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NEW YORK CITY

March 21, 2024 | Ziegfeld Ballroom, New York City

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Nominations are now open for the MCN Wonder Women Awards at the Ziegfeld Ballroom on March 21, 2024.

The Wonder Women Awards acknowledge the achievements and commitment of some of the most remarkable women in television, who continually show up to innovate, inspire, speak up for equality and lead their team and organization from the front.

Nominations will close on Friday, September 22 at midnight. If you know a strong female leader at your workplace who inspires you, nominate them today!



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NYC TV WEEK

PREVIEW ISSUE

TV power players head to Manhattan for an event-packed week, including the Advanced Advertising Summit, Hispanic Television Summit, Next TV Summit and the 40 Under 40 celebration

FULL COURT PRESS IN SYNDICATION

Judge shows, true crime filling void for stations

Dana and Keith Cutler of *Cutlers Court*

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CONTENT

Content Director Kent Gibbons,
kent.gibbons@futurenet.com
Content Manager Michael Demenchuk,
michael.demenchuk@futurenet.com
Senior Content Producer - Technology
Daniel Frankel, daniel.frankel@futurenet.com
Senior Content Producer - Business
Jon Lafayette, jon.lafayette@futurenet.com
Senior Content Producer - Programming
Michael Malone, michael.malone@futurenet.com
Senior Content Producer - Programming
R. Thomas Umstead, thomas.umstead@futurenet.com
Contributors Paige Albinaki, John S. Eggerton
Production Manager Heather Tatrow
Group Art Director Nicole Cobban
Art Directors Andy McGregor, Anthony Guillaume

ADVERTISING SALES

Managing VP, Sales Dena G. Malouf,
dena.malouf@futurenet.com

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FUTURE US, INC.

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Our 2023 class of influential women in sports media shows the strides that have been made — and how much room for progress remains.
By Stuart Miller

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Reality shows, international fare and reruns are just three of the unconventional ways networks are filling their strike-affected fall schedules.
By Michael Malone

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With the economics of daytime TV proving a challenge, stations are finding a solution in cost-effective court and true crime shows.
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FUTURE

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Diversity Week Spotlights Media Industry's DEI Efforts

Annual New York event emphasizes the value of an inclusive workplace



By R. Thomas Umstead
thomas.umstead@futurenet.com
@rtumstead30

Creating and shaping the television industry's future, building legacies and staying focused on diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) efforts are all themes that will resonate throughout September Diversity Week festivities in New York.

The WICT Network's Leadership Conference, the 37th Annual NAMIC Conference and The Walter Kaitz Foundation's Annual Fundraising Dinner — all of which will take place during the week of September 18 — will seek to build on last year's return to an in-person celebration by emphasizing the industry's valuing of DEI efforts as a way to stay competitive in an evolving entertainment marketplace, organizers said.

"The industry is doubling down on DEI, given everything that is going on in our industry with the shifts in companies and the economic environment in which our business is operated," NAMIC president and CEO A. Shuanise Washington said. "We're way too invested in DEI and what it means to the industry. For the most part, our CEOs are clear that DEI is not a feel-good proposition, but it actually ties itself to the bottom line."

WICT Kicks Off Week

The WICT Network will open Diversity Week on September 18 with its annual Leadership Conference. Under the theme "Co-Create the Future," conference organizers said the two-day event will feature more sessions and networking



roundtables than previous iterations.

WICT will dole out honors during its opening day Touchstones Luncheon, including for its "Women of the Year": Comcast executive VP and chief diversity officer Dalila Wilson-Scott and Paramount Global president and CEO of International Markets, Global Consumer Products & Experiences Pam Kaufman. The organization will also honor three "Women to Watch": Charter Communications senior VP of billing strategy and design, customer operations Stephanie Babin; A+E Networks senior VP, legal and business affairs Kelley Drukker; and Listing Central LLC founder and CEO Nicole Nixon.

"The industry's commitment to DEI is stronger than ever," WICT president and CEO Maria Brennan said. "Our conference promises an opportunity for established and emerging leaders to gain the insights, strategies, and inspiration that are essential for navigating the ever-evolving challenges of our time."

The 37th annual NAMIC Conference, under the theme "Our Legacy, a Mosaic of Possibilities," will look to provide attendees — through numerous

WICT Network president and CEO Maria Brennan speaks with *Good Morning America's* Robin Roberts at the 2022 WICT Conference, which again this year will kick off Diversity Week events in New York.

interactive sessions and networking opportunities — with actionable solutions to advance diversity and inclusion within their companies, Washington said.

NBC Nightly News anchor Lester Holt will headline the NAMIC conference, which runs over two days beginning September 19. During the conference, NAMIC will also honor NBCU News Group's Jose Diaz-Balart with the Mickey Leland Humanitarian Award during the September 20 Awards Luncheon. Other confirmed NAMIC conference speakers include film producer Will Packer and best-selling author Steve Pemberton.

"The conference is really about embracing our 40-plus year legacy of being focused on diversity, equity and inclusion, and exploring what the possibilities are in terms of going forward," Washington said.

Kaitz Keeps DEI in Focus

Comcast's Wilson-Scott, along with Revolt CEO Detavio Samuels, will co-chair the 40th anniversary Walter Kaitz Foundation Annual Fundraising Dinner on September 23. With its theme of "Staying Focused," the fundraising affair will acknowledge the DEI progress that the industry has made through the foundation's partners and supporters, Kaitz officials said.

Charter Communications will sponsor a pre-dinner reception, including a silent auction of "a carefully-curated collection of items and experiences," Kaitz said.

This year's Diversity Week output will not include the industry's joint NAMIC and WICT diversity employment study, released every two years.

Last year's report concluded that female representation in the workforce increased by 5 percentage points since the prior report in 2019, even as the pandemic had a significantly greater impact on the employment of women overall. Workforce representation by people of color fell by 7 percentage points, dropping to 37% from 44% since the 2019 survey. ●

WATCH THIS ...



Season two of *I Am Groot* premieres on Disney Plus September 6. Baby Groot explores the universe and beyond aboard the Guardians' spaceships. Vin Diesel voices Groot. On September 8, film *Sitting in Bars With Cake* premieres on Prime Video. Yara Shahidi and Odessa A'zion are in the cast of a movie "full of baking, dating and drama between best friends as they navigate life in Los Angeles in their 20s," Prime said. FX's *Welcome to*



Wrexham starts season two September 12. Rob McElhenney and Ryan Reynolds bought a struggling soccer team in Wales and the team isn't struggling anymore. On September 14, *Buddy Games* begins on CBS. Josh Duhamel is behind this competition series that celebrates the great outdoors, and old friends. Also on September 14, season nine of *Southern Charm* starts on Bravo. The charmers include Venita Aspen, Leva Bonaparte and Craig Conover. Some new arrivals turn up, and they've got some charm as well.



THE WATCHMAN

Senior content producer Michael Malone's look at the programming scene



By Michael Malone
michael.malone@futurenet.com
@BCMikMalone

Baratunde Thurston Gets Around In Season 2 of 'America Outdoors'

America Outdoors With Baratunde Thurston starts season two on PBS September 6. Thurston, an author, comedian and podcaster, hosts.

Thurston has added executive producer to his role. It means "seeing more of the operation, which helps me do the job in the field when I understand how we got to choose this spot," he said at a press event.

Season two will examine the link between human wellness and time spent outside. The host ventures to Georgia to check out the Suwanee, to Arkansas to see why so many residents spend so much time outside, to Utah to examine what draws the modern pilgrims and to the forests of Oregon, among other locales. He made a point of finding spots other travel shows and reporters may have overlooked.

"You can't call the show *America Outdoors* and just be in the Northeast or the Southeast or just out West," he said. "You have to get around."

What Not To Watch Before Heading to the Ocean

Scripted shows are hard to come by, but The CW has *The Swarm*, about a mysterious life force causing havoc in our oceans. It premieres September 12.

Like most any scripted show debuting in the U.S., *The Swarm* has aired in other nations. It is a coproduction involving broadcasters in Germany, Italy, France, Scandinavia and

Japan. Based on the novel by Frank Schätzing, *The Swarm* is created by Frank Doelger, Eric Welbers, Marc Huffam and Ute Leonhardt.

Doelger, who was an executive producer on *Game of Thrones*, said the project had a "troubled history" with filmmakers. "It would be difficult to make as a feature, as a disaster movie," he said. "That would cheat the audience

out of some of the things that are extraordinary about the book, such as the scale of it. I thought, if we make it, we have to make a monster movie, not a disaster movie."

He ended up making a monster series. Asked about his influences, Doelger mentioned *Jaws*, *Chernobyl* and *Game of Thrones*. From *Jaws*, he learned to hold off on revealing the monster as long as possible.

From *Chernobyl*, he learned how good sound effects make the bad guy's presence felt even when he is not seen. From *Game of Thrones*, he learned to balance reality with fantasy.

Despite its international roots, *The Swarm's* primary language is English. Doelger said that is the default language of the global scientific community.

The show sends a message about environmental crises. It also shows some clever people who are addressing them. "It's really important that people don't lose hope," he said. "As dire as the situation is, there are people who can do something about it." ●



KEEPING UP THE PUSH TOWARD PROGRESS

2023's Women in the Game have made strides in sports media, but there's more ground to gain



By Stuart Miller
smiller@journalist.com
@sfmsfm5186

Women have made undeniable progress in the worlds of sports and media in the last 20 years, as B+C Multichannel News has chronicled partly through these annual profiles of female leaders in the televised sports world, Women in the Game. But though steady, progress has been slow, although there was a greater change in attitude and tangible improvements after #MeToo burst into the headlines.

One silver lining in the tragic and destructive pandemic has been the change in the way America goes to work, and there's hope that this could bring greater progress for women in sports and sports media. "There are women talking sports now on TV and online every day as hosts, analysts, play-by-play announcers and reporters and they're no longer exceptions," Jodi Logsdon, VP of news and editorial for CBS Sports, said. "We've seen the change behind the scenes too. When I started, women tended to be in certain roles in marketing or operations and not in an editorial or production capacity, but that has changed."

Roles, Attitudes Changing

Best of all, Logsdon said, there's been a shift in attitude, so women and people of color are no longer being hired just for show or to meet a quota. "There's now a recognition of the fact that having those different perspectives and truly hearing them and engaging them is not just the right thing to do but it's also actually making us better," she said. "Women and people of color bring different ideas and cover stories in different ways and appeal to broader audiences with stories that reflect them."

That said, resistance can be tough to break down. Stephanie Medina, director of Fox NFL Sunday, said Fox Sports has brought in another woman director and has a third in training but "an agent told me that until two years ago there were other networks that didn't even want the names of

female directors on their lists of people to see."

Meredith Battin, VP of content planning and programming for the National Football League, who was often the only woman in the room when she was starting out, said improvements have been slowest to hit at the most senior levels. "The changes over the course of my career have been tremendous," she said.

"Change doesn't happen overnight, but things look a lot different today for women in the field than they did 10 years ago," agreed Karen Brodtkin, who is co-head of WME Sports and executive VP of content strategy and development at Endeavor.

She said there still needs to be more effort made to get women (and people of color) into the pipeline so that when hiring happens, there are more candidates. "I'm hopeful our agents and executives will look a lot more like our clients moving forward," she said. "We're certainly not there yet but we're creating opportunities."

Years ago, Battin said, the challenge was just about getting women in the door. Now it's about finding ways to support working mothers. "The pandemic showed that people don't have to always be in the office and there can be more flexibility for parents," she said. While sports-related jobs are often going to require work on nights and weekends, "this is the positive for women that has come out of the pandemic," Battin said.

Rosalyn Durant, executive VP of programming and acquisitions for ESPN, said leadership needs to "support people for their full selves, to be flexible as leaders to meet people's needs so they can be successful."

Kat Harwood, a principal in Deloitte Consulting LLP's sports-industry practice, said the pandemic produced a seismic change but workplaces are "reaching an inflection point" as companies start to mandate more days back in the office. While it will take time to sort out what works best for companies and employees, she said, there's no going back to the rigidity of the past — and women will be the beneficiaries of this paradigm shift.

Paying It Forward

She credits the women who came before her for helping break down barriers and push for change, adding that her generation has done the same. "There's a sense among women in the field of banding together, of providing wrap-around support and pulling through the next group to pay it forward," Harwood said. "Now we're getting a multiplier effect for those efforts."

Added Brodtkin, "I hope we've left a strong legacy for the women who come up behind us."

When asked when progress would reach the point of true equality, Durant said: "I don't know that I'll ever get to answer that question and say, 'It's enough,' though I hope I do one day. We have to continue focusing on it and intentionality, and acknowledge where there are gaps — then we can make sure women get support and truly get the same opportunities." ●



Women's sports stars like Breanna Stewart of the New York Liberty are gaining more mainstream notice, and the same holds true behind the scenes.

Meredith Battin

VP, Content Planning and Programming, National Football League

KEY STATS: “My role has changed every few years,” Battin said. In recent years, she has overseen a team of more than 40 in portfolio-level planning and investment operations. She’s now helping bring together the content for linear and digital platforms, which is a shift driven by the need to reach more fans. Battin is responsible for everything from YouTube content to podcasts as the NFL strives to reach fans where they are. “We’re planning and programming with all the platforms in mind,” she said. “That’s an exciting shift.”

VARSITY STATUS: Battin started out in the business world at American Express but wanted a job she felt passionate about. So she earned an MBA from UCLA to prepare for a career in the sports world. Battin graduated just as the NFL was launching its digital business and jumped in right away. She has been with the league for nearly 17 years,

starting as a product manager for NFL Digital Media and taking on increasing responsibility across new areas since then. Her previous title was VP of business operations and club media.

IN HER OWN WORDS: “I’ve had the great fortune to try my hand in all sorts of things in the media space. When I started we had a website and that was it, and now that’s not even the most interesting thing we do: there’s YouTube, podcasts, FAST [channels]. We want to get more content to more people and make things more accessible.

“It’s a lot of work to rethink how we do our planning and how we bring our groups together. We have to figure out different strategies around our events: what content goes where and how to maximize our reach. We’re doing that in a resource-constrained world with more platforms, so you have to be



smarter, more efficient, more creative. I like being able to pair what each platform brings to the table from a strategic value and from the fan’s value and put the full picture together. I see things holistically.” ●

Karen Brodtkin

Co-Head of WME Sports and Executive VP of Content Strategy and Development, Endeavor

KEY STATS: Brodtkin is, with Hillary Mandel, the co-head of WME Sports, which encompasses the agency’s representation of athletes, broadcasters, coaches and front-office personnel. She also leads business development and strategy for a range of business areas across the Endeavor portfolio, including partnerships with sports leagues, federations, conferences and teams; content licensing; strategy and development; media strategy and consultation; sports naming rights and venue programming, strategy and development; and eSports partnerships and events. “In the throes of the pandemic from 2020 to 2022, while we were working from home, we built a football business, a basketball representation business, a basketball coaching business and a Major League Baseball representation business,” Brodtkin said.



VARSITY STATUS: Brodtkin started as a corporate attorney specializing in labor and employment matters, then spent five years as an entertainment attorney at two Los Angeles-based entertainment firms where her clients included Garth Brooks, Spike Lee, Warner Bros. and New Line Cinema.

