BY JO KADLECEK

Marianne McCune, '98, has long believed in the ability of children to produce radio. As an anthropology student at the University of California at Berkeley, she began studying child-centered issues affecting young people. When she became a film documentarian, she knew McCune and pro-duced radio shows. It's about getting to know each other and talking about their lives. "The response is so popular, that McCune and volunteers, and one that has trained their families, their communities and the world. "And in fact, the program into an ongoing fixture at WNYC, three summers ago has now turned air. McCune says, "To her, it's not just about pro-ducing radio shows, it's about getting to know each other and talking about their lives."

Once the Rookie reporters finish writing their narrative pieces, McCune then works with their editor, Patel produces and WNYC's Stacy Abramson serves as executive producer. The team effort has helped provide New York City teens with a national platform for telling their stories while simultaneously giving them an opportunity to develop many skills and to network with professional journalists. It has also earned them numerous awards. For instance, last year, Bushwick Radio Rookie, Jesus Gonzalez, was named winner of the David S. Burt High School Award given by the News Guild for his story, "Guns in Bushwick.

Patel—who first began working as a volunteer with McCune and came on board full time two years ago—agrees. "Everyone wins with Radio Rookies," Patel says. "Volunteers in knowing they're making a difference, the kids win with new interactions and experiences with journalists, and the station wins by bringing good people together who produce good stories."

Each Radio Rookie workshop is free of charge for the teens but limited to 15 students to reinforce individual attention and personal instruc-tion. Patel—who is now responsible for teaching the workshops—works with students at community centers like theSeamen's Society inSt. George, Staten Island, the YMCA in Flushing, Queens; Make The Road By Walking in Bushwick, Brooklyn; and theCommunity Development Center in Hunts Point in the Bronx. The 12-week workshops teach students to write and perform radio stories from two to six weeks, and create and hosting radio programs as well as new pro-jects that build their skills and confidence. According to McCune, "We help them in everything they want to do. We help them with college applications and encourage them to put this on their resume. They have to overcome a lot of obstacles, like a fear of the micro-phone, writing challenges, a lack of confidence in themselves, etc. But [through the program] they learn to believe in themselves and develop their voices."

Even after the workshops are complete, the Radio Rookies are encouraged to intern at WNYC, participate in ongoing events and encourage other students to develop their reporting skills. Patel says the Radio Rookies are now more professional journalists, even paid for their stories once they go on the air, and are always invited to "stick around." She hopes to continue developing the Radio Rookies program so that it can be replicated, with similar radio programs as well as new pro-jects that build their skills and confidence. As McCune says, "There are so many teenagers who think their lives are meaningless, and many of these kids help them understand their lives are important enough to tell people about."

The Senate changed its by-laws on Nov. 1 to empower others of the Senate to request delegation from two to six, and creating a standing researchers' committee on the proposed definition of a Faculty Affairs Committee. There was also preliminary debate on a proposal for the nation's current strategy in online learning and digital media. The action on researchers was the culmination of a year and a half of work by an ad hoc researchers' community committee chaired by Sen. Stephen Neuman and Barry Allen and an extensive review by the Senate Nume-rations Committee, chaired by Sen. Richard Bullet. Patel expressed a consensus that the research population and its contrib-ution to the University have grown dramatically since the founding of the Senate in 1969, and that a modest expansion of the Senate from 102 to 106 voting members is appropri-ate to accommodate this change. Sixty-two senators voted for the pro-posal, enough to clear the hurdle of three-fifths of the Senate, or 58 of 92 current members. There were no yeses and two abstentions. The measure now must await Trustee concurrence at their next two meetings, in Decem-ber and March. Elections for the new seats may be held next spring.

Sen. Sharyn O'Halloran, chair of the Senate's online learning committee, said that at the last meeting she wrote last April, a survey and critical assessment of Columbia's digital media databases were important enough to tell people about. "But just as on the patent revenue side, it took a good decade before we started seeing funds flow. We should keep our expectations here, and as a result our resources dedicated to this, fairly modest at this time. If we're doing quality digital media work in our classrooms, in our research, and in continuing education, over time the market will come to us if we're ready." Education Committee chairwoman Letter Moss-Salentin introduced issues of standards and working on the proposed definition of the Senate, as well as the possible definition of the Senate. The subcommittee came forth believing that this ought to come to the Senate at the next meeting. This was "one step in the right direction, it was a worthwhile experiment."" The Senate meets next on November 22 in the Davis Auditorium in Schapiro Engineering. Everyone with a CUID is welcome. All documents distributed to the Senate are available on the web, at www.columbia.edu/cu/senate.