

### KZSU is Stanford University

By Mark Lawrence and Kathleen Baldwin



KZSU, the voice of Stanford, is the University's FM station, broadcasting on 90.1 FM. They also feature live streaming at [kzsulive.stanford.edu](http://kzsulive.stanford.edu) KZSU serves the Stanford community with quality broadcasts of music, sports, news, and public affairs.

The station is owned by the Board of Trustees of Stanford University and is governed by a Board of Directors appointed by the President. KZSU got their FM license in 1964, and upgraded from 10 to 500 watts in 1978. KZSU is a non-commercial station funded mainly by Stanford student fees, with help from underwriting, gifts, and listener donations. KZSU's staff is all volunteers, made up of Stanford students, staff, alumni, and community affiliates, except for the Chief Engineer, who is a part time employee. They recruit staff each year at the Activities Fair with about 30 to 40 working to have a 24/7 station.

In the early days of the station, KZSU broadcast as an AM carrier current station (through the University's power supply) on 880 kHz, starting in 1947 Originally under the Drama Department (hence its location in Memorial Hall), later under Dept. of Communication. A carrier current station must have a transmitter in each building to transmit radio waves. These transformers were low power and gave no interference to other channels nearby so at that time, KZSU did not need to be licensed by the FCC. Programing was directed to students, living in the dorms (Stern, Wilbur, Toyon, Branner, Crothers, CroMem, Flo Mo, Roble, Lagunita and the "Frat Cluster 1"). As more construction of dorms came on line, it was determined that the station needed to request an FM license. This would allow the station to reach all students. The original FM antenna was on the roof of Memorial Hall, but this did not provide good coverage. They needed a new antenna and antenna location. It was determined the antenna site would be on Stanford land, and is located in the foothills, one of the highest points on campus. The FM license was granted in 1964 and funds were designated to provide the support for the station.

On a good day, the 500-watt signal reaches from Oakland and parts of San Francisco in the north, to Fremont and points beyond in the east and down to Gilroy in the south. It's just about the whole Bay Area — most of the coverage of commercial stations which broadcast at 50,000 watts and more. KZSU broadcasts in full stereo, and without much of the compression favored by most Bay Area commercial stations.



KZSU sometimes has had interference problems with a few small stations in the south bay. These include a repeater for Christian station broadcasting out of Idaho and a pirate station that plays some pretty bad music, according to Mark Lawrence, the Chief Engineer. Mark has been involved with KZSU since 1963.

Today, besides music shows, KZSU has news and public affairs programming, broadcasts of important Stanford events, the weekly Palo Alto City Council on Monday nights, live musical performances on *Wednesday Night Live*, and other specials. During the regular school year, KZSU broadcasts games from eight different Stanford sports. These include men's/women's soccer, women's volleyball, men's/women's basketball, football, baseball, and softball.