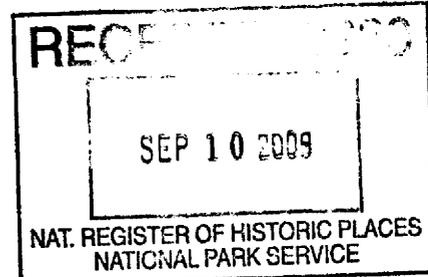


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**United States Department of Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

**historic name** Michael J. Kirwan Educational Television Center  
**other names/site number** KVZK-TV, KZVK Building, AS-25-044

**2. Location**

**street & number** Route 118, North side of Utulei  
**city or town** Utulei  
**state** American Samoa **code** AS **county** Tutuila Island, Western **code** 001 **zip code** 96799  
N/A **not for publication**  
x **vicinity**  
050

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

*David J. Herdrich*  
Signature of certifying official/Title

8/26/09  
Date

State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  
( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Michael J. Kirwan Educational Television Center

County: Ma'ouputasi

AS

Name of Property

County and State

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is:  
 entered in the National Register.  
 \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
 \_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register.  
 \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
 \_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register.  
 \_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
 \_\_\_ removed from the National Register.  
 \_\_\_ other, (explain:)

10/23/2009

*[Signature]* Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property (check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)	
		contributing	noncontributing
private	X building(s)		
public-local	district	1	buildings
X public-State	structure		sites
public-Federal	site		structures
	object		objects
		1	total •

Name of related multiple property listing:  
(Enter "N/A" if property not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources is previously listed in the National Register

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)  
EDUCATION

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)  
EDUCATION / and entertainment

EDUCATION / education-related transmission from building

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)  
No Style

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)  
Foundation: Concrete  
walls: Concrete with stone coping

roof Corrugated Iron  
other

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Michael J. Kirwan Educational Television Center  
Name of Property

County: Ma'ouputasi AS  
County and State

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

A Associative value... Properties significant for their association or linkage to events important in the past.

B Property is associated with former Congressman Michael J. Kirwan (the studio is named after him) as well as Governor Hyrum Rex Lee, who contributed greatly to the modernization of American Samoa during his first term as governor (1961-1967)

### Period of Significance

1964 - present

### Significant Dates

### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

Michael J. Kirwan  
Hyrum Rex Lee

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

American Samoa Department of Public Works  
J. Caroso

### Narrative Statement of Significance

Michael J. Kirwan Educational Television Center  
Name of Property

County: Ma'ouputasi AS  
County and State

### 9. Major Bibliographic References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

**Primary location of additional data:**

- X State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: Less than one acre \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

UTM Coordinates:—

1	2	534176.236	8421492.327	3	Zone	Easting	Northing
2				4	Zone	Easting	Northing
					<input type="checkbox"/> See Continuation Sheet		

Verbal Boundary Description (Please refer to form 10-900a attached)

Boundary Justification (Please refer to form 10-900a attached)

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Kathy Gordon-Cox – Education Research Specialist Cultural Heritage	date	9/30/08
organization	American Samoa Historic Preservation Office	telephone	(684) 699 2316
street & number	Main Road	zip code	96799
city or town	Nu'uuli	state	AS
name/title	James Malae- Education Research Specialist	date	8/25/09
organization	American Samoa Historic Preservation Office	telephone	(684) 699 2316
street & number	Main Road	zip code	96799
city or town	Nu'uuli	state	AS

Michael J. Kirwan Educational Television Center  
Name of Property

County: Ma'ouputasi AS  
County and State

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

**Maps** A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs** Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional Items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

<b>name/title</b>	American Samoa Government	<b>date</b>	
<b>organization</b>		<b>telephone</b>	
<b>street&amp;number</b>		<b>zip code</b>	96799
<b>city or town</b>	Pago Pago	<b>state</b>	AS

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

**Physical Description of Building**

The Michael J. Kirwan Television Studio is a two story cruciform building with a concrete foundation, walls constructed of concrete with a lava rock coping and concrete pillars at 16 foot intervals, and a gabled corrugated iron roof. The original roof was made of wood shingles, and there was a structure on the roof that housed antennae for broadcasting and receiving. The antennae that were on the original roof have been replaced by four satellite dishes, three of which are situated at the southwest corner of the television station, with the other at the northeast corner of the building. The façade of the building faces southward and extends out about 25 feet from the main building. The primary color of the building is black because of the lava rocks used; the pillars are yellow and the roof is white. The building faces the access road that connects the main road to the tramway. Behind and to the left of the building is the mountain ridge that leads to the Governor's Residence. On the right side of the building is the Department of Education Main Office, which has recently been rebuilt. There is a chain link fence on the west side of the building, which has been modified from its original configuration to secure the three satellite dishes described above.

