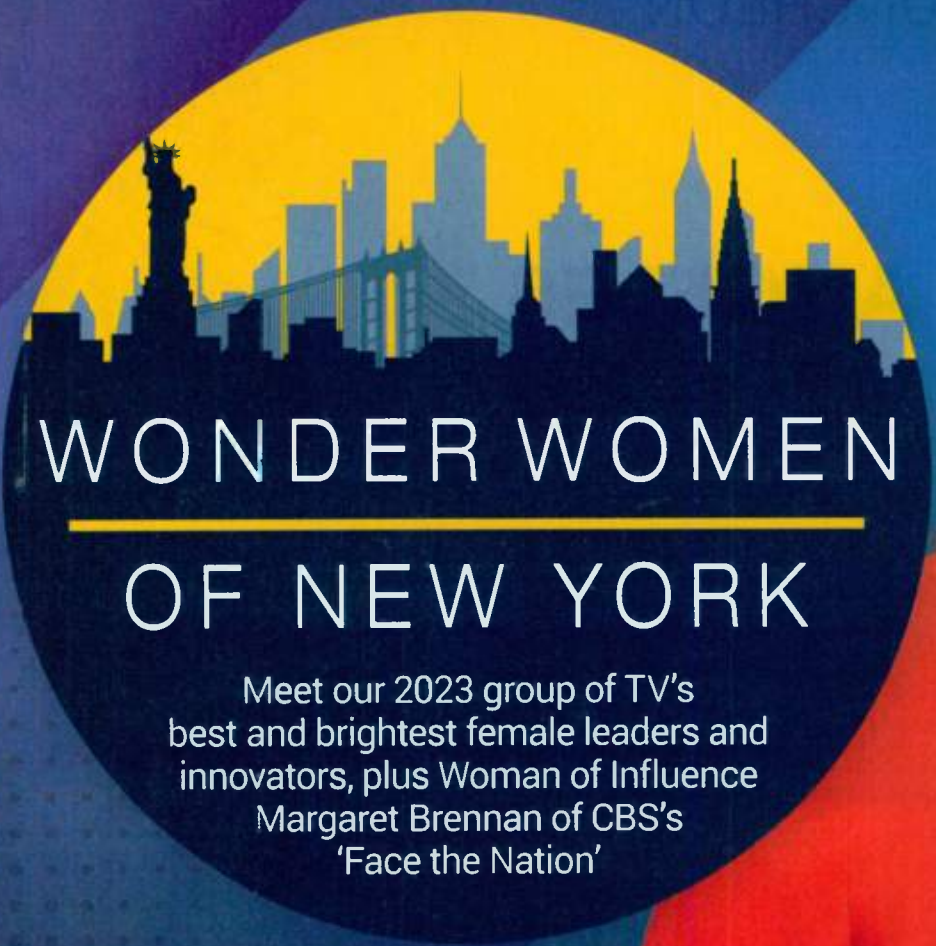


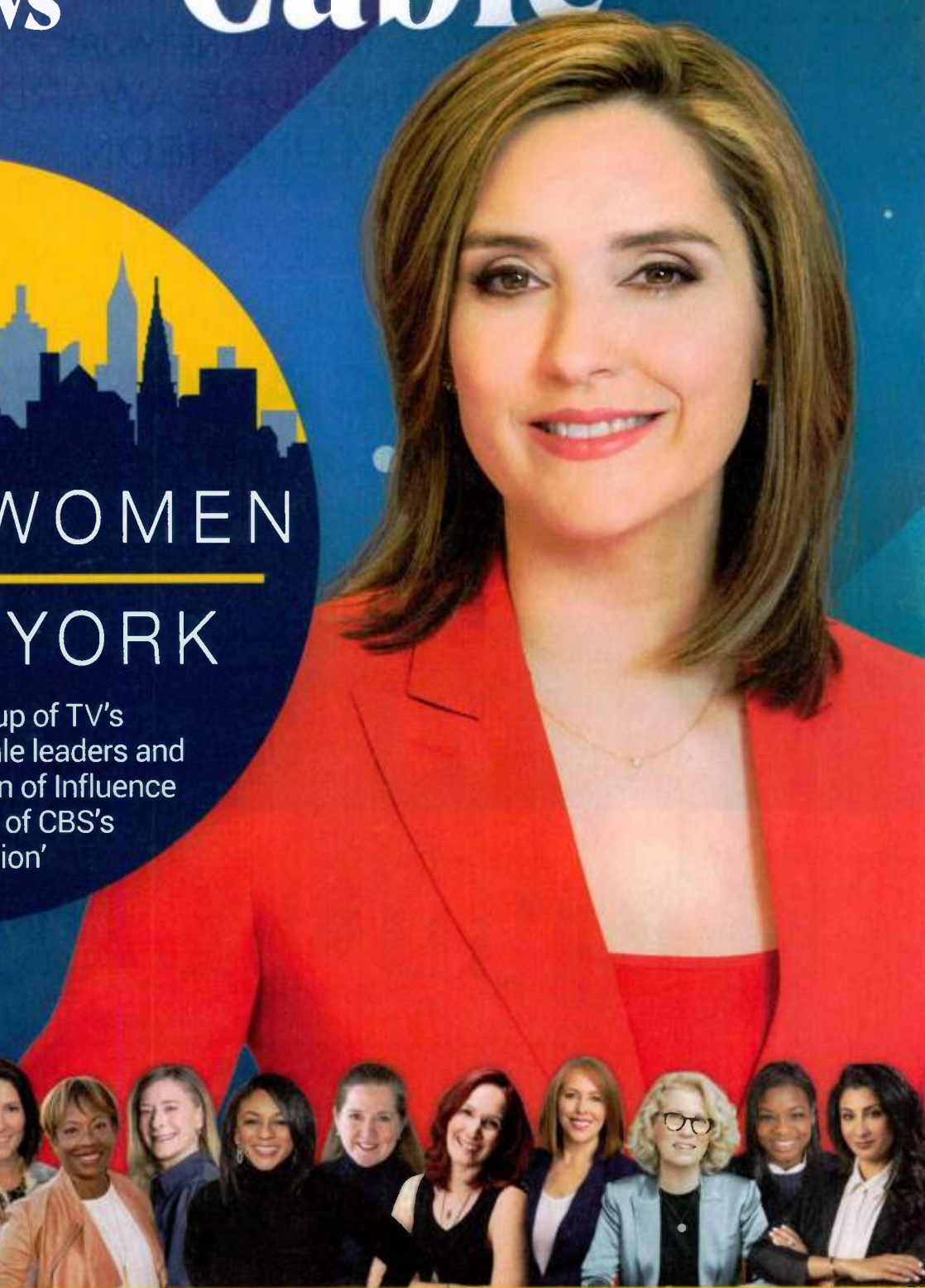
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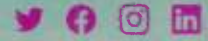
Q+A: MLB'S
ROB MANFRED ON
NEW SEASON'S BIG CHANGES



WONDER WOMEN OF NEW YORK

Meet our 2023 group of TV's
best and brightest female leaders and
innovators, plus Woman of Influence
Margaret Brennan of CBS's
'Face the Nation'





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FEATURES

4 LEAD-IN

Major League Baseball's season is getting into full swing with a raft of on-field rules changes and a TV picture that's in flux. Commissioner Rob Manfred weighs in on the modern game's changing landscape.

By R. Thomas Umstead

8 SPECIAL REPORT:

WONDER WOMEN OF NEW YORK
Meet the 15 remarkable women executives who'll be in the spotlight at Multichannel News's annual gala luncheon event in New York.
PLUS: Margaret Brennan of CBS's *Face the Nation*, our Woman of Influence for 2023, is the face of Sunday-morning public affairs TV.



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Vol. 153 • No. 2 • March 2023. B&C Broadcasting & Cable (ISSN 1068-6827) (USPS 066-000) is published 6 times per year (Feb, March, April, June, Sept, Dec) by Future US, Inc., 130 West 42nd Street, 7th Floor, New York, NY 10036. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Please send address changes to Broadcasting & Cable PO Box 848 Lowell MA 01853. Printed in U.S.A. ©2023 Future US, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

FUTURE

Connectors
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Manfred Leads MLB Into A Season of Changes

Baseball commissioner talks new rules, changing TV picture as 2023 season gets underway



By R. Thomas Umstead
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Major League Baseball's regular season takes its first swings on March 30, with baseball fans able to access live game telecasts on broadcast, cable and streaming platforms.

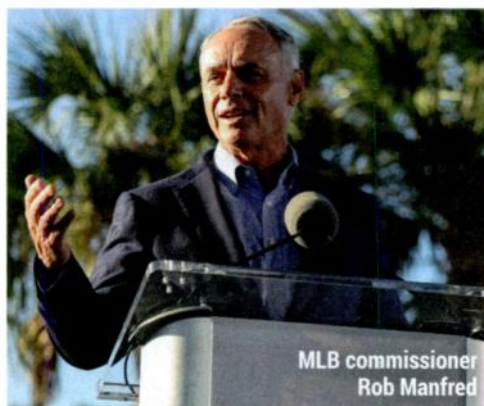
With the financial challenges of Bally Sports and Warner Bros. Discovery's desire to exit the RSN business, the situation with regional sports networks situation remains in flux. The national TV situation is settled, though, with games set for linear channels Fox, ESPN, FS1, TBS and MLB Network, as well as streamers Apple TV Plus and Peacock, which both enter the second season of their multiyear deals.

Games on streaming platforms in particular are expected to help the league reach younger viewers, Lee Berke, a TV sports consultant and CEO of LHB Sports, said.

"The way to reach the next generation of baseball fans is to be on the screens that they are utilizing, and increasingly that's services like Apple TV Plus, Peacock and YouTube," Berke said. "You establish a presence there and you build on those and other services over time."

B+C Multichannel News recently caught up with Major League Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred to discuss the outlook for linear and streaming TV this season. He also talked about this year's rule changes — including a pitch timer, larger bases and a ban on defensive shifts — an effort to speed up games and increase excitement on the field. Here are highlights of that interview.

B+C: How does baseball balance its linear television strategy with the need to reach new and potentially younger viewers on the streaming platform?



Rob Manfred: Look, we see broadcast television, particularly for major events, will continue to deliver the biggest reach in terms of your audience and is a crucial component of the overall media strategy. It's really, really important to have that bedrock of broadcast television.

B+C: Yet you've done major streaming deals with Peacock and Apple TV Plus. How have those deals worked for baseball so far?

RM: We feel like the landscape going forward can be summarized in two thoughts. In my view, you want the widest reach for your biggest events, and we just talked about that with broadcast television. But then I think the second piece of it is making sure that people can watch what they want to watch when they want to watch it. I think our streaming experiments move us forward in that regard, and as such we're going to move forward on the platform.

B+C: Is baseball looking to do any additional distribution deals with other streaming services?

RM: No ... the Peacock and the Apple TV Plus deals were multiyear deals, so we'll be back with our same partners this year.

B+C: Overall, what should baseball fans look forward to in terms of watching baseball on television?

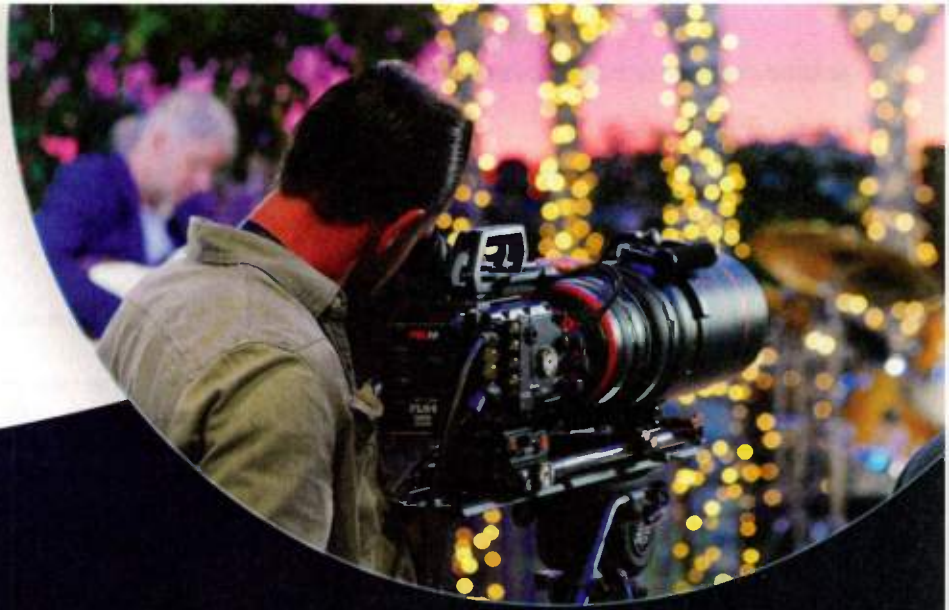
RM: I think the big thing for 2023 are the rules changes that we have for this year in terms of the pitch clock and the elimination of the shift. While these are internal and non-broadcaster issues, it is all aimed at making the product better. ●



The 2023 Major League Baseball season will bring such changes as a pitch clock, larger bases and faces in new places such as Xander Bogaerts, who moved from the Red Sox to the Padres.

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—Eric Fletcher, SOC - Technical Chair



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THE WATCHMAN

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



By Michael Malone
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'Extrapolations' Imagines Climate Change a Few Years Down the Road

Extrapolations, a drama that touches on climate change in the near future, begins on Apple TV Plus March 17. Featuring eight connected stories that depict how climate change has become embedded into everyday life, the show comes from Scott Z. Burns. The cast includes Meryl Streep, Sienna Miller, Kit Harington, Daveed Diggs, Matthew Rhys and Edward Norton, among other A-listers.

Episodes "about love, work, faith and family from across the globe will explore the intimate, life-altering choices that must be made when the planet is changing faster than the population," Apple TV Plus said.

