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Reed Sarratt Lecture Story

Carl Kasell, a renowned broadcaster for National Public Radio, told several hundred journalism students at the University of North Carolina that taking two naps a day is a key factor to his success.

Of course, that's because he doesn't sleep at night- he works around the clock.

Kasell spoke on Tuesday for 45 minutes about the pressures and rewards of a career in broadcast journalism. He told the student audience that they need to be involved while in school and take advantage of journalism opportunities given by the University to develop their writing skills.

Kasell said that this is especially important because today, in the light of the world's chaotic political situation, "broadcasters and journalists face tougher conditions than ever."

The field of journalism has become even more challenging and meaningful during this era, Kasell said. For example, NPR provided a great deal of support for a grieving United States of America during the tragedy of Sept. 11, 2001, with a touching compilation of poetry, compelling talks, analyses and commentaries. NPR's audience doubled that day; Kasell called it a "defining moment of public radio."

And Kasell has seen many of the major landmarks in the development of public radio during the five decades he has been working in broadcast journalism.

As a UNC-CH freshman in 1952, when broadcasting was still an emerging field, Kasell was one of the first staff members- along with Charles Kuralt- at WUNC-FM, the University's radio station.

After graduating, Kasell worked in various broadcasting jobs before he settled at NPR in 1975. Kasell has been with NPR's award-winning news program "Morning Edition" since it first aired in 1979, and he also currently broadcasts for the NPR quiz show, "Wait, Wait...Don't Tell Me!"

Kasell wrapped up by saying: "We [at NPR] see the future of public radio as bright because it is invisible. All other news sources force listeners to stop in their tracks. Radio can be with us throughout our daily lives...Our audiences continue to grow tremendously, and almost all listeners stay with us."