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# Radio Power: How Colgate Raised \$5.1 Million In One Day

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Colgate campus, home to radio station WRCU.

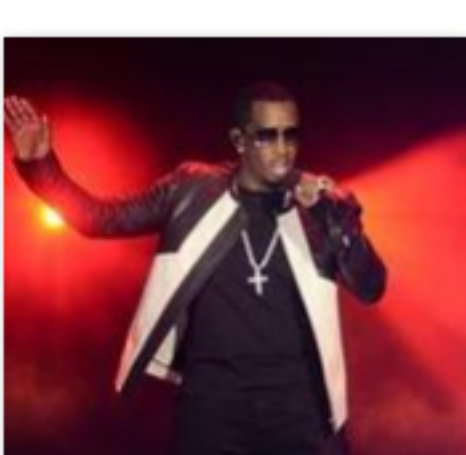
Colgate University has been around for nearly 200 years, but entertainment attorney Bernie Resnick (Class of 1983) is pretty sure he's the only alum who has ever donated—or will ever donate—a gold plaque from an LL Cool J album.

Resnick earned the artifact while representing Timbaland, the record's primary producer, and bestowed the plaque upon student-run radio station WRCU in honor of the opening of its state-of-the-art on-campus studio in 2008. Says Resnick: "I gave them something they couldn't buy."



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Earlier this month, Resnick played a part in another first for Colgate—a blitzkrieg fundraising campaign, centered around the tiny radio station, that generated \$5.1 million in a single day. The number represents more than 10% of the university's financial aid budget for next year.

"I was told it was the most any liberal arts school had raised in a day," says Brandon Fiegoli, a senior who serves as WRCU's general manager. "The school loves the radio station. The alumni love it now, too. It was a good way to get our name out there."

The campaign's rapidfire rollout speaks volumes about the enduring power, and changing dynamics, of local terrestrial radio. WRCU's signal only stretches 20-25 miles from its base in Hamilton, N.Y. But now that the station streams its programming over the web, it can reach alums all around the world.

That ability allowed radio to become the linchpin of the university's record fundraising effort. On Friday, December 13th (the traditionally unlucky day is auspicious at Colgate, which—as legend has it—was founded by 13 men, with 13 prayers and \$13) the gauntlet was cast: an anonymous donor had agreed to give \$1 million toward financial aid if 1,300 other alums would contribute as well.

WRCU unveiled a day of programming by prominent alums beginning early in the morning. Joe Castiglione, the longtime voice of the Boston Red Sox, did an hour of sports—including a call with fellow alum Mark Murphy, President and CEO of the Green Bay Packers. Resnick DJ'ed a show with an eclectic mix of songs: "Everything from Lorde to Cab Calloway," he says.

The fundraising campaign was announced as a surprise (much like Beyoncé's latest album) and Colgate met its initial goal before noon. Almost immediately, big-budget donors offered to up the guarantee to \$3 million if an additional 1,300 alums

chipped in; when that goal was achieved, they upped the ante to \$4 million for 3,513 donors. By the evening, that milestone had been attained as well.

In the end, Colgate received a total of \$5.1 million from 5,683 unique donors. Before then, the school had never received contributions from even 600 donors in one day. The feat is more incredible considering the University's size (just under 3,000 students) and moderate endowment (\$800 million).

"WRCU played a significant role in the success of our challenge—especially with its live-stream that was heard world-wide," says Dr. Murray Decock, Colgate's Vice President of Institutional Advancement. "It was really the foundation upon which we built the momentum through DJ and public-service announcements with progress and updates."

Speaking broadly, the web was supposed to make terrestrial radio obsolete; indeed, it has reshaped the industry. But it has also served as an unlikely ally for even the smallest radio stations, amplifying their reach to levels previously unheard of for the likes of WRCU.

Despite the success of services like Pandora and Spotify, demand for curated content seems unlikely to fade. Consumers can be overwhelmed with choice—sometimes they just want someone else to decide what they should listen to or watch, whether it's a web-based upstart like Songza or a DJ on their alma mater's radio station.


"The idea of remote listening to terrestrial radio has a lot of value, particularly in a situation when you want to hear news and music from your home town," says Resnick. "There will always be a home for terrestrial radio to be streamed through the internet."

That's music to quite a few ears.

*UPDATE: An earlier version of this story stated that Colgate raised \$5.1 million for financial aid in one day. In fact, only the first million was for financial aid and the remainder was for capital expenses.*

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The World's Highest-Paid Musicians 2013





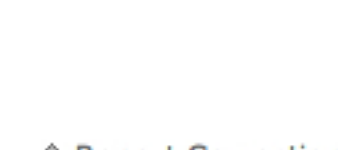
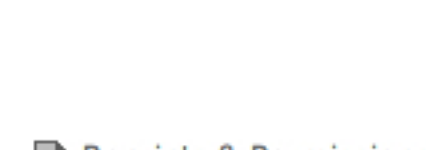
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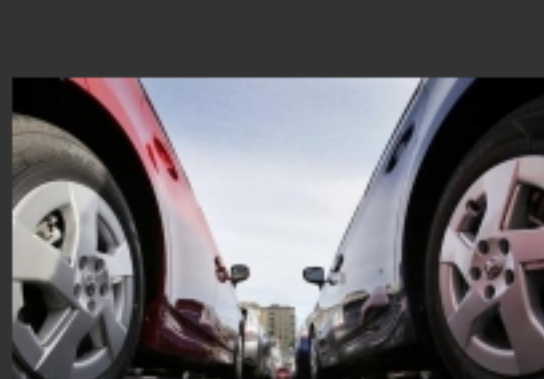


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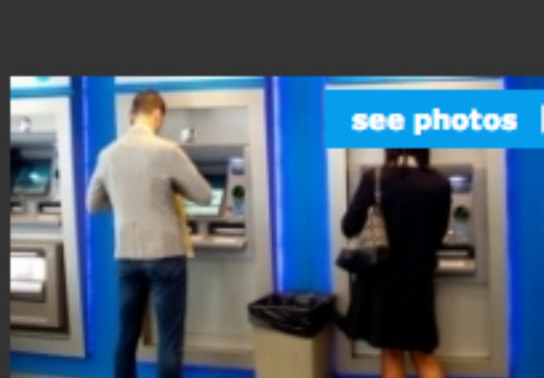
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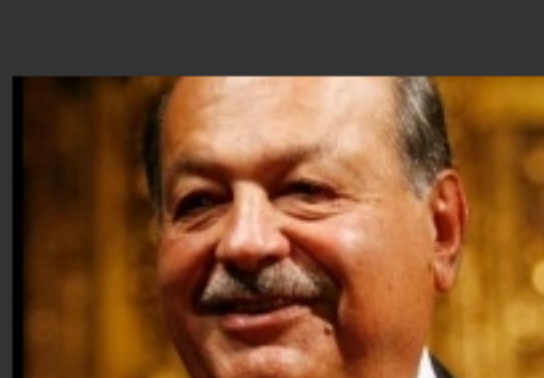
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