At the TCA Press Tour, Burns said stories that touch on climate change focus on the end, which no one really knows. "But we do know enough science now to know that there are a lot of steps between where we are today and the end," he said.

He aimed "to tell a series of stories that allow you to go on this hopefully amazing thrill ride between where we are today and where we might end up, and what we can do to change any of those steps along the way."

Rhys was drawn to a compelling story with an important message. "It was great to read something that contextualizes it," he said, "and can actually show it in a very real and human way how that will affect us."

Bob Odenkirk Gets 'Lucky' With New Project

Lucky Hank, a mid-life crisis tale with Bob Odenkirk as Hank Devereaux Jr., chairman of

the English department at a janky Rust Belt college, debuts on a batch of AMC Networks channels, including AMC and BBC America, March 19. Aaron Zelman and Paul Lieberstein adapted the project from the Richard Russo novel *Straight Man*.

Odenkirk was finishing up *Better Call Saul* when he saw the script. "I liked it a lot," he said at the TCA Press Tour. "Then I read the novel, and then I read it again, because translating something from a novel to television or a movie is always a trick. I wanted to see what it shared with the novel and where it went. And I liked it very much, especially in connection with the work I'd been doing on *Saul*."

While *Saul* was often flying solo, Odenkirk liked that Hank had his family to lean on. Mireille Enos plays his wife Lily.

Zelman and Lieberstein are co-showrunners and executive producers. Lieberstein, who played Toby on *The Office*, wanted to set a show at a college. "I love this idea about tenure where you are trapped in success," he said. "You can't leave that job. So it just allows people to behave very badly in a semi-protected way. It really felt like this was a great opportunity." ●



Extrapolations



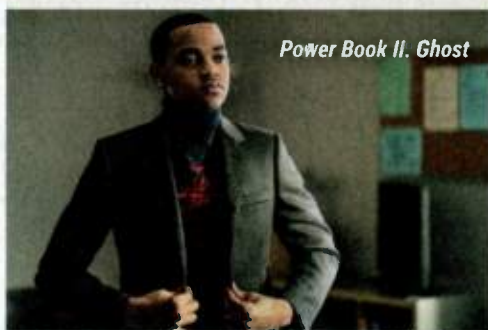
Lucky Hank

WATCH THIS ...



Bono & The Edge: A Sort of Homecoming, with Dave Letterman

Bono & The Edge: A Sort of Homecoming, with Dave Letterman, premieres on Disney Plus March 17. Letterman, formerly known as David, visits Dublin to hang with the U2 guys and check out a performance. ■ Also on March 17, season three of *Power Book II: Ghost* premieres on Starz. Sticking with the St. Patrick's theme, Tariq St. Patrick is determined to get his trust and family back, and get out of the game for good. Michael Rainey Jr. plays



Power Book II: Ghost

Tariq. ■ On March 19, *Inside with Jen Psaki* debuts on MSNBC. The former White House press secretary interviews newsmakers and takes on the big issues. ■ Also starting March 19 is the final season of *Sanditon* on PBS. The Masterpiece drama is adapted from Jane Austen's last novel, which was not completed. ■ Finally, season two of *Yellowjackets* is on Showtime March 24. The dark drama is about a girls' soccer team that goes down in a plane crash in the wild.



Yellowjackets

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The 'Face' of Sunday Morning News

Woman of Influence
Margaret Brennan
reached five years in
'Face the Nation'
moderator chair
in February



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

Margaret Brennan, moderator of *Face the Nation*, has been named 2023's Woman of Influence by *Multichannel News*. Brennan became moderator of the CBS public-affairs program in 2018. She's also chief foreign affairs correspondent at CBS News.

Brennan joined CBS News in 2012 and has been State Department and White House correspondent. Prior to that, she worked at Bloomberg Television, CNBC and NBC News.

Brennan said the "amazing group of women" at *Face the Nation* has some

serious influence. All three senior producers, Anne Hsu, Avery Miller and Carol Ross Joynt, as well as executive producer Mary Hager and tech manager Laura Foran, are women. "I do think of it as a group of wonder women behind *Face the Nation*," Brennan said.

Based in Washington, Brennan will be celebrated at *Multichannel News*'s Wonder Women luncheon March 23 at the Ziegfeld Ballroom in New York. She spoke about covering the nation's lawmakers and newsmakers the day after President Joe Biden's State of the Union address. An edited transcript follows.

MCN: Is *Face the Nation* a different show during the Biden presidency than it was during Trump's reign?

Margaret Brennan: I think the heart and soul of who we are is the same. In many ways, the end of the Trump presidency, during the pandemic, reminded us of who we are. And it gave me real clarity on who we need to be and the service that we need to provide. So I still try to keep that front and center, in my thinking and how I approach interviews and even just how we curate topics.

The momentum of the news hasn't slowed too dramatically. There are still really huge issues that are not specific to the man in the office, but to where the world is at this moment. Those things still loom large. We are still doing a fair amount of national security and a lot less on health policy than during the worst of the pandemic, but

we're still trying to remain true to the value we provide in helping to keep people informed.

MCN: Do you have a highlight going back over the last year or so, a moment that broke some major news or crystallized what the show's all about?

MB: I had an interview in October [2022] right before the election with [House Majority Whip] Tom Emmer (R-Minn.), who was on the program talking about what was about to happen with the election. It was in this moment, right after Paul Pelosi had been attacked in his home and at the same moment that U.S. officials were warning us about the risk of political violence. And that just felt incredibly important.

I don't like it when politics are covered like it's ESPN — it's not who's up, who's down, who won. These are people's lives. The words we use and the way we use them, particularly at key moments, is so key. And that just felt like one of those moments.

I had a fairly tough exchange with [Emmer] about how he was communicating to fellow Republicans what

is acceptable in terms of rhetoric, and the use of weapons specifically in social media — why do you need to put a gun in a political ad or in a tweet when the tweet has nothing to do at all with guns? All the veiled threats.

I think that was a moment that encapsulated a lot of where we were in terms of anxiety for the country.

On the cusp of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, I'm proud of how we covered that. And we've remained dedicated to covering that and all the parts of that conflict that impact the world — not just the battleground, but what's happening in the economy, what's happening with food security.

The week leading up to the conflict,

“I don't like it when politics are covered like it's ESPN — it's not who's up, who's down, who won. These are people's lives.”

Margaret Brennan

Margaret Brennan interviews former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi at the U.S. Capitol.

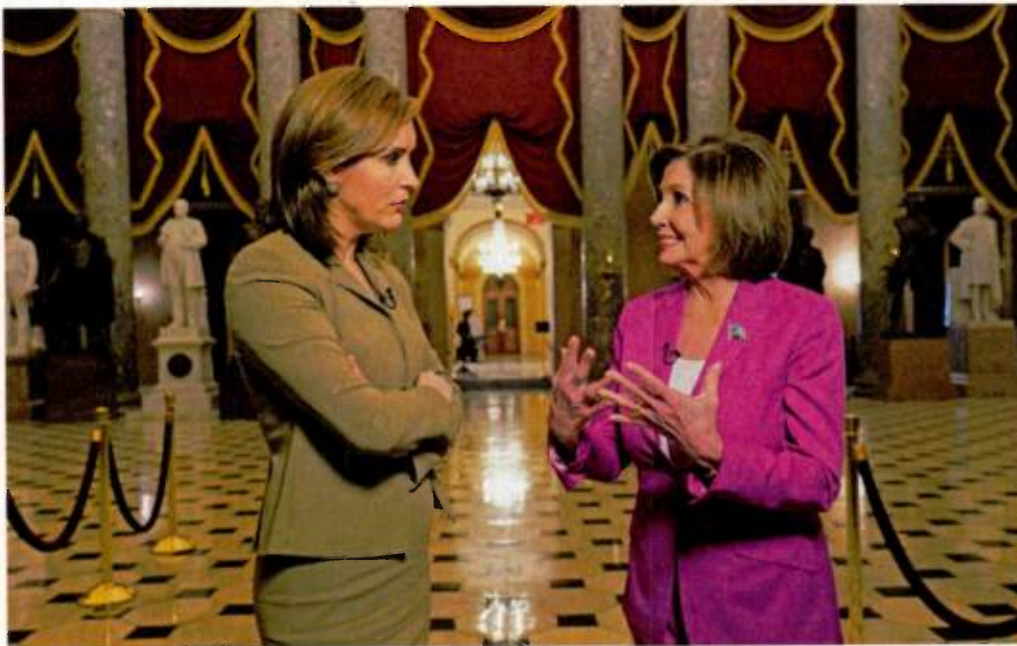
I had a pretty tough exchange with the Russian ambassador, who was on February 20, saying, absolutely no invasion. And then four days later, there you go.

We had [Ukraine] President [Volodymyr] Zelenskyy on in April, and it was right after the Ukrainians had retaken the areas around Kyiv and the massacres in Bucha had just been discovered. We woke up that morning to a lot of the first images from that, and that was the same morning we had the president of Ukraine on. And he just was so passionate and angry about what he had just witnessed done to his people, having gone to those front lines and seeing it. The world was horrified at that moment. It was the very first time he used the term genocide to describe what was happening. It really focused in on what was happening, the idea of a land war in Europe in this moment, with that kind of brutality.

MCN: It's five years for you in this role. Does it feel like five years?

MB: I think about the show in terms of my children, because I was pregnant with my first son when I got the job. It exhilarated and terrified me horribly in the same moment. [Laughs.] So when I hear it, I'm like, 'gosh, my eldest son is literally in parallel to the show,' and I think of the show as my child.

In many ways, it doesn't feel like the baby's that old. [Laughs.] It doesn't feel like it has been that long. But if you look at the amount of history that we have covered in our five years, it's pretty incredible. I certainly didn't expect that. When I slipped into the moderator role, we were in the still very chaotic part of the Trump administration, pre-pandemic. I had been a White House correspondent for the Obama administration and the Trump administration, and I had gotten used to that frenetic pace. And I anticipated that for the show. But I didn't anticipate the gravity of





the world-changing events that we would cover.

In such a short period of time, the velocity of the news and the weight of what we were covering, with the worst global pandemic in a century, the misinformation/disinformation that really cost people their lives, the racial justice protests that exploded in this capital city into violence and [the] January 6 [attack on the U.S. Capitol] having happened.

We thought we were in an incredibly intense news environment, and then it just kept picking up. So it feels like we've covered about a decade in five years. I probably have some gray hair from that.

MCN: How has the show evolved over your five years on it?

MB: I think that we have remained true to the sensibilities, the continuity. The executive producer, Mary Hager, has helped that to a large extent. I also just was making that transition from being a correspondent into the moderator, and I'd been an anchor before. But this was just a different kind of interview at a moment in time that has felt incredibly important.

And so coming into a place of comfort with all of that, and figuring out how to do all of that and manage it in a way that isn't overwhelming for our viewers, in a way that helps them better understand and at times when often we're trying to understand it ourselves as we report it out, that takes time.

I feel like we did hit our stride during the pandemic, certainly, but continuing now. I feel like I've changed, but the sensibility of the show remains true to just that, those

Above, Margaret Brennan and Face the Nation crew members prep for a broadcast. Below, Brennan interviews former President Donald Trump at the White House.



same foundational things we talked about when I stepped into it, which was context, perspective, civil conversation — things that I fundamentally believe we have to bring back as a country.

MCN: What do you do to unwind?

MB: Well, I have a 4-year-old and a 2-year-old and a pretty crazy job, so there's not a lot of downtime. I work out. I try to spend my Mondays, which is my weekend, spend some quality time with my 4-year-old when he comes home from school because I don't get him on weekends. While my older son's at school, I spend time with my 2-year-old. It's literally coaching my 2-year-old on how to say words.

MCN: I'm guessing you have a good green room story — two guests before the show, after the show, screaming at each other or coming to peace. Something we don't get to see on the show.

MB: One of the things that I remember, it's like embedded here as this oh-my-gosh moment, was having the secretary of defense, Lloyd Austin, who doesn't do interviews very often; the Ukrainian ambassador to the U.S. [Oksana Markarova], who is a friend of the show; and the Chinese ambassador to the U.S., [Qin Gang], who is now the foreign minister. Huge bookings, but it was literally trying to avoid a diplomatic incident, having them in different parts of the building.

After my interview with the Chinese ambassador, where I was pressing him on his country not completely denouncing what had happened with Russia's choices in attacking Ukraine, the Ukrainian ambassador buttonholed him on his way out.

That stood out to me. I was like, 'Gosh, I really want to know what happened in that conversation while I was in the studio.' ●

CBS NEWS
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MARGARET BRENNAN

FACE THE NATION MODERATOR
CBS NEWS CHIEF FOREIGN AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

**2023 MULTICHANNEL NEWS
“WOMAN OF INFLUENCE”**

Samira Bakhtiar

Director of Global Media and Entertainment
Amazon Web Services



By Daniel Frankel
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As director of global media and entertainment at Amazon Web Services (AWS), Samira Bakhtiar leads a globally dispersed team of engineers and sales executives, serving top-level media clients including Fox, The Walt Disney Co., Paramount Global and NBCUniversal.

A native of Southern California's Aliso Niguel beach community, now a dyed-in-the-wool New Yorker and family woman, Bakhtiar serves as a guide for her clients, in many ways, to a media-services technology revolution encompassing production, contribution, postproduction and primary and secondary distribution, all of which are being placed into the cloud and reimagined in the process.

Amazon solutions are now possible and Bakhtiar revels in the opportunity to show her clients how to achieve them.

Recruited from Cisco Systems five years ago, Bakhtiar said AWS was the only technology company that she knew of that had a full line of "purpose-built" solutions for the emerging needs of her clients, many of whom were diving headfirst into the Streaming Wars at the time.

AWS, she said, "has the right set of solutions required to meet the transformational moment that we're in right now — from transcoding to machine learning to dynamic ad insertion."