IN HER OWN WORDS: “I thought I had one of the best jobs in the world at Fox until I got recruited to come here in 2014, leaving legal business affairs behind to come in as a true dealmaker and help on strategy. My skills are in building and nurturing relationships. I’m a good manager of people and good at strategically building out a business.

“I also think a lot about culture. I want the brand of WME Sports to stand for something culturally, and if we have the right culture internally that will resonate externally with clients and signing efforts. I’m not sure if there are any other sports agencies run or co-run by women, and there are no other media advisory businesses featuring two women at the top.” ●

Rosalyn Durant

Executive VP, Programming and Acquisitions, ESPN

KEY STATS: Durant returned to The Walt Disney Co.-controlled ESPN in March 2023 after three years as senior VP of Disney Springs, Water Parks and ESPN Wide World of Sports. In her new role, she leads programming and media rights deals for all ESPN platforms.

VARSITY STATUS: Prior to her three years in Florida, Durant spent two decades at ESPN, starting as an intern in affiliate sales and marketing in 1998. She signed on full-time in 1999 as a marketing coordinator and rose through the ranks. By 2005, she was senior director for national accounts and the following year she moved into programming as a senior director. Since then she has been VP, programming and acquisitions, managing the network's relationships with the NBA, Major League Soccer, FIFA and other organizations, as well



as VP of college sports programming and acquisitions, overseeing all of ESPN's college

sports relationships, rights acquisitions and programming, and senior VP of ESPN's College Networks.

IN HER OWN WORDS: "I am back. ESPN is home. Even when I was at Walt Disney World, every week I'd talk to someone from ESPN — a friend or someone reaching out for advice or someone else — just to stay connected with the business. So returning here felt like a natural next step.

"I'm back in the department I spent the majority of my time at ESPN in. I know the team here and understand the work that's in front of us. We need a disciplined approach to acquisitions and content in order to find the right mix that will help us broaden our reach to fans. It could be men's or women's sports, traditional or non-traditional, amateur, college or pro: It's not one thing but the right mix. We want to round out the portfolio, not get sidetracked by all of the noise around us and focus on what we do well." ●

Kat Harwood

Principal, Sports Industry Practice, Deloitte Consulting LLP

KEY STATS: Harwood joined Deloitte's sports consultancy not long after it began eight years ago. She advises those in the industry on how to maximize value from digital enablement opportunities across all aspects of their operations, from improving the fan experience to generating new revenue streams.

"At first we were building awareness, but now we have strong partnerships and clients, so we are leveraging that and we can get more folks answering our calls," she said. "We're also showing them what we are doing outside of sports that has applicability inside sports."

Harwood's group does consulting with the Olympics and others but is "really proud of the investment and impact we've had on a lot of women's sports leagues like the NWSL, WNBA and the women's U.S. soccer team."

VARSITY STATUS: Harwood has spent her entire career at Deloitte. While tailgating at a

football game during college at UCLA, she met an alum who connected her with the company. An internship led to a full-time job, starting as an auditor in the aerospace and defense industry. She then got an MBA from Wharton. "Business school helped me broaden my knowledge across all aspects of running a business, which was important if I wanted to be a consultant," she said, adding that she purposely studied sports business while getting her graduate degree. "That became the foundation for a totally different career at Deloitte."

IN HER OWN WORDS: "The experience I'm



most proud of is a program we started last year called The Student Athlete Leadership Experience, presented by and in conjunction with Deloitte Foundation. It's often hard for student-athletes to understand how the skills in their sports translate into the business

world and how to get in the door. We've doubled the number of participants this year, to eight schools and 50 student-athletes. We help them build a community of like-minded people and Deloitte folks donate their time, giving an introduction to business courses or doing interview prep and other things like that. I got to ideate the concept, pitch it and find the funding. Seeing it come together was one of the most genuinely inspiring things I've done." ●

Tammy Henault

Chief Marketing Officer, National Basketball Association

KEY STATS: Henault joined the NBA last November to head the global marketing efforts for the league and its affiliate leagues. She also is a leader in overseeing the NBA's new Next Gen platform, working with the product and content teams on the reimagined NBA App and on NBA ID, the league's new global membership program offering fans benefits and rewards.

VARSITY STATUS: Henault spent her career in direct-to-consumer marketing, first at magazines like *People* and *Time* and then at *The New York Times* as it began moving toward the digital age. She then worked for CBS and finally Paramount Global, where she managed a team of more than 150 employees responsible

for brand, partnership and performance marketing as well as audience development, customer acquisition and retention. She oversaw marketing for more than 100 movies and TV shows, including *Star Trek: Discovery* and *1883* and also for the global launch of Paramount Plus.

IN HER OWN WORDS:

"At the magazines and *The New York Times*, I lived the transformation from print to digital. With *The Times*, we were shifting from free

consumption to pay and trying to stay ahead of the curve. It was an incredible experience to launch a whole new model for an industry. I left

Paramount for the NBA because it is such a global powerhouse of a brand, with such a passionate fan base, which makes it a dream to work for. There are a lot of synergies from a content and media perspective and I thought my background could add value.

"I'm still learning a ton about our fans and the different audience types, who's a viewer on linear and who's on streaming. I'll have the 'new' CMO attached to my title until I've gone through a full NBA season." ●



Jodi Logsdon

VP, News and Editorial, CBS Sports

KEY STATS: Logsdon is responsible for editorial operations, newsgathering and research across platforms, serving as the lead editorial voice guiding CBS Sports productions. She also partners with leaders and other contributors to ensure CBS Sports's high standards for news and reporting are met in all coverage across studio, game and digital productions. She also directs editorial operations for CBS Sports HQ and oversees the CBSSports.com editorial content division. Under her leadership, the research teams use data and statistics to enhance storytelling across productions and the News & Assignment Desk guides the reporting and presentation of breaking news and compelling developments across platforms. Logsdon also manages

the CBS Sports Race & Culture Unit, which revolves around storytelling at the intersection of sports, race, identity and culture, and is the primary liaison for editorial coordination with CBS News.

VARSITY STATUS: A two-time Sports Emmy Award winner, Logsdon came to CBS Sports in 2015 after 12 years at ESPN. She had started as a news and copy editor for ESPN.com, eventually overseeing the daily newsgathering operation that supported ESPN's studio productions. While there she was a contributor to ESPN's Diversity &

Inclusion Priority Team. She also was an inaugural member of the CBS Sports Inclusivity Advisory Council.

IN HER OWN

WORDS: "I came to CBS Sports because they hadn't had a dedicated news and editorial person on the TV side and were just creating the role, so I was able to design it. They

envisioned it as an individual contributor to cover everything. I started as an individual contributor, a singular voice focused on the news that must be addressed in our coverage. In the years since, I have built and enhanced multiple teams dedicated to informing our storytelling, our productions and, by extension, our audiences. A few years in, I also took over our two research teams, one for broadcast and one for cable, and merged them together. Now we've undertaken a larger effort across all CBS Sports to integrate all our digital teams more closely with linear networks and all editorial will be under me.

"For the editorial integration project we started this past spring I draw from experience I've gained at various stops along the course of my career, harnessing the lexicon learned in my tenure at ESPN.com and flexing the muscles I remember from my days with the ESPN news and assignment desk and as a coordinating producer on ESPNNews. As we embark on our biggest college football season yet, and march toward our broadcast of Super Bowl LVIII, I'm humbled to know that the ever-growing news, research, editorial and Race & Culture teams I've built, and continue to build, serve to uplift the depth and breadth of that coverage." ●



Stephanie Medina

Director, 'Fox NFL Sunday,' Fox Sports

KEY STATS: For 2022, Medina oversaw a major overhaul at Fox NFL Sunday as the pregame show got a new set, control room, cameras and graphics system. "This felt like a new beginning, and I got to lead that," the Emmy Award-winning director said. "It was challenging because I needed to learn the technology and incorporate it without losing what is the core of our show, those five guys at the desk."

VARSITY STATUS: Medina joined Fox as an associate director for the network's Major League Baseball and



NFL pregame shows in 2003. She directed the network's Bowl Championship Series pregame coverage in 2006 and 2007, as well as MLB pregame shows in 2008 and 2009 and the pregame show for Super Bowl LI. She began as director of Fox NFL Sunday at the start of the 2013-14 season and made her Super Bowl debut at Super Bowl XLVIII in 2014. "No other women were getting to direct like this and some people didn't want me to get the job, but producer Bill Richards and [Fox Sports CEO] Eric Shanks gave me this opportunity."

IN HER OWN WORDS: "I was a news junkie at a young age and then on a field trip in eighth grade we went to see the working of a TV studio and I saw the chaos and the yelling and the monitors and it was like the angels started singing. It was like nirvana for me.

"I was the first in my family to go to college. I majored in communications and just wanted to get into TV production — I liked the live crazy element — but I knew no one in the business. I realized my only way in was internships. I worked my butt off at an internship at KTLA [Los Angeles] and soon after they called me because they needed help on the assignment desk. I kept getting calls, to help in graphics or to load the tape. When people would quit, I'd fall in. I got to be assistant director on their early news show, and then their main one and then I became director. It took a good eight years to get from working for free to directing." ●

Gina DiGioia Sheldon

Chief Legal Officer, Fubo

KEY STATS: Sheldon was Fubo's first in-house legal hire, joining just before the company listed on the New York Stock Exchange. She built Fubo's legal team and became the company's first chief legal officer. Sheldon now leads all legal matters for Fubo, including financing, acquisitions and corporate governance. On the executive management team, Sheldon helps shape Fubo's internal legal function and helps define the company's strategy.

Sheldon closed two acquisitions to expand Fubo's global footprint and tech capabilities: Edisn.ai, an AI-powered computer vision technology firm based in Bangalore, India, aimed at creating a more interactive and immersive live TV and sports viewership experience, and live TV streaming company Molotov SAS in France, which reaches nearly 4 million monthly active users in Europe. She also headed the legal proceedings at home for carriage agreements at regional sports networks, including Altitude Sports in

10 Rocky Mountain states and with Sinclair Broadcast Group to bring the Bally Sports-branded regional sports networks to Fubo, making the streamer home to more than 35 regional sports networks.

Sheldon also was involved with rights deals, including an exclusive year-long partnership with former NFL player Shawne Merriman's Lights Out Xtreme Fighting MMA league and a multiyear renewal with NBA All-Star Gilbert Arenas for his series No Chill. She also oversees patent filings for proprietary technology that will differentiate the Fubo streaming platform.

VARSITY STATUS: Sheldon began her career as an apprentice with the State Department at the U.S. Embassy in Rome. She then went to law school hoping to get involved with international transactional work. After



working for small firms, she spent 17 years at Alloy Inc. and Alloy Digital, working on media deals, mergers and acquisitions and e-commerce. "I like to say I grew up at Alloy," she said.

IN HER OWN WORDS: "I joined Fubo because my sweet spot is working with growth-stage companies and Fubo had just gone through a merger and was growing and looking to do an IPO. I love to be hands-on and dig in, working with an entrepreneurial managerial team. At a growth stage, you can have more of an impact because you're not put in the box of just doing legal: There's enough work to go around and I'm one of the more experienced folks here. There was a large learning curve, but I bring my experience into conversations and transactions. I'm not just thinking about just legal rights and clearances, but about dollars and long-term strategy. I'm looking at things holistically." ●

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40 Under 40 N.Y.: Success in the City

NYC TV Week event to honor emerging executives making their mark in media

There's no shortage of rising stars or established veterans in the media and entertainment industry who are making an impact in the years between when they start their careers and when they turn 40. And for more than a decade, Multichannel News and sister brands Broadcasting+Cable and NextTV have honored a select group of these talented individuals as part of the "40 Under 40" awards program.

From OTT, cross-platform measurement and new metrics, to digital disruption, Big Data and economic challenges, it's truly a transformative time in the development and delivery of video content. The 40 Under 40 awards are designed to honor those at the forefront of this industry revolution. Through a nomination and judging process, MCN has selected a group of creative, tech-savvy visionaries helping to lead media in new directions, wherever the viewers are.

The 2023 New York "40 Under 40" class will be honored at a gala party September 14, capping off Future plc's NYC TV Week of events, which also includes the the Advanced Advertising Summit, the Hispanic Television Summit and Next TV Summit New York. It will take place at the 230 Fifth Rooftop at 230 Fifth Avenue in Manhattan.

For more information and to register, visit tweek40under40.com.

On the following pages, meet the 2023 "40 Under 40" New York, listed in alphabetical order.



Cristina Arango
VP, Head of
Business
Development
Fubo

Cristina Arango drives strategic partnerships generating revenue, subscribers and cost savings for Fubo, the leading sports-first live TV streaming platform. She is also

the acting chief marketing officer of Molotov.tv by Fubo, a live-TV streaming platform in France. Arango, who joined Fubo in 2016, has held roles across multiple teams including U.S. and France marketing, business development and post-acquisition integration. Prior to Fubo, she was an analyst in private equity and investment banking, where she worked with clients such as MundoFox, a Hispanic TV over-the-air network from Fox International Channels. She has

helped Fubo establish relationships with Best Buy and Viasat to boost visibility, and secured co-marketing and distribution partnerships with Google Fiber, WOW!, Frontier Communications, CenturyLink, Wave Broadband and RCN.



Katie Beltz-Long
VP, Head of U.S.
Demand Sales
Beachfront

Katie Beltz-Long is a dynamic sales leader with extensive experience in media and advertising technology. She joined Beachfront in January 2022 and drives partnerships with leading agencies, brands and demand-side platforms. Focused on transforming the media buying landscape, Long works closely with internal and external stakeholders to develop technological innovations that bring greater simplicity, automation and addressability to TV and connected TV advertising. She has been the driving force behind new, innovative and timely partnerships at Beachfront, including with Kroger Precision Marketing and FlowCode. She created and leads an internal Culture Committee focused on the continued assessment and improvement of employee welfare through team activities, policies and perks. Long earlier held senior sales positions at Verizon Media (Yahoo, Oath, BrightRoll).



Melanie Brown
VP, Advanced TV
Tubi

At Tubi, Melanie Brown leads a team of strategic subject-matter experts to bring data and technological capabilities to the forefront of clients' connected-TV activations. She is leading Tubi's testing of new currencies to improve cross-platform measurement for CTV and linear TV guarantees. She oversees Tubi's Certified Measurement Program, working closely with partners including Innovid, Kantar, Data Plus Math, NCSolutions and FourSquare to prove the value of Tubi's platform for advertisers. She began her career in 2012 at Visible World. Following the acquisition of Visible World's AudienceXpress by

FreeWheel, she took her experience in linear TV activation and turned to advanced audiences for targeting and measurement, joining the TV businesses at Shareable (now Comscore) and Experian as well as at VideoAmp. Prior to joining Tubi in 2022, she served on the addressability team at LiveRamp.



