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WGUV Director of Engineering honored with Silver Circle Award

(Grand Rapids, MI, February 27, 2009) WGUV is happy to announce that Director of Engineering Robert Lumbert has been inducted into the Silver Circle by The National Academy of Arts and Sciences. He will be honored on Sunday, March 1 in Birmingham for his more than 25 years of outstanding service and leadership in the television broadcasting community. Bob joins WGUV's Assistant General Manager – Community Relations, Chuck Furman, Programming Manager Carrie Corbin, Assistant General Manager – Operation, Ken Kolbe and General Manager Michael Walenta, who have all been inducted over the last four years.

Upon graduation from high school, Bob got a job with Consumers Energy in their engineering department with help from the high school vocational office. After marrying and graduating from Ferris State University in 1978 with an Associate's degree in Radio-Television Service and a Bachelor's degree in Broadcast Electronics Technology, Bob ended up at WGUV-TV (then called WGVC), a fledgling PBS affiliate in Grand Rapids. He served for eight years as Television Area Maintenance Engineer.

In 1986, Bob left WGUV to become Telecommunications Specialist in the Department of Television Production at his alma mater, Ferris State University. In 1988, he returned to WGUV as the Assistant Director of Engineering and in 1990, he was made Director of Engineering, which he remains through the present. He oversees the technical facilities for two full-power television and four radio stations. Bob also provides management leadership for a dozen engineering staff members and directs all facets of WGUV's technical operations.

Bob headed the 1999 Michigan Engineering Study for Digital Conversion of the state's public broadcasting stations, including statewide interconnect facilities planning. Currently, he is heading WGUV's digital conversion process. Throughout phase one of the conversion, Bob outlined the process and oversaw the purchase of the new digital antennae and transmitters for WGUV, as well as its affiliate WGVK in Kalamazoo. At the same time, he oversaw the upgrade of WGVK's existing equipment. During phase two, Bob has overseen the upgrade of WGUV's master control, which is now in its final stages. Through the entire process, Bob has faced the difficult task of juggling the conversions of two stations simultaneously, and has met the

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WGVU

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challenge with great success. Thanks to his hard work, including being onsite at one transmitter or the other almost every day for almost two years, both transmitters and antennas are online and operational.

In the past few years, Bob has been working with the help of the entire engineering department and station grant writers to secure funding for the conversion and other equipment. Many of the upgrades to Master Control were made possible by a grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting that Bob helped to secure. In 2004, he helped the station to receive a grant from the Public Telecommunications Facilities Program that will enable WGVU to replace its existing analog Studio Transmitter link with a digital one, allowing the station to deliver a reliable digital signal to viewers in the Kalamazoo area.

Bob has also been working to converting WGVU's radio stations to digital signals and WGVU's 1480 AM station is now broadcasting In Band On Channel (IBOC). He has been working on securing grant money in order to move WGVU-FM and WGVS-FM to an IBOC broadcast.

In 2002, Bob was awarded the MAB Pioneer Award for his considerable contributions to the broadcast engineering field and his efforts to correlate all of the stations in Michigan.

Bob currently resides in a suburb of Grand Rapids and attends the Cedar Springs Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. In his mentoring and volunteer work in the engineering field, Bob has helped train and has given countless hours providing technical guidance for members of Jehovah's Witnesses. Not only has he overseen the installation of audio/visual equipment at the JW Hall in Holt, Michigan, but he has also trained all of its operators and has been active over the years at regional and national conventions of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Bob looks forward to the next generation of television that WGVU will bring to its audience and is feeling the excitement that this self-proclaimed geek gets with all new technology.

WGVU's continued mission is to provide educational, informative, and entertaining programs and events to the West Michigan community as a service of Grand Valley State University.

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