The capabilities of AWS's technology and engineering partners opened up vast new terrain for the creative sales executive to serve her client base.

Transformational, she said, was the collaboration between Bakhtiar's team and NBCU on Peacock, which Bakhtiar said evolved from concept to launch on a

“A lot of our customers still want to understand how Peacock did that in such a short period of time.”

Samira Bakhtiar

record-breaking timeline of just 12 months back in 2020, despite the constraints of the pandemic.

"A lot of our customers still want to understand how Peacock did that in such a short period of time," said Bakhtiar, who is also proud of AWS's work in regards to NBCU's huge live-streaming efforts for Super Bowl LVI in 2022 and for the Beijing Winter Olympics.

High-Stakes Operation

The monetary stakes involved with Bakhtiar's work can be considered somewhat staggering. AWS commands around 16% of Amazon's total revenue, which reached nearly \$514 billion in 2022. Amazon doesn't break out which portion of the total AWS pie is occupied by media services, but suffice it to say that amid an \$82 billion-a-year operation, we're talking about big-time sales numbers.

In her affable phone chat in early February, Bakhtiar didn't brag about that kind of data. But she did say how proud she is of the team she's built, which she said is 60% women and diverse across areas of race, age and gender orientation.

This matters to her. Nearly two decades ago, Bakhtiar was a political science undergrad at the

University of Arizona, cutting her teeth on a nascent political career while working for Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.). She'd taken the LSATs and was on her way to law school.

Then, in one of her classes, she saw a recruiting pitch for the Cisco Systems sales associate program. She was immediately hooked on a career as a technological evangelist. She soon embarked on a one-year Cisco internship in North Carolina, learning all the elements of cable network technology. That was followed by a three-year MBA program stint at Fordham University's Gabelli School of Business and then a full-time sales career with the foundational Silicon Valley tech giant, initially serving a "large Long Island cable operator" client for Cisco.

Ultimately, she transitioned to media and entertainment tech, a job she absolutely loved — but felt quite lonely as the "only woman" among the top-level sales and engineering executives in her division.

Inclusion Is a Priority

At AWS, she's built the kind of working group "that the 23-year-old Samira would be comfortable with," she said with mild laughter.

Certainly, Amazon seems "comfortable" with Bakhtiar.

"People come to AWS to work with inclusive leaders like Samira," Marc Aldrich, general manager of AWS for media and entertainment, to whom Bakhtiar reports, said. "Samira is a passionate, inspirational leader who empowers everyone around her. She has high expectations of herself and is a role model on how to lead authentically, with empathy and professionalism."

Added Yana Podroubaeva, a senior sales account leader who reports to Bakhtiar at AWS: "I'd say that there is no one like her. Samira leads with a strong vision, incredible passion, she empowers her teams and gives back to the industry by way of mentoring and thought leadership. I'm grateful for such a strong role model to be inspired and encouraged by every day." ●





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Samira Bakhtiar

Director, AWS Media & Entertainment

FOR BEING RECOGNIZED AS
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WONDER WOMAN NEW YORK CITY

Karen Barroeta

Executive VP, Production and Development
Telemundo Global Studios



By Kent Gibbons
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Adapting to viewers' changing habits is crucial for a successful programmer, and colleagues say that vision helps define Karen Barroeta as she leads development and production at NBCUniversal's Telemundo Global Studios in Miami.

Barroeta joined Telemundo in 2002 as a marketer. She was general manager of Telemundo's pay TV channel in Latin America and held other roles as well before becoming a senior VP at Telemundo Network and Universo.

She was packing up her office in Miami on March 13, 2020, during the COVID-19 outbreak, when then-Telemundo chairman Cesar Conde came in and asked her to consider becoming the No. 2 executive at the studios.

"I knew my answer, but I said sure, I would think about it," the Caracas, Venezuela-born Barroeta recalled with a laugh. "It was like a dream come true."

About a year ago she was promoted again and reports directly to Beau Ferrari, the NBCU Telemundo Enterprises chairman.

She loves that her job embraces creative and business roles. "I'm very creative and I like to see something that is enticing," she said. "But I also love the business side of this whole industry."

Selling a 'Super Series'

Helping Telemundo's business now is the primetime action "super series" *El Señor de los Cielos* (The Lord of the Skies). The eighth season debuted in

“I'm very creative and I like to see something that is enticing. But I also love the business side of this whole industry.”

Karen Barroeta

January and brought back the drug-lord hero, Aurelio Casillas, played by Rafael Amaya, after his apparent death in season seven.

"It was her team and her vision to kind of bring that property back and bring such an iconic character back to the network," Claudia Chagui, who has Barroeta's former job of senior VP of marketing and creative at Telemundo, said. "But how do we do that in 2023, right?"

One way is to acknowledge that everything happens earlier in the day now, so Telemundo moved *El Señor* from the former 10 p.m. slot to 9 o'clock.

"We want to make sure that our originals run in the times where there are more people available," Barroeta said. "The reality is that one-third of the people that are coming to watch us are coming from streaming platforms. They're not in linear during the day, and they're just coming in at 9 to watch the show and then go."

Another is to create extra content for those watching on-demand on NBCU's streaming outlet Peacock, bolstering both the linear and streaming platforms. "That's just one example, but it's a very clear example of how she understands the kind of

priorities that we have," Chagui said.

So far, so good: *El Señor de los Cielos* was the top-ranked Spanish-language program in primetime, even growing in the 18-49 demographic in its second week after a hot start, according to Telemundo, citing Nielsen.

Data-Driven Visionary

Mónica Gil, executive VP, chief administrative and marketing officer at NBCU Telemundo Enterprises, called Barroeta a visionary thinker and praised her ability to "marry marketing with storytelling, with data."

"She's continued to make one of our largest [programs] relevant in a space where there's so much competition, and she's very competitive," Gil said. "She wants to win and she wants to make audiences love what we share with them on a daily basis."

Gil added: "She's taken it to the next level where sometimes, with repeated series, you don't know if they're going to do great or not."

As for other shows in the pipeline, Barroeta and Telemundo have high hopes for the newly launched (March 7) *Juegos de Mentiras* (Game of Lies), a drama about a man who is suspected of killing his wife; the return (for a fourth season) of popular series *Sin Senos Si Hay Paraiso* and *El Conde: Amor y Honor*, an adaptation of literary classic *The Count of Monte Cristo*.

Besides work, Barroeta loves being the mom of an 8-year-old son. And enjoys (truly) dressing up as Wonder Woman in seasonally appropriate fashion.

"That's my favorite costume in my life!" she said. "In Venezuela, we don't have that culture of dressing up for Halloween. So I felt kind of weird at the beginning when I moved here, and for many years I didn't do costumes. But when you become a mother, you need to." ●



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And congratulations to all of the
2023 Wonder Women honorees



NBCUniversal TELEMUNDO

Marnie Black

Executive VP, Public Relations
AMC Networks



By Cathy Applefeld Olson
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A Black & Red Ball at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion to mark the series finale of *Mad Men*. An exhibit at the Museum of the Moving Image on the impact of *The Walking Dead*. A collaboration with the Smithsonian for the conclusion of *Breaking Bad* that saw the donation of iconic costumes and props to the National Museum of American History.

These are just a few of the cultural impact moments masterminded by Marnie Black, executive VP of public relations at AMC Networks. And although her fingerprints are all over other AMC successes, including the series finale of *Better Call Saul* hitting a record 2.7 million viewers and, earlier during her 25-year career, on a legacy of activations at MTV, Black is characteristically looking ahead to the next storytelling opportunities.

"The most exciting thing is that AMC Networks now has a portfolio of brands, and we are really beginning to look at how our shows can live and be exposed to the audiences on all those networks and streaming services, beyond just on-air promos," she said of the family that includes BBC America, IFC, Sundance TV and WE tv, AMC Plus, Acorn TV, ALLBLK and Shudder. "And the amount of data and information we can get and how we can reach potential people that are interested in that show or are interested in like shows is fascinating to me."

Black's work directly impacts the entire AMC team. "Her understanding of the business and excellent strategic judgment have been invaluable to our

“Obviously, we are here to entertain people, but I believe that if shows can change hearts and minds, that’s incredibly important.”

Marnie Black

company and its ability to have an out-sized impact on viewers and popular culture in a very dynamic and evolving environment," Dan McDermott, AMC Networks president of entertainment and AMC Studios, noted.

Indeed, part of Black's magic is her sense of knowing which tools in the expanding PR kit will drive momentum—and customizing some of her own.

Keeping Up With Trends

"Things like influencer engagement and custom content creation didn't exist 20 years ago when I was at MTV, and they are now a huge part of our campaigns," she said. "In the earlier part of my career at AMC, we did a lot of media partnerships and we aren't doing a huge amount of media partnerships anymore. Large-scale events, festivals, things like that, have become a very key part of our campaigns."

As well as leading media and consumer-facing campaigns, Black continues to raise the bar on the content those campaigns serve. Since 2020, she's been a key driver of AMC's diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) strategy, partnering with groups like Color of Change and establishing an on-set Self-ID campaign through which cast and crew

could anonymously disclose identity information to establish a baseline of what representation looks like for them.

"Diversity, equity and inclusion fell under my purview, initially, because it was a crisis," she said. "Many in the industry were asking us questions and holding us accountable, as they should have." After leading the initial response, Black approached then-AMC Networks president Sarah Barnett and chief operating officer Ed Carroll to see if she could lead a more proactive DEI initiative.

"I wanted try to meaningfully impact the diversity both in front of and behind the camera on our shows," she said.

"I think the feeling at the time, and it certainly proved to be the case, was that if we could impact the people who were making and telling our stories, that the kind of stories we were telling would also change."

Doing Good Is Good Business

Her pro-social inclinations date back to her days at MTV, where she worked on everything from an Emmy-winning, wide-reaching campaign about sexual health to a civil-rights campaign to the launch of video game *Rock Band* and countless *Video Music Awards*.

"Judy McGrath, who was chairman of MTV, used to say we had an obligation to use our superpowers for good," said Black. "Obviously, we are here to entertain people, but I believe that if shows can change hearts and minds that's incredibly important."

AMC's *Dark Winds*, which follows two Navajo Police Officers in the Southwest in the 1970s and is the No. 1 new series launch in AMC Plus history in both viewership and subscriber acquisition, is a salient example of the impact Black has spurred. The show was created by a Native American writer, is written primarily by Native American writers with the writers' room comprising more than 50% writers from underrepresented groups and stars a Native American cast. ●



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 **AMC NETWORKS**

Amy Campbell

Chief Marketing Officer MTV Entertainment Studios and Paramount Media Networks



By Jon Lafayette
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People who work with Amy Campbell, chief marketing officer for MTV Entertainment Studios and Paramount Media Networks, admire her calm demeanor in a demanding job at a company that's gone through change in a crazy industry.

Following graduate school, Campbell discovered the production business, freelancing before joining MTV. "I gravitated to commercials, short-form, making little mini, bite-sized stories," she recalled.

Former MTV president Christina Norman also has a production background. "You have to figure out how to get things done with five cents, a ball of string and some tape," Norman said. Particularly in MTV's early days, "there were a lot of balls in the air. There was no manual. Amy always delivered and it's been great to see her move up through the organization in times of tremendous change. This might sound corny, but Amy's a nice person. The people who work for her are lucky to have a leader who is such a humane person."

Her boss feels lucky, too. "Everybody sees Amy as the rock in a storm, but what people don't see coming is how crazy creative and innovative she is," Chris McCarthy, CEO, Paramount/Showtime Media Networks & MTV Entertainment Studios, said.

Before Paramount launched the latest season of the series *Yellowstone*, Campbell made last-minute changes to the promotional campaign, focusing on younger viewers. *Yellowstone's* share among 18-to-34-year-olds jumped almost 50%, McCarthy said. "To say she's a hero is to underestimate how big and powerful her contributions have been."

She's also been a leader in MTV's social-impact efforts. "That was a huge passion of

“Doing good is part of MTV's DNA and part of what has kept me at MTV for so long.”

Amy Campbell

hers from the very beginning," said Steve Friedman, former president of MTV, who remains a company adviser.

Leading Pro-Social Pushes

Campbell spearheaded campaigns about youth violence, women dying during childbirth and mental health. During the last election, her campaign persuaded 700,000 young people to be poll workers. "It's no longer about a PSA on the channel," Friedman said. "It's the TikTok video, it's Instagram. It's wherever they are. She's the heart and soul of the brand."

"Doing good is part of MTV's DNA and part of what has kept me at MTV for so long," Campbell said.

In creating campaigns, Campbell works to understand the content she's promoting, said Pamela Post, former head of MTV Studios' West Coast office. For *RuPaul's Drag Race*, Campbell decided rather than making a spectacle of the show's drag queens, she'd focus on their heart and talent. The campaign worked because "heart is easier to relate to," Post recalled. "It's much more universal."

Said Campbell: "They're dancers, they're singers, they're costume designers. The talent the queens have is incredible. But the heart of the story is about finding your family.

My daughter Sullivan watches it and we talk about the different types of beauty there are."

Sharita Petersen, VP, creative services at Paramount Networks, remembered one time Campbell brought Sullivan to a promo shoot for *Love & Hip Hop*. There were problems with the fire department and Campbell stepped in to support her team with her usual calm.

Said Petersen: "Even if she doesn't have the answers, you trust she's going to get to answers."

Campbell's example as a working mom inspired Petersen to bring her son to a shoot. "I got a chance to explain to him what it is that I do," she said.

Skilled Motivator

Francesca Batista, VP, MTV Entertainment Studios, added that Campbell is "the most appreciative person." Campbell always sends a text, an email or a call to thank staffers for their work. "She's able to motivate teams to achieve extraordinary work," Batista said.