Amber Callahan
VP, Distribution
AMC Networks

At AMC Networks, Amber Callahan leads or serves as second-chair negotiator on multimillion-dollar deals in the U.S. and Canada for all of AMCN's services across traditional network carriage, SVOD, FAST/AVOD and TVOD/EST. She is also part of the business development team, where she has spearheaded partnerships to grow awareness and subscriptions for AMC Plus with brands including Target, JetBlue, GrubHub, American Express and Meredith. Since joining AMC Networks six years ago, Callahan has transitioned from partner management and deal support to leading deal negotiations with major MVPDs, vMVPDs and connected-TV platforms, including carriage renewal deals with Comcast and Dish Network. In the last few years, she led the launch of AMCN's FAST Channels on multiple platforms, including Samsung and Sling TV. Prior to joining AMC Networks, Callahan was a senior marketing manager at Time Warner Cable and Charter Communications.



Lori Cassorla
SVP, Group Media
Director,
Investments
Mediahub

Lori Cassorla is responsible for leading video strategy and investment across various Mediahub clients while also leading the advanced video advertising team. She has a passion for infusing data with traditional media, most recently focusing on outcomes-based media. Cassorla brokered first-to-market deals on behalf of such clients as Chipotle and Ulta Beauty, guaranteeing their video investments on key business metrics including search, in-store traffic and sales. From pioneer-

ing industry-first deal terms to brokering custom partnerships granting buyers unparalleled targeting control, she helps Mediahub clients secure the two things they crave most—accountability and flexibility—while maintaining Mediahub's creative spirit at the core.



Karen Chan
Group Director,
Investment
Innovation
GroupM

At GroupM, Karen Chan promotes a holistic approach to the evolution of TV and video across teams, departments and agencies. She helps to bring in new ideas and processes, including continuous play, tech and data platform partnerships, alternative currency measurement and internal communications/partner marketing. Chan was a key player in marketing GroupM's Continuous Play study with iSpot, which found that more than \$1.9 billion in media dollars are wasted in the U.S. market because about 10% of all CTV ads appear when the TV is turned off. She previously worked at Vizio, MediaMath, Tremor Video and SHE Media (Penske Media Group). She is an active member of GroupM's AAPI employee resource group and works closely with the Learning and Development team to mentor new associates in advertising.



Michael Chioditti
VP, Strategy and
Business
Development
Endeavor
Streaming

Michael Chioditti oversees the media advisory group and business development efforts at Endeavor Streaming. He has a deep knowledge base of digital strategy, licensing and partnerships that has advanced the business of both Endeavor Streaming and its clients. Prior to joining Endeavor Streaming, Chioditti worked at the National Basketball Association, where he was responsible for new media business development, focusing on the implementation of new media initiatives and products for the league across digital, social and emerging media platforms. He joined Endeavor Streaming in late 2021 to spearhead its foray into consultative business services.



Christina Chung
VP, Business
Operations
Estrella Media

Christina Chung oversees Estrella

Media's digital operating infrastructure and, in two years, has been instrumental in growing the company's digital and streaming business from inception to a leadership position in Spanish-language FAST, AVOD and streaming audio. Estrella Media's four FAST channels reach 10 million viewers and deliver 280 million minutes of video per month. Chung developed the company's ad-tech stack and ad operations, working with partners like Freewheel, Google, Amagi, Triton and Operative, to create a robust multiplatform ad monetization platform. Prior to Estrella Media, she held leadership account and solutions engineering positions at FreeWheel, managing strategic accounts including The Walt Disney Co., Fox Networks, Sony Crackle and Discovery. She also has a background in private equity and investment banking.



Shawn Donilon
EVP, Government
Relations
National
Association of
Broadcasters

Shawn Donilon oversees advocacy efforts for the National Association of Broadcasters on Capitol Hill and at the White House. His exceptional ability to develop and execute legislative strategies, aimed to advance and protect local broadcasters and their audiences, has been crucial to the industry's resilience and growth amid regulatory and technological challenges. He joined NAB's advocacy team in March 2013 and has been integrally involved in developing and executing NAB's strategy in a host of legislative fights during his tenure. These include passage of the STELAR bill; congressional opposition to a performance tax; Congress's appropriation of \$1 billion to fully reimburse broadcasters impacted by the spectrum repack; and securing COVID-19 relief funds for all broadcasters.

Donilon previously served as legislative director and counsel to former Rep. Charles F. Bass (R-N.H.).



Matthew Duarte
VP, Strategy and
Business
Development
YES Network

Matt Duarte, who joined the YES Network in December 2019, identifies and recommends new business opportunities and partners with YES senior leadership to drive overall company strategy. Notable was the development and launch of the Emmy Award-winning YES App, which became the No. 1 free sports app in the Apple App Store upon its March 2021 launch. In March 2023, Duarte spearheaded the launch of YES Network's direct-to-consumer subscription product, providing fans of the New York Yankees, Brooklyn Nets and New York Liberty in YES's regional coverage territory an option to purchase a direct subscription through the app. Prior to YES, Duarte was the first enterprise manager in Madison Square Garden's MBA Rotational program in 2018-2019, where he rotated among marketing partnerships, MSG Sports and Business Strategy and venue operations. Earlier, he was assistant VP, U.S. corporate banking at Wells Fargo.



David Dworin
Chief Product
Officer
FreeWheel

David Dworin oversees and defines FreeWheel's product vision, strategy, design and development worldwide. Before he was promoted to this role in January 2023, Dworin was VP of product management, leading FreeWheel's programmatic premium video marketplace, a solution that connects buyers and sellers of premium video to execute trusted, efficient and effective advertising transactions across multiple screens. He formerly headed FreeWheel's global advisory services practice, the company's consulting arm and its trust and standards team, which works to improve industry trust through ongoing accreditation,

compliance and marketplace quality initiatives. Before FreeWheel, he ran a consulting practice that helped companies across a variety of sectors grow and scale their businesses by developing new strategies, refining operations and improving talent management.



Matt Farina
SVP, Content
Distribution
NBCUniversal

Matt Farina is responsible for the monetization and multiplatform distribution of NBCUniversal's portfolio of television networks and streaming products. A 13-year NBCU veteran, he oversees the distribution of the company's programming via Roku, Cox Communications, Vizio, SiriusXM, Tubi and partners in Canada and the Caribbean. Farina and his team also provide best-in-class viewing experiences and optimize the consumer experience for NBCUniversal's tentpole programming. His team's focus on the 2022 FIFA Men's World Cup led to historic ratings for the Telemundo property. In 2022, Farina's role grew beyond carriage agreements for NBCU's full portfolio of TV networks, Peacock and FAST channels to identifying new content opportunities and optimizing the consumer experience for NBCUniversal's tentpole programming on partner platforms.



Laura Florence
SVP, Global FAST
Channels
Fremantle

Laura Florence brings nearly 20 years of experience in the entertainment industry to her new position as senior VP, Global FAST Channels at Fremantle. Previously serving as SVP and GM, Digital at Chicken Soup for the Soul Entertainment, she oversaw Redbox and Crackle Plus digital platforms, including TVOD, AVOD, FAST channels and FAST distribution for the app and channel portfolio to over 120 endpoints across 15 platforms. Her responsibilities also included platform content strategy and operations for the company's distribution and production groups. Her previous roles include leading North American sales and marketing

for Gravitus Ventures, sales and brand management at Millennium/Alchemy and working on live events and original programming at Comcast/E! Networks.



Meredith Garofalo
Freelance
Meteorologist
and Space/
Science
Correspondent
Spectrum News NY1

Meredith Garofalo is a regional Edward R. Murrow Award-winning certified broadcast meteorologist and science/space correspondent. She is currently a freelance meteorologist for Spectrum News NY1 in New York City. She was also the 2021 chair for the AMS Station Scientist Committee. Garofalo's 15 years in the broadcast business includes a wide variety of experience earned across the country, stemming from her internship at WGN Chicago. She has worked at stations in New York, Ohio, South Dakota, Florida and California and nationally with WeatherNation. She is also an accomplished reporter of weather and science stories, including rocket launches at Vandenberg Space Force Base and Cape Canaveral.



Katie Gray
Director, Content
Fulfillment and
Vendor
Management
A+E Networks

As director of content fulfillment and vendor management at A+E Networks, Katie Gray is focused on digital distribution with laser dedication to customer service. Leading the fulfillment of A+E's nonlinear content, she oversees 13 on-site employees and two different vendor houses. In 2022, the teams completed more than 120,000 partner packages to dozens of endpoints in support of video-on-demand outlets including FVOD, TVOD, SVOD, AVOD and FAST. Gray was integral to the A+E library digitization, a company-wide project to track the creation of over 15,000 assets in support of expanded digital distribution deals. She began her career at A+E in 2011.

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Courtney Huber

VP, Partnership Marketing

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Courtney Huber
VP, Partnership
Marketing
Hallmark Media

Courtney Huber is an integral member of the Hallmark Media distribution team, leading product launch and marketing initiatives across linear, direct-to-consumer and FAST channels. (Hallmark Media assets include Hallmark Channel, Hallmark Movies and Mysteries, Hallmark Drama, Hallmark Movies Now and AVOD platform Hallmark Movies and More). A key accomplishment was piloting Hallmark's launch with Peacock of a branded streaming hub including live, linear programming. She also leads partnership marketing efforts for Hallmark's Countdown to Christmas. Huber manages major partnerships that also include Hulu, Comcast, Vizio, Pluto TV, Verizon and LG. Prior to Hallmark Media, she was VP, international partner marketing at CuriosityStream. She earlier held marketing and distribution roles at Spectrum Reach, Olympusat and Discovery.



Marielle Kaar
Director,
Preschool
Production and
Development
Nickelodeon

Marielle Kaar, director of production and development for Nickelodeon Preschool, is currently the executive in charge of *Dora*, the new CG-animated reboot of *Dora the Explorer*. Kaar also oversees production as executive in charge of the newly green-lit 2D-animated series *Super Duper Bunny League*, and is director of production and development on additional shows on Nickelodeon Animation's powerhouse preschool roster, including *Blue's Clues and You!* and *Bubble Guppies*. A 10-year Nickelodeon veteran, Kaar began her career as an intern at the network and quickly transitioned to assisting executives on the preschool production and development team. She later became the manager of animation production and development for series such as *Butterbean's Café* and *Sunny Day*.



Andrew Kaplan
Director, Research
and Data
**New York
Interconnect**

Andrew Kaplan provides research that moves the needle for advertising clients in the New York market. He has been with New York Interconnect (NYI), the joint venture between Altice USA, Charter Communications and Comcast, for five years, steadily moving up the ranks to manage his own team. Kaplan's team develops client-specific research stories that prove the benefits of the New York DMA, as well as NYI's various ad products, including TV360 (data-driven linear), addressable and streaming. He also is responsible for creating the campaign-level attribution reports that prove a client's ROI and is well-versed in using set-top box data to provide network and daypart recommendations for linear/addressable campaigns based on advanced audience targets. He started his career at Discovery.



Rob Kelly
Senior Director,
Marketing
Ampersand

Rob Kelly leads the charge in positioning and amplifying Ampersand's role as a leader in the advanced television industry. From industry event sponsorships, PR and thought leadership to handcrafting go-to-market strategies for Ampersand's national, local and agency sales teams, Kelly serves as the engine driving Ampersand's mantra of "Moving TV Forward." Ampersand, owned by Comcast, Charter Communications and Cox Communications, represents the largest share of television inventory across multiscreen environments. Kelly's efforts led to Ampersand's elevated presence at industry events including Cannes (Ampersand owned the entire facade of the Palais there last summer), Advertising Week New York and the ANA Masters of Marketing. Ampersand also promoted its brand by wrapping the escalators at CES in Las Vegas.



Ryan Kristafer
Entertainment
Anchor/
Reporter
**WNYW Fox 5
New York**

Ryan Kristafer joined *Good Day New York* and the Fox 5 New York team in August 2019. Originally from Connecticut, he started his career emceeding corporate events across the U.S. as an on-stage host and DJ. He then hosted a nationally syndicated "Man in the Stands" feature on NBC Sports Radio. Following that, he spent five years at ABC affiliate WTNH New Haven, Connecticut, as a feature reporter and host of a daily talk show, *CT Style*. As the entertainment anchor/reporter for *Good Day New York* and Fox 5, he interviews celebrities and covers entertainment headlines, lifestyle, trends and more.



Dan Lanzano
VP, Advertising
Sales
**Warner Bros.
Discovery**

Dan Lanzano is responsible for the cross-platform strategy and monetization for marquee properties at Warner Bros. Discovery, including HGTV, CNN, TNT, ID, Magnolia Network, Trvl and HLN. He has helped move WBD's business forward through innovative beta-test partnerships with marquee agency and client partners around alternative measurement and new currencies such as VideoAmp, Comscore and iSpot. Advertisers involved in that test include Liberty Mutual, Chipotle, the U.S. Postal Service, Subaru and Behr. Starting in 2016, he was VP of ad sales at Turner/WarnerMedia, driving multiplatform ad-sales efforts across TBS, TNT, CNN, Adult Swim, truTV, Cartoon Network and HBO Max. He began at Turner in 2007 as an account service representative for CNN.



Deon LeCointe
Director, Networked
Solutions
**Sony Imaging and
Professional
Solutions - Americas**

Deon LeCointe oversees Sony's live production product portfolio and

works with television networks and broadcasters to design and build equipment that delivers live content to millions of homes around the world. His team includes product managers, solution architects, sales engineers and service personnel responsible for the development, sales and marketing of products designed for news, sports and entertainment. He has led the implementation of IP-based infrastructure, cameras and switchers at notable installations including CNN's Hudson Yards facility in New York and NFL Network in Los Angeles. He co-founded UJIMA, the Sony Electronics Black Employee Network.



Abigail Neugebauer
Senior Director of Content, Magnolia Network
Warner Bros. Discovery

Abigail Neugebauer develops and produces original lifestyle programming for WBD's Magnolia Network. She is currently the production executive on shows such as *Making Modern With Brooke and Brice*, *The Established Home*, *Problem Spaces* and *The Piece Maker*. In her three years at Magnolia, she has been a pivotal figure in developing and executing a creative cross-platform production strategy that has resulted in Magnolia Workshops, a standalone series of how-to courses that rolled out across linear, streaming and OTT. Earlier, she led digital teams that created original content for brands like Food Network Kitchen, Genius Kitchen and HGTV. She began her content career at Condé Nast and later managed digital video content teams at About.com (now Dotdash Meredith).



Molly O'Connor
VP, Business Planning and Strategy
Warner Bros. Discovery

Molly O'Connor is responsible for developing and executing a comprehensive strategy to deliver subscription volume and revenue for Warner Bros. Discovery's U.S. Streaming and Networks business, with a focus on Max. Prior

to joining HBO in 2018, she worked in strategy and business development at film and television studio A24. Earlier in her career, she was a management consultant in the TMT sector. She is an expert in developing effective distribution strategies for the direct-to-consumer and traditional linear television business. She helped develop and execute the distribution strategy for the launch of HBO Max in the U.S. and continues to help drive Max subscriber growth.



Andy Oh
Principal, Sports Partnerships
Amazon

Andy Oh has played a significant role in the growth and diversity of Prime Video's sports offerings. Since joining Amazon in January 2021, Oh has piloted groundbreaking negotiations for the company's streaming platform. Most recently, he headed the renewal with the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA), which will allow Prime Video to exclusively stream 20 WNBA games as well as the WNBA Commissioner's Cup championship game this season. In addition to the WNBA renewal, Oh has expanded Prime Video's female-focused offerings for customers through his leadership of the Seattle Storm deal last spring. This deal marked the first local WNBA package made available to Prime Video subscribers.



