

# Garage Goes High-Tech

By Katie Martin



It's any garage band's dream: Free recording sessions in a professional studio. Minus the cold, dusty concrete floors, of course.

When SU started offering "jam nights" in its new audio recording studio, more than 100 students—and faculty and staff—jumped at the chance.

Junior Juliana Humphreys, who sings with Squawkappella, a co-ed student a cappella group, was one of the first to sign up. "This new studio makes recording a feasible option," she said. "Now, we don't have to travel great distances to record our work! The facility is top of the line and it's great that undergraduates can work so intimately with equipment envied by large universities nationwide. SU students have a great opportunity at their fingertips!"

Recently named by Severn Records founder and SU alumnus David Earl '90, the Blueswaters Foundation, Inc. Audio Demonstration Studio is located on the third floor of the Teacher Education and Technology Center.

At more than 1,200 square feet, the studio and control room are part of SU's new Integrated Media Center, which also features five audio editing suites, 15 video editing suites, Mac and PC instructional

labs, a standard definition production studio and one of the few campus-based high-definition digital video production studios nationwide.

Some 25 evening jam sessions have been coordinated by audio engineers Garrett Davis, a former SU student who now owns his own recording and production company, and Jesse Campbell, a songwriter and musician who is currently studying film and new media at SU.

"Music and media are consumed everywhere now, in a million different ways," Davis said. "This allows students to get hands-on experience in a creative environment."

Senior Monae Stokes, who has rapped for unsigned labels since age 14, recorded the demo "She a Beast" during one of the weekly Wednesday night sessions. "The engineers taught me a few basics about the microphone and overdubbing," she said. "I've been to several recording studios, but this was by far the largest and most professional."

For senior Chris Dubendorf, it was the first time his rock band Anchors Way was able to work with dedicated, professional sound engineers. "The equipment was

cutting edge and otherwise out of our budget. Thank you audio studio!" he said.

Dr. Jerry Tabor, music, recorded with the SU Jazz Brass Big Band, while Dr. Wayne Ackerson '88, '90, history, recorded Billy Idol and INXS covers with his six-member band Bluelight Special. "For the campus community, having free recording time and space is a huge advantage because most students couldn't afford to rent a studio," he said.

But SU students aren't just using the space to practice recording and editing.

Beginning this fall, SU's Department of Music will offer a new music technology track to give students a concrete, professional foundation in music production. The only program of its kind in the University System of Maryland, it enables students to pursue careers in the music and recording industries.

"The track updates our program to meet the needs of the contemporary student," said Dr. Linda Cockey, department chair. "We want to prepare them for the growing demands of tomorrow's music industry."

Classes include audio production, music acoustics and ear training. Students will also explore the music business and copyright issues, recording and engineering, music products and retail, and musical performance as it relates to live concerts, television, radio, the Internet, video games and teaching.

"Through this new facility, SU has adopted a philosophy of cross-pollination between communications, music, art, business and other departments campus wide," said Jerome Waldron, SU's chief information officer. "This is all about integrated media. Disciplines are melding together and we're seeing only the beginnings."

For senior Grayson English and other SU students in the indie band Naked Brunch, being able to record on campus means one thing: "Bring on the rock!"