"I know what I put into my work, and recognizing it is really important," Campbell said. "I also practice this Buddhist idea of ahimsa. It's really about respecting life in all forms, from my team to everybody in my life, and animals are in there too."

Campbell adopted a cat, a dog and a rabbit from a downtown shelter called Animal Haven. She reached out to see how she could help and became chairman of its board. Campbell helps generate publicity for Animal Haven's fundraising gala.

"She adopted one of our animals and the rest is history," Tiffany Lacey, executive director at Animal Haven, said. "She showed interest in being on the board and we jumped at the opportunity. She's a huge animal lover and so is her daughter. The whole family is really passionate about the work we do."

"She uses her superpowers for good and I've seen that firsthand," Jacqueline Parkes, former chief marketing officer for MTV, VH1 and Logo, said. "She is a rare combination of creative chops, strategic thinking and being one of the nicest people you'll ever meet in business." ●



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Congratulates **Amy Campbell**
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Pola Changnon

General Manager
Turner Classic Movies



By Kent Gibbons
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Pola Changnon is an Atlanta native who made it to Tinseltown after film school and thought she'd never look back, but ended up having a Wonder Woman-level career back in Atlanta at Turner Classic Movies.

By returning to Atlanta, first to work at Cartoon Network in 1998 before moving to Turner Entertainment Networks and finally TCM, Changnon was able to help her parents (still living there) get to know their grandchildren (two daughters, now grown).

"I thought, well, you know what, if I'm here for a couple years, then great," Changnon said. "But here I am 25 years later and have had the most amazing opportunity."

Being at TCM also means she gets back to L.A. every April for the TCM Classic Film Festival, four days when thousands of movie fans gather to watch beloved films on big screens in Hollywood, meet TCM personalities and hear from people who made the movies they're seeing. This year's edition happens April 13-16 and is tied in with the 100-year anniversary of the Warner Bros. studio. Last year, it drew more than 20,000 attendees.

A Joyous Ride

"As the company has evolved — you know, Turner, AOL Time Warner, Warner Media and now Warner Bros. Discovery — I've been really fortunate in that the things that I find joyous are also the things that seem to be propelling me forward," she said. "So it's been a good ride."

“I really figured it would be a seamless transition since I'd been with the network for a long time, but nobody anticipated what was coming around the corner in March.**”**

Pola Changnon

Every good career-girl movie sees the hero overcome obstacles, and Changnon faced a very big one — the global pandemic — when she took charge of TCM as general manager in January 2020. She was promoted from senior VP of marketing, studio production and talent, replacing Jennifer Dorian, who left after 20 years at TCM.

"I really figured it would be a seamless transition since I'd been with the network for a long time, but nobody anticipated what was coming around the corner in March," Changnon said.

Clearly, the festival couldn't have been held in April, so one of her first big decisions as GM was to cancel the in-person event. But something good came out of it, in 2020 and then again in 2021, before the comeback last year.

"The team pivoted and we ended up putting on a version of the festival on the network, at the time we would've had the in-real-life version, and everyone pulled together in the most amazing way," she said. "It felt very, you know, Judy and Mickey

[Garland and Rooney] — 'let's put on a show. My mom will make the curtains, you guys figure out what the songs are.' A really all-hands collaborative effort to pull together something that could represent what we had wanted to do."

In 2021, with more time to plan, the virtual festival grew to include streaming service HBO Max, "which of course is such a big priority for the company then and now," she said. The results "validated the idea that the context and curation we bring to linear are just as valuable in the streaming environment, in some cases more. When you have so much to choose from, where do you start?"

Charles Tabesh, senior VP of programming and content strategy at TCM, praised Changnon's leadership through so much change. "Going through these corporate mergers and just being somebody who has taken a really active and important role in making sure that TCM is well-represented with new management and that TCM is guiding us through the choppy waters has been really impressive and special," Tabesh said. "And I've certainly, through that process, grown closer to her as a boss and as a friend, too."

Blending Business, Creativity

Changnon's predecessor, Dorian, now CEO of Public Broadcasting Atlanta, said her friend is truly a Wonder Woman. "I think what makes her different or unique from a lot of other leaders is she's so left brain and right brain," Dorian said. "Her blend of creative aesthetic design blended with strategy and good management makes her a great leader.

"She started her career with a master's in film and doing creative work and became a general manager," Dorian noted. "And that's not something you see a lot in business or even media and entertainment. So yay for team creative when it comes to Pola." ●



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KATHLEEN FINCH

Chairman and Chief Content Officer,
US Networks Group



POLA CHANGNON

General Manager, Turner Classic Movies



**WARNER BROS.
DISCOVERY**

Sonia Coleman

Senior VP, Human Resources

Disney General Entertainment Content and ESPN/The Walt Disney Co.



By Cathy Applefeld Olson
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Soon after Sonia Coleman expanded her purview to include HR oversight at ESPN in 2021, she attended a Las Vegas Raiders Monday Night Football game with her ESPN colleagues.

“Seeing the passion and heart of a number of teams coming together from many different leaders was an ‘aha moment’ and I’ve experienced that over and over again with the ESPN team,” Coleman said. “Everybody is clear about their purpose and that they are all there to serve ESPN fans.”

Coleman’s bar for what successful teamwork looks like was already high. After achieving early career momentum in The Walt Disney Co.’s consumer products division, she was handpicked by former Disney senior VP and chief human resources officer Jayne Parker to join the corporate team, where she continues to flourish. Today, Coleman manages two bicoastal jobs supporting two major segments of the organization. She also serves as an active mentor within the company and supports its Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Engagement Task Force.

From Mentee to Mentor

“I had someone that was a really incredible sponsor early in my career and if it weren’t for her, I believe my career could’ve gone in a really different direction,” she said. “Since that moment I’ve thought a lot about sponsorship.

“The first and most important thing is for people to know we value everyone. And that value has to be demonstrated through representation.”

Sonia Coleman

“Jayne Parker taking an interest in me and seeing something I didn’t see in myself really changed how I work and where I work, essentially,” she continued. “For me, that was a career highlight because it’s about always being open to what the opportunities are, even if you can’t see it for yourself. With the right level of investment from others, they see it for you. I’ve been in three or four industries, and I’ve been at The Walt Disney Company for 17 years. There’s not many people that can say that; I feel very fortunate.”

The feeling is mutual. Coleman is “an exceptional leader” who “leads with optimism and cares deeply about our teams,” Disney Entertainment co-chair Dana Walden said. “As a most formidable ally who has been central to our success, we are very lucky to have her at Disney.”

ESPN chairman Jimmy Pitaro said Coleman is “precisely the right leader to both honor and reimagine our culture as we continue to evolve.”

Coleman is also evolving the HR function after the past several years have ushered in an entirely new workforce paradigm and

deep reexamining of the meaning of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI).

“Over the past few years with COVID and the racial reckoning and so many other things, we have become better at truly understanding what people need and creating a culture around that rather than a culture around what the outputs are,” she said.

When the company in January announced the return to work four days a week, Coleman made sure employees understood there would still be some flexibility as needed. She also oversaw the acceleration of an internal program that enables the team to get feedback on the employee experience on a quarterly basis.

“Based off of that feedback we are making decisions about things like, how do we provide the right level of wellness care?” she said.

Making Inclusion a Mindset

Regarding DEI at Disney, Coleman said, “The first and most important thing is for people to know we value everyone. And that value has to be demonstrated through representation, through our leaders and also through the content we create for our audiences. We are focused on creating representation for women and people of color at all levels of our companies and zeroing in on doing it at the highest levels. It’s about the investment we make from early career to leadership roles.”

Coleman said the task extends well beyond attracting talent and working to elevate internal incubator, accelerator and talent programs — all key services in their own right. “Those are all great resources in accelerating paths for growth, but I also think it’s about the environment, the culture and the mindset of every single individual who works with us,” she noted.

“We’ve gotten better at attraction,” Coleman said. “Where I’m focused is on, how do we retain individuals?

And I think that’s about the environment.” ●





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Disney

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Kathleen Finch

Chairman and Chief Content Officer, U.S. Networks Group **Warner Bros. Discovery**



By Michael Malone
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When talk of Discovery and Warner Media coming together first started going down, Kathleen Finch said she

was “hugely excited” about the prospect. Besides the potential merger of two content behemoths, Finch noted how Discovery Networks, including HGTV, Food Network and TLC, skewed female, while Warner Bros. leaned slightly male.

A combined Warner Bros. and Discovery would give the group the opportunity to serve up content to just about everybody.

“It felt like such a great complementary set of incredible assets,” Finch said.

The merger creating Warner Bros. Discovery happened last April, and Finch got her new title, overseeing two dozen networks including Discovery Channel, TBS, TNT and Cartoon Network. Back when Discovery acquired Scripps Networks in 2018, Finch, as chief lifestyle brands officer, oversaw a dozen.

A Big Portfolio

She takes the expanded workload in stride. “I don’t think anybody goes into this business thinking it’s 9 to 5,” she said, “because it’s not.”

Finch is excited by the clout the joint portfolio yields. She mentioned how, on any given night, the group controls 30% of what people are watching on cable. When Discovery needed a host for “Shark Week,” there were talks with Warner Bros. Pictures, and it came up that Dwayne Johnson had an upcoming movie and might be game for a dip in the Discovery water. He was named Shark Week master of ceremonies, the first one to hold that title.

“I don’t think anybody goes into this business thinking it’s 9 to 5, because it’s not.”

Kathleen Finch

Warner Bros. Discovery has entertainment, sports and news. “We have a big presence in every single place you can be,” said Finch.

David Zaslav, Warner Bros. Discovery president and CEO, said the company has the right person calling the programming shots. “Kathleen has a long track record of building strong brands that really stand for something and act as beacons of curation for content that people love,” he said. “She has an innate ability to spot the kinds of stories, formats and characters that people want to spend time with. Over the years, she has taken a chance on a long list of new shows that became hits, and she has always encouraged the same imaginative thinking from her teams.”

Finch grew up in New York City’s Greenwich Village and graduated from Stanford. Her first full-time job was with Apple Computer, producing videos about why people should consider getting a home computer. Finch recalled Steve Jobs walking around the office. “If I had only known,” she quipped.

After shifting to television, she was president of HGTV, DIY Network and Great American Country, then

became chief programming, content and brand officer at Discovery, then chief lifestyle brands officer after the Scripps Networks acquisition.

Finch described herself as “queen of the TV junkies.” She mentioned what it’s like watching TV at home. “I do make my poor husband crazy, literally jumping to three or four networks at once,” she said.

With the merger approaching its one-year anniversary, Finch said the execs are looking to take advantage of the audience overlap, rather than seeing the various networks compete with each other. With Animal Planet airing the Puppy Bowl on Super Bowl Sunday, the event was simulcast on Discovery, Discovery Plus, TBS and HBO Max. TruTV’s *Impractical Jokers* also airs on TBS for season 10.

“We’re excited about all the experimenting,” she said, “to see where we can really double down.”

Cultural Connection

The marriage of corporate cultures, never an easy maneuver to pull off, has gone smoothly, Finch said. She credits Zaslav for stressing to employees that it’s not my culture or your culture — it’s our culture. “We didn’t have time to sit and overthink culture,” she said. “We focused on how to build a new culture that’s supportive and inclusive of what everybody is working on.”

Warner Bros. Discovery is “100% there,” she added. “It happened remarkably fast.”

Finch credits Judy Girard, former HGTV president, as a mentor, and actively looks to mentor young people seeking to grow in television. Speaking at a New York University media class recently, she gave out her email, and urged the students to stay in contact. Finch remembered senior executives helping her out when she was young and hungry for a break.

“When I’m lecturing young people, I tell them, I’m spending my time helping you,” Finch said. “And I expect that when you’re in my position, you’ll do the same for others.” ●



Congratulations
Kathleen
Finch

**You are a true
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**Cheers to all of the
inspiring 2023
recipients!**



Annie Howell

Chief Communications Officer Hallmark Media



By Paige Albinia
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Last year, Crown Media Family Networks became Hallmark Media and concurrently, Hallmark Channel rebranded with a new tagline: “Where Love Happens.” For Annie Howell, Hallmark Media’s chief communications officer, that tagline resonates.

Howell was executive VP of corporate communications and media relations at Hallmark Channel from 2010 to 2014 before starting her own executive coaching and strategic communications consultancy, Punch Point Group, with which she remains involved today. But a piece of her heart remained at Hallmark during her six years away, so when the opportunity arose for her to return in a bigger role—even though it requires a weekly commute to New York from her Bethesda, Maryland, home—she took it.

“I love being on a leadership team and I love running a team,” Howell said. “This is what I’m meant to do, this is what I’m really good at. It’s what fuels my joy.”

After being away from the company for six years, Howell returned to consult when Hallmark was radically transforming itself in early 2020 after it apologized for pulling ads featuring two women sharing a kiss at the altar. By that summer, the channel had blown up its entire leadership team, naming Wonya Lucas, formerly president and CEO of TV One, as CEO and adding more stories that included diverse points of view.

Howell consulted on the transition for the first seven months of 2020 and then joined as chief communications officer that September.

“That first year was hard because we

“As a leader, I love to teach and guide and get people to realize their potential and see them strive and thrive.”

Annie Howell

really found ourselves dead center in this polarized debate about race, sexuality and who we are,” Howell said. “The Hallmark brand is so near and dear to the hearts of so many but we decided to walk through the fire and keep going. We had to make a decision that we were going to widen the circle and tell stories for more people. We’re all humans and we’re all worthy of love and happy endings and that kiss and everything else. That was a hard shift the first year for certain parts of our audience to accept.”

Howell’s job at Hallmark—where “Countdown to Christmas” dominates cable ratings every holiday season and beyond—is to consistently communicate that brand message.

“My job is to really put the purpose into what we communicate about ourselves and each other,” she said. “It’s managing that reputation and perception.”