Matthew Olson
Sports Media Agent
Creative Artists Agency

CAA sports media agent Matthew Olson represents leading sports broadcasters including Laura Rutledge, Elle Duncan, Kate Abdo, Dan Orlovsky, Pablo Torre, Shea Serrano and Jon "Boog" Sciambi. He negotiated a multiyear deal for veteran ESPN writer and on-air personality Torre to join Meadowlark Media, where he will contribute to its unscripted efforts. He also brokered a multiyear extension for former NFL quarterback Orlovsky to join the No. 2 NFL booth at ESPN, while also maintaining his role as one of the mainstays on NFL Live, ESPN's signature daily

NFL program. Olson was an integral member of the team that negotiated a deal for Shea Serrano at Amazon, which includes Serrano's scripted television and audio rights. *Primo*, Serrano's first series for the streamer, premiered in May.



Marc Paskin
Agent
UTA

Marc Paskin, an agent in the News and Broadcast division of UTA, has a client roster that includes Jen Psaki, Baratunde Thurston, Brian Tyler Cohen, Brittany Packnett Cunningham, James Longman, Jenna Bush Hager, Mary Hager, Beverly Chase, Brooke Baldwin, Peter Hamby, Taylor Lorenz, Abby Phillip, Jonathan Swan and Kara Swisher. One recent accomplishment is the launch of *Inside With Jen Psaki* on MSNBC. He partnered with UTA's Publishing department to secure a deal for MSNBC host Mehdi Hasan's book, *Win Every Argument*, which soared to the top of *The New York Times* bestseller list. Paskin is a former talent executive at ABC News who later joined the online news publication Mic. He is co-chair of UTA Proud, the UTA employee inclusion group dedicated to supporting LGBTQIA+ members at the company.



Denise Peluso
VP, Research and Insights
BBC Studios

Denise Peluso is responsible for consumer insights and research across all BBC Studios business units in the North America and Latin America region. Since joining BBC Studios in 2015, she has helmed insights for content distribution, brands, marketing, streaming channel launches, consumer products and production. She oversees a team of multidisciplinary researchers whose remits span from analysis of content performance in market to UX research supporting BBC's digital news and streaming division. As the company expands in North America with the rollout of new platforms and consumer experiences, Peluso has added to her team and led efforts to gain

key insights into consumer perception for the BBC in the region. She started out at Universal McCann on Sony's research team before moving to Comedy Central's ad sales research division.



Jackie Perez
Director, Business Development
Spectrum Reach

Jackie Perez has 14 years of experience in advertising, holding roles in the worlds of media, agency and ad tech. She uses her expertise to help build Spectrum Reach's programmatic business from the ground up. Her clients today include WPP, Publicis Groupe, Havas Media and Procter and Gamble. She created Spectrum Reach's first-ever programmatic story and its corresponding sales materials, and was the first to represent the company as an expert on programmatic at industry events. Before joining Spectrum Reach, the ad-sales division of Charter Communications, Perez held positions at Time Inc. (now Dotdash Meredith), IPG Mediabrands' Magna and Yahoo (formerly Verizon Media), and has consulted clients such as Verizon, Visa, Allstate, Best Buy and GSK.



Kendra Prasad
VP, Acquisition
The Farmer's Dog

Kendra Prasad has more than nine years of marketing and performance expertise and industry experience and is passionate about building holistic customer-centric growth strategies that enable growth and retention. Her big moment came during Super Bowl LVII, where a commercial for The Farmer's Dog won USA Today's Ad Meter. "Our product can be perceived as niche, but it's good for everyone with a dog," Prasad said of the big investment in one commercial. "TV's huge platform and visual nature let us tell our story and 'why' in a way we can't with digital." The emotional spot follows the life of Bear, a chocolate lab, as he grows older alongside his owner, Ava. The tagline? "Nothing matters more than more years together."



Cosmina Schulman
SVP, Strategic Partnerships
NESN

Cosmina (LaBella)

Schulman is responsible for advertising sales revenues at NESN, the regional sports network televising the Boston Red Sox and Boston Bruins, and for building out sales strategies. As part of the executive management team she plays an active role in determining vision and business approach. Previously, she was NESN's national sales manager and local sales manager. She started her career at Home Team Sports, a division of Fox Sports, and sold for every NBA, NHL and NBA RSN in the country. She also is the VP of Women in Sports and Events Boston chapter and the executive chair of NESN's ERG group, Women of NESN. She worked to conceive NESN's sports-betting strategy, and her team brought to life the first-ever titled Dunkin' Beanpot college hockey tournament, a collaboration between The Beanpot, TD Garden and NESN.



Travis Scoles
SVP, Advanced Advertising
Paramount Global

Travis Scoles's foresight

and strategic thinking have been critical to shaping Paramount into a dominant engine of innovation and leadership within advanced advertising. He has been integral in optimizing the ways advertisers are able to leverage Vantage, Paramount's advanced targeting product, to achieve deeper engagement and has instituted technological advancements that have further solidified Paramount's leadership position in the space. He is also actively involved in driving thought and product leadership in advanced advertising. Scoles oversees all aspects of Vantage as well as other internal data optimization and analysis products. He also manages key efforts in currency and measurement innovation. Scoles joined the company, then called ViacomCBS, in February 2020.



Jenna Silver
SVP, Industry Marketing, U.S.
Advertising Sales
TelevisaUnivision

Jenna Silver oversees

a team of strategic business-to-business marketers charged with positioning Spanish-language media and content company TelevisaUnivision as the go-to destination for helping brands grow with U.S. Hispanic audiences. Silver also leads the strategy and development of the company's annual upfront presentation and its thought leadership conference, "Leading the Change." Prior to TelevisaUnivision, she held sales marketing and client solutions roles spanning print, digital/mobile and out-of-home/experiential media with Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia, Trusted Media Brands (formerly Reader's Digest Association) and News Corp. She is a proud founding member of eMERGE, TelevisaUnivision's early-career employee resource group.



Josh Sims
Fox NASCAR Host and Reporter
Fox Sports

Josh Sims joined Fox Sports in July

2021 as a reporter for NASCAR Race Hub, NASCAR RaceDay and select NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series races on pit road, becoming the first African-American reporter to cover pit road for a NASCAR national series television broadcast. In 2023, he made his NASCAR Cup Series pit-reporting debut in the Daytona 500 as part of a select schedule of Cup Series races throughout the season. Sims also added a full season of NASCAR Xfinity Series pit reporting to his schedule, while maintaining his NASCAR Race Hub co-hosting duties. He joined Fox Sports from WJZY, the Fox affiliate in Charlotte, North Carolina, where he was a sports anchor and reporter from 2015 to 2021. At Fox, he has been able to help showcase diverse voices within NASCAR, including a feature story on Jusan Hamilton, the first Black race director of the Daytona 500.



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Operator
Cheddar News

Thomas Staples is an award-winning director and producer, technical director, video engineer and cinematographer with extensive experience in multicam directing, projection, editing, stage production and video engineering. In the theater, he worked for nine years as technical director of the American Negro Playwright Theatre. His television experience spans a range of diverse shows such as *Black College Quiz*, ESPN's *Monday Night Football* and the *Stellar Awards*. At Altice USA's Cheddar News, he has held several roles from broadcast editor to master control operator. He excelled in master control shifting, previously an in-studio-only job, to more than three years of remote operations on daily live news broadcasts with Cheddar News.



Lindsay Stewart
VP, FAST and
AVOD Revenue
Strategy
AMC Networks

Lindsay Stewart leads strategic direction and business development for AMC Networks's free, ad-supported streaming products. Internally tapped to launch the company's first FAST partnership with Pluto TV in 2020, Stewart has been integral to the continued development of the company's growing portfolio of FAST channels, which now includes 13 owned channels like *The Walking Dead Universe*, *Stories by AMC* and *AMC Thrillers* across platforms including Samsung TV Plus, The Roku Channel, Vizio, Sling and Redbox. Stewart also was critical to the 2022 creation and launch of the ALLBLK Gems and AMC en Español FAST channels. With over a decade of experience in digital content strategy, partnerships, marketing and distribution, she joined AMC Networks in 2012.



Adam Verdugo
Executive
Producer, 'CBS
Evening News
With Norah
O'Donnell'
CBS News

Since June 2022 Adam Verdugo has executive produced the *CBS Evening News with Norah O'Donnell*, based in Washington, D.C. He was part of the program's launch team in 2019 and played a key role in its move to Washington as executive story editor. After joining CBS News in 2013, Verdugo has worked closely with O'Donnell for more than a decade. He has helped develop franchises on the newscast including "Profiles in Service," featuring everyday Americans and U.S. military service members who dedicate their lives to helping others, and he helped launch and currently manages *Person to Person With Norah O'Donnell* on the CBS News Streaming Network. He began his career at NBC News and was a senior producer on *Meet the Press*.



Brian Weiss
VP, Entertainment
Programming and
Multicast
Networks
Tegna

Brian Weiss joined the successful startup company Cooper Media to launch true-crime multicast network Justice Network in 2015, and helped lead the strategy and launch of action-adventure reality network Quest in 2018. He was president of the networks when they were acquired by broadcast group Tegna in 2019. Weiss has a track record of working effectively with others to drive distribution and sales growth by finding mutually beneficial partnerships. At Tegna, he leads all entertainment content, including true-crime production group Vault Studios and the syndicated program *Daily Blast Live*. Before Cooper Media, Weiss led business development and partnerships for *The Washington Post*, where he helped strike revenue-share distribution deals with YouTube, Hulu, Amazon and Microsoft. He began his career at Bloomberg.



Patrick West
Senior Manager,
Sales
Amagi

After joining Amagi in June 2022, Patrick West has become a valued partner for many U.S. news organizations and station groups navigating the world of free ad-supported streaming TV (FAST) and cloud-based playout and distribution workflows. He brought to Amagi more than 15 years of media distribution and technology experience. West previously worked at CNN's Newsource business for seven years, building a terrific network of news leaders. In less than a year, he helped deploy FAST strategies for station groups like Graham Media Group, Imagicom and Morgan Murphy Media. Earlier, West worked at CNN Newsource as senior director of sales and affiliate relations. Prior to CNN, he worked at Inform, a video platform connecting content owners with digital publishers. He also was affiliate distribution manager for The Weather Channel.



Travis Winkler
General Manager,
Video and Audio
Bloomberg

Travis Winkler oversees Bloomberg L.P.'s video and audio business, including the teams responsible for worldwide video and audio distribution, business development, content partnerships and business operations. In February, he led the cross-functional launch of Bloomberg Originals (previously Quicktake), featuring cinematic documentary-style deep dives, talk shows, live events and video podcasts. He and his team negotiated deals for bringing on the hosts of *Getting Warmer With Kal Penn* and *The Future With Hannah Fry*, the first two Bloomberg Originals shows. Winkler's team also continues to score wins with distribution of Bloomberg TV Plus and Bloomberg Originals, including 2023 launches on Amazon Prime Video in Canada, Mexico, Australia and Brazil.

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Telemundo Chief Beau Ferrari Headlines Hispanic TV Summit

21st annual gathering highlights power and potential of the category



NBCUniversal Telemundo Enterprises chairman Beau Ferrari, pictured at Telemundo's upfront, will open morning activities at the Hispanic Television Summit.



By Joe Schramm
jschramm@schrammny.com

The 21st Annual Hispanic Television Summit, programmed by Schramm Marketing Group during NYC TV Week, features a morning keynote interview with Beau Ferrari, chairman of NBCUniversal Telemundo Enterprises, parent of the Telemundo network. He will focus on the Hispanic market's unparalleled potential as an economic growth catalyst and the force of this consumer group in today's multicultural landscape.

The summit is the premier event for those in the business of television for Hispanic audiences worldwide. It takes place Wednesday, September 13, at 360 Madison Ave. in New York. The summit explores ways that global and local distribution of culturally accurate TV programming is engaging Hispanic viewers and advertisers across platforms — from streaming to broadcast to traditional pay TV (satellite and cable).

The morning sessions focus on revenue from advertising and subscription, opening with a "state of the Hispanic media market" by the new chair of the Hispanic Marketing Council (HMC), Isabella Sanchez of Zubi Advertising Services.

The morning continues with a panel discussion among leading media buyers from some of the Hispanic market's highest-spending agencies, including Horizon Media, deXposito & Partners

and Omnicom Media's Elevate. Up next is a fireside chat with an executive from T-Mobile, a leading consumer brand, about the cultural narrative in its ad creative, and another fireside chat with Comcast Cable's multicultural marketing leader, Jose Velez Silva, and JP Rodriguez of Gallegos, the brand's agency. The morning closes with the chairman's keynote interview with NBCU Telemundo Enterprises's Ferrari, on tapping into the economic power of Hispanics.

The midday program celebrates the accomplishments of the business's pioneers and leaders with the presentation of the Annual Hispanic Television Awards (see sidebar). The ceremony is followed by a celebratory lunch of traditional Caribbean and Mexican cuisines.

The afternoon opens with the Local Broadcaster's keynote interview conversation with Jesus Lara, president of TelevisaUnivision Local Media. He will demonstrate the value of reaching Hispanics locally. The balance of the afternoon focuses on the business of programming for Hispanic TV audiences. One session spotlights different programming genres and another highlights program origination, featuring a popular series star, a producer and a streaming executive from Prime Video. A session on viewer demand with Oswald Mendez from Canela Media and Javier Saralegui of Danger TV promises to spark energetic reactions.

The final session is about distribution on linear and streaming platforms and is followed by a closing reception. ●



AWARDS

HISPANIC TELEVISION AWARD WINNERS SET

THE HISPANIC TV SUMMIT presents a series of annual awards, two of which honor pioneers in Hispanic TV while others recognize leadership within the business. This year's recipients are:

The Rafael Eli Award for Corporate Pioneer In Hispanic Television: Horowitz Research, division of MARC Research, accepted by executive VP Adriana Waterston.

The Rafael Eli Award for Programming Pioneer In Hispanic Television: ESPN Deportes, accepted by ESPN senior VP, programming and planning Freddy Rolón.

Leadership in Hispanic Television, Media Category: Isabella Sanchez, chair of the Hispanic Marketing Council and VP for Zubi Advertising Services.

Leadership in Hispanic Television, Programming Category: Miguel Gurwitz, sports anchor, soccer analyst and NFL commentator, Telemundo.

