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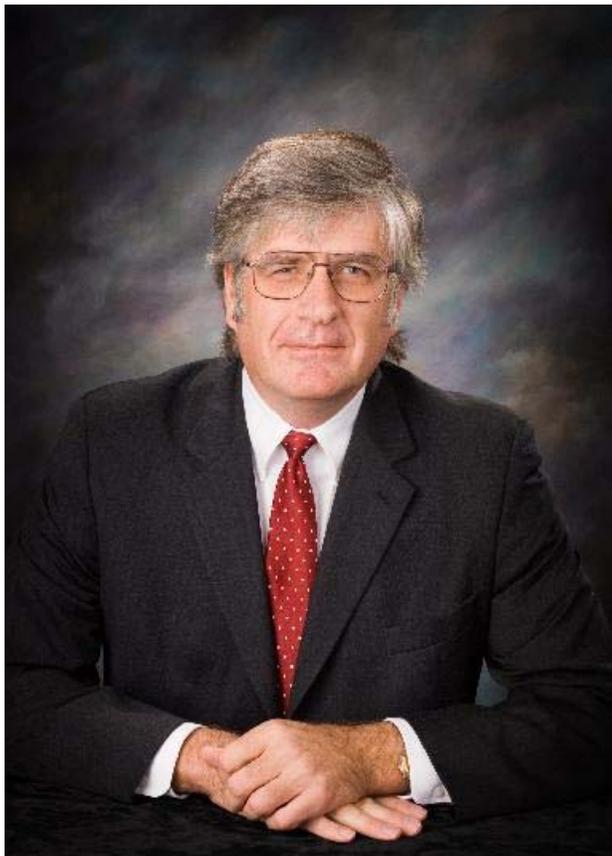
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## New General Manager of WEIU-TV/FM Named

Apr-29-2010



The word "comfortable" popped up over and over again as Jack K. Neal explained his decision to accept the job as general manager of WEIU-TV/FM on the campus of Eastern Illinois University.

"I grew up in Ohio and have worked in both Ohio and Indiana," he said. "I'm a small town guy, looking forward to returning to the Midwest. It's very much like coming home for me."

For Neal, "coming home" means leaving his current job as station manager at KUHT-TV, Houston PBS, America's first public television station and one of the founding stations of the Public Broadcasting Service (1969). The station is located on the campus of the University of Houston, meaning Neal is already accustomed to working in a university setting.

And he enjoys it.

"On a visit to Eastern, I arrived at the studios about five minutes before air time," he said. "And there was virtually no difference between the activity taking place there and what would be taking place in a 'professional' newsroom.

"It was exhilarating to watch the students running down the hall to make sure everything was ready before airtime. This is what attracted me to the

campus. The students there seem very involved, and I like the idea of teaching them the things they need to know in their chosen career path, especially as the industry continues its move in a new direction."

As general manager, Neal will have primary responsibility for the coordination, supervision and administration of programs and activities at EIU's television/radio center. This includes support of the academic mission of the university, as well as programming and outreach services to the campus and greater community through WEIU-FM, WEIU-TV, student audio channels, locally controlled community and campus cable channels and web distribution.

He's reluctant at this point to discuss what changes, if any, might be made at the EIU campus facilities after his arrival to campus on June 1.

"It's too early to make that kind of decision," he said. "I first need to get a full understanding of what's already taking place at WEIU.

"It's a solid station already. It's in a place where public stations should be heading -- local, lots of good programming, a nightly television news program and an Emmy-winning news program, at that," he said.

Speaking in generalities, Neal did say he would continue to seek out locally produced programming and even more involvement than already exists in the local community.

"And we'll discover ways in which to develop user-generated content -- in essence, make our operation more interactive," he added. "Television/radio really is a two-way medium now."

Neal, who has worked in television and/or radio since 1974, previously worked for Blue Ridge Public Television (WBRA-TV), Roanoke, Va.; the Public Broadcasting Council of Central New York (WCNY-TV), Syracuse, N.Y.; the Educational Television Association of Metropolitan Cleveland (WVIZ-TV), Cleveland, Ohio; and other stations in Ohio and Indiana.

His education includes a bachelor's degree in management and a master's degree in business administration, both from California Coast University.