Howell accomplishes that by positioning the brand externally and by making sure everyone is on point internally.

“I think that she makes people better, which makes the team stronger,” Hallmark Media executive VP, ad sales and digital media Ed Georger said. “She has a phrase that she uses often: ‘Words matter.’ One of the things I have learned from her is

how to choose your words, be articulate and know that words matter, whether that’s talking to your co-worker, your mentee or your boss.”

Another part of Howell’s job, and a big piece of her career in general, has been mentoring others, whether people on her team, other women in the industry, or kids in her neighborhood.

“As a leader, I love to teach and guide and get people to realize their potential and see them strive and thrive,” she said.

Champion of Connection

One example of that is Catherine Frymark, who worked for Howell at Discovery and is now executive VP of corporate communications at Mattel.

“Annie has a way of connecting with people on both a professional and emotional level that is very rare,” Frymark said. “She’s a champion of this industry, of women in this industry and she’s very supportive and active in it. Mentorship is something that comes as second nature to her.”

Prominent in cable network public-affairs organizations for years, her continued leadership is seen in her role as co-chair of the Alliance for Women in Media’s Gracie Awards.

Howell started in public relations after graduating Seneca College of Applied Arts & Technology in Toronto and making her way to Washington, D.C., where she worked for Jody Powell, President Jimmy Carter’s press secretary. She was a founding member and VP at Powell Tate and an account executive at Ogilvy & Mather Public Affairs.

“I instill in my team the same things that were instilled in me,” she said.

“If I can’t tell journalists the truth, then I try to help them. I’ve always been of the mindset—and Jody drilled it into my head—that journalists matter too, what they need matters and that relationship matters. The minute you break that trust, it’s over.” ●



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ANNIE HOWELL

For her leadership, strength, and authenticity
& celebrates all the 2023 Wonder Women



Kate O'Brian

President of News
E.W. Scripps Co.



By Michael Malone
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Kate O'Brian has had a busy couple years with Scripps, including the relaunch of news brand Newsy to a meatier 24/7 national network known as Scripps News. That saw the network expand from two hours of original content a day to 15 hours, with longform specials and investigations.

Scripps News came to be January 1. "The mandate was to turn it into a 24/7 news operation, and we did it in five months," she said. "I can't believe we did it, but we did."

In addition to Scripps News, O'Brian oversees Court TV, which saw robust ratings in 2022 ("a nice assist from Johnny Depp and Amber Heard," O'Brian said), and is off to a strong start in 2023, thanks in large part to South Carolina attorney Alex Murdaugh's murder trial. She also works with the Scripps TV stations to complement their news output with Scripps News, and complement the network's output with local reportage from the stations.

Network News Vet

Before coming on board at Scripps in April 2021, O'Brian spent 33 years at ABC News in a number of roles, including senior VP of news, programming general manager at ABC News Radio, producer at World News Tonight and field producer in Rome and London.

O'Brian departed ABC News in 2013 to be president of Al Jazeera America. "I never expected to go anyplace else," she said. "But it was really too good to pass up."

Al Jazeera America folded in spring 2016, which O'Brian described as "heartbreaking." She was a news consultant before joining Scripps.

E.W. Scripps president and CEO Adam

“The mandate was to turn it into a 24/7 news operation, and we did it in five months. I can't believe we did it, but we did.”

Kate O'Brian

Symson knew O'Brian from their meetings in New York, with Symson representing the group's ABC affiliates and O'Brian with ABC News One. "For a long time, I've been a Kate O'Brian fan," he said. "When we were looking at putting more resources behind the company objective, Kate O'Brian was literally my first call."

Symson noted that, for the first time in Scripps's 144-year history, a journalism leader reports to the CEO. He called it "an interesting moment."

The Scripps News rebrand, besides building out a full-fledged news network, came down to ensuring that venerable corporate name was better represented in the brand. "This is a company that was born into journalism," O'Brian said. "This is a company that has been at the forefront of responsible journalism for its 144 years. Why wouldn't we want to have that name attached to this product?"

Scripps News avoids punditry and sticks to facts. O'Brian described the approach as

"aggressively right in the middle, assertively right in the middle."

She mentioned a "very, very, very strong integrated relationship" between Scripps News and the 61 Scripps stations, a partnership that will get closer in 2023. "We air their content, they air our content," she said. "We have our reporters live on their air, and they have their reporters live on our air."

Scripps News content is free on all platforms except cable. Based in Atlanta, its reporters are on one side of a newsroom O'Brian described as the size of a football field, with Court TV staff on the other side. "We really work to make sure we're integrated in terms of newsgathering," she said. "We're part of the same family."

Symson credited O'Brian for upping the quality level at both networks. "The bar Kate set was paramount for us to take this next step," he said. "I am exceptionally proud of the level of quality we put out every day."

News Biz a Family Affair

While she's often in Atlanta, O'Brian splits her time between New York City and Martha's Vineyard. Reporting is in her blood. Her father was a newspaper columnist, her sister is at CNN and one of her daughters is at Dow Jones.

O'Brian got her start in TV news as an intern at 20/20. "Sitting in the production room, watching how the video and the scripts went together," she said, "I realized, oh my god, this is what I want to be doing."

Decades later, O'Brian is running a major news operation.

"It's a company filled with people who really care about not just the journalism, but the culture, their co-workers, about doing good in the world," she said. "Plenty of companies say they do all those things, but I've never been part of a company that really exhibits all of that right up front." ●





SCRIPPS

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KATE O'BRIAN

PRESIDENT, SCRIPPS NEWS

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ALL OF THIS YEAR'S
WONDER WOMEN

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**SCRIPPS
NEWS**

Rori Peters

Senior VP, Content Distribution & Sales Strategy **TV One and Cleo TV**



By Stuart Miller
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Rori Peters has been a major player in content distribution for three decades, but — as hard as it might be to imagine — she had a career before television.

Now senior VP of content distribution and sales for the content distribution and marketing department at TV One and Cleo TV, Peters studied economics in college and then worked in banking for 10 years. Even then, though, Peters was making connections in this industry by working on media mergers and acquisitions, although most of her clients were in radio and broadcast. When her bank was folding its media division, it offered Peters another spot internally.

"I couldn't see myself doing oil and gas, so I started talking to my media clients — I was dealing at the CEO level," Peters said, crediting Emmis Communications founder and CEO Jeff Smulyan with encouraging her to explore this "new and interesting" thing called cable that was taking off as a serious business. "He said, 'You give me ideas and keep me from making mistakes and you're great at building relationships, and they'll need people like you.'"

Making Connections

Smulyan introduced Peters to his cable friends, including entrepreneur Steve Brill, who hired Peters to help build Court TV. She immediately plunged into meeting all the cable operators and content-acquisition players, quickly establishing solid relationships. In the first six months, it

"I don't waste people's time ... I also start with solutions as opposed to, 'You've gotta do this' or just wining and dining boondoggles, which I never had much patience for."

Rori Peters

became a running joke that people were convinced she'd been in cable forever.

Michelle Rice, president of TV One and Cleo TV, said that's typical of Peters, a friend of hers for a quarter-century.

"Rori scores off the charts on likability," Rice said. "There's a Southern saying, 'She knows no strangers.' That fits her. She'll go to the bathroom and come back with three new friends. And she builds and keeps relationships."

After seven years learning from the distribution team at Court TV, Peters moved on to boost growth at Comedy Central, AMC Networks, NUVOTV and Scripps Networks Interactive. Rice said Peters's "deal savvy" has proved invaluable for companies in growth mode, especially because distribution partners are trying to cut budgets and increase margins — goals that don't always sync with a network's aspirations.

"She understands business models because of her finance background and can get down to business with a win-win value proposition," Rice said.

"I don't waste people's time," said Peters, who in conversation is blunt but charming. "I understood the business and could speak in

broader numbers, not just talking about my network. I also start with solutions as opposed to, 'You've gotta do this' or just wining and dining boondoggles, which I never had much patience for. I'm stubborn. I say, I know I can do this, fix a problem, change someone's mind."

In 2012, Rice asked Peters to come aboard at TV One for just a couple of years. "They were still trying to get distribution with a lot of companies I had done deals with, and they'd never done renewals before and had those coming," said Peters, who is still there a decade later as a key member of the executive leadership team. She's responsible for developing strategy and negotiating the carriage of the networks and their programming across all video platforms.

As a leader, Peters said she has learned not to get complacent, citing a recent interview with The Walt Disney Co. CEO Bob Iger, where he talked about trusting his own instincts so much he had become dismissive of his team's ideas. "So I asked myself if I'm doing that, because nobody has all the answers," she said.

Committed to Mentoring

She is also committed to nurturing future generations of women. She was chair of then-Women in Cable Telecommunications (now The WICT Network) in 2002-03 and helped implement the PAR Initiative, the comprehensive advocacy program (done with NAMIC) helping companies improve diversity metrics for women and minorities with respect to Pay Equity, Advancement Opportunities, and Resources for Work/Life Integration.

Peters has also been an active member of NAMIC but said she focused more on furthering the cause for women because she historically saw gender issues as the bigger obstacle in building relationships. Lately, progress for women in the field has stalled out, in her view.

"So I spend a lot of time responding to women who reach out on LinkedIn or with the younger members of our company. It's critically important for the future." ●



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& SALES STRATEGY



*"When you help
another woman rise,
we all shine."*

- Aminatou Sow and Ann Friedman

CONGRATULATIONS to ALL of the 2023 WONDER WOMEN AWARD RECIPIENTS



Sharon Peters

Executive VP and Chief Marketing Officer
Charter Communications



By Paige Albinak
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The secret of success for Sharon Peters, executive VP and chief marketing officer at Charter Communications, is no secret at all. “I was always focused on proving myself as an individual,” Peters said. “I’m willing to work really hard and I always spoke up and made my ambitions known.”

That work ethic doesn’t go unnoticed by her superiors, peers and direct reports. “Sharon is the hardest-working person I know,” Charter group VP of digital marketing Rohan Kumar said. “She’s like a superhero, and her super powers are her work ethic, discipline, attention to detail, ability to execute and her leadership.”

That level of ambition meant jumping in and taking on projects and departments that she didn’t know much about. But she learned through trial and error that she could roll up her sleeves, figure it out and get it done.

“I always had to do the next job before I got it,” she said. “I’ve always been willing to take that risk and take on more responsibilities. There were some times where I would get a responsibility and I didn’t know a thing about it but I found that after a time, I became an expert in it.”

After graduating from Villanova University, Peters got her start as an intern at Cablevision Systems’s SportsChannel (later sold to Fox Sports Net). Working for the regional sports networks proved to be a good introduction to cable—while there, Peters supported marketing, public relations, programming and production.

“I always had to do the next job before I got it. I’ve always been willing to take that risk and take on more responsibilities.”

Sharon Peters

“I was very focused on everything that I worked on, on learning about the business and on meeting people and developing relationships,” she said.

At Cablevision, she worked her way up to VP of media and original programming. She was an early adopter of data, analytics and advanced advertising practices, having integrated addressable TV into her business practices as early as 2000.

Peters left Cablevision in 2016 to join Charter as group VP, marketing, and in that role she helped oversee the launch of Charter’s Spectrum brand after Charter completed its acquisitions of Time Warner Cable and Bright House Networks. She since has risen to full oversight of marketing at Charter, and beyond. She was promoted to senior VP, marketing, in 2021 and one year ago was named Charter’s executive VP and CMO.

“For any major company, marketing is the engine that powers customer growth, and Sharon and her team are constantly experimenting with new ways to exceed those expectations with their talent for campaigns that showcase our brand and are popular with consumers,” said Adam Ray, Charter executive VP and chief commercial officer, to whom Peters reports. “Sharon is passionate about all things marketing;



that love of craft, combined with her deep industry knowledge and her ability to lead her team to great heights, sets her apart in this industry.”

Marketing as a Growth Driver

In her role as CMO, she takes her love of marketing to new places, overseeing all of Charter’s marketing-related functions. In the end, though, “what I tell my team is that we have one goal, which is to grow customers for the company,” she said.

“Sharon and I started working together 22 years ago at Cablevision,” Charter senior VP, marketing and creative strategy Joe Leonard said. “It was clear then that she was destined to make an impact, and she continues to be at the forefront of new strategies and ideas that drive results in the industry. Sharon is hard working and compassionate, and cares deeply not only for the business but for the people she works with.”

Right now, Charter’s—and thus Peters’s—primary focus is on how it keeps its customers connected to the world through its Spectrum One suite of products, including high-speed internet, advanced Wi-Fi and unlimited mobile.

While she keeps an eye on all of that, she also works with Charter’s local and regional operators to get the word out about Spectrum’s involvement in the Federal Communications Commission’s Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF). It’s part of the company’s \$5 billion investment, including more than \$1 billion won in the recent RDOF auction, in underserved rural communities.

“I love to work on projects where you feel like you are helping people get what they need,” Peters said. She also led the launch of Spectrum Internet Assist, which provides broadband service for people with lower incomes.

“I really identify with those types of programs,” she said, noting that she got through college with financial aid and work/study programs. “They allow us to do something good for people as well for the business.” ●

Sharon Peters
shows us
why she's a
Wonder Woman
every day.

We appreciate everyone
else sees it too.

Congratulations to all the
2023 Wonder Women.

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COMMUNICATIONS

Melody Smalls

Executive VP, Global Human Resources
Allen Media Group



By Susan Ashworth
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Even as a young adult, Melody Smalls knew exactly what her life's ambition would entail.

"I was always focused on bringing out the best in others — being a strategic servant leader while moving meaningful businesses forward," said Smalls, who today serves as executive VP of global human resources for Allen Media Group. That means she is responsible for providing global human resources strategy for all the divisions in the Allen Media Group — which totals 10 television networks, including The Weather Channel, Allen Media Broadcasting and Entertainment Studios Networks. She also spearheads security and oversees facilities operations teams across the company.

