

Unknown Organization - Media Giraffe Profile

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Brian Scott - Berkeley Community Media

"The fact that there's a global audience for things that are coming out of Berkeley and out of the station is pretty significant. I think that it's really important that people continue to use these resources to make sure that their message gets out." Brian Scott, Executive Director "

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About

Provides community access to media resources. The mission statement speaks for itself: "Our mission is to build an electronic free speech forum in order to encourage democratic involvement and build community." Democratic involvement is no stranger to Berkeley, California. Home of the free speech movement and of America's most out-spoken liberal community, Berkeley citizens are often on the frontlines of national and international political debates. But even the loudest of Berkeleians need a supportive, versatile medium to channel their voices. Berkeley Community Media, the local public access TV station, has supplied its community with just that medium. Beginning in 1994 as a public, education and government TV station for the City of Berkeley, the station has continued to expand its coverage of local events, while supplying Berkeley residents with access to media equipment and studio time. The station's three-camera studio, editing facilities, field cameras and training to master the equipment, as well as internships, are open to any Berkeley resident for a low-cost membership fee. Residents unable to pay off a membership fee are entitled to volunteer. The memberships, funding from cable-franchisers, donations, and cable subscribers are what keep the station's cameras rolling even after falling victim to over \$70,000 in funding cuts from the City of Berkeley last year. In spite of those cuts, last year, members aired 600 individual shows and 50 series shows ranging from humor to religious programming, in languages from Spanish to sign language. B-TV's web streaming has allowed the programming, shows like the community health series, Education is the Best Medicine and the "left to what most people consider left" series, The Hippie News Network, to reach far corners of the globe. Executive Director Brian Scott not only receives emails from his community, but from Finland as well. Scott, who began at the station in 1999 after working with public access in San Francisco, praises the freedom granted only in public access as the key to fostering democratic involvement. Scott personally reaches out to underserved members of the community, either through non-profit organizations, school visits, or phone calls. The result is a wide-range of programming that Scott claims would not be seen anywhere else. With the station's express studios, residents are able to participate in programming without extensive time or planning. All it takes is an idea and a technician.

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