One of the little heralded successes at The University of Akron has been the campus radio station, WZIP. During the 1970s, the station was a rather unimpressive, loosely organized entity operating out of a cramped space in Kolbe Hall. A major transformation happened when the School of Communication hired Mr. Tom Beck as director of the station. Most notably, he introduced discipline and professionalism into the training regimen for students wanting to participate and, crucially, began an underwriting program that grew to bring substantial revenue directly into the station’s budget. Mr. Beck used those funds mainly to increase the signal strength and coverage of the
station to the point that the signal reached most of the northeast Ohio region. The result was that WZIP boasted the second largest number of listeners of any student-run radio station in the country, and each semester, some sixty students completed training and participated in station operations. When Kolbe Hall was renovated for the School of Communication, the radio station acquired space sufficient for administrative office suites, two broadcast studios, and space for equipment repair and maintenance, as well as conference and meeting rooms.