After earning her undergraduate degree in human resources and marketing from the Temple University Fox School of Business, Smalls earned a master's in organizational psychology from Columbia University. That educational background helped her see that the key to managing hundreds of employees located at several major media companies begins by recognizing that the safety and well-being of every single employee is a paramount priority.

Structured for Success

To do that, Smalls puts a premium on being organized, declarative and pragmatic. She makes sure her HR teams are part of a smooth-running machine that is appropriately staffed and structured. "[It's important to] harmonize strategy and processes for efficiency and effectiveness," she said.

Colleagues have noticed. "As head of Global Human Resources for Allen Media Group, Melody Smalls is a phenomenal executive,"

“Structure follows strategy. In that order. This is the question I ask in all that I do.”

Melody Smalls

Allen Media Group founder, chairman and CEO Byron Allen said.

Recognition is also due to her philosophy when it comes to managing the business of managing people. "Structure follows strategy," she said. "In that order. This is the question I ask in all that I do. Human resource professionals must understand and align with the business strategy first in order to build systems, initiatives, processes, etc."

Even as the media and entertainment industry flexed and changed through the COVID pandemic, Smalls managed to keep the human resources quadrant of the Allen Media ship upright and functioning effectively. "Like many companies returning back to a 'new normal' post COVID, [the priority was] reestablishing culture amidst a new work environment," she said.

She achieved that in part by relying on her educational background in organizational psychology, a skill that has proven invaluable to the day-to-day demands of managing human resources for several hundred employees. Relationships and trust matter. And in a thriving, growing company like Allen Media Group, it's the successful human resources leader

who helps employees navigate the challenges and dynamics that exist when striving to achieve certain goals.

Managing for Change

Smalls is also a proponent of change management, a philosophy that can be very deliberate or very organic — it depends on the "change" that needs to happen, she said. "Change management is the process by which an organization, department or group moves through change from the initial concept of change through resolution," which can mean anything from simple steps (like showing employees how to update their benefits on their own) to more complex situations like implementing an entire organizational redesign.

One of Smalls's best skills? She is an adept listener. That's proven out by the honors she's received from organizations like the National Diversity Council (which named her one of the Most Powerful & Influential Women in 2016), *Savoy Magazine* (which named her one of the Most Influential Blacks in Corporate America in 2018) and her status as a mentor for organizations like the Pathbuilders business management consultancy and The Cool Girls, a young female empowerment organization.

"I approach delicate matters in a calm, firm but empathetic manner," she said. "I listen to understand and to 'hear' you. This type of approach ensures trust, which is critical when dealing with sensitive or vulnerable topics."

Above all, Smalls emphasizes acting with integrity — a priority that applies to every conversation she has and every decision she makes, from her early days as a

human resources adviser at First Chicago Trust Co., JP Morgan and Chase Manhattan Bank to her leap into human resources in the media industry at MTV Networks, TNT, TBS, TCM and Cartoon Network.

"Priority one for me is integrity," she said. "I always want my team to be able to share any and everything, from major successes to teachable moments." ●



All of us at ALLEN MEDIA GROUP are proud to congratulate our
MELODY SMALLS
for being named in the WONDER WOMEN class for 2023.
We also congratulate all her fellow honorees this year.



Melody Smalls
Executive Vice President,
Global Human Resources
ALLEN MEDIA GROUP

“As Head of Global Human Resources for ALLEN MEDIA GROUP, Melody Smalls is a phenomenal executive. We are also extremely honored that Broadcasting & Cable is recognizing Melody for her extraordinary talents.”



Byron Allen
Founder, Chairman & CEO
ALLEN MEDIA GROUP

Michelle Strong

Senior VP of Distribution **A+E Networks**



By Cathy Applefeld Olson
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Some people talk about their dream career. Michelle Strong makes a plan and makes it happen.

That's exactly how Strong, senior VP of distribution at A+E Networks, has come to occupy the position she does today — leading a team responsible for securing distribution and revenue growth for the company's brands including A&E, History and Lifetime, and maximizing its marketing partnerships.

Her media origin story dates back to high school, when cable TV arrived on the Missouri base where this daughter of a military family who had moved across a patchwork of states and overseas was living. In BET, Strong found not only an entertaining pastime, but an affirming reflection.

"It was really the first time that I saw people that consistently looked like me, that enjoyed the same things in life that I enjoyed," she said. "It was so pointed for me that I not only wanted to work in television, but I absolutely wanted to work at BET. And so, going to college I majored in communications, with that goal always in the back of my head. It felt so lofty to me. I didn't know a kid like me could actually do anything like that."

Living the Dream

After a professor talked her out of pursuing an on-air role, she pivoted her focus to behind the scenes and landed a sales position at Comcast after graduation. It gave her access to executives at various networks, including one sales principal from BET with whom Strong maintained contact. One day the BET

“I was in my element and I was living a dream. Not in front of the camera, but behind the camera.”

Michelle Strong

executive called to say there was an opening. Strong leapt at the opportunity.

"I stepped in the door and did exactly what I told her I would do. I showcased my passion, I showcased my work ethic and I got a job," she recalled. "And I thought my life couldn't get any better than that. I loved it — I was in my element and I was living a dream. Not in front of the camera, but behind the camera."

Strong's career quickly ascended. She became BET's VP of affiliate sales and then segued to Disney ESPN Media Networks, where she was senior director, national accounts before coming to A+E Networks. All along, she's been honing her skills and her keen sense of the best ways to navigate the changing winds of media distribution.

Those skills are golden at A+E Networks. David Zagin, president of distribution, called Strong "a dedicated leader in our company and a highly respected executive and colleague, both internally and externally."

Executive VP of distribution Jane Rice echoed the sentiment.

"Wonder Woman has long been the symbol for truth, justice and equality and Michelle embodies those values every single day," she said. "She's a strategic leader that truly cares about her role, her clients and her team, along with being a

passionate champion for DEI and mentoring."

On the DEI and mentoring front, Strong was founder and former co-chair of the A+E Multicultural Advisory Committee (MAC), a group that gives feedback and guidance on multicultural content development and intentional and inclusive representation.

For Strong, it's a matter of remaining both agile and grounded in key priorities. "I grew up in the height of the industry before there was a lot of consolidation, when you could go to a system and negotiate a deal at that level," she said. "Obviously things have changed so much. There is so much fragmentation in the way people consume content.

"For me, what has been a consistent factor is that good content is good content regardless of what's happening in the industry. We are trying to make sure our content is available through every vehicle where people want to see it."

There for the Team

With her team, Strong is a stalwart manager who rolls her sleeves up without getting too in the weeds of their work. "I want them to know I'm in it with them and they can come to me for guidance and feedback and advice, and that it's not foreign to me," she said.

Never forgetting the experience with her professor, she's also quick to champion them, channeling former A+E Networks president and CEO Abbe Raven, whom she cites as a pivotal mentor.

"I wish I knew then all the wonderful things I know now about perseverance and not listening to people that crush your dreams and how you should keep going on with that passion," Strong said.

"If there are opportunities, whether it be internal opportunities or within the business I think would be good for them to broaden their careers, I really try to push them forward in those areas and be a champion for them when they're not in the room." ●





SALUTES THE
2023 WONDER WOMEN
FOR THEIR STELLAR CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR INDUSTRY.

Today we celebrate our own
Michelle Strong
whose commitment to excellence and the next
generation of leaders inspires us every day.



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Suzanne Sullivan

Executive VP, Ad Sales, Fox Entertainment
Fox Corp.



By Jon Lafayette
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For all her success, Suzanne Sullivan, executive VP for ad sales at Fox, says that being in sales was a bit of an accident.

"I'm the introvert in my family, so it's funny I'm the one who ended up in sales," Sullivan said. "I know how to fake being an extrovert really well, but it's not my natural comfort zone."

Growing up in Saddle River, New Jersey, she wanted to be an architect or Katie Couric. Her mother talked her out of being an architect, claiming she wasn't good at math. To get into TV news, she did internships with NBC News and a local cable access channel in Worcester, Massachusetts, where she attended College of the Holy Cross. When she graduated, she sent resumes to stations up and down the Eastern seaboard, but got no nibbles.

"So I responded to an ad for a sales assistant job at CBS," Sullivan recalled. She didn't know anything about advertising. "I figured I'd get my foot in the door at CBS and who knows where it might take me. And here's where it took me 30 years later."

An Energetic Learner

She moved over to the agency side at BBDO and OMD. "You hire people for enthusiasm, passion and energy, because you can teach them everything else," Steve Grubbs, former OMD U.S. CEO, said. "And you know, Suzanne certainly fit the bill. Over time, you realized she's just one of the most trustworthy and honest people that you come across."

Sullivan left the agency for ESPN, but returned. When she became a mother, she left for four years. At that time, it was unusual for women to come back to work after a break that long. "She's the only person who left that

"I figured I'd get my foot in the door at CBS and who knows where it might take me. And here's where it took me 30 years later."

Suzanne Sullivan

I hired back, not once but twice," Grubbs said. "Looking back on those days, I don't know how these young women did it. It was just asking a lot."

Eventually the sales bug bit again, and Sullivan moved to Fox, first with Twentieth Television, then with Fox Broadcasting. Toby Byrne, who later became president of sales at Fox, hired her. Years earlier Byrne was Sullivan's assistant at BBDO. "Suzanne wasn't thrilled with my performance and was talking to her boss about potentially firing me," Byrne recalled. "Needless to say, I turned it around quickly and we have been friends ever since. I was fortunate enough to hire her at Fox and it was fun to joke about how she wanted to run me out of the business."

Sullivan's agency background helped her relate to buyers. "She has exceptionally high integrity, and integrity in our business is critical," said John Muszynski, U.S. chairman of Publicis Media's PMX. "With her, I know that I can trust that the person on the other side of the desk actually wants to help my clients' business. Not just their business."

Sullivan said she's proud of partnerships with clients like integrating AT&T into

American Idol, creating an award-winning game show for Pepsi Wild Cherry and bringing Amazon into the sitcom Call Me Kat.

Muszynski also praised her skill at the lost art of market reading. "We don't agree on things all the time," he said. "But the negotiation is really pretty simple because we both study the marketplace and we both understand the dynamics of the marketplace."

As much as she works for her clients, she delivers for Fox.

"Suzanne works tirelessly and collaboratively to create opportunities that consistently position Fox Entertainment as the most client-focused and creatively innovative media company," Fox Entertainment CEO Rob Wade said.

An Honest Broker

Sullivan was already at Fox when Marianne Gambelli arrived from NBC to head ad sales, first at Fox News Media and then for all of Fox Corp. The two had an immediate connection, Gambelli said.

When the new Fox was formed after The Walt Disney Co.'s 2019 acquisition of 21st Century Fox, the ad-sales department needed to be reorganized. "I didn't really know everybody, so I relied on Suzanne for everything from who are the right people to what is the right structure and how do we go to market," Gambelli said. "I would never do anything without consulting with her first. I rely on her for her trust and her honesty. Even when I don't want an honest answer, I get an honest answer. She has all the historical knowledge, but she's not afraid to innovate and move forward."

Issues like integrating Fox's streaming service Tubi keep her sharp. "It keeps us thinking differently," Sullivan said. "I can't imagine if I were still doing the same thing that I was doing 30 years ago."

Sullivan also proudly serves as co-chair of Fox's diversity and inclusion council. Away from work, she used to spend a lot of time at ice rinks while her kids played hockey. Her son has been an emergency goalie for the NHL's New Jersey Devils. She recently started playing pickleball, so watch out. ●



COMPASSIONATE LEADERS DRIVE POSITIVE CHANGE

CONGRATS!

SUZANNE SULLIVAN

AND TO ALL THE 2023 MCN
WONDER WOMEN HONOREES



BY PAVING YOUR OWN PATH,
YOU ARE SETTING AN EXAMPLE
FOR THE NEXT GENERATION



Monica Williams

Senior VP, Digital Products and Operations
NBCUniversal



By Stuart Miller
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Monica Williams's parents moved from China to Michigan, where they worked in the medical field.

"Growing up, a career in media was never even on my mind — I had no exposure to the idea that it was even a possibility," said Williams, who as senior VP, digital products and operations, is responsible for enhancing the reach and visibility of NBCUniversal's portfolio content across all partner platforms.

At the University of Michigan, Williams studied industrial operations engineering, which landed her a job at General Electric. In 2004, she landed on a team in California responsible for shutting down a GE Aviation facility. When that role was completed a year later, the corporation wanted her to pack her bags yet again. But Williams was getting her MBA at the Drucker School of Management and asked if they could find a role that would allow her to remain in Southern California. At that point, the company still owned NBCUniversal and placed Williams there.

Up for the Media Challenge

"It was perfect for utilizing my operational background and focusing on process improvement," Williams said. "I fell in love with this complex and fascinating world of media. With digital launches, it was fast-paced and constantly changing, and I was learning a ton."

Last year, Williams turned her attention to three major events on

"I fell in love with this complex and fascinating world of media. With digital launches, it was fast-paced and constantly changing, and I was learning a ton."

Monica Williams

NBCUniversal platforms — the Beijing Olympics, Super Bowl LVI and the FIFA World Cup. Williams provided easier access to content and standardized functionality across partner experiences. "We were curating the experience beyond the raw content we deliver," she said.

She pioneered efforts to construct and launch a product that, for instance, provided viewers access to NBCUniversal's Winter Olympics Tentpole App via their set-top-box video platform. The app became home to 800-plus curated Olympic on-demand videos; improved discovery and navigation features; personalization by sport; up-to-date medal standings and dynamic tune-in to the networks of NBCUniversal.

For Williams a major part of her job is looking at the technology and thinking of it in human terms: "My job is always about people and their product experience. I work from the end consumer standpoint — what do they see, what are they missing, how can we evolve and push the envelope to create the best experience possible."

