he didn't think community members signed it.

Belanger's instructions to those circulating the petition did not explicitly restrict signatures to students, but the wording of the petition said it was a student effort.

Belanger presented the petition to Camacho after the Thursday evening meeting.

Another prominent protest effort. KTRU DJs used Sid Richardson College stereo equipment to play announcement and protest songs Thursday afternoon. The stereo is usually used for "Radio Free Sid," when the college blasts music from the top floor of the college on Friday afternoon. The music can be heard throughout campus.

According to Hanszen College junior Joey McKeel, KTRU DJ Chris Valdez came up with the idea on the KTRU listeners and called Laura Rees, Sid Richardson College president, to propose the idea. Rees "was behind it all the way, so she

Little resolved at last night's meeting

by Olivia Allison
THE RICE THRESHER

More than 350 people attended last night's meeting between KTRU staff, Zenaida Camacho and John Hutchinson to discuss the future of KTRU after the station's regular programming was suspended yesterday morning.

The crowd, at least 60 percent undergraduates, had filled the doors and more were waiting outside both doors of the room by the time the meeting began.

A number of students who attended the meeting wore KTRU bumper stickers on their clothing to show support for the station. Several students were shirts with the words "Rice University, Enemy of Art" written on them. At least three network television crews and several reporters attended the meeting.

KTRU Station Manager Will McKeel and Will Rice College senior Johnny So began the meeting by asking Camacho, vice president for Student Affairs, to explain why he suspended student programming on the station.

Camacho said he wanted to hear students' opinions first before answering So's question. However, the audience insisted that Camacho answer So's question.

Camacho then presented prepared remarks on the subject, saying he took student programming off the air to end the conflict-filled negotiations about the number of athletic events that KTRU would broadcast. Camacho added that he did not know how long it would be before students are allowed to return to KTRU.

"In the last few months, it has become quite clear to me that we

See MEETING, Page 4

ANOTHER THRESHER EXTRA

We printed a letter-sized extra yesterday afternoon and a one-page wrap around the regular issue last night. This extra contains much of what was printed in both of those and represents our most complete coverage of the KTRU shutdown, news which broke after we'd gone to press with the regular issue. We will continue following this story and have further details in the Dec. 8 issue, the last Thresher of the semester.
Bullying students

Locking students out of the KTRU studio yesterday morning was not just wrong — it was the most horrifyingly authoritarian display we have ever heard about at Rice. The shutdown was a childish way to prove that the university is in charge of the campus. But to some extent there is a neighborliness that comes from the proximity of the college campus and its students to the student radio station.

When students are locked out of the student radio station, talking about feelings is patronizing and infuriating, not to mention demeaning. We think the KTRU supporters who interrupted speakers at the meeting may need lessons in manners. However, they called for Camacho to deliver his statement before a discussion of "feelings" because they rightly expected him, as the man behind the decision and a student leader himself, to be able to provide some explanation for the shutdown of the station.

But as far as anyone attended the meeting could tell, Camacho had no explanation. How could this be possible? How could a presumably responsible adult think it was a good idea to take a heavy-handed, bullying approach to this problem and not have a clear course of action?

We're puzzled.

If Camacho and Hutchinson have really thought about the immediate future of KTRU as little as it seemed when they faced an angry student body. They are not fit to hold their jobs.

Shutting down KTRU was as impulsive, angry and abusive at a professor.

The stickers ranged from self-deprecating ("freak show") to obscure ("luring disco dollies to a life of vice") to whimsical ("taking the premier award for excellence in broadcast journalism on the campus of Rice University and its agents (namely Vice President for Student Affairs Zenaido Camacho) ought to be a bit more honest with us.

Peerasak Shah Sid junior

The stickers were gone.

Contact the Thresher

Letters to the editor should be sent to the Thresher by mail, fax, e-mail or by telephone. Letters should be no longer than 250 words in both content and length.

Letters should be typed or written legibly. The Thresher reserves the right to edit letters for both content and length.

