



Mr. Tom Wheeler, Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

September 4, 2015

Dear Chairman Wheeler,

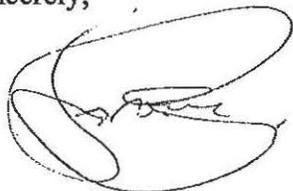
I cannot overstate how valuable our collaboration with Charter Community Access has been over the past four years. Each year our university, faculty and students, work hard to put on *Election Connection*, a show that covers the politics of western Connecticut. *Election Connection* is not only the sole show to cover this area; it gives students experience in the media production world. We began putting this on in 2011, and have done so every years since. This success has been largely due to Charter Network in Newtown and its staff and equipment. Without the collaboration and expertise of Charter Communications and Greg Van Antwerp, Community Access Supervisor, these essential, locally produced programs could not take place.

Charter has been vital to our nationally award-winning news coverage. We have also produced local sports programming with the help of Charter. The numerous emails and the data we're gathered reveals hundreds of folks who watch our show in the region. Viewers are able to call in and tweet us during the live news and election coverage, and they have done so with great results. With Charter's help *Election Connection* is able to feature four network-styled anchors, analysis and commentary, live coverage from Republican and Democratic headquarters, pre-recorded interviews and news packages, up-to-minute graphic polling results, as well as students who deliver six to ten live field reports throughout the night from various state offices, and a mixture of both physical and virtual sets in the Charter studio. The network has also provides an exceptional educational opportunity to students through their television studio facilities. Two of our volunteer anchors have appeared on CNN as policy experts. The college course that produces this show includes a crew of over 60 students and people from the community, including anchors who are local, political, historical, and economic experts. Thanks to Charter and the opportunities Greg and his staff provide, we are able to cover political races and issues important to our community in a way that no other media are doing. Western Connecticut is an area that is under-served when it comes to providing original, distinct, local news as well as public affairs that cater to our community.

We are proud to serve that local need. Our work is inspired by the words of Thomas Jefferson regarding the importance of having an informed public for a healthy democracy and republic. *Election Connection* was featured in Global Media Journal, a peer-reviewed academic journal, for its innovative approach to local programming and pedagogy¹. In 2013, our live news and election coverage was recognized by a Telly Award and the Communicator Award of Distinction from the International Academy of Visual Arts. In spring 2015, the show won first place in the Multicamera-Studio category in a national film festival competition in which 1,352 colleges and universities competed. We owe that recognition in large part to Charter and Greg. Graduates from our department cite this experience as one of their most important learning experiences while at Western Connecticut State University. We hope this exceptional educational opportunity and community service continues for western Connecticut.

Our program is very grateful to be able to serve our region in a way that no other media organization, public or private, is doing. This is a dynamic time for media. As mergers and acquisitions take place, we hope we can continue to provide high quality, locally produced, informative community service programming. Thank you, for your time and attention.

Sincerely,



JC Barone, PhD
Associate Professor
Executive Producer, *Election Connection*
Department of Communication & Media Arts
Western Connecticut State University
Web: <http://people.wcsu.edu/baronej>; Email: baronej@wcsu.edu

¹ "Mobility & Connectivity: Shifts in Teaching, Learning, and Providing Live News" (2013).

<http://web.a.ebscohost.com/abstract?direct=true&profile=ehost&scope=site&authtype=crawler&jrnl=15507521&AN=97173958&h=N1ingrwJsJtKw4hvqFTgZqgWYk4z%2fBe%2fTq7SO776cVYfKuV1u4BiniGvFOKHilXkc2Ech1tJYM227RdbJUITVw%3d%3d&crI=c&resultNs=AdminWebAuth&resultLocal=ErrCrINotAuth&crIhashurl=login.aspx%3fdirect%3dtrue%26profile%3dehost%26scope%3dsite%26authtype%3dcrawler%26jrnl%3d15507521%26AN%3d97173958>

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445 12th Street, SW Washington, DC 20554
September 15, 2015

Dear Chairman Wheeler,

"Election Connection," the election show we put on every year for Western Connecticut, is very important to our university. Both students and faculty participate in creating the show, and our university goes to many conferences around the country. "Election Connection" was featured in the Global Media Journal, and, in 2013, was recognized by a Telly Award and the Communicator Award of Distinction from the International Academy of Visual Arts for its innovative approach to local programming and pedagogy. In spring 2015, we won first place in the Multicamera-Studio category in a national film festival competition in which 1,352 colleges and universities competed. This success wouldn't have been possible without Charter's willingness to take us on, and for the employees who helped us through all the learning curves. We thank them from the bottoms of our hearts and hope they continue their good work for future students.

Sincerely



Students at WCSU

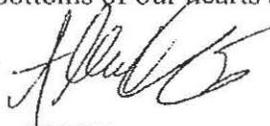
Communications & Media Arts
Western Connecticut State University
181 White Street
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Sincerely

Students at WCSU

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Students at WCSU

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Sincerely,  Nick Collins

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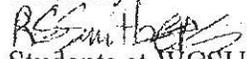
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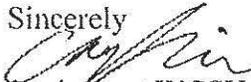
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A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Santa Gonzalez". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed address information.

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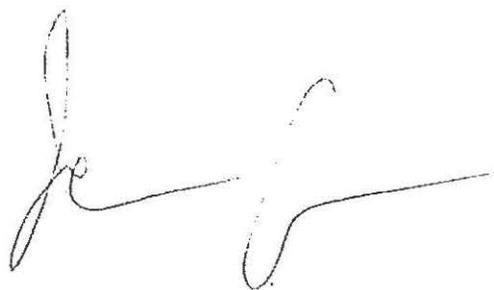
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