There are square glass windows in the front of the building, some of which are broken and have been covered with plywood. There are blue double doors in the middle of the front of the building. There are also several air conditioning units in some of the windows. There is a chain link fence extending from the left side of the facade out past the access road to the rear of the building that secures the three satellite dishes in the southwest corner. Previously, the fence was only from the left corner of the left side of the cruciform and extended to the access road where a gate was placed.

The left side of the building has no windows, and the stone coping extends from the foundation to the roof, with a distance of approximately twenty five feet. There is a small canopy in the center of the left side that covers an entrance to the building. There are several split unit air conditioners on the side of the building. These were not in existence when the building was first built, indicating that the building probably had central air conditioning when it was first constructed. There are drainage pipes leading from the roof to the ground clamped to the concrete pillars. They are placed at every other pillar starting from the one on the left side of the façade.

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The rear of the building is similar in appearance to the façade with few noticeable differences. Instead of a double door, there is only a single door for the rear entrance. There are also a few window unit air conditioners protruding from windows on the second floor, but their locations do not correspond to the locations of the ones in front. There is a large metal door in the face of the roof that is most likely used for maintenance or ventilation.

The right side of the building is practically identical to the left side except the location of the split unit air conditioners is different than the other side. There is also a street lamp mounted to one of the concrete pillars. The concrete pillars are yellow, but the paint is old and chipping off.

When you enter the double doors in the front of the studio, there is a short corridor that goes by a small reception area. Past the reception area, there is a corridor perpendicular to the entryway that leads around the first floor. On the left side of the first floor are the two studios that were used for educational broadcasting and are still used for news broadcasts and other local programming. On the right side of the first floor are offices used by technicians. The corridor is a large rectangle, and in the center are the control room and other technical equipment. On the right side of the corridor towards the rear there is a stairwell leading to the second floor. There is also a similar stairwell in the front left corner of the stairwell. The walls are painted off white.

The second floor was originally where lesson plans and curriculum were developed. There is an identical rectangular corridor that separates the outer offices from the inner offices. The walls are painted off white as well. The inner office was one large room, but has since been divided into smaller offices over time. Overall, the building retains much of its original integrity; the floor plan is unchanged except for the addition of several partitions to create individual offices. The outside of the building is also intact except for the windows that have been removed for window unit air conditioners.

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**Summary Paragraph**

The Michael J. Kirwan Educational Television Center (Now KVZK-TV) was part of a “bold experiment” to revolutionize education in American Samoa, and was seen as a potential model for education in developing nations around the world. The idea was to have instructors broadcast lessons from the station to schools all over American Samoa. The television station was just one part of Governor H. Rex Lee’s plan to reform education in the territory. In addition to the TV station, over twenty new schools, a power station, and transmitters to broadcast the educational television (ETV) were built as part of the infrastructure needed to make this dream a reality. The station was opened on October 5, 1964, and for the first few years programming was broadcast to schools territory-wide from 8 AM to 2 PM. Most observers believe that this did have a positive impact on education in the territory. However, due to shifting political climates and focus, the amount of ETV in classrooms began to decline in the early 1970’s, and eventually the only ‘educational’ programming broadcast were those programs from the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). Many American Samoa residents still watch KVZK-TV as a source of entertainment, and the building remains a testament to the dream that educational television can be a means of imparting knowledge to our youth.

**Historical Background**

Around 3,500 years ago, ancestors of the earliest Polynesians discovered a group of islands that would someday be known as Samoa. In the ensuing 2,000 years their descendants created and established Samoa’s culture and way of life. (Shaffer; 2000:1)

Europeans first took an interest in the islands around the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. In 1900, Samoa ceded itself to the United States and became American Samoa. It comprises seven islands located at the eastern end of the 483km-long (300 mile) Samoa Archipelago. Together they make up a land area of 200 sq. km (77 sq. miles), almost half of which belong to Tutuila, the slender remains of an ancient volcano. (Frommers; 2008)

Tutuila and the other islands that make up American Samoa were administered by the Navy from 1900 to 1951. During WWII, the islands became a staging area for U.S. military operations in the Pacific theater. Samoa stayed pretty much the same after the war, rather ignored, unheard of, and becoming over populated as the years went by, both as a result of large families and island migration.

