

March 30, 2011

Last week, one of the Twin Cities' top-ranked radio stations, KDWB-FM 101.3, featured a parody song on its morning program that has offended some members of the Asian-American community. The two-minute song by radio personality Steve-O mocked housing issues and teen pregnancy in the Hmong community. The song, which has gone viral, was part of an occasional segment on the popular "Dave Ryan in the Morning Show." After soliciting listener-suggested song titles, Steve-O writes and sings a song, which is often meant to be in jest.

While the Minnesota chapter of the Asian American Journalists Association acknowledges the role of parody, we've heard from members of the community who found these remarks offensive and in poor taste. We know KDWB has a large Hmong listenership. We urge the station to take heed when promoting material that stereotypes and marginalizes a large segment of its fan base. It appears that the station recognizes the legitimacy of these concerns. We commend KDWB for addressing the situation. The station has issued a statement (which can be read below). It has also promoted a healthy discussion on its Facebook page, where many Hmong listeners are chiming in with comments.

In regards to Asian-American issues, we hope AAJA can serve as a resource to KDWB's programming in the future.

Thank you,

Tom Horgen and Emma Carew, AAJA-MN co-presidents

Bobby Caina Calvin and Jam Sardar, AAJA MediaWatch national co-chairs

KDWB's statement:

KDWB-FM and the Dave Ryan in the Morning Show are very proud that members of the Hmong community are some of our most loyal listeners and fans.

Our listeners understand that The Dave Ryan in the Morning show is a comedy show meant to entertain, and that much of its content is parody. While we've received positive feedback from many Hmong listeners who let us know that they found the song in question very humorous, we apologize to anyone we may have inadvertently offended, as this was never our intent.

We appreciate the support we continue to receive from all of our listeners.