Leadership in Hispanic Television, Cultural Narrative Category: Tony Hernandez, founder of the Immigrant Archive Project, which captures on video the personal experiences of Hispanic immigrants, and co-founder, president and CEO of Latino Broadcasting Co. — JS



Adriana Waterston

Freddy Rolón

Isabella Sanchez

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jorgealberto@condista.com

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heidi@condista.com

Nontraditional Approaches To Traditional TV Season

Writers strike causes broadcast nets to go with Plan B and Plan C to piece together fall schedules



By Michael Malone
michael.malone@futurenet.com
@BCMikMalone

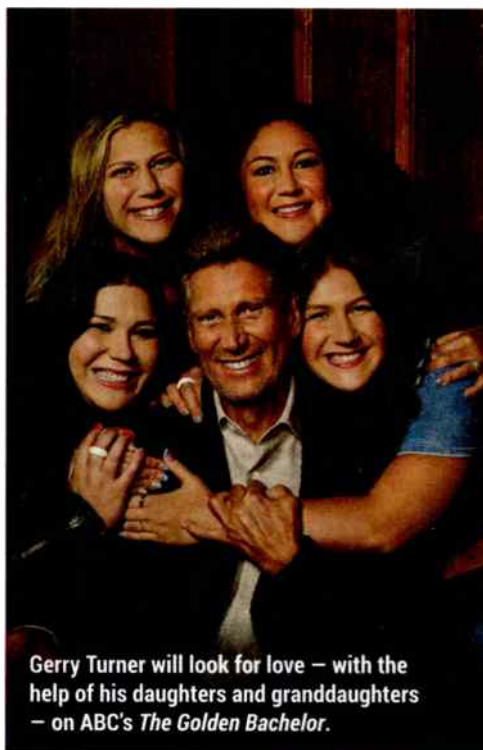
September still means something in the broadcast world. The traditional TV season begins with the kids in school and the weather starting to cool. But with the writers strike severely limiting the scripted content that's available, ABC, CBS, Fox, NBC and The CW are piecing together their schedules with reality, shows acquired from overseas and buzzy series borrowed from corporate siblings.

The broadcast nets have seen their share of the viewing public plummet across the past decade. Will viewers watch the second-tier programming?

Myles McNutt, Old Dominion University associate professor of communication, sees a few parallels between how the networks were programmed during the 2007-2008 strike and how they are doing so today. But it's a much different state of affairs for broadcast TV in 2023. The previous strike "felt like a short-term interruption of a long-term biz model," said McNutt. "Now it's, how can broadcast TV recover from complete collapse? It seems more existential this time."

The networks are loading up on unscripted programming, none more eye-opening than *The Golden Bachelor* on ABC, which sees a 71-year-old widower search for his soulmate. ABC hopes *The Golden Bachelor* pulls in viewers the way *The Bachelor* and *The Bachelorette* do.

As the typical broadcast viewer gets older, some believe a show about a septuagenarian can find an audience. "Not long ago, most networks would say, why make a show where the target is likely 50-plus, when the only demographic people care about is 18-49?" Dom Caristi, professor emeritus at Ball State University's



Gerry Turner will look for love – with the help of his daughters and granddaughters – on ABC's *The Golden Bachelor*.

media department, said. "Those days are gone."

CBS is also expanding its top reality franchises, as the network goes 90-minutes-per-episode for both *Survivor* and *The Amazing Race*. McNutt believes supersize episodes are here to stay. "I have no doubt they'll never go back to 60-minute *Survivor* episodes," he said. "It's a really easy strike move that clearly is going to become part of the permanent lineup."

The networks are also licensing scripted shows from other nations to help fill the holes on their schedules, none more so than The CW. Dramas *Sullivan's Crossing* and *The Spencer Sisters*, and comedies *Run the Burbs* and *Children Ruin Everything*, are among the Canadian shows set to debut on The CW.

Brad Schwartz, entertainment president at The CW, had a bona fide hit with a Canadian import in the past. While at Pop TV, he put

Schitt's Creek on U.S. TV. "He has experience in that approach," Zak Shaikh, Magid senior VP of global media and entertainment, said.

Coming from the U.K. to The CW is comedy *Everyone Else Burns*, while drama *The Swarm* is a coproduction by broadcasters in Germany, Italy, France, Scandinavia and Japan.

Season three of hospital drama *Transplant*, also from Canada, begins on NBC October 5.

Mary Dalton, professor of communication and film studies at Wake Forest, called the imports a smart idea. "I think it makes a lot of sense," she said. "For the people who aren't watching a bunch of British shows on PBS or Canadian shows on the streamers, it does expand their horizons a bit."

'Ghosts' Back to Back

CBS has a hit in comedy *Ghosts*, inspired by *Ghosts* in the U.K. This fall, CBS will air both *Ghosts* series, back to back on Thursdays.

"It's content most Americans have not seen, but they do already have a connection," Ball State's Caristi said. "They get the premise because they've seen the American version."

CBS will also debut *Yellowstone*, a hit on corporate sibling Paramount Network, on Sundays, starting with season one. Shaikh said the Western is a better match for CBS than Showtime drama *Dexter* was when CBS aired it in 2008 during the strike. "It's a smart strategy in that it can fit for CBS better," he said.

Still, some believe *Yellowstone* is enough of a hit that many CBS viewers have seen it. "I find it difficult to believe that someone in the CBS broadcast demo is not aware of *Yellowstone*," McNutt said.

CBS will also air a couple of episodes from Paramount Plus's *Frasier* reboot.

Peaked TV

For years, viewers have lamented that there's just too much great TV for one person to possibly consume. With the writers and actors strikes limiting the amount of TV being made, that may no longer be an issue.

"In the early days of peak TV, you used to feel like there were so many wonderful shows, and you can't possibly keep up," Dalton said. These days, "there are so many mediocre shows I don't want to keep up with them all. It creates time to go back and see the things you may have missed." ●

'Goosebumps' Is Back

Beloved R.L. Stine books hatched '90s series, films and new series on Disney Plus



By Michael Malone
michael.malone@futurenet.com
@BCMikMalone

Teen horror show *Goosebumps*, based on the books by R.L. Stine, premieres on Disney Plus and Hulu in October. A *Goosebumps* series aired in Canada for four seasons in the late '90s and the Stine novels also hatched a couple of feature films, with Jack Black portraying the author.

Whereas the Canadian series had an anthology motif, each episode having a distinct story with a beginning, middle and end, the new series spreads story and characters across 10 episodes. Justin Long, Rachael Harris and Zack Morris are in the cast.

Stine is part of the production, but does not have an official title. "As someone who grew up reading his books as a tween, it's incredible to be



able to have anything to do with R.L. Stine," executive producer Conor Welch said. "To have him involved is really awesome."

The books focused on middle-school kids and the series ages them up to high school. The aim was to make the show something that both children and parents can enjoy together. "It was important to us, when we were developing the new version of the show, that it would be authentically funny and

(From l.): Isa Briones, Will Price, Miles McKenna, Zack Morris and Ana Yi Puig in *Goosebumps*.

dramatic and scary," executive producer Pavun Shetty said. "Five high-school kids face real high-school issues that kids face, and their parents face real issues that adults face. A lot of times those issues are messy and awkward and absurd and frightening."

The show shoots in Vancouver. Rob Letterman and Nicholas Stoller created *Goosebumps* and are executive producers. Hilary Winston is showrunner and executive producer.

Five episodes roll on premiere day and subsequently premiere weekly on Fridays.

Shetty described *Goosebumps* as "a total genre mashup" that blends horror and comedy. "Our aim was, when you expect a scare you actually start laughing, and when you laugh at something awkward, you actually get super scared," he said. "It takes the traditional scary elements, jump scares and gross-out scares and psychological scares, and combines them with everyday life."

Besides horror and comedy, *Goosebumps* has some drama, too. "It's a grounded, funny, real-feeling show about an awkward set of kids figuring out high school and that time of life," Shetty said. ●

BOOK REVIEW: 'END CREDITS'

End Credits: How I Broke Up With Hollywood is Patty Lin's memoir about making it in the television business, then getting out of the industry before it devoured her soul. The daughter of Taiwanese immigrants, she writes of her childhood in suburban Chicago and New Jersey, consuming vast quantities of TV, and defying her parents' wishes to work in television.

Lin lands an internship at *Late Night With David Letterman*, and that turns into a full-time position working on the show's budget. Just before she starts, Lin gives a home-

less man who claims to do palm readings a dollar. "You got a shit job," he tells her.

Lin sticks it out for a few years, but desperately wants to be on the creative end of TV. She writes a few spec scripts and gets an agent, then makes the move to Los Angeles.

She eventually lands a job on late '90s dramedy *Martial Law* and later moves on to *Freaks and Geeks*.

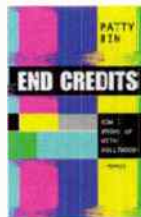
"Like the show's lead character,

Lindsay, I was an honor student and dated a pothead drummer in high school, allowing me to straddle both the freak and geek worlds," she wrote.

More prestigious jobs followed: *Friends*. *Desperate Housewives*. *Breaking Bad*.

But Lin grows increasingly frustrated by what she calls the "chaotic, abusive, male-dominated work culture." She's the rare woman in the writers'

room, and the even more rare Asian-American woman. "With each job, I had more cumulative trauma, more evidence that the



business was exploitative, unsatisfying, beyond hope," she writes.

Lin quits the business at age 38.

The book offers accounts of some big names in Hollywood, good and bad, including Paul Feig, Judd Apatow, Carlton Cuse, Vince Gilligan and Marc Cherry. Lin's writing style goes down easy, like the person sitting next to you at the bar, on their first cocktail. There's plenty of inside-baseball detail, but Lin's narrative is delivered in a way that even those far removed from Hollywood can enjoy too.

Lin can craft a story on paper as well as she could on screen, in a previous life. — MM

Peacock's Telemundo-produced Spanish telecast of the U.S.-Netherlands Women's World Cup match June 27 delivered a higher average minute audience than Fox's English-language coverage.



Peacock Gets Women Into The Streaming Sports Game

NBCU's streaming platform makes a major-league commitment with live events, documentary programs



By R. Thomas Umstead
thomas.umstead@futurenet.com
@rtu.mstead30

W

hen NBCUniversal acquired the rights to the U.S. Women's Open golf

tournament in 2021 as part of a multiyear agreement with the United States Golf Association, then-USGA CEO Mike Davis said he was "excited" about the increased exposure the tournaments would receive with the addition of NBCU's streaming service, Peacock.

This past July, the USGA realized its goal of increased viewership and awareness through Peacock for the 78th U.S. Women's Open. The tournament from Pebble Beach, California, finished as the most-streamed women's golf

tournament in NBC Sports history, nearly tripling its consumption from a year prior.

Peacock's audience, combined with NBC's linear TV coverage of the tournament over the July 8-9 weekend, averaged 1.34 million viewers, up 76% vs. 2022 (765,000 viewers) and 35% vs. 2021 (995,000 viewers).

"Across the board, the 2023 U.S. Women's Open was a record-breaking championship, in large part due the commitment by NBCU to showcase the championship and its players with more programming across more hours, including primetime on the East Coast," USGA chief commercial officer Jon Podany said. "The record-breaking streaming numbers on Peacock are a testament to that commitment, as well as the growing interest in the U.S. Women's Open and women's golf as a whole."

NBCUniversal president, Peacock and direct-to-consumer Kelly Campbell



Peacock's commitment to showcasing live women's sports programming extends beyond the golf links to a bevy of live-action sporting events featuring pro and amateur female athletes. The three-year-old streaming service has increased its women's sports content by more than 20% in 2023, compared to 2022, offering high-profile events in figure skating, cycling, snowboarding, gymnastics, track and field and tennis.

Teaming with NBCUniversal-owned Telemundo, Peacock streamed live Spanish-language coverage of all 64 FIFA Women's World Cup matches this summer, a first for the streaming platform. The service hit paydirt on July 27 when the United States met the Netherlands. The match, which ended in a 1-1 draw, delivered an average minute audience (AMA) of 244,000 viewers, besting Fox's English-language stream AMA of 197,000, NBCU said.

The U.S. team advanced to the knockout stage of the tournament but lost to Sweden on August 6.

More Events, Docs in Lineup

Still on the docket for Peacock in the women's sports arena is live coverage of golf's AIG Women's Open and the LPGA Kroger Queen City Championship; the 2023 World Athletics Track & Field competition; the 2023 World Gymnastics Championships; Big Ten women's basketball games; and the 2023 ISU Grand Prix Figure Skating event.

In 2024, Peacock will focus its cameras on women's sports events as it covers 2024 Summer Olympics from Paris.

Beyond live events, Peacock is serving fans of women's sports with documentary programming. Notable on that front are originals *Golden: The Journey of USA's Elite Gymnastics*, which chronicled the journey of five elite American gymnasts as they headed to the 2022 Summer Olympic trials, and *The '96 Effect*, which profiled the 1996 U.S. women's softball, soccer and basketball teams.

NBCUniversal president of Peacock and direct-to-consumer Kelly Campbell

discussed the growing appeal of women's sports programming and offered an overview of the streaming service's strategy for acquiring and streaming women's sports content in an interview with B+C Multichannel News. A lightly edited version of the interview follows.

B+C: What is Peacock's strategy with regard to its investment in live women's sports programming?

Kelly Campbell: Live programming — and sports in particular — has been core to our strategy from day one, and women's sports is an important part of that. Fandom is a key component of the Peacock brand, and we want fans of women's sports, which has a passionate and growing audience, to look at Peacock as their streaming home. This year we have about 20% more women's sports than last year and women's sports will continue to play an important role as Peacock continues to grow.

B+C: Why is there such a growing audience interest in live women's sports content among viewers? What are Peacock's plans to add more women's sports programming to its overall lineup of live sports programming?

KC: Beyond meeting the demand for women's sports, we are investing in it and helping to fuel it. Making women's sports available on streaming is pivotal to the continued growth of these events because it makes them easily accessible and available to a broader audience than ever before. Without the restrictions of traditional programming and the ability to watch on-demand, streaming unlocks even more possibilities for fans.

B+C: What impact has Peacock's Women's World Cup coverage had on its strategy of showcasing live women's sports content?

KC: This summer, we're particularly proud that in partnership with Tele-mundo all 64 matches of the FIFA



Women's World Cup were available to stream on Peacock in Spanish. This is the first time the entire tournament has been available to stream, regardless of language, and it's been a huge success both for Peacock and the sport. The U.S. vs. Netherlands match in the Women's World Cup was the most-streamed Women's World Cup match ever, proving that not only is there a passionate fanbase for the sport, but an interest in women's sports on streaming that is very real. Similarly, as the streaming home of the 2024 Paris Olympics, Peacock will stream every single event for fans, allowing more access and visibility to a larger spectrum of women's events and athletes that may not get the opportunity to be showcased in edited highlight reels or programming packages.

B+C: What advantage does the inclusion of live women's sports have in attracting sports fans to Peacock and the streaming platform?

KC: Peacock is the most complete streaming service and live sports are a

Average viewership for NBC's coverage of Allisen Corpuz's U.S. Women's Open win was up 76% from the 2022 edition thanks to additional exposure on Peacock.

great point of entry to Peacock. When fans of the Women's World Cup or the LPGA come to Peacock for a specific event, we see them sticking around to explore our other offerings, including original series like *Poker Face*, new movies like *The Super Mario Bros. Movie*, a Bravo franchise, or more sports like the Premier League or *Sunday Night Football*.

B+C: How does non-live women's sports-themed programming play into the appeal of women's sports programming on the service?

KC: For sports fans, we also offer so much more beyond live coverage. We are home to documentaries on a range of sports and icons including *Golden: The Journey of USA's Elite Gymnasts* and *Meddling: The Olympic Skating Scandal That Shocked the World*, which were both nominated for Sports Emmys. We are also always innovating our product experience to bring sports fans closer to the action, particularly our "Catch Up with Key Plays" feature available in soccer matches that allows you to catch up on the action you missed without leaving the game. ●

Jacksonville is Hot, and We're Not Talking Weather

WJXT is the rare independent station that rules its market's ratings



By Michael Malone
michael.malone@futurenet.com
@BCMikMalone

How valuable is a network affiliation? Extremely valuable, stations across the nation would likely say. Jacksonville's WJXT might say something different.