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Students, faculty voice reactions to KTRU controversy

Faculty, staff concerned about administrative handling of student-run radio programming

by Jose Luis Curbia

At the most basic level, yesterday's indefinite shutdown of KTRU programming comes down to the issue of The undergraduate student body versus the administration. But that doesn't mean Rice faculty and staff have strong feelings about the mix as well. Many members of the faculty and staff have strong feelings about everything from general KTRU programming to yesterday's shutdown, many staff and faculty members still do not know the details about the incident.

"Universities are supposed to be places where you can express your ideas freely," Associate Professor of Biology Joel Wolfram said. "A university is a place that's supposed to be better than the real world. But this seems to be the worst mirror of society coming out, someone in power abusing that power. And I think that's really inappropriate."

"I can tell you, as a community member and as someone who works at Rice, I understand very well the pressures to open up a dialogue between students and KTRU in the past weeks to try to find a way to make this work, and this means all of it." Both Wolfe and Sawyer said they were worried about the administration with the administration among the student body and the faculty, and helping to find a resolution. "I think the students still have a frustration that they don't understand enough about the administration," said Sawyer. "I wish we could have been more open to a way that we can operate this station as a community that involves students, faculty and staff."

"I hope this is a step in the right direction, although it's hard to see how we navigate from where we are to where we need to be."

--- Dale Sawyer
Will Rice College master

"You know what it really looks like? It looks like [the administration] seized on an opportunity to change something they've wanted to change, to make an announcement, to say," Sawyer said.

"I wasn't real happy about it because we had parents and other people trying to listen to the game. I didn't really understand it," said McKinnon. "I would have liked for our gametime to be on the radio somewhere, and KTRU always seemed like a viable option to me because my athlet- ers are athletes at Rice."

Wolfe said he didn't have an opinion about the way KTRU should be run because he doesn't know enough about the situation and the history of the station.

"It was like a shocking reaction to the whole thing," Wolfe said. "Closing down the whole station, reorganizing it, kicking the door in response to something two DJs did strike me as an atomic bomb to get rid of a tranquility indigestion."

"I hope it involves the students. I hope it involves the students who know and love KTRU."

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STUDENTS SPEAK OUT
The Thresher asked students a Thursday afternoon, "What do you think about the KTRU shutdown?"

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Camacho: Broadcasting of music during game caused shutdown

McKeel and Hanszen junior Patrick Glauthier, a DJ and member of the KTRU Oversight Committee, said that KTRU's position because, unlike other blank tape organizations, KTRU had been taken off the air. "Not every student at Rice likes KTRU," Hemsath said. "KTRU cannot hide behind the university radio" and "the day the music died." Another reads, "It's sad," she said. She had found the KTRU instructional manual to try to fix what she assumed was a technical error when Camacho and Hutchinson came in. She had broken something, and she apologized to them, but in the back of her mind, she said, was the idea that they had come to take over the station.

"I don't know what I've done," she said. "And they were like, 'We don't have any obligation to your conversations or your obligations.' Glauthier said. After every few songs, we would have a on-air conversation about what the situation was, what had happened, where the meeting was being held.

About half an hour before they were about to leave, Glauthier told them there had been some complaints about the local DJs, and they made them turn the volume down.

"But other than that, everybody was calm and mild and people were spread the word," Glauthier said. "We just wanted to make sure we were up for KTRU.

Some students showed their feelings in displays across campus.

The door to the station's office, formerly plastered with distinctive KTRU bumper stickers, was stripped of the stickers. Hutchinson said he had the stickers removed so that students who went to the office for their shifts would know that KTRU had been taken off the air.

Many members of the audience cheered when Rosa Guerrero, an Admission Office assistant, staff told the students, "You guys are being bad.

"I'm just walking out of the door. It didn't really register that that was the end of KTRU as you know," Steeher said.

"I just wanted to crawl somewhere and die," she said. "This is the most horrible thing that could have possibly happened.

She said she had found a formal apology to the members of the women's basketball team after the incident Tuesday night. "I'm just wanting to be up for KTRU." Hutchinson said it was his decision to remove the stickers. Hutchinson said he had the stickers removed so that students who went to the office for their shifts would know that KTRU had been taken off the air.

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