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Then, in 1961, this was all about to change. An article appeared in *Reader's Digest*, a widely read American magazine. Clarence Hall titled his piece, *Samoa: America's Shame in the South Seas*. As a reporter, he had met someone off a cruise ship whilst in Pago Pago and quoted him as having said '...look what we've let happen to these – our own nationals!' (p 112) He proceeded to report upon peeling paint and derelict buildings and wharves, 'teeth-jarring roads', 'hideous outhouses' that sat out over the water, 'leaky water mains that cause frequent water shortages – despite an annual rain fall of over 200 inches per year!' Also, 'While we (the U.S.) have been doling out billions to underdeveloped nations, we have let our only South Pacific possession sink to the level of a slum'. He accused the U.S. of 'neglect and apathy' towards an important protectorate that had ceded itself to the United States in 1900. The place needed an economic rescue. The place was to be recognized for the strategic position it had played in WWII. The people deserved to be treated with respect.

This call from the publication was heeded by President John F. Kennedy and Congress, who appointed Mr. H. Rex Lee as Governor to the islands. Lee immediately began plans for a complete reformation of American Samoa. Lee's plans were built upon '...a desire for the Samoan people to have greater opportunities' and '...to pave the way for Samoan training in specialized fields and ... (for Samoans to) have interchange with the socio-economic world of Western civilization' (Lee: 1965:19). 'Samoan children should be equipped with the educational tools that enable them to compete with other American young people' (Ibid: 11).

**KVZK Studios and Educational Television**

So, in 1962, on the small, South Pacific island of Tutuila, the Governor of the day, H. Rex Lee, dreamed of introducing a Territory wide educational system using television and experts as the means of instruction. Lee's vision was partially inspired by projects that were '... newly developed models used in poor urban neighborhoods of Washington, D.C., New York City, and Philadelphia'. (Goldfarb; 2002:26). The United States House of Representatives and the Senate authorized a feasibility study to be carried out by the National Association of Educational Broadcasters. They approved a total budget of \$3,538,000 for an initial three-channel television system and new consolidated village schools. 'Lee shocked the territory's citizens when he announced he was going to install a television education system to broadcast lessons into elementary schools in remote villages. They didn't realize at the time that, 'The educational TV system would become famous throughout the entire Pacific region'. (Shaffer; 2000:191) Lee's dream became known as 'the bold experiment' (Schramm; 1981) and the heart of that experiment took place within the KVZK television studios at Utulei, specifically built for the purpose.

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Many teachers working throughout the U.S.A. would soon be recruited by a government representative from the National Association of Educational Broadcasters, combing various states where television teaching was being used. The medium was still fairly new and Vernon Bronson was searching for experienced educational television teachers. The people recruited were experts who eventually came to American Samoa on two year contracts to produce daily lesson plans, write culturally relevant student reading books, teach on camera and train local island people to take over their positions once their contracts were completed. 'Each American working here has a Samoan counterpart.' Bill Dale explained from the master control room at KVZK, to a group of touring UNESCO educators in 1966. (PTR, March/April: 35)

The United States Government fully supported Governor Lee's plan which was '...the most far-reaching program ever designed for the use of this medium' (Lee; 1963:18). The educational TV system was planned as the core of a program to lift all levels of education simultaneously throughout the islands.

A new power plant was built and 22 consolidated elementary schools of three to 24 rooms were constructed. These schools were built in the Samoan *fale* style, with curved roofs, designed to be culturally sensitive and reflect the *fa'a Samoa* (the Samoan way of life).

Samoan teachers were not displaced by the TV teachers from the mainland. They were retained to teach in the class rooms using the TV for part of the day; teaching bilingually, and providing feed back to the television teachers. In addition, the television system would be used to teach Samoan teachers after school hours. The Feleti Memorial Teacher Training School (on Tutuila island), also continued to provide teaching staff from a new program introduced to include TV methods.

By 1963 the plans were completed for the KVZK television studios. The educational project that would be housed within the studios was the first of its kind in the 'under developed world'. In fact, the idea of using television as the total medium of instruction across the curriculum was a completely new and innovative idea. Lessons were prepared and then '...pre-recorded on video tape for later broadcast to the new system of elementary and high schools' (Lee; 1965:14).

The infrastructure for this television project was island wide. It would be required to serve the mountainous islands of Tutuila and Manu'a, the latter being sixty miles away. A 226 foot transmitting tower was constructed on the 1603 foot high mountain peak of Mt. Alava, near Pago Pago. A \$140,000 tramway system was built to transport the technicians up to the transmitters. Very few of the villages had electricity, and therefore power lines had to be installed to make the television operation practical.

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Electricity was brought to many villages for the first time. As a matter of historical interest, Margaret Mead dedicated a power plant on Ta'u Island in 1971 signaling the total completion of the electrification program.