The station split with CBS in 2002, but has not relinquished its leader status in the Florida market in the decades since. When primetime rolls around, WJXT has *Last Man Standing* at 8 p.m. and *The Neighborhood* at 8:30 p.m., then two episodes of *The Big Bang Theory*.

Might the station, with a News4Jax brand, plug a newscast into prime? There are no plans to right now, but "we're taking a look at a lot of stuff," WJXT VP and general manager Terri Cope-Walton said.

Jacksonville is Nielsen's No. 41 DMA. Duopolies are all over the place in northern Florida. Graham Media Group owns WJXT and The CW affiliate

WCWJ. Tegna owns NBC station WTLV and ABC outlet WJXX. Cox Media Group owns Fox affiliate WFOX and has a joint sales agreement (JSA) with Hoffman Communications to manage WJAX, the CBS affiliate. WFOX offers the local Telemundo affiliate on a digital channel.

Norsan Media owns WUJX, an Estrella TV affiliate. Comcast is the primary pay TV operator in Jacksonville.

WJXT is a ratings beast. News4Jax won the 6 a.m. races in households and viewers 25-54 in June, according to Nielsen, and won households and the demo at 5 and 6 p.m. too. At 11 p.m., WJXT averaged a 2.4 in the household battle, with WJAX at 1.5, WTLV at 1.3, WFOX at 0.7 and WJXX at 0.6. In viewers 25-54, WJXT scored a 0.9, WTLV a 0.5, WJAX a 0.4, WJXX a 0.3 and WFOX a 0.2.

WJXT and WFOX are live from 10-11 p.m.

Cope-Walton marks two years in the GM role in November. Formerly the news director at WRTV Indianapolis, she took over in Jacksonville when Bob Ellis got the GM job at Graham's WDIV Detroit.

"Our secret sauce is everyone's ability to be really authentic," she said. "That authenticity shows up in the storytelling, whether it's a TV package, an OTT special, a digital article. It's the authenticity that permeates this place that connects with viewers and audience."

WJXT is working through some major talent retirements. Longtime anchor Mary Baer and longtime meteorologist John Gaughan both retired May 31. Both began at WJXT way back in 1992.

Anchor Joy Purdy has stepped in on Baer's newscasts and Richard Nunn was named chief meteorologist.

Both Baer and Gaughan got what Cope-Walton called "a warm send-off" in the spring. "Collectively, we are super-happy they wrapped up their careers here," she said.

WTLV-WJXX goes with First Coast News branding. Community involvement is a cornerstone of the brand. First Coast News held its annual "Stuff the Bus" campaign July 22, which sees buses filled with school supplies for teachers and students who can use them. The initiative helped 57,000 students last year, said Tim Thomas, WTLV-WJXX president and general manager, and it looks like a higher number this year.

Another community initiative, K9s for Warriors, finds service dogs for soldiers in need. "The community really, truly does support our veterans," said Thomas.

With that in mind, First Coast News produced the military special *Voices of Bravery* earlier this year.

The Tegna stations also battle breast cancer with Buddy Check, a partnership with a local hospital that provides mammography screenings from an equipped bus.

"The station is very connected to the community," said Thomas.

WJAX-WFOX, which goes with Action News Jax branding, introduced the local Telemundo station last year. "There's all kinds of great things going on there," said Bob Longo, WJAX-WFOX VP and general manager. "The Hispanic market is growing, and we think it's a smart move."

The Telemundo station has Spanish-language news cut-ins, and Longo said management is considering a newscast launch for next year.

For Action News Jax, a news revamp saw faster-paced newscasts debut in recent years. "Contem-



Tom Wills arrived at WJXT in 1975 and anchors the independent station's leading newscasts.

porary, fast-paced news and investigations are a big driver for us," said Longo, who was news director at the stations before his promotion to GM late in 2017.

WUJX has the 5 p.m. regional newscast *Ola News Edicion Especial*, which reruns at 11 p.m. It is an extension of parent Norsan's weekly Spanish-language newspaper *Ola News*. "It airs in Jacksonville, Charlotte and Charleston," said Denise Coleman, Norsan chief of staff and community affairs. "We have a couple of freelancers in Jacksonville."

Action Jacksonville

Jacksonville is a growing market. Construction cranes are all over town. Stations are hustling to pull in the new arrivals.

WJAX-WFOX has signed on for three more years as the official station of the Jacksonville Jaguars. "They've got a great coach and a great quarterback, and we're feeling good about that," said Longo.

Doug Pederson is the Jags coach and Trevor Lawrence the QB.

First Coast News has relaunched its lifestyle show, *First Coast Living*, and added an anchor, with David Benfield joining Jordan Wilkerson on the program. "It's got some energy," said Thomas.

Speaking of lifestyle shows, WJXT has *River City Live* on at 9:30 a.m. weekdays, and adds a half hour in the fall. The first 30 minutes will remain on WJXT, and the second 30 minutes will be on OTT platform *News4JAX+*. The extended run time allows *River City Live* to "be



WTLV-WJXX's 'Buddy Check' campaign raises awareness of breast cancer.

more authentic," Cope-Walton said.

Jana Angel and Rance Adams host.

The Jacksonville market is located near the Georgia border, with the Atlantic Ocean nearby.

A half-dozen Georgia counties are part of the DMA, which has the St. Johns River coursing through it. "It's a beautiful area, with lots of outdoor activity," Thomas said. "It's a very welcoming community."

Longo described Jacksonville as a year-round outdoor community. He spoke of breakfast on the beach, then heading downtown to TIAA Bank Field for a Jaguars game in the fall. "We got it all, in terms of living and working here," he said.

Being in Florida, Jacksonville is hot. Temperatures clocked in at 97 at press time.

Major employers include insurance outfit

Florida Blue, transportation company CSX and medical organization the Mayo Clinic, the latter with a "huge campus" in Jacksonville's Beach Haven neighborhood, according to Longo.

As Thomas suggested, the military has a strong presence in Jacksonville. Bases include Naval Air Station Jacksonville and Naval Station Mayport.

Cope-Walton noted how having a little Georgia in the market gives Jacksonville a unique southern vibe one might not feel elsewhere in Florida. She also likes the "neighborhoods with their own texture and feel."

With more people working remotely, those neighborhoods are even livelier. "People do a lot of living there," Cope-Walton said. "They have a full life in those communities." ●

FIRST COAST NEWS IS ON THE VIEWERS' SIDE

WTLV-WJXX is "doubling down" on its *On Your Side* news branding, according to Tim Thomas, First Coast News president and general manager. He described the tagline as "a compassionate, helpful brand." Stories are told in a manner that not only informs the viewer, but helps them make sense of the report and take action.

"It gives us a different lens to look through," Thomas said. "You can report the story, or you can tell it in a way that helps the viewer navigate the story."

Anchor Anthony Austin gets calls

and emails from viewers, who "Ask Anthony," as the segments are known, for help in solving day-to-day dilemmas. One story saw First Coast News

build a ramp for a disabled woman who had difficulty getting in and out of her house. *Ask Anthony* launched late in 2022 and the segments run Tuesdays and Thursdays in the 6 p.m. news.

Thomas said the *On Your Side* approach helps First Coast News stand out in Jacksonville's news battle. "As we tell stories," he said, "we explain how we can help you, the viewer, or you, the user." — MM



The First Coast News team covers Jacksonville for Tegna's NBC-ABC coopoly.

Syndication Seeks A Court Comeback

Newsmagazines fill a void with repackaged true crime



By Paige Albiniak
palbiniak@gmail.com
@PaigeA

Turns out, even court shows have gotten too expensive for daytime syndication.

The challenge with daytime — the hours between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. — is that it has become very hard for stations to make money in those time slots. That's why court shows are so appealing in those hours: An entire year of programming can be produced within a few weeks and the shows can be sold on a station-friendly, barter-only basis. But the dwindling daytime audience is making it difficult for stations to keep low-cost court shows on the air, which is why even lower-cost repeats are becoming prevalent.

In the past two years, three of the genre's major shows have ended. CBS Media Ventures's *Judge Judy* completed original production in 2021, while Warner Bros. Discovery earlier this year canceled *The People's Court*, which aired in syndication for 26 seasons, and *Judge Mathis*, which ran for 24. All three of those shows remain on TV stations in repeats. They are joined by MGM's block of court repeats — *Paternity Court With Lauren Lake*, *Personal Injury Court* and *Couples Court With the Cutlers* — which run on stations under the title "Relationship Court."

Also concluding its run is Wrigley Media's *Relative Justice*, starring Judge Rhonda Willis, which aired in first-run syndication for three seasons.

True-blue *Judy* viewers can find her in originals on Amazon Freevee, where she stars in a *Judge Judy* lookalike, *Judy Justice*.



Those repeats are also being offered to stations, although so far there haven't been takers due to the seller seeking cash license fees in a cash-strapped market.

Shakeout in the Court

Of all the court shows that have aired in recent years, only two standalone shows remain in original production: CBS Media Ventures's *Hot Bench*, which was created by Judge Judy Sheindlin, and Fox's *Divorce Court*, which features Star Jones and is now headed into its 25th season. *Divorce Court* stays in the black by airing on other platforms.

"Older episodes of *Divorce Court* have dedicated channels on different platforms and it plays all over the place," said Stephen Brown, executive VP, programming, Fox Television Stations and Fox First Run. "It's to the point where we make more money on streaming than we do on the broadcast."

Arguably the winner of the court fallout is Byron Allen's Allen Media Group, which snapped up *People's Court*'s Judge Marilyn Milian and Judge Greg Mathis and gave them both their own

Allen Media Group is filling the court content breach for stations with a lineup of nine judge shows currently available in syndication.

new shows. Those shows — *Justice for the People With Judge Milian* and *Mathis Court With Judge Mathis* — join *Equal Justice With Judge Eboni K. Williams* as AMG rolls out three more court shows this fall, bringing its total court offering to nine. AMG tends to bundle these shows into blocks, come the ratings and sell advertising across the entire block. AMG owns its shows outright and also offers them on its own streaming and cable networks, creating ancillary revenue streams. It's a model that others are seeking to emulate.

"We made a conscious choice many years ago to be the leader in the space," Allen, founder, chairman and CEO of AMG, said. "Legal is a very important advertising category for local TV stations. There are plenty of law firms that are advertising and they like the environment of court shows. We are helping TV stations to capitalize on the category and hold on to it."

Besides AMG, there are others out there who are willing to take swings.

This fall, Atlanta-based Crazy Legs Productions is rolling out *Cutlers Court*, starring Dana and Keith Cutler. The married couple from Kansas City are both lawyers who cut their court-show teeth on MGM's *Couples Court With the Cutlers*, which ran in original production from 2017-20. MGM, which was acquired by Amazon in 2022, has since exited the court business.

Cutlers Court is cleared in more than 80% of the U.S. and it's been picked up in 17 of the top 20 markets on stations from such groups as CBS Television Stations, Sinclair Broadcast Group, Nexstar Media Group, Gray Television, Weigel Broadcasting, Tegna and E.W. Scripps.

"The departure of other court shows left a vacuum that we're filling," Tom Cappello, executive producer and co-founder and CEO of Crazy Legs, said. "We know that there are available time slots for our show. That's made it a good time to get into the syndication space."

Like most court shows, *Cutlers Court* is being sold on an all-barter basis and will air as double runs in most markets.

Production started in August in Atlanta, with 150 original half-hour episodes planned for the Monday-Friday daytime strip.

"We saw an opportunity in the marketplace where there was a real demand for real cases, real litigants and real drama," Cappello said. "We decided to get into this space and this genre because I think it works really well for a smaller boutique production company like us rather than a big brand like MGM or Warner Bros. Discovery."

Cutlers Court is Crazy Legs's first foray into first-run syndication but it has been producing unscripted shows for such networks as Discovery, Travel, ID, TLC, HGTV, Magnolia and DIY for 15 years. Crazy Legs is working on building a content library that it can then distribute directly to consumers, much like AMG is doing.

"We're hoping that this is just the start of many syndicated programs, including court, lifestyle and game shows," Cappello said.

The new show will feature the Cutlers again talking to couples about their relationship problems. Where Couples Court started and ended with cheating, though, Cutlers Court will go broader, Playing Field Entertainment executive producer and co-founder Ross Babbit said.

"It may be a cheating case, but it may be a paternity case or a question of, 'Should I stay or should I go?'" Babbit said. "We're bringing a wider variety of love stories."



CBS News correspondent Erin Moriarty reports for the syndication-bound true crime newsmagazine 48 Hours and hosts a spinoff podcast, My Life of Crime.



A sibling to court is true crime, which seems like a category that would play well among daytime's core audience of women 25-54 (or older). So far, though, it's been hard to get true-crime shows to stick in syndication.

Making True Crime Pay

The exception to that is NBC News-produced series Dateline, which launched a repackaged syndicated version in 2017 after testing the concept on about 20 stations in August 2016. Now headed into its seventh season as a strip, weekend hour and primetime show on Fox-owned MyNetworkTV, Dateline has proven itself to be a reliable syndication player. The show is cleared in 100% of the country and in all 210 markets, Sean O'Boyle, executive VP and general sales manager, NBCUniversal Syndication Studios, said.

"The marketplace needs content and it's not expensive for studios to offer programming like this," O'Boyle said. "The notion of spending millions for the next Ellen or Kelly Clarkson is past. This is a good example of right-sizing."

Moreover, true crime is taking up some of the space that soap operas used to fill because a well-told true-crime story has a beginning, middle and an end. It's that drive toward resolution that keeps viewers hooked, O'Boyle said.

To that end, CBS this fall is launching a similar product, 48 Hours, repackaged and updated for syndication with Jericka Duncan and Jonathan Vigliotti serving as anchors. CBS News has nearly 600 episodes to offer to TV stations as 48 Hours has been in production since 1988. The show still airs on Saturday nights on CBS.

"We wanted to do two things: distinguish the library shows that are going to syndication and distinguish from brand-

new fresh content that then makes its way downstream," executive producer Judy Tygard said. "We added Jericka and Jon because they can give the shows the additional content that's needed."

Duncan and Vigliotti are providing new information in each case, giving them more content, including opens, mid-joins and transitions.

The show is cleared on an all-barter basis in more than 97% of the country in 190 markets with the 15 CBS-owned stations serving as the launch group. It's sold to stations in the Nexstar Media Group, Sinclair, Fox Television Stations, Gray Television, Cox Media Group, Tegna and E.W. Scripps station groups.

48 Hours has been undergoing a brand expansion over the last several years. The show airs on CBS on Saturday nights but also has broadcast, cable and streaming windows on the CBS News Streaming Network, CBSNews.com, Paramount Plus, YouTube, Fave TV, Pop TV and domestically and internationally on Paramount-owned FAST platform Pluto TV. It's also licensed to networks in dozens of countries across the globe. The show also produces a podcast, and correspondent Erin Moriarty has her own podcast, titled My Life of Crime.

