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Student Works to Improve Local Public Access Station

Summary: Seth Elsen ’13 is working to improve the practicality and usability of the local public access television station.

(November 19, 2012)-Seth Elsen ’13, Shelton, Washington, is currently working with the Center for Small Towns (CST) and the City of Morris Public Access Television channel to improve the practicality and usability of the station. Elsen, along with City Manager Blaine Hill, began work on the project in October. The goal of the project's initial phase is to create a plan that will streamline the channel, which currently utilizes a system of DVDs and alarms to schedule programming. This current arrangement leaves dead air time and may not be the most effective way of delivering programming.

Elsen plans to provide a list of possible grant and funding sources to the organization as well as a tentative plan for streamlining the station’s processes. Changes that Elsen plans will be aimed at using air time constructively, delivering media that consumers want and need, and making the broadcasting system as efficient as possible. At the end of the planning and preliminary process this spring, the City of Morris hopes to implement a new broadcasting system.

Elsen has been working with CST for three years since transferring from the South Puget Sound Community College in Olympia, Washington. As a political science and resource management major, he sees significant benefit to working with CST, as it offers him practical experience aligning with what he may pursue as a career. Working with CST has allowed Elsen to gain experience in understanding and working with tribal policy and sustainable energy integration as well as the SUN-E project, which helped create more sustainable energy resources for the Morris campus. Elsen is excited to be working with the Morris community to help improve the public broadcasting system.

The University of Minnesota, Morris Center for Small Towns is a community outreach program that serves as a point-of-entry to the resources of the University of Minnesota. Small towns, local units of government, k-12 schools, nonprofit organizations, and other University units are able to utilize the Center's resources as they work on rural issues or make contributions to rural society. Their mission is to focus the University’s attention and marshal its resources toward assisting Minnesota’s small towns with locally identified issues by creating applied learning opportunities for faculty and students.

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