There was world wide interest in the Educational TV project right from the beginning. The KVZK studios would soon become '...the center of worldwide attention, not just in education circles...' (Schramm; 1981: preface). The studios were visited '...by individuals and teams from dozens of countries. Their reports...probably exceeded everything that had ever been written about Samoa up until then.' (ibid)

From *Time* magazine, in 1964 '...KVZK broadcasts from the two-story Michael J. Kirwan Studios at Utulei, just outside Pago Pago, from 8:05 a.m. until 2:05 p.m., and attendance at the tuned-in schools is close to perfect.'

Scholarly articles began to appear reporting on and assessing the possible benefits of the project. From *The English Journal* in 1965, John Wigand writes – 'The massive educational TV experiment in American Samoa has achieved world-wide attention during the last year...'

In 1965, Clarence Hall, the same writer from the *Reader's Digest* who had listed American Samoa as the U.S.'s complete shame in the South Pacific, recanted with an article called *Samoa: America's Showplace of the South Seas*. The building of roads, an airport and other infrastructure is mentioned, but the lynchpin for the praise was the new education system that Governor Lee instigated and installed. Lee realized that... 'Education ...must be his main thrust. ...the answer lay in television. It was a revolutionary idea...After a year of trial, has Samoa's experiment in TV teaching been successful? "Outstandingly so," say authorities.' (p 5).

Hall went on to say that 'American Samoa's ETV system has been studied by international agencies and by technicians from many countries. Its implications for underdeveloped areas everywhere are significant...' (ibid).

The world wide interest that the system generated was immense. Reflecting back to the time it was fully operational, a lengthy article in *Public Telecommunications Review* published in 1977 maintained that, 'Scarcely a week went by without some official delegation showing up...education ministers from developing nations; Asian and European broadcasters; economic planners from other Pacific island nations; generals and admirals; delegations of American school superintendents; Senators and

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Representatives; the press...Pierre Salinger burst unannounced into a KVZK studio one day...Charles Lindberg...' (p36) Even a President of the United States visited to the studios.

After two years of operation, in October of 1966, the then President of the United States, Lyndon B. Johnson and the First Lady visited American Samoa. They visited the KVZK studios, transmission tower and some schools where television instruction was being delivered and referred to the island as 'a symbol and showcase'. From his address to assembled dignitaries, the President stated;

*You have recognized that education is the tidal force of our century driving all else ahead of it, and ...the pilot programme of education that you have started may point the way to learning breakthroughs throughout the Pacific Islands and South-East Asia. ...It is truly a remarkable experiment. (Samoa News, Oct 1966)*

Johnson further stated that 'Everyone wants to study the job that you have done – UNESCO, the World Bank New Guinea, New Zealand, India and other countries around the world.' (ibid) This statement was supported in the fall of 1969 when the Yale Law Report, reporting on legal services in American Samoa said '...and, of greatest importance, an educational television system which is a model now being followed by a number of developing countries abroad.' (Habernigg; 1969:2)

The President remained impressed by TV teaching and in July of 1968, Johnson addressed the Alberto Masferrer Normal School in San Andres, El Salvador by saying, 'Mrs. Johnson and I were greatly inspired and stimulated when we visited American Samoa a few years ago. Governor Rex Lee showed us the educational television that he had brought to American Samoa.' Johnson's grand plan for educational television based on the American Samoan model encompassed the entire world. 'We are going to do everything that we can to see that the fruits of technology in this great, new technique of television are brought to the homes of all the people of all the world'.

In 1967, the *Los Angeles Times WEST magazine* covered Samoa's educational activities with a humanistic slant. One of the teacher's children was featured in a color 6 full-page article, *Growing up in Samoa*.

Also in 1967, the educational policies and goals were reiterated and set out clearly for the public in the Governor's Annual Report. Point 3 from a three point plan stated that the main objective of the program was to:

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‘Provide the Samoan student with the intellectual tools he needs to compete and achieve on a level with stateside standards’;

*Without a command of the English language, it is impossible for a Samoan to receive a higher education or advance much beyond menial employment. Instruction in English, therefore, is given highest priority at all levels of instruction.*

Thus, a great deal of the instruction was based around teaching English as a Second Language using the Tate Oral English Syllabus. This did not mean the lessons were to be at the expense of Samoan culture. The Department of Education was committed to preserving the culture, ‘... *the Department of Education seeks to preserve the more meaningful characteristics of fa’a-Samoa (The Samoan way of life) and to prevent the alienation of the young Samoan from his own culture*’ (Lee; 1967:26).