The ability to wring that much distribution, and thus revenue, from a piece of content is going to become increasingly vital to producers' bottom lines as audiences continue to fragment across platforms.

Trifecta also is taking a third true crime-focused program — iCrime With Elizabeth Vargas, a show in which people submit videos they shot on their phones — into season two.

Looking ahead, both station groups and syndicators said they are in development on new court shows with fresh talent and their eyes are firmly fixed on 2024.

"It might be time to come out with something new," Fox Television Stations executive VP, programming Frank Cicha said. "If you look at it, court does well on FAST channels and diginets. We have platforms for a new court show if you don't care about exclusivity." ●

Husband-and-wife judges Dana and Keith Cutler are reconvening in syndication with a new offering, Cutlers Court.

EDO Is Building a Business On Predicting Outcomes

Firm started by actor Edward Norton now co-stars with Disney, Amazon, Nielsen



By Jon Lafayette
jon.lafayette@futurenet.com
@jlafayette

The advertising industry's focus on outcomes is creating very good results for research and analytics company EDO.

EDO, co-founded by the actor Edward Norton, measures the effectiveness of ads and has developed systems to predict and optimize campaigns. The company also has focused on measuring streaming, the Wild West of the media business.

"We've got the right strategy at the right moment," EDO CEO Kevin Krim told *Broadcasting+Cable*. "This landscape is changing really fast."

The Walt Disney Co., the leader in the ad-supported streaming business, named EDO as its provider of campaign outcome analytics. Norton even appeared at Disney's ad-tech conference earlier this year, declaring: "I'm here for entirely wonky, data service measurement reasons. We're able to

measure real purchase interest. We're on the next seismic shift in advertising. More great stories are going to get created as a function of it."

EDO has other high-profile media connections, too. The company worked with Amazon to measure the effectiveness of ads streamed during Prime Video's NFL Thursday Night Football and was the first outcome measurement partner named by Netflix as it looks to build an advertising business.

Even Nielsen has turned to EDO to help clients measure not only how many people are watching shows and advertising, but how much business those ads generate. EDO's data will be in Nielsen's software and vice versa, making life easier for their mutual clients.

"Nielsen wants to change how it approaches the ecosystem," Krim said. "They want to be a more open ecosystem. And for the very first time, they've partnered with another measurement company."

EDO's latest big move came in June

EDO's staff at an all-hands meeting, including founder Edward Norton (bottom row, second from r.) and CEO Kevin Krim (bottom row, far r.).

with the launch of a new Creative Rotation Optimization product it said can improve campaign performance by as much as 20%. Executives from EDO and the University of Phoenix, one of the first advertisers to use Creative Rotation Optimization, will discuss campaign outcomes at the Advanced Advertising Summit during NYC TV Week on Monday, September 11.

Origin Story in Movies

EDO's beginnings were in trying to predict movie box-office sales, something near and dear to actor Norton's heart as a profit participant.

"That itself was an interesting little software product," Krim said. "There are obviously a very limited number of customers for it, but it was a really good proof of concept."

Even more useful was the capability EDO developed to determine optimal media spending on and creative placement of advertising for films.

"Why we wanted to build EDO as more than simply a movie marketing vehicle is because every creator is inevitably, in one way or another, tied to the results of their creative work," Krim said. "The higher-order mission that we've always had is to improve the effectiveness of this TV ecosystem."

Simply reaching people and hoping for the best is no longer good enough for advertisers. Instead, EDO took the digital approach, measuring what ads are working in real time in order to better predict and optimize the sales lift from a campaign.

"When you get into a dynamic digital environment, where you can collect data in near real time with statistically very robust data sets, you can quickly

understand what's working, what's not and you can optimize for the outcomes you're trying to drive," Krim said.

That kind of knowledge changes not only the way you would buy advertising, but also the way it's sold.

"You're not going to want to sell it as sort of a demographic reach guarantee; you're going to want to sell it as a blend of what's the optimal audience and what's the optimal outcome," Krim said. "And you're going to want to buy it that way."

Advertisers and agencies bought in and media companies followed.

After movie studios, EDO pitched automakers. Both categories are big TV spenders.

"Anything that we can present that's real time and predictive of that outcome, we thought they'd be pretty hungry for it. And we were right," said Krim, whose background was developing digital advertising products.

"Now we have clients across every vertical on TV," he said. "It's as diverse as travel, consumer packaged goods, quick-service restaurants, cosmetics, apparel."

EDO has become even more popular with traditional media buyers and sellers as more and more of their inventory is digital and addressable.

"What's changed a lot over the last few years is our ability to measure streaming," Krim said. "Streaming has become a huge focus of media outcome measurement."

Krim said that pricing for streaming advertising is getting more closely tied to the results generated, versus the early days of streaming when prices were often higher than for primetime TV because the inventory was limited and streaming was the way to reach younger cord-cutting viewers.

"Streamers really want to prove the value of their inventory," Krim said.

EDO measures streaming through what Krim describes as a "patchwork quilt of our own technology" and

ADVANCED ADVERTISING SUMMIT

EDO's Laura Grover and Laura Schmidt of the University of Phoenix will present a case study on their use of EDO's Creative Rotation Optimization during NYC TV Week's Advanced Advertising Summit on September 11. For more information or to register, go to nyctvweekevents.com.

a bunch of different partnerships. "We're working with everybody who represents premium streaming inventory, YouTube and other social video providers," he said.

EDO is often limited in how it can use data obtained from other sources. In many cases, data can be used only for mutual clients and can't be aggregated for syndicated measurement products or benchmarking.

Engagement is at the heart of EDO's creative rotation optimization approach. "We take the level of engagement generated every time a piece of creative aired and we divide that by the amount of people who saw it and create an engagement rate," Krim said.

The engagement rate tells the client which audiences are responding to a particular spot and the networks and programs in which it performs best. The engagement difference between the best-performing creative in a campaign and the worst can range from 5% to 20%, Krim said.

"We're seeing through the early pilots we've done that the creative rotation optimization tool delivers big increases in campaign performance," he said. "And again, there's no incremental media dollars. It's just, 'Let's make the most out of every impression every time we've got a creative running, let's run the right one.' That is exactly the vision."

Spreading the Data Love

EDO is looking to add more sources of data in order to better measure campaigns' viewership and effectiveness.

Many of those data-source deals will make EDO's analytics available to more ad buyers and advertisers.

"We want to make sure that we're getting our data available wherever people are working, so they don't have to make a choice between outcome measurement for something else," Krim said.

Effectiveness will become a factor in programmatic decision-making, Krim said.

To effectuate that, EDO is also looking to have its analytics integrated into the major programmatic ad-buying and ad-selling platforms as more ad placements become automated.

"We're in deep talks with them and they're not quite ready," Krim said. "Now our platform is built for that. We'll be ready for them when they're ready for us." Automation is key because people just can't move quickly enough to keep up with optimizing campaigns in real time. "You have to be faster for that," Krim said.

Krim said that EDO is not yet profitable, and it continues to invest in its business. EDO received \$80 million in funding from Shamrock Capital in 2022. "We're a very capital-efficient business so we don't think we'll need any more capital for a while," he said.

"We want to keep investing towards this converging TV future where people are going to watch live TV or on-demand TV, from many different types of screens," Krim said. "The opportunity is that [advertisers] are going to want their campaigns to be optimized sort of automatically on the fly based on outcomes, and that I think is where we get into position." ●

Kevin
Krim



People

Notable executives on the move



CANELA MEDIA

Peter Gonzalez was named chief technology officer at Canela Media, a digital media company producing content for the Hispanic market. The 25-year broadcast veteran comes from WWE, where he was senior VP of the sports entertainment company's Media Technology team.



CASA SYSTEMS

Andover, Massachusetts-based cable technology firm Casa Systems has named **Michael Glickman** as president and CEO. Most recently president of PacketFabric, Glickman held several senior roles at Cisco Systems, including senior VP of the Global Service Provider unit.



CBS NEWS & STATIONS

Kim Voet has joined CBS News and Stations as president and general manager in Miami, responsible for WFOR-WBFS, CBS News Miami and CBSMiami.com. She joins WFOR after 26 years with WDIV Detroit, a Graham Media Group-owned NBC affiliate.



CHARTER

Danny Bowman was named executive VP, product, at Charter Communications in Stamford, Connecticut, adding oversight of video to his responsibilities for the cable operator's connectivity products. He joined Charter in 2018 as chief mobile officer.



DTV INNOVATIONS

Tom Moniak was VP of sales and marketing at DTV Innovations, with primary responsibility for the U.S. market. He was director of sales at Digital Nirvana, a provider of artificial intelligence and machine learning solutions for post-production and content creation workflows.



GLOBECAST

Jean-Christophe Perier has joined Globecast as chief marketing officer, responsible for steering worldwide marketing and external communications strategy. He had worked for such companies as Technicolor and SoftAtHome and created and managed Veygo.



HEARST TV

Hearst Television has named **Kevin Murphy** VP of information technology, a new post focused on IT security and the planning, design and implementation of next-generation networking infrastructure. He was executive director, network architecture and engineering.



HEARST TV

Michael Callahan has been promoted to VP of production at Hearst Television's Very Local division, which produces such shows as *Plate It*, *Baltimore*, *Local Love* and *Boston Rob Does Beantown and Beyond*. He had been a senior director overseeing streaming production.



IQ FIBER

IQ Fiber, a residential fiber-optic internet service provider based in Jacksonville, Florida, named **Stebbins "Steb" Chandor Jr.** as chief financial officer. He had been CFO at technology infrastructure firm Education Networks of America.



ISPOT

iSpot has hired **Leslie Wood** as chief research officer, overseeing the data-science department responsible for TV and video measurement products. She had been chief research officer at NCSolutions, previously known as Nielsen Catalina Solutions.



NEXSTAR

Nexstar Media Group has promoted **Larry Cottrill** to VP and general manager of WCMH, its ABC station in Columbus, Ohio, replacing the retiring Ken Freedman. He had been GM of Nexstar's Richmond, Virginia operations, including ABC affiliate WRIC.



VIAPLAY

Viaplay Group elevated **Cecilia Gave** to executive VP, head of sports, overseeing the strategic development and management of its sports operations across all relevant markets. Based in Stockholm, Sweden, she had been the company's VP, sport production.



RIEDEL

Peter Shen was named China general manager at broadcast, pro audio, event, sports, theater and security applications provider Riedel Communications. He was VP of business development at TVU Networks, leading global R&D, marketing ad sales efforts for its family of router products.



WARNER BROS. DISCOVERY

Lisa Collins was named group VP overseeing diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) initiatives across North America at Warner Bros. Discovery. Based in Burbank, California, she had been head of people & culture partners for production.



SCRIPPS

Merri Hanson has been named VP and general manager at KSTU Salt Lake City, a Fox affiliate owned by E.W. Scripps. The 25-year sales and broadcast veteran was VP and general manager of Scripps-owned KIVI Boise, Idaho, an ABC affiliate.



WDIV

Graham Media Group-owned WDIV Detroit has added **Demond Fernandez** as an anchor and reporter. He joins the NBC affiliate known as Local 4 from Tegna-owned ABC station WFAA Dallas, where he was a senior reporter covering southern Dallas communities.



TUBI

Tubi, the Fox-owned free ad-supported TV (FAST) streaming service, has named **Anjali Sud** as CEO, succeeding founder and CEO Farhad Massoudi and reporting to Tubi Media Group CEO Paul Cheesbrough. She comes from video platform Vimeo, where she had been CEO.



WLS

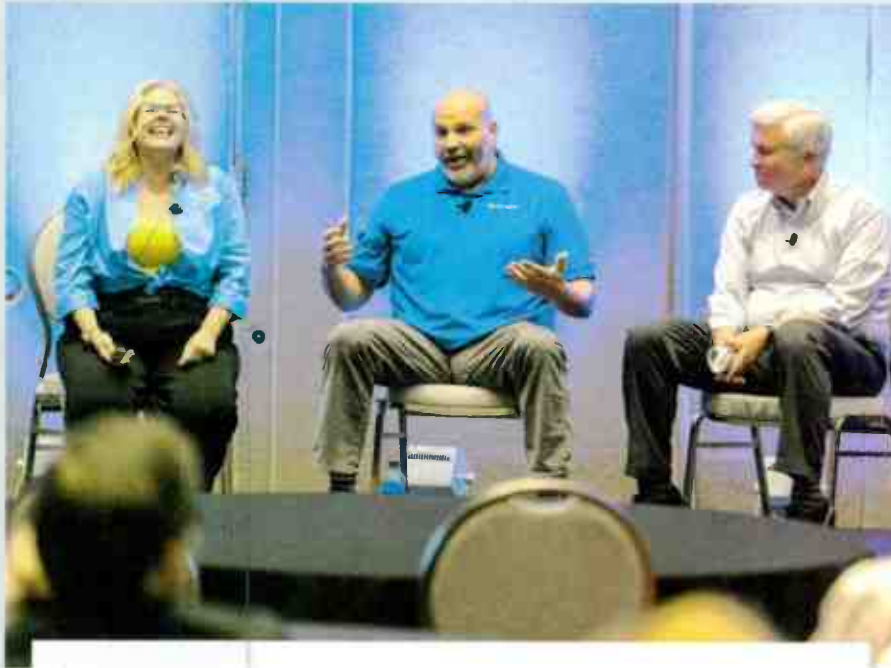
Rob Hughes has joined ABC-owned station WLS Chicago as a weekend anchor and weekday reporter. Most recently a weekday anchor/reporter with WANF Atlanta, he has also worked at WCNC Charlotte; WLFJ West Lafayette, Indiana; and Kansas First News.

BRIEFLY NOTED

Other industry execs making moves

Fox promoted **David Espinosa** to president of distribution. He had been executive VP, distribution strategy and business affairs. ... Innovid tapped **Jeff Austin** as senior VP, revenue operations. He had been VP, business operations at Stackline. **Dave Fahey** was also named Innovid's VP, agency partnerships. He was head of agency partnerships at Viant Technology. ... **Brady Volpe** has joined OpenVault as chief product officer. He was founder of Nimble This, a broadband technology firm acquired by OpenVault. ... OpenX Technologies has named **Danner Close** as VP, strategic relationships of the omnichannel supply-side platform. ... Sinclair-owned KTUL Tulsa, Oklahoma, promoted **Joie Bettenhausen** to morning meteorologist. She'll deliver weather forecasts on *Good Morning Oklahoma* on weekdays from 4:30 to 7 a.m.

For more personnel news from the TV, video and connectivity business, visit nexttv.com/fates-and-fortunes.



During the "Connectivity Exchange" panel at August's The Independent Show at the Minneapolis Convention Center in Minneapolis (l. to r.): **Sally Daniels**, NCTC; **Steve Leavitt**, Connectbase; and **Jim Patterson**, American Broadband Communications.



NCTC CEO **Lou Borrelli** (c.) on the Independent Show's stage with the NCTC Employee of the Year award winners, **Nisha Gowin** (l.) and **Barb Littrell**.



Attendees of August's Independent Show visited U.S. Bank Stadium, the home of the NFL's Minnesota Vikings (from l.): **Matt Shearer**, LHTC Broadband; **Scott Craig**, Citizens Fiber; **Brian Jeffers**, HTC Communications; **Ken Cutrell**, Citizens Cable Communications; and **Deanna Richter**, LHTC Broadband.



