

## Contact Information

### Name

Andrew Thomas

### Email Address

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### Member Type?

Participating Member

### Length of term

Until June of 2028

### Current Occupation

General Manager at Barriques Cafe on 2505 University

### Any past felony convictions?

No

## Background:

### Please indicate your involvement with WORT, past or current.

Since August 2022, I have been volunteering at WORT on a weekly basis. I first began as a sound engineer on Mondays 12-2pm for A Public Affair and Madison Book Beat, and this is my most consistent volunteer shift to date. In January 2023, I became the first Monday of the month host for Madison BookBeat, a position I still hold.

I've been a semi-regular substitute host on Global Revolutions since January 2023. I also assist Ford Blackwell with engineering for On the Horizon every third Sunday. Additionally, I've hosted On the Horizon in its entirety, as well as DJ Kayla Kush's Saturday Night Style, a number of times. I've hosted the Access Hour 6-7 times, often bringing in live music and collaborating with Aaron Scholz to make these happen smoothly.

Between my sound engineering, hosting, and DJ volunteering, I've learned how to book interviews, record and edit audio, and utilize the soundboards to play a variety of media types.

I've been a substitute host on A Public Affair three different times. One show was a 2hr special that I produced with Jade Iseri Ramos on jazz on vinyl that involved interviewing a variety of people at Lola's Madison and other Madison-area venues and weaving it into a podcast-like program.

I envisioned and co-organized the first annual Spote de WORT skateboard contest in August 2024. I worked with Doug Holz and local skateshop owner, Jeff Halleran, to have WORT DJs (Bad Sister Heidi, The Real Jaguar, and myself) play music alongside youth DJs in the skateboard community for a free-of-charge skate competition for all ages. To date, it's one of the events I'm most proud to have been involved in here at WORT.

I regularly rap for shows I'm directly involved with as well as other shows during pledge drives, and I've volunteered for the morning set-up crew at the last two WORTStock's as well as the upcoming one.

I've sat in on a few different task forces addressing social media strategies as well as future directions for WORT.

Lastly, I regularly attend WORT sponsored events in the community such as Bowl-a-Rama, La Fette de Marquette, etc. When I worked at Delta Beer Lab as the Community Engagement Coordinator, I secured WORT a spot as a weekly nonprofit partner and led a vinyl listening night in the taproom.

### Please indicate your involvement with communit(ies) in WORT's listening area.

I first moved to Madison for graduate school and eventual part-time employment at the university, positions I held for a total of seven years. And while I have very gladly moved on from the bleak halls of academia, I nevertheless feel adept at liaising between the university and greater Madison community. For instance, a number of Madison Book Beat interviews have been with UW faculty.

In my time as Community Engagement Coordinator at Delta Beer Lab, I developed close working relationships with nonprofit organizations such as Domestic Abuse Intervention Services (DAIS), RCC: Sexual Violence Resource Center, New Bridge, The River Food Pantry, REAP Food Group, Stage Q, LGBT Books to Prisoners, and Sustain Dane to name just a few.

I have strong connections with the Madison DJing and local music scene as well as the skateboarding community (see Sporthe de WORT description above). In my day job as general manager of a Barriques coffee shop, I frequently interact with the 18-25 year old demographic, many of whom are queer and/or POC.

While my experience was limited to a summer, I volunteered for a weekly meal distribution program in the historically Black, Brown, and Southeast Asian Allied neighborhood just south of the Beltline from where I live.

## Ideas

### What are your goals for WORT?

WORT is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. I'm 37 years old. I'd like to see WORT celebrate its 100th anniversary (or however long this ol' mortal coil allows). So how do we do this?

First, by respecting the hard work and dedication that's gone into making WORT the institution it is while also making room for more diverse and younger voices to be heard.

I'd like to see WORT continue to make further inroads into Indigenous, Black, Brown, Asian and LGBTQ+ communities by providing more opportunities for programming determined by these communities. In conjunction with this, it's absolutely vital that WORT have a stronger impact on the 20s-40s demographic as they'll be necessary for the heavy-lifting further down the road.

The most direct line to listeners' hearts is through music, and I'd love to help develop a summer DJing school where WORT DJs mentor youth on how to DJ. This would include everything from building a set list to using audio equipment to developing a confident on-air presence. Additionally, I'd like to see more live music being broadcast out of WORT's vinyl library. I know Aaron Scholz is interested in this as well, and I would be so excited to help develop this programming.

Ultimately I'd love to see WORT develop into a multi-media community space that included news, talk, music as well as an art space and center for more robust written publication. I'm imagining something along the lines of WORT combined with an ArtLitLab and Tone Madison. Not entirely sure how to make that happen, but I'm here for doing the hard work.

### What do you see as WORT's major responsibilities to the community?

WORT's major responsibilities to the Madison community are to be inclusive; informative/educative on a wide range of topics and current events; technologically and demographically adaptive (I repeat, adaptive); and it should fight against the corporate, patriarchal, algorithmic, capitalistic status quo through progressive (not liberal, progressive) news and talk and bad ass music programming.

### There are many areas where WORT could improve and many new activities WORT could undertake. Please list specific tasks on which you would be willing to work.

While some of this has been addressed above, I'd be interested in a number of tasks from community outreach in a variety of forms to developing and implementing specific programming for youth or other interested communities. I was an educator for over a decade before pivoting into very different lines of work, so my strengths are primarily in written and verbal communication, designing and assessing educational materials/curriculum, and delivering constructive feedback.

I'm personally interested in learning more about audio engineering and live music production, so I'd be willing to assist in any kind of work that would allow for this.

### Why do you wish to be on WORT's Board of Directors?

WORT has changed my life. Being a transplant from Texas via Mississippi, WORT has made both my partner and I choose Madison as our permanent home. WORT's scrappy DIY nature as well as its vision and values align with what I want from a community. Being a part of the BoD would allow me to have a greater role in shaping what WORT will be for years to come as well as understand what all goes into making a listener sponsored community radio station succeed.

**The Board currently meets monthly on a Wednesday night. Meetings are scheduled at 7:00 p.m. and may finish as late as 11 p.m.. Are you able to regularly attend Board meetings?**

Almost always, yes. The only exception would be if the meeting ever occurred on the final day of the month. I conduct End of the Month inventory on the last day of each month at my day job, and this usually lasts until about 8pm.

**WORT's Board is an active participant in station affairs. Board members do committee work and participate in pledge drives and other fundraising events. Board members are expected to commit to five to ten hours a month in addition to meetings. Roughly estimate the time you have available for work in addition to Board meetings.**

My schedule is regularly in flux, but 5-10 additional hours a month shouldn't be an issue. I'm stepping away from my regular hosting spot on Madison BookBeat to make more time for this position (if I'm selected).

**Feel free to add any additional relevant material.**

LONG LIVE WORT!