This was not mere lip service as the plan states clearly: ... *a special course describing (in Samoan) the history and customs of Samoa is presented to all students in level 5 (grades 8 and 9)* (ibid). Without the KVZK building, which could transmit to all the territory, this would not have been possible. The studios allowed 102 people to deliver island wide education whereas importing over 300 teachers, placing them into remote areas, providing housing, medical and so forth was the alternative. It was possible for one, expert teacher to reach several hundred students using KVZK ETV now. ‘My wife taught science to approximately 600 students in four different high schools...’

Many years later in 1981, the dedication to the preservation of culture and the real intentions of ETV would be ignored by some theorists looking back at the project in more critical terms. Baldauf, for example, called the system ‘transplanted’ and ‘alien’ (Baldauf; 1981:228). But the fact of the matter was the whole system was designed around Samoa and for Samoans. As a new project, it could hardly be considered ‘transplanted’. The fact that television was a medium that was indeed alien did not stop Samoans from embracing the new technology wholeheartedly. (Cox; 2007)

In 1967 the entire American Samoa education system continued to use television as its core of instruction;

*KVZK-TV, providing six channels for this purpose, remained the largest instructional television broadcasting complex in the world – the only known education system that uses broadcast television entirely for instruction* (Lee;1967:27).

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A very large amount of money was spent for the time, '... the 1967 fiscal year budget for the Department of Education was \$3,333,547.' (Ibid)

Whatever the cost, by 1969, this summative statement appears in The Yale Law Report, 'The television educational system is controversial locally, as well as on the mainland, but the test results, and the results visible to any casual observer show that those who started in the system in the first grade several years ago have made remarkable progress, more so than under any educational system in existence in the South Pacific.' (Habernigg; 1969:3)

Several years passed. Different governors were appointed and new political landscapes ensued. The television project devised by Governor Lee held less interest to subsequent governors and Department of Education officials. In a visit to Tutuila by a superintendent from the U.S.A. in 1977 he asked 'Who's in charge of the education system here?' After explaining that there was a Director of Education who's budget and decisions had to be approved by the Governor, the superintendent asked 'How well does that work?' The deadpan reply from Bill Dale was, 'It depends on who the Governor is,' 'The superintendent laughs.' (Gilmore; 1977:39)

Emphasis began to shift from television as education to television as information provider and entertainment. There was still educational content within programming, but by 1974, three years before the interview quoted above, utilizing KVZK as the principal means of delivering instruction was beginning to wane.

In the book *Samoan Village* published the same year (1974), Lowell D. Holmes, devotes a section to KVZK studios at Utulei, and what he perceives as the historical significance, current at the time, of the Educational Television project carried out within those studios.

It begins by placing the project in its time frame and island setting. Lowell mentions that in November, 1964 the Crown Prince of Tonga (who later became the king) addressed a congregation of some 7000 Samoans in Pago Pago. His theme was cultural change and how the island of Tutuila, due to what he considered the 'opportunity' of television had been more affected than any other Pacific island in the group,

*Adult educational programming is as important to our discussion of cultural change as is that produced for school children. Schools are open evenings to the public so that families without their own television sets can take advantage of the three hours of evening broadcasting.*

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Holmes concludes by quoting the following:

*The new educational system of American Samoa is reported to have done marvelous things for the territory's nearly 10,000 school children. Daily attendance averages about ninety-four percent, and the high school completion figure is ninety percent. More and more high school graduates are going on to college in American Samoa or on the mainland. A community college, founded in 1971, has an enrollment of over 1000 students. (pp 98 – 100)*

KVZK began to produce a greater number and variety of local programs and joined a program cooperative established by the Public Broadcasting Service stations. The same year, the first scholarships ever were offered to local employees to study broadcasting in Hawaii and California. These scholarships were accepted and reflect a historical significance in education otherwise impossible without KVZK studios and its influence.

However, in 1975, Governor Earl B. Ruth discovered a \$10 million budget deficit primarily as a result of ‘...a reduction in local revenues expected by way of taxes from the major industries.’ (Ruth; 1975:26) and this may have influenced his decisions concerning the education budget, which he severely limited, thereby making it virtually impossible to continue to use television as the core of teaching.

A decade out from 1967, television was not only popular in American Samoa, but had also become the major source of information and entertainment for the territory's 30,000 residents. The Governor's Annual Report for that year states ‘...there is probably no other community under the U.S. flag where non-commercial, public television plays such a vital role as it does in American Samoa’. (Barnett: 1967:85)

By 1981, Lee's bold experiment became the title of a book by the same name. In Schramm's, *Bold Experiment The Story of Educational Television in American Samoa*, he titles Chapter 10, ‘Lessons from the Samoa Experience’. He begins,

*Some fifteen years have passed since KVZK-TV went on the air and a tiny group of islands in the South Pacific became the setting for perhaps the world's most ambitious project to use television as a means of bringing about a rapid transformation on an entire school system. A bold experiment it was... (p 184)*

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Schramm's analysis offers reasons for KVZK-TV's educational project's ending thus; '...forces within and outside the system eventually brought a virtual abandonment of the project'. Forces such as government changes, testing issues, funding, shifting priorities and the alteration of the service from instructional programming to commercial prime-time programming all played a part in the decline of educational programming from KVZK.