She also emphasizes a "be present but think ahead" approach. "Our mission state-

ment is to optimize for today and build for tomorrow," Williams said. "You need to solve the problem immediately in front of you but if you look at multiple ways to do it, you can find one that will give us more flexibility and help us build for the future."

"Monica is an exceptional leader and brings a unique vision to the team as she continues to pioneer innovative digital products that drive the future of video viewership while optimizing consumer experiences," NBCUniversal Content Distribution chair Matt Bond said.

Extending a Helping Hand

Beyond her role in digital products and operations, Williams is committed to helping the next generation coming up behind her. "She is also a fierce advocate for diversity and inclusion as co-chair of our Content Distribution Group Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council, an important initiative she championed," Bond said.

Williams is also a founding member of "Asian Pacific Americans @ NBCUniversal," which aims to attract, promote and retain Asian-American and Pacific Islander-American talent. She's also on the global advisory board for NBCU TechWomen. And she is a founding member of Chief, a private network to help get more women into leadership positions.

The industry has made plenty of progress, Williams said, adding that it needs to do more and move faster, especially since the pandemic had a bigger impact on women and their careers than men. "I'm pretty vocal about that," she said, adding that whether it's at The WICT Network or her own company, she tries to push for ideas that she feels can lead to change.

"I always think, 'What can I do to make an impact — big or small — and help the next generation, whether it's through WICT or mentoring programs?'" Williams said. "I'm very conscious of that every day." ●



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"While the industry knowledge and soft skills I've developed through the programs are substantial, the connections I've made with other members are truly invaluable."

Ingrid Laub
Director, Creative Strategy,
Warner Bros. Discovery

Member Since 1995

"A constant throughout my career, providing career guidance, development opportunities, and a powerful source of connections."

Andrea Jomides
VP Distribution, REELZ

Member Since 1989

"I'm a member for two key reasons: the people and the experiences. Amazing women participating in fascinating industry events - getting involved is a no brainer!"

Liz Spaulding
VP of Business Development, BritBox

Member Since 2017

"I can draw a direct line from my experiences with the organization to my current role. I look forward to meeting new members and having an opportunity to pay it forward."

Mary Maldonado
VP Human Resources, Comcast

Member Since 2013

"Since joining, I've been able to meet amazing people from all parts of the media industry who have helped me grow my career."

Anna Kung
Manager of Yield and Inventory, Spectrum Reach

Member Since 2019

HONOR ROLL

RECAPPING PAST WONDER WOMEN OF NEW YORK SINCE 1999



The 2022 Multichannel News Wonder Women (from l.): Karen Bailey, Starz; Wonya Lucas, Crown Media; Joella Wind, Charter; Latasha Gillespie, Amazon Studios; Tonya Cornileus, ESPN; Kim Kelleher, AMC Networks; Roxanne Sherwood, ABC News; Mina Lefevre, Meta; Laura Molen, NBCUniversal; Amy Israel, Showtime Networks; and Dalila Wilson-Scott, Comcast.

CLASS OF 2022

WOMAN OF INFLUENCE

MARTHA RADDATZ
Chief Global Affairs Correspondent,
ABC News

KAREN BAILEY
Executive VP of Original Programming,
Starz

TONYA CORNILEUS
VP, Development, Inclusion & Wellness,
ESPN

KATRINA CUKAJ
Executive VP of Ad Sales
and Client Partnerships,
WarnerMedia

SARAH KATE ELLIS
President & CEO, GLAAD

LATASHA GILLESPIE
Executive Head, Global Diversity, Equity
& Inclusion, Amazon Studios

AMY ISRAEL
Executive VP, Scripted Programming,
Showtime Networks

KIM KELLEHER
President, Commercial Revenue
& Partnerships, AMC Networks

MINA LEFEBVRE
Head of Development and Programming,
Meta

WONYA LUCAS
President & CEO, Crown Media Family
Networks

LAURA MOLEN
President, Advertising & Partnerships,
NBCUniversal

ROXANNA SHERWOOD
Senior Executive Producer, Original
Longform Content, ABC News

COURTNEY WHITE
President, Food Network & Streaming
Food Content, Discovery Inc.

DALILA WILSON-SCOTT
Executive VP, Chief Diversity Officer,
Comcast Corp.

JOELLA WIND
Group VP, Sales Operations, Spectrum
Enterprise

CLASS OF 2020-21

WOMAN OF INFLUENCE
CONNIE CHUNG
Television Journalist

FRIDAY ABERNETHY
Senior VP, Content Distribution,
Univision Communications

TRICIA ALCAMO
Group VP, Human Resources, Spectrum
Enterprise, Charter Communications

LISA BONNELL
Senior VP, Global Audit and General
Auditor, Comcast NBCUniversal

SAMANTHA COOPER
Executive VP, Global Content Licensing,
ViacomCBS

NANCY DANIELS
Chief Brand Officer, Discovery Inc.,
Discovery & Factual

ROSALYN DURANT
Senior VP, Operations, Disney Springs,
ESPN Wide World of Sports and Water
Parks for the Walt Disney World Resort

MÓNICA GIL
Chief Marketing Officer and Executive
VP, NBCUniversal Telemundo Enterprises

GEORGIA JUVELIS
Executive VP and Co-Head, Corporate
Communications, AMC Networks

JENNIFER KOESTER
Director of Telco & Video Distribution
Partnerships, Google

JEANINE LIBURD
Chief Social Impact & Communications
Officer, BET Networks

TINA PERRY
President, OWN: Oprah Winfrey Network

STEPHANIE PLASSE
SVP and Deputy General Counsel,
Global Revenue, Partnerships &
Distribution, A+E Networks

CLASS OF 2019

WOMAN OF INFLUENCE
DEBRA LEE
President and Chief Operating Officer,
Black Entertainment Television

LORI FINK

Chief Legal Officer, Xandr
(an AT&T company)

MICHELLE THORNTON GHEE

Executive VP, Business Development
Endeavor Global Marketing

MARGARET LAZO

Chief Human Resources Officer,
Univision Communications

LAURA NATHANSON

Executive VP, Revenue & Operations,
Disney Advertising Sales

FRANCESCA ORSI

Executive VP and Co-Head of Drama,
HBO

ALISON OVERHOLT

VP, Editor-in-Chief, ESPN the Magazine,
espnW and The ESPYs, ESPN

JO ANN ROSS

President and Chief Revenue Officer,
CBS Corp.

MADHU GOEL SOUTHWORTH

Senior VP, Legal & Business Affairs, AMC
and SundanceTV (AMC Networks)

MELISSA TOLCHIN

Senior VP of Partner Marketing, Content
Distribution, NBCUniversal

CHRISTINE WHITAKER

Senior VP, Keystone Region, Comcast

MICHELLE WILSON

Co-President, World Wrestling
Entertainment

LEIGH WOISARD

Senior VP, Public Affairs, Cox
Communications

CLASS OF 2018**WOMAN OF INFLUENCE****HANNAH STORM**

SportsCenter Anchor, Producer,
Director, Philanthropist, ESPN

DARCY ANTONELLIS

CEO, Vubiquity

KERRY BROCKHAGE

Executive VP & Chief Counsel, Content
Distribution, NBCUniversal

CHRISTA D'ALIMONTE

Executive VP, General Counsel &
Secretary, Viacom

STEPHANIE DRULEY

Senior VP, Event & Studio Production,
ESPN

MARIANNE GAMBELLI

President, Ad Sales, Fox News Channel
and Fox Business

SARAH GITCHELL

Senior VP, Deputy General Counsel &
Chief Counsel - Content Acquisition,
Comcast Cable

BETH MAIN

Senior VP, Domestic Network
Distribution, HBO

JENNIFER MIRGOROD

Executive VP of Content Distribution &
Strategic Partnerships, Turner

DEBRA O'CONNELL

Executive VP, Sales & Marketing Disney/
ABC Television Group

ELAINE PAUL

Chief Financial Officer, Strategy &
Business Development, Hulu

LORETTA POLK

VP & Associate General Counsel NCTA -
The Internet & Television Association

JOSIE THOMAS

Executive VP, Chief Diversity & Inclusion
Officer; CBS Corp.

CLASS OF 2017**JANA BENNETT**

President, General Manager, History

SANDRA DEWEY

President, TNT and TBS Production
and Business Affairs, Head of Studio T,
Turner Broadcasting System

LAURA GENTILE

Senior VP, espnW/Women's Initiatives,
ESPN

JESSICA HERRERA-FLANIGAN

Executive VP of Government
and Corporate Affairs, Univision
Communications Inc.

COLLEEN LANGNER

Senior VP, Marketing Operations,
Cox Communications

SUSANNE McAVOY

Executive VP, Marketing, Creative and
Communications, Crown Media Family
Networks

JAMIE POWER

Managing Partner, Modi Media

LINDA SCHUPACK

Executive VP of Marketing, AMC and
SundanceTV

MYRNA SOTO

Senior VP and Global Chief Information
Security Officer, Comcast Corp.

CHRISTINA SPADE

Executive VP and Chief Financial Officer,
Showtime Networks

SANDRA STERN

President, Lionsgate Television Group

LISA WILLIAMS-FAUNTROY

Senior VP for Business and Legal Affairs,
Discovery Communications

CLASS OF 2016**PATRICIA BETRON**

Senior VP, Multimedia Sales, ESPN

NICOLE BUIE

VP of Marketing, Cox Media

MEGAN CLARKEN

President, Product Leadership,
Nielsen

KAREN GRINTHAL

Senior VP, National Ad Sales, Scripps
Networks Interactive

CYNTHIA HOOK

Senior VP, General Auditor and Global
Risk Officer, Comcast Corp.

HOLLY JACOBS

Executive VP, U.S. Reality and Syndicated
Programming, Sony Pictures Television

PAMELA KAUFMAN

Chief Marketing Officer and President,
Consumer Products, Nickelodeon

ARLENE MANOS

President, National Advertising Sales,
AMC Networks

STEPHANIE McMAHON

Chief Brand Officer, World Wrestling
Entertainment

JILL RATNER

Executive VP, Litigation, Fox Group

MICHELLE RICE

Executive VP, Content Distribution and
Marketing, TV One

SAVALLE SIMS

Executive VP, Deputy General Counsel,
Discovery Communications

ELLEN STONE

Executive VP, Marketing, Bravo/Oxygen

CLASS OF 2015**LYNN CHARYTAN**

Senior VP of Legal Regulatory Affairs,
Senior Deputy General Counsel, Comcast

KATY FERGUSON

Executive VP, Managing Partner,
Entertainment, Horizon Media

JENNIFER HIGHTOWER

Senior VP of Law and Policy, General
Counsel, Cox Communications

SANDRA HOWE

Senior VP, Global Marketing, Arris

SUSETTE HSIUNG

Executive VP, Network Production,
Management and Operations, Disney
Channel

SANDRA KAPELL

Executive VP, Human Resources
Administration, Cablevision Systems

JUDI LOPEZ

Senior VP, Affiliate Distribution
Marketing, NUV0tv and Fuse

SARAH MADIGAN

Executive VP, Content Distribution,
Univision Communications

MELISSA MAXFIELD

Senior VP of Federal Government Affairs,
Comcast

COURTENEY MONROE

CEO, National Geographic Channels U.S.

TINA PIDGEON

General Counsel Compliance Officer,
Senior VP of Government Affairs, General
Communication Inc.

JANE RICE

Senior VP, Distribution, A+E Networks

CLAUDIA TERAN

Executive VP, Deputy General Counsel,
Fox Networks Group, Fox Sports

CLASS OF 2014**SARAH BARNETT**

President, SundanceTV

JENNIFER CHUN

Senior VP, Content Acquisition, Time
Warner Cable

PATRICIA FILI-KRUSHEL

Chairman, NBCUniversal News Group

BRENDA FREEMAN

Chief Marketing Officer, Animation,
Young Adults and Kids' Media, Turner
Broadcasting System

TARA MAITRA

Senior VP, General Manager, Content and
Media Sales, TiVo

KIMBERLY MAKI

Corporate VP, Communications, Bright
House Networks

JODI MARKLEY

Senior VP, Operations, ESPN

JANET NOVA

Executive VP and Deputy Group General
Counsel, 21st Century Fox

JESSICA RODRIGUEZ

Executive VP, Program Scheduling &
Promotions, Univision Communications

LISA ROSENBLUM

Executive VP, Government and Public
Affairs, Cablevision Systems

KATHRYN ZACHEM

Senior VP, Regulatory, Comcast

CLASS OF 2013**JAMIA BIGALOW**

Senior VP, Distribution Marketing, Fox
Networks

DENISE DENSON

Executive VP, Content Distribution and
Marketing, Viacom Media Networks

VIVIANE EISENBERG

Senior VP and Chief Counsel,
Programming, Global Marketing & Global
Licensing, HBO

IRENE ESTEVES

Executive VP and Chief Financial Officer,
Time Warner Cable

TAMARA FRANKLIN

Senior VP, Affiliate Strategy and
Business Development, Scripps
Networks Interactive

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Chief Operating Officer, Telemundo
Media