NCTC COO and CFO **Lisa Hood** shakes hands with retired U.S. Navy Rear Adm. **Mike Manazir** after his Independent Show keynote speech.



The Independent Show attendees heard from TV chef **Andrew Zimmern** during a lunch session.



(From l.): ABC News senior national correspondent **Terry Moran** (l.) and *Nightline* executive producer **Eman Varoqua** accept the Walter Cronkite Award for Excellence in Political Journalism for National Political Programs for the Hulu streaming series *Impact x Nightline*.



Actors **Jeffrey Dean Morgan** (l.) and **Lauren Cohan** with some walkers at the June takeover event for AMC's *The Walking Dead: Dead City* in New York.



Crunchyroll Games head **Terry Lee** (l.) and Crunchyroll SVP, content acquisitions **Adam Zehner** worked out at Crunchyroll's "Ultimate Anime Fitness Challenge" fan event at July's Comic-Con in San Diego.



Moderator **Marissa Torres** and meteorologists **Nicole Valdes**, **Valeria Lacourciere** and **Craig Herrera** took part in Fox Weather's "Weathering It Together, Latinx Representation in Journalism, Weather Coverage and Connecting Stories" panel at July's National Association of Hispanic Journalists International Training Convention & Expo in Miami.



Ovation CEO **Charles Segars** (l.) with his son, **Matthew**, and wife, **Alice**, at June's Ford's Theatre Annual Presidential Gala in Washington.

Aaron May/National Press Club; Crunchyroll; Shutterstock; Fox Weather; Paul Morigi/Getty Images for Ovation TV

Ad Meter

Who's spending what where SUMMER 2023 TV ADVERTISING RECAP

The most-seen brands and industries on TV, and more



Impressions Spotlight

Highlighted below are top programs and networks ranked by household TV ad impressions delivered from June 1 through August 15.

Total household TV ad impressions:
1.34 trillion (+ 3.0% YoY)

Big 4 (ABC, CBS, Fox and NBC) primetime TV ad impressions:
72.3 billion (+ 1.0% YoY)

Key takeaway: iSpot's summer TV ad recap offers a glimpse at how networks have grown ad reach (slightly) compared to last summer, with more episodes of shows such as *Celebrity Wheel of Fortune* year-over-year and more ads during America's Funniest Home Videos, America's Got Talent and others.



TOP 5 PROGRAMS, JUNE 1 - AUGUST 15

By share of household TV ad impressions – new program airings only

- 1. Good Morning America** 
 Share of impressions: **2.72%**
 Top advertiser: **CarMax (2.60%)**
- 2. Today** 
 Share of impressions: **2.12%**
 Top advertiser: **Citi Credit Card (5.59%)**
- 3. SportsCenter** 
 Share of impressions: **2.09%**
 Top advertiser: **GEICO (2.82%)**
- 4. ABC World News Tonight With David Muir** 
 Share of impressions: **1.99%**
 Top advertiser: **Dupixent - Eczema (2.18%)**
- 5. The Young and the Restless** 
 Share of impressions: **1.43%**
 Top advertiser: **Trivago (2.07%)**

TOP ADVERTISERS

By share of household TV ad impressions (June 1 - Aug. 15)

- 
 Share of impressions: **0.82%**
 Top network: **Ion (6.15%)**
 Top program: **Law & Order: SVU (2.53%)**
- 
 Share of impressions: **0.75%**
 Top network: **NBC (9.92%)**
 Top program: **Friends (2.14%)**




MOST-SEEN INDUSTRIES

By share of household TV ad impressions (June 1 - Aug. 15)

- 1) QSR (4.39%)
- 2) Auto & General Insurance (2.61%)
- 3) Automakers (2.56%)
- 4) Vitamins & Supplements (2.20%)
- 5) Skin & Foot Care (2.06%)
- 6) Department Stores (1.93%)
- 7) Laundry Detergent (1.82%)
- 8) Wireless Services (1.81%)
- 9) Cleaning Supplies (1.74%)
- 10) Pet Food (1.61%)

TOP NETWORKS

By share of household TV ad impressions – new program airings only (June 1 - August 15)

- 
 Share of impressions: **0.62%**
 Top network: **Fox News (10.30%)**
 Top program: **Law & Order: SVU (2.56%)**
- 
 Share of impressions: **0.60%**
 Top network: **Ion (7.60%)**
 Top program: **Friends (3.38%)**
- 
 Share of impressions: **0.55%**
 Top network: **ABC (8.84%)**
 Top program: **Law & Order: SVU (1.75%)**

- 1) ABC (13.45%)
- 2) Fox News Channel (10.96%)
- 3) NBC (10.45%)
- 4) CBS (8.95%)
- 5) CNN (6.40%)
- 6) MSNBC (5.96%)
- 7) Univision (5.74%)
- 8) ESPN (4.85%)
- 9) Telemundo (2.89%)
- 10) Fox (2.16%)



By Jaime Spencer
@jspencer

AI in Media: Define Or Be Defined

Why local broadcasters must stay ahead of the technology curve

The reluctance of broadcasters to accelerate the adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) is not without justification. A complex labyrinth of risks lies ahead, ranging from potential legal nightmares to perceived threats to product quality and the attendant danger to brand reputation. Resource challenges are also formidable. Moreover, a consumer base already skeptical of news organizations in general is suspicious of AI's role in the newsroom.

Consequently, many in the industry have only dipped their toes in the AI waters, while others have entirely sidestepped the revolution. This conservative approach is justifiable, but it cannot continue indefinitely. If local media organizations don't move with haste to define how their human resources will optimize their performance with AI, AI will define how their human resources are optimized.

Keeping Ahead of The Curve Is Vital

The impact of AI on businesses, as various studies have prognosticated, will be immense, precipitating widescale economic disruption and job displacement. But broadcasters need not concern themselves with these projections. A

quick look at the landscape today without even considering technology makes it easy to see: Stations are already smaller than in the past and getting smaller. Without significant innovation, industry dynamics will continue to put pressure on costs and resources, whether AI becomes a part of the operating model or not. So why not invest in defining and using tailored, customized solutions that can dramatically increase efficiency and product quality?

The customization process will be time-consuming and labor-intensive, which lends urgency to broadcasters' need to adopt AI in meaningful, strategic ways. The goal here is not a race to see who can use AI solutions like ChatGPT or Bard fastest in their newsrooms. For all the bluster about the capabilities of these Large Language Models (LLMs), they're really not that smart out of the box. They're not sentient. They can't think. They fill in blanks similar to the text completion you use every day on your smartphones and tablets, albeit in a much more sophisticated manner.

The public has also discerned the limitations of AI. After a mad rush to OpenAI's ChatGPT made it the fastest-adopted technology in human history,

visits fell off as users wondered, "What do I actually do with this?"

AI can't answer that question. Humans need to answer that question and then be meticulous about how their tools are trained, what data and inputs inform the desired outputs, and how they will interact with it to achieve the efficiency and quality nirvana that is so often touted. As the adage goes: garbage in, garbage out. This has never been truer than with AI. Broadcasters will

need to be intentional and disciplined while using customized tools, or the effort won't add up to much more than headaches.

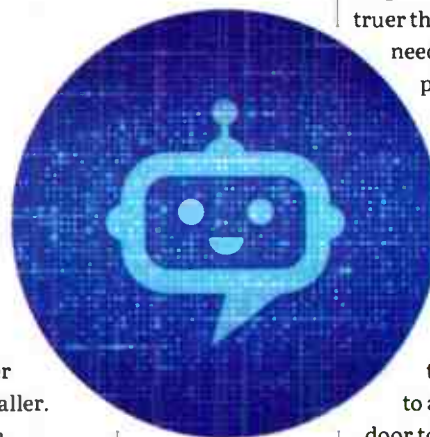
The flip side to the challenging customization process is massive potential. AI could help journalists, salespeople, leaders and others significantly enhance their businesses without adding to a sea of sameness, opening the door to legal liability, or adversely impacting brands.

Wordsmiths Hold An Advantage

In fact, the need to direct AI tools and technology in refined ways may actually put broadcasters in an enviable position, given their skill in communicating. Whereas directing technology used to strictly be the domain of programmers, the natural language basis of AI gives an advantage to those — like journalists — who are good with words.

According to Magid research, an increase in AI literacy results in greater consumer acceptance and enthusiasm towards AI utilization in journalism. Broadcasters would undoubtedly benefit from embracing this sentiment.

Implementing such sweeping changes will indeed be a challenging task, redefining skill sets, resources and tools within local stations. However, with proactive planning and steadfast determination, broadcasters could herald a new era of relevance and prosperity via AI integration. ●



Jaime Spencer is executive VP and head of local media at Magid.

Narendra Reddy

Chief Operating Officer,
The Africa Channel

Veteran producer works to bring continent's diversity to U.S. TV screens

In a television marketplace with increasingly diverse programming offerings, The Africa Channel continues to connect the culture and lifestyle of the African continent to U.S. audiences.

The 18-year-old independent network's lineup of Africa-based lifestyle and food shows, scripted series and movies can be viewed on multiple platforms including cable, through deals with Comcast, Charter Communications and Cox Communications; via agreements with free ad-supported TV platforms such as Xumo Play, Pluto TV and Tubi; and through subscription VOD service Demand Africa.

Navigating the network's operations is veteran international programming executive and Africa Channel chief operating officer Narendra Reddy. The former independent producer and NBCUniversal executive spoke with B+C Multichannel News senior content producer, programming R. Thomas Umstead about the network's distribution and programming fortunes in an evolving multiplatform television universe.

What are some of the distribution challenges The Africa Channel faces in a crowded television marketplace?

Despite the increase in the number of platforms, there is a much smaller subset of platforms that are designed and built to reach specific communities, in particular the African diaspora. Our distribution strategy is to essentially go to where our audiences are, so we



are working with the traditional cable and satellite providers. We've also expanded our reach into the virtual MVPD platform, including agreements with Roku and Amazon, as well as with FAST and AVOD aggregators such as Xumo, Pluto, Tubi, Samsung and others. I also personally believe that there is also a strong play for us in the subscription video-on-demand market [with Demand Africa].

What is behind the increasing interest in Africa-based television, music and fashion here in the U.S.? My mantra and what I've been advocating is that Black audiences are not monolithic. We're seeing genres including [Africa-based] lifestyle, music, sports, travel

BONUS FIVE

All-time favorite shows? I'd have to stick with *Game of Thrones*, *The West Wing*, *Succession* and *Black Mirror*.

Shows on your DVR? Do people still DVR? *Lupin*, *All Mankind*, *Pachinko* and *Slow Horses*.

Vacation destinations? Japan and Vietnam

Most memorable meal? La Colombe in Cape Town, South Africa; Indian Accent in New Delhi

Books on your nightstand? *The Four Agreements: A Practical Guide to Personal Freedom* by Don Miguel Ruiz; *Americanah* by Chimimanda Ngozi Adichie

and food all gaining a lot of resonance now across cultural lines. We believe that there is a Pan-African identity that can connect with 150 million people of the diaspora.

Having said that, what then is Africa Channel's target audience sweet spot? I will just say broadly, our audience is people of African descent who have made their home voluntarily or involuntarily outside of the continent of Africa. The secondary audience is those who have an interest in travel, lifestyle and culture, particularly that of Africa and its people.

Will The Africa Channel eventually look to develop original programming? Based on our current economics, I would say that 70% of the content is carefully curated and licensed programming from across the continent and the diaspora. We've also been producing programming that speaks about the people who've made other countries their home, whether it's in the U.K. or the U.S. We've created an upcoming series called *African Royale* that follows the life of a young American heiress who is honoring the legacy of her royal Nigerian heritage but who's also navigating an independent life in America. Over the last year we've been developing a slate of scripted coproductions through our production arm, Africa Channel Studios.

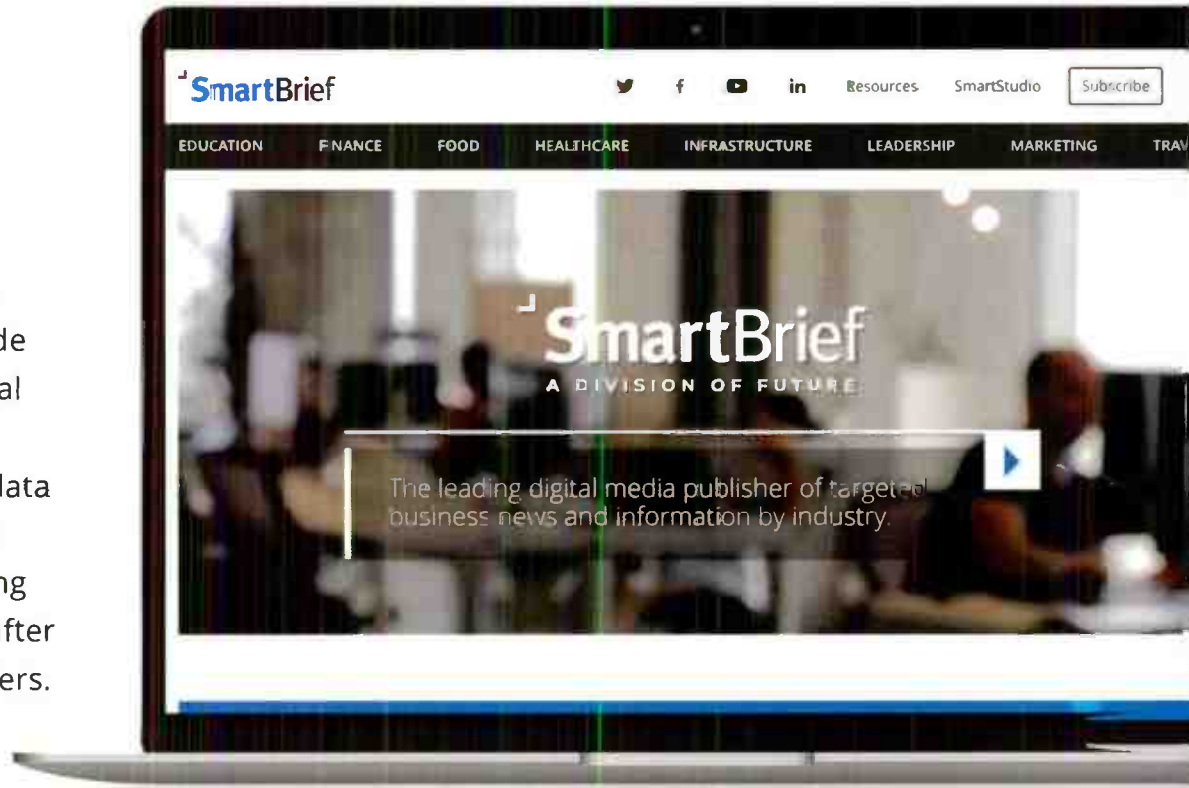
Given your history in the business, do you feel that today's television environment is the most welcoming to diverse content? Yes, and not just for the sake of increasing on-screen diversity, but because there are so many interesting diverse stories to tell. The streamers have helped make the world a smaller place when it comes to programming. Given the increased polarization in our audiences today, I do believe that there is an opportunity for media companies and storytellers to use the medium to build bridges in this country. ●



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