But the fact remains, that the KVZK-Educational Television studios have had a great and lasting positive influence upon an educational transformation in American Samoa. This transformation includes increasingly better English language teaching and learning; structural changes in buildings and schools; technological expertise brought to and practiced by Samoans and higher education goals. Schramm continues, '...the record leaves little doubt that television, together with the new approach to education that accompanied it, was the catalyst in this transformation'. (p 185)

American Samoa educator Paul Stevenson stated in his doctoral dissertation, 'Teacher in-service education began in the American Samoa educational system as part of the educational television experiment in 1964'. (Stevenson; 1982:1)

KVZK-ETV ceased being the main method of delivering lessons to students in remote areas. Sadly, the ramifications of this ending were to be felt in many developing areas that had hoped to use the Samoan model for their own countries. Murray devoted an article to this educational technology in 1980 titled *The Rise and Decline of an Educational Technology: Television in American Samoa*. (Murray;1980)

Thomas weighed in 1981 by deciding the project had goals that were unattainable. Evaluation *Consequences of Unreasonable Goals – The Plight of Education in American Samoa*.

But whether goals set were too high, or that politics trumps education in a territory such as American Samoa, or the decline of technology is inevitable, or innovative projects often come before their time, the KVZK studios still stand.

Today, in 2008, the KVZK building with its two live studios continues to contribute to the island as a broadcaster. It is still used to produce local Samoan language television shows and offers news broadcasts. There is a daily ½ hour locally produced news show as well as two network news programs, ABC and CBS. The current Station Manager believes that reintroducing more educational content would increase the broadcast potential of the station and regrets the dropping of educational programming in favor of entertainment. Despite controversy KVZK serves the entire Territory and

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currently has digital conversion funding so that by May of 2008, it will be like every other U.S. television station.

Most days of the week, one may observe groups of people from schools, choirs, church and other community groups walking through the large, blue door at the front of the building on their way into the studios to be filmed and broadcast throughout the islands. There is no doubt that the KVZK building continues to provide significant educational contributions to the American Samoa people.

**Criteria B (Association with persons significant in American Samoa's History)**

**H. Rex Lee**

In 1961, Hyrum Rex Lee was appointed by President Kennedy to be Governor of American Samoa. Lee had previously worked for the Department of Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Department of Agriculture. By the time he reached Pago Pago, he had nearly 25 years working for the federal government, the majority of which had been at the Interior Department. (National Governors Association; 2004) Lee's extensive experience in government showed that he was not a political contributor being rewarded for loyalty; he was brought to American Samoa to get results.

When Lee arrived in American Samoa, he found "that standards prevailing in the American Samoan school system did not approach those required to enable Samoans to compete on terms of equality in the modern world." (Lee; 1965:13) To alleviate this problem, Lee began an ambitious program to improve the education system from the ground up. During his tenure, over 20 consolidated schools were built (Lee; 1967: 15), funding was procured for continuing education for local teachers (Lee; 1962: 37), and many teachers were brought from the United States to formulate and teach lessons from the new Michael J. Kirwan Instructional Resource Center (KVZK-TV).

Lee did not want to import over 300 teachers from the mainland to replace local instructors, many of whom had years of loyal service; he felt this would adversely impact his plan to improve education in the territory (Lee; 1967: 14). He felt by televising lessons from KVZK, he could get the benefit of American instruction without totally disrupting village life that the Samoans were accustomed to. His 12 year goal was to "raise the level of stateside-standard educational achievement from less than 1 percent of all Samoan students in fiscal year 1966 to 50 percent by fiscal year 1978." (Lee; 1967: 17) Unfortunately, as the 1970's progressed, educational television ceased to be the "core of instruction"

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(Schramm; 1982: 184) in KVZK's programming, and television as entertainment became the primary function of KVZK.

