

## Radio Broadcasting Coordinator Named L&C's 2011 Emerson Excellence in Teaching Award Winner

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Godfrey, Ill. – Faculty member, radio broadcasting program coordinator and WLCA 89.9-FM station manager Mike Lemons is Lewis and Clark Community College's 2011 Emerson Excellence in Education Award winner.

Lemons has been with L&C for 16 years, and during that time has taught mass communications courses ranging from announcing to advertising sales, managed an award winning radio station and pioneered dual credit radio courses within four local high schools.

"Mike demonstrates daily that his highest priority is the success of his students," said Linda Chapman, vice president for Academic Affairs at L&C. "He is an excellent classroom instructor and professional who regularly assesses his students' learning in order to continuously improve his program."

A student of L&C's radio broadcasting program in the 1980s, Lemons graduated from L&C and joined the workforce before eventually going back to earn a bachelor's degree in workforce education from Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

His work credits include radio advertising sales at WBGZ in Alton, as well as gigs at Hot 97 STL and 105.7 The Point in St. Louis – but his current work is his passion.

"I really enjoy getting to meet the new students each year and seeing them grow. I've even become friends with some of them over the years," Lemons said. "I also really enjoy running the station, which is a modern rock format. I have one of the greatest jobs that I know."

The Emerson Excellence in Teaching Award recipient is revealed each year during faculty in-service at the start of the fall semester. Lemons said he is honored to have been chosen this year.

“I’ve had the opportunity to accept a number of awards over the years on behalf of the radio station – local and national awards – but those were due in large part to the students over the years. To know this one came from my peers means a lot,” he said. “It’s good to see they appreciate the efforts of the radio station and know the work that we do.”

As program coordinator, Lemons has been instrumental in setting up dual credit radio broadcasting partnerships with high schools in Alton, Bethalto and East Alton-Wood River, which help students earn college credits for free, get real on-air broadcasting experience and get their foot in the door to the radio broadcasting program at the college once they’ve graduated. The program started at Alton High School about four years ago. Today, he helps manage two digital substations of 89.9, which are shared by AHS and Civic Memorial High School, and more recently, East Alton-Wood River High School and Marquette Catholic High School, respectively.

In the classroom, Lemons makes classes enjoyable for students. “Our classes are heavy on interaction. We do fun things and I try to lighten the mood at times. In our profession, people need to be a little willing to take risks and put themselves on display,” he said of his teaching style. “This way, we break down the barriers early on, and they can perform when they need to.”

Under his wing, WLCA 89.9-FM has won a number of awards, including an Achievement in Radio Award for Best Student-Run Station in the St. Louis market, and has been recognized by the College Music Journal, a sort of “industry bible for college radio,” Lemons said. The station is also currently the only college station in the St. Louis area presenting live shows at the Pageant.

Lemons also spends time volunteering in the community, setting a good example for students.

“He introduces his students to philanthropy by modeling these behaviors and requiring them,” Chapman said. “Each year he organizes a fund raiser for the Alton Boys and Girls Club which involves all of his students (89 Hours of Christmas). He is the annual emcee of the college’s Honors Banquet and volunteers as an emcee, judge and panel member for many social services organizations, including the United Way.”

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