Governor Lee also was instrumental in modernizing American Samoa's infrastructure. A 9000 foot runway was built at the Tafuna International Airport to accommodate large jet aircraft, the Intercontinental Hotel was built in Utulei as a luxury resort for tourists, and a soft drink bottling plant, (Lee; 1964: 32-35). Lee also oversaw the building of the auditorium in Utulei that bears his name, a 6 megawatt power plant, and improving the road system in the territory. (Lee; 1962: 2) His administration also built the Lyndon Baines Johnson Tropical Medical Center in Faga'alu that still serves as the primary health provider in American Samoa. (Lee; 1967: 31) In 1966, a hurricane destroyed many of the traditional fale that American Samoans had lived in, and most of these were replaced by Western style houses. (Lee; 1967: 75) Some of these structures still house residents of American Samoa today. Lee was the longest serving appointed Governor—a term of over six years—during either the Naval or Interior administration of the territory. Lee was the Governor when President Johnson became the first and only U.S. Head of State to visit the territory in 1966. Lee was also the only appointed Governor ever re-appointed to the post; he was brought back in 1977 to oversee the transition from appointed chief executives to locally elected ones.

Governor Lee's first administration was a watershed moment in the history of American Samoa. He affected drastic changes in the education, health care, transportation, and entertainment of American Samoans. Although his vision for educational television was not fully realized, it was part of the transition of American Samoans from the relatively simple lifestyle they had lived for centuries to the more westernized culture that exists today. The introduction of television through the Michael J. Kirwan Educational Television Center to American Samoa permanently altered the people of the territory's worldview, and its impact is still felt today.

**Michael J. Kirwan**

Michael J. Kirwan was a Congressman from Ohio's 19<sup>th</sup> district, and he served in Washington from 1937 to 1970. As a freshman legislator, Congressman Kirwan made his first trip to the Pacific in 1939 for a fact finding mission to Guam. The conditions in the American possession were not to his satisfaction, and he did "everything he could to assist in Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal plan to fortify the overlooked U.S. territory and make improvements to the harbor of Guam." (Jovich; 2009) Over the years, Kirwan helped appropriate funds to make improvements to Guam's infrastructure.

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According to Jovich, "In truth, there was something in Mike Kirwan's character that made him especially sympathetic to the needs of inhabitants in U.S. territories and Native American Indians here in the United States." (Jovich; 2009) This trait would be manifested in the 1960's in a practically unknown place called American Samoa.

In September, 1961, Congressman Kirwan left Washington to visit Japan as well as United States territories in the Pacific. His arrival in American Samoa would eventually lead to immense changes in the lifestyles of the people of the islands. Earlier that year, Clarence Hall had written an article in *Reader's Digest* called *Samoa: America's Shame in the South Seas*. The article described American Samoa as a place neglected since the end of World War II, when it had been an important base for the U.S. military in its struggle against Imperial Japan.

Kirwan was met by the latest appointed Governor of the territory, H. Rex Lee. Kirwan had lobbied John F. Kennedy to appoint Lee as Governor, telling the President, "I trust Rex. With him in charge, new life and opportunity will be afforded Samoa and the Samoans." (Jovich; 2009) Kirwan had been getting reports that conditions in American Samoa were not good, but what he found when he got to the tropical island was "nothing short of appalling." (Jovich; 2009)

The roads were unpaved, the buildings were in decay, and the rest of the infrastructure was substandard. The state of the schools and the education system were horrible. Many of the schools were traditional Samoan *fales* that had no blackboards or desks or even restrooms. All of this was occurring with the territory on the verge of hosting the South Pacific Conference the following year.

Kirwan saw this potential embarrassment as an opportunity to make American Samoa a showcase for all of the visitors that would be arriving for the conference, and quickly had his subcommittee appropriate \$4.5 million to make drastic improvements in the islands. (Jovich; 2009) Among the projects that would be completed prior to the South Pacific Conference in July 1962 would be a 800 seat auditorium, a 9000 foot runway, a 6 megawatt power plant, a 8 and a half mile stretch of paved highway from the airport to the town area, 3 new high school buildings, and renovations of many of the existing government buildings. In addition virtually every building was painted prior to the conference. (Lee; 1962, 2)

The conference went well, but now Governor Lee and Kirwan felt a need to improve the educational system. Lee had a revolutionary idea to get lessons to the students from stateside qualified teachers without importing hundreds of them: have the teachers broadcast their lessons from a studio out to the schools. However, this meant that many things had to be done. New schools had to be built, then

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teachers who could design a proper curriculum and present it had to be recruited, a television studio had to be constructed to broadcast the lessons from, and finally, a transmitter had to be put in place to relay the transmissions to all of the schools.

Lee told Kirwan he would need \$ 5 million to get the education system going how he wanted it, and Kirwan was successful in securing the funding. In the two years following the South Pacific Conference, over 20 new schools were built around the territory. Most of the buildings in these schools were oval in shape, designed to mimic the traditional Samoan *fale*. They had walls at the rounded ends, but the sides were screened with 'sails' that could be let down to allow for airflow, but pulled up to keep rain out when necessary.

The television studio was built in Utulei, next to the H. Rex Lee Auditorium (the Samoans had decided to dedicate the building to the Governor). It was completed in 1964. When Congressman Kirwan returned that year to see what his efforts had wrought, the Governor Lee and the Samoans had a surprise for him. On November 23<sup>rd</sup>, Kirwan arrived for the dedication of the new Polynesian style airport terminal (Jovich; 2009). Shortly thereafter, the Congressman and his party were taken to Utulei for a dedication of the TV studio.

When he got there, Governor Lee's wife handed Kirwan a pair of scissors to cut the ribbon strewn across the door. After he cut the ribbon and entered the building, he was greeted by a crowd of island chiefs cheering him. It was then that he saw a sign with the words "MICHAEL J. KIRWAN EDUCATION TELEVISION CENTER" on it (Jovich; 2009). The chiefs and people of American Samoa were very grateful to the man who had helped make all of these improvements to their islands and wanted to show their appreciation for his efforts.

Michael J. Kirwan saw the plight of the people of American Samoa and decided that something needed to be done to improve their lives. He was instrumental in securing funding that brought new roads, schools, and other infrastructure that changed the territory forever. However, the area that he affected the most change was in the education of young Samoans. Congressman Kirwan's support for the idea of educational television was a major reason that the television studio that bears his name was built. It is an expression of a vision that pictures flying through the air can be used to mold young minds.

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

Beginning at a point on the curb directly in front of the front door of the Michael J. Kirwan Educational Center, proceed west for approximately 50 feet until you reach the access road that runs around the building. Turning north, proceed along this road on the right edge for approximately 100 feet until you reach the rear of the building. Turning east, proceed along the right edge of the road for approximately 100 feet until you reach the east side of the building. Turning north, proceed for 100 feet until you reach the road in front of the station. Turn west on the frontage road, and proceed 50 feet to return to the point of origin.

**Boundary Justification**

The Michael J. Kirwan Educational Television Center is located entirely within the boundaries described above.

Photo Log

Michael J. Kirwan Educational Television Center (KVZK)  
East Tutuila, AS

Image	Date	Description
AS East Tutuila KVZK 001	6/6/09	Facing NE, front of KVZK building (221)
AS East Tutuila KVZK 002	6/6/09	KVZK News Studio

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 09000842 Date Listed: 10/23/2009

Michael J. Kirwan Educational  
Television Center  
Property Name

Tutuila Island, Western AS  
County State

N/A  
Multiple Name

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This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

  
Signature of the Keeper

10/23/09  
Date of Action

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Amended Items in Nomination:

Location:  
The correct code for Tutuila island, Western is: 003

Historic Function:  
The Historic and Current Functions are amended to add: *Industry/Communication Facility.*

Significance:  
The appropriate level of significance is: *State.*  
[The SHPO certification did not cite a specific level of significance. While the introduction of the educational television system received widespread international exposure, its main significance, as shown in the nomination, was to American Samoa and its people. The preparation of additional national context regarding the use of modern twentieth-century technology for educational programs might justify a broader significance.]

The Period of Significance is revised to read: *1964—1974.*  
[Taking the period of significance up to the present to reflect the continuing use of the site is not warranted. Continuing use does not necessarily equate to National Register significance. The nomination documents the fact that the property and its innovative programs were significantly curtailed and altered during the 1970s under subsequent political administrations in American Samoa. 1974 is cited in a number of areas of the narrative as a pivotal turning point after which the program's initial significant contributions began to wane along with governmental support. The exceptional significance necessary for less than 50 year old properties under NR Criteria Consideration G appears limited to the 10-year span from 1964 to 1974.]

The Areas of Significance are amended to read: *Education and Communication.*  
[The nomination cover document cites the criteria rather than specific areas of significance.]

## SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

(continued)

### Geographical Data:

The Verbal Boundary Description is amended to clarify that the fifth line should read: "...Turning *South*, proceed for 100 feet..." and that the building and boundary directions are skewed slightly from NE to SW.

These clarifications were confirmed with the American Samoa SHPO office.

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### DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file

Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)



1. Michael J. Kiwan Educational Television Center

2. East Tutuake AS

3. James Makae

4. June 6, 2009

5. Digital Image on file at the American Samoa Historic Preservation Office

6. Facing NE, Front of KVZK Building

7. 1



1. Michael J Kirwan Educational Center

2. East Tutuila

3. James Hala

4. June 6, 2009

5. Digital Image or file at the American Samoa Government Office

6. KVK-NEWS SERVICE

7. 2