AVA JORDHAMO

President, New York, Zenith

NANCY KANTER

Senior VP, Original Programming and GM,
Disney Junior Worldwide

MARJORIE KAPLAN

President and GM, Animal Planet/
President, Science & Velocity Networks

CATHY KILSTROM

Senior VP, Customer Care, Comcast
Cable West Division

KIM NORRIS

Executive VP, Emerging Businesses &
Data Analytics, Cablevision Media Sales

DONNA SPECIALE

President, Turner Entertainment and
Young Adults Ad Sales

CLASS OF 2012**JENNIFER BALL**

Senior VP, Affiliate Marketing and
Distribution, Univision Communications

SHERRY BRENNAN

Senior VP, Distribution Strategy and
Development, Fox Networks

JODI BRENNER

Senior VP, Business and Legal Affairs, TV
Networks Distribution, NBCUniversal

**KAREN DOUGHERTY
BUCHHOLZ**

VP of Administration, Comcast

MARISSA FREEMAN

Senior VP of Brand Strategy and
Marketing Communications, Time
Warner Cable

REBECCA GLASHOW

Senior VP, Digital Media Distribution,
Discovery Communications

KELLIE GRUTKO

VP of Marketing, Comcast Spotlight

RHONDA HOLT

Senior VP of Media Platform
Technologies and Operations, Turner

LORI LEBAS

Senior VP of Strategy and Business
Operations, ESPN

MARY MEDUSKI

Executive VP and Chief Financial Officer,
Suddenlink Communications

GEMMA TONER

Senior VP of Marketing and Business
Development, Cablevision Systems

MICHELLE VICARY

Executive VP of Programming, Crown
Media Networks

DANA ZIMMER

Executive VP, TV Networks Distribution,
NBCUniversal

CLASS OF 2011**LORI CONKLING**

Executive VP, Distribution, National
Accounts, Field Sales & Canada, A&E
Television Networks

KIMBERLY EDMUNDS

Senior VP, Customer Operations,
Cox Communications

STEPHANIE GIBBONS

Executive VP, Marketing and On-Air
Promotions, FX

MINDY GROSSMAN

CEO and Director, HSN

JADZ JANUCIK

Senior VP, Association Affairs, NCTA

GRACE KILLELEA

Senior VP, Talent, Comcast

MICHELLE KIM

Group VP and Chief Counsel,
Programming, Time Warner Cable

CHRISTINA MILLER

Senior VP, Turner Sports Strategy/
Marketing/Programming and
Cartoon Network Enterprises, Turner
Broadcasting System

STEPHANIE MITCHKO

VP, Interactive Platform, Cablevision
Systems

LISA SCHWARTZ

Executive VP, Distribution and Business
Development, IFC Entertainment

DIANE TRYNESKI

Senior VP, Broadcast, Studio Operations
and Engineering, HBO

CLASS OF 2010**JENNIFER CASERTA**

Executive VP and General Manager, IFC

JENNIFER DANGAR

Senior VP, Domestic Distribution,
Discovery Communications

KRISTINE FAULKNER

VP, Product Development and
Management, Cox Communications

MELANI GRIFFITH

Senior VP, Programming and Video
Services, Insight Communications

CATHY HETZEL

President, Advanced Media and
Information, Rentrak

PEARLENA IGBOKWE

Senior VP, Original Programming,
Showtime

DIANA KEREKES

VP, Video Content, Comcast

KATHLEEN MAYO

Executive VP, Consumer Operations,
Cablevision Systems

GAIL MACKINNON

Executive VP and Chief Government
Relations Officer, Time Warner Cable

SUE NAEGLE

President, HBO Entertainment

TONIA O'CONNOR

Executive VP, Distribution, Sales and
Marketing, Univision

RITA TUZON

Executive VP and General Counsel, Fox
Networks Group

CLASS OF 2009**PEGGY BALLARD**

Senior Director, Worldwide Service
Provider Marketing, Cisco Systems

ALINA FALCÓN

Executive VP and Operating Manager,
Univision

JENNIFER GAISKI

Senior VP, Content Acquisition, Comcast

JOAN GILLMAN

Executive VP and President of Media
Sales, Time Warner Cable

KATE JUERGENS

Executive VP of Original Programming
and Development, ABC Family

VICKI LINS

Chief Marketing Officer, Canoe Ventures

GWEN MARCUS

Executive VP and General Counsel,
Showtime Networks

PATRICIA MCCASKILL

Senior VP of Programming, Suddenlink
Communications

EILEEN O'NEILL

President and General Manager, TLC

KATHY PAYNE

VP of Programming, Cox
Communications

DIANE ROBINA

President, FearNet, Comcast
Programming Group

CLASS OF 2008**JANICE AROUH**

Senior VP, Network Distribution
and Service, Hallmark Channel and
Hallmark Movie Channel

SUSAN BUNDA

Executive VP, Content and Strategy,
CNN Worldwide

JACKIE DE CRINIS

Senior VP of Original Scripted Series
Programming, USA Network

CHARLOTTE FIELD

Senior VP, Testing and Operations,
Comcast

ROSA GATTI

Senior VP, Corporate Communications
and Outreach, ESPN

BROWN JOHNSON

Executive VP and Executive Creative
Director, Nickelodeon; Preschool General
Manager, Noggin

AMY TYKESON

President and CEO, BendBroadband

SANDY WAX

President, PBS Kids Sprout

MARY WHITE

President, Central Division, Charter
Communications

MELINDA WITMER

Executive VP and Chief Programming
Officer, Time Warner Cable

CLASS OF 2007**COLLEEN ABDOULAH**

President, WideOpenWest

CATHY AVGIRIS

Senior VP and General Manager,
Comcast Voice Services

DEBBY BEECE

President of Programming and
Marketing, Oxygen Media

FRANCES BERWICK

Executive VP of Programming and
Production, Bravo Network

NANCY DUBUC

Executive VP and General Manager, The
History Channel

MICHELE GANELESS

Executive VP and General Manager,
Comedy Central

JILL LUCKETT

Senior VP of Program Network Policy,
NCTA

LINDA McMAHON

CEO, World Wrestling Entertainment

MARILYN O'CONNELL

Senior VP of Video Solutions, Verizon
Communications

ELOISE SCHMITZ

Senior VP of Strategic Planning, Charter
Communications

CLASS OF 2006**SHARI ANNE BRILL**

VP and Director, Programming, Carat
USA

LOUISE HENRY BRYSON

President, Distribution and Affiliate Sales
Development, Lifetime Entertainment
Services; Executive VP and General
Manager, Lifetime Movie Network

CHRISTINE DRIESSEN

Executive VP and CFO, ESPN

PATRICIA GOTTESMAN

Executive VP, Product Management and
Marketing, Cablevision Systems

SUE ANN HAMILTON

Executive VP, Programming, Charter
Communications

CAROL HEVEY

Executive VP, Operations, Time Warner
Cable Carolinas Region

KIM MARTIN

Executive VP and General Manager,
WE tv

LORI McFARLING

Senior VP, Distribution, Discovery
Communications

CHRISTINA NORMAN

President, MTV

REBECCA SCILINGO

VP, Integration and Deployment,
Comcast

SUZANNE SCOTT

Network Executive Producer, Fox News

CATHY WEEDEN
VP and General Manager, Sunshine Network

CLASS OF 2005

NOMI BERGMAN
Executive VP, Strategy and Development, Advance/Newhouse Communications

DEBORAH BLACKWELL
Senior VP and General Manager, SoapNet

STEPHANIE CAMPBELL
Executive VP, Programming, DirecTV

LAUREN CORRAO
Senior VP, Original Programming and Head of Development, Comedy Central

LISA GERSH
Chief Operating Officer and Co-Founder, Oxygen Media

JILL GREENTHAL
Senior Managing Director, Corporate Advisory Services, The Blackstone Group

MICHELE JAMES
Chief Talent Scout and Co-Founder, James and Co.

SUZANNE KEENAN
Senior VP, Customer Service, Comcast

STACEY LYNN KOERNER
Executive VP and Director of Global Research and Planning, Viacom

HARRIET NOVET
VP, Time Warner Cable of New York and New Jersey

SUSAN SWAIN
Executive VP and Co-Chief Operating Officer, C-SPAN

MEREDITH WAGNER
EVP, Public Affairs and Corporate Communications, Lifetime Television

PANDIT WRIGHT
Senior Executive VP, Human Resources And Administration, Discovery Communications

LINDA YACCARINO
Executive VP and General Manager, Turner Entertainment Sales and Marketing

LAUREN ZALAZNICK
President, Bravo and Trio, NBCUniversal Cable

CLASS OF 2004

JENNY ALONZO
NAMIC President/VP, Creative Services and Production, Lifetime Television

BRIDGET BAKER
Senior VP, Cable Distribution, NBC Cable

ITALIA COMMISSO WEINAND
Senior VP, Programming, Human Resources, Mediacom Communications

LYNNE COSTANTINI
VP, Programming, Time Warner Cable

LEE ANN DALY
Senior VP, Marketing, ESPN

KRISTIN DOLAN
Senior VP, Digital Product Management, Cablevision Systems

ELLEN EAST
VP, Communications and Investor Relations, Cox Communications

BETSY FRANK
Executive VP, Research and Planning, MTV Networks

ANDREA GREENBERG
President, Distribution, Rainbow Sports Networks

DENA KAPLAN
Senior VP, Marketing, GSN

LYNN PICARD
Executive VP and General Manager, Lifetime Television

JESSICA REIF COHEN
First VP, Senior Media and Entertainment Research Analyst, Merrill Lynch

DEBORA WILSON
Chief Operating Officer, The Weather Channel and The Weather Channel Interactive

CLASS OF 2003

AMY BANSE
VP, Programming Investments, Comcast

MARY-ELLIS BUNIM
Executive Producer and Co-Founder, Bunim/Murray Productions

MAE DOUGLAS
Senior VP and Chief People Officer, Cox Communications

DANIELLE GELBER
VP, Original Programming, Showtime Networks

PAMELA EULER HALLING
Senior VP, Marketing and Programming, Insight Communications

KATHY JOHNSON
Executive VP, NAMIC

LAUREEN ONG
President, National Geographic Channel

ELLEN SCHNED
Senior VP, National Accounts and Affiliate Marketing, Court TV

LINDA SIMENSKY
Senior VP, Original Animation, Cartoon Network

CAROLYN STRAUSS
Executive VP, Original Programming, HBO

DOMINIQUE TELSON
VP, Original Programming, Showtime Networks

SUSAN WHITING
President and CEO, Nielsen Media Research

CYMA ZARGHAMI
Executive VP and General Manager, Nickelodeon

CLASS OF 2002

NICOLE BROWNING
President, Affiliate Sales and Marketing, MTV Networks

SHERITA CAESAR
VP and General Manager, Subscriber Network Services, Scientific Atlanta

JILL CAMPBELL
Operations VP, Cox Communications

MIRANDA CURTIS
President, Liberty Media International

SUSAN MARSHALL
Senior VP, AT&T Broadband

CHRIS MOSELEY
Executive VP, Worldwide Marketing, Crown Media Holdings

SHEILA NEVINS
Executive VP, Original Programming, HBO

ABBE RAVEN
General Manager and Executive VP, The History Channel

PAMELA THOMAS-GRAHAM
President and CEO, CNBC

BARBARA YORK
Senior Industry Affairs VP and Chief Administrative Officer, NCTA

CLASS OF 2001

CHAR BEALES
President/CEO, Cable & Telecommunications Association for Marketing

MARY PAT BLAKE
Senior VP, Marketing, Charter Communications

ANN CARLSEN
Founder and Chairman, Carlsen Resources

KATHLEEN DORE
President, Bravo Networks

JUDY GIRARD
Senior VP and General Manager, Food Network

YVETTE GORDON
Interactive Technologies Director, SeaChange International

BONNIE HAMMER
Executive VP and General Manager, Sci Fi Channel

KIM KELLY
Executive VP, Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer, Insight Communications

DEBRA LEE
President and Chief Operating Officer, Black Entertainment Television

ANN MONTGOMERY
Senior VP, Operations, Adelphia Communications

DAWN TARNOFSKY-OSTROFF
Executive VP, Entertainment, Lifetime Television

MAGGIE BELLVILLE
Executive Operations VP, Cox Communications

CAROLE BLACK
President and CEO, Lifetime Television

CHRISTIE HEFNER
Chairman and CEO, Playboy Enterprises

MINDY HERMAN
President and CEO, In Demand LLC

BROOKE JOHNSON/DELIA FINE

Executive VP and General Manager, Original Films, Drama, Performing Arts VP, A&E Network

JUDITH McHALE
President and Chief Operating Officer, Discovery Communications

PAM McKISSICK/LUCY HOOD
President and Chief Operating Officer, TV Guide Networks; Senior VP and General Manager, Sneak Prevue

ROSEMARIE NYE
Cable Communications VP, Lucent Technologies

PAT THOMPSON
Senior VP, Daniels and Associates

MAGGIE WILDEROTTER
President and CEO, Wink Communications

CLASS OF 1999

BETTY COHEN
President, Cartoon Network

DEBORAH LATHEN
Cable Services Bureau Chief, Federal Communications Commission

GERALDINE LAYBOURNE
Chairman, Oxygen Media

MARGARET LOESCH
President and CEO, Odyssey Network

KATE McENROE
President, American Movie Classics, AMC Networks

JUDY McGRATH
President, MTV Networks

SUSAN PACKARD
Chief Operating Officer, Home & Garden Television

JAN PETERS/JULIE BERG/JUDITH ALLEN
President and CEO; Executive VP and Chief Marketing Officer; Senior VP, Video, MediaOne Group

FRAN SHEA
Acting President, E! Networks

ANNE SWEENEY
President, Disney/ABC Cable Networks

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OR TICKET
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Jessica Wolin

jessica.wolin@futurenet.com | 212-685-4233

2023 HONOREES



Caroline Beasley

Chief Executive Officer
Beasley Media Group



George G. Beasley

Founder
Beasley Media Group
(Posthumous Award)



Matt Bond

Chairman, Content Distribution
NBCUniversal



Ray Cole

President & COO
Citadel Communications LLC



Frank Comerford

Chief Revenue Officer & President of Sales,
NBCUniversal Local
NBCUniversal



Ray Hopkins

President, U.S. Networks Distribution
Paramount Global



Wonya Lucas

President & CEO
Hallmark Media



LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Jim Nantz

Sports Commentator
CBS Sports



Soledad O'Brien

CEO
SO'B Productions



Rachael Ray

Host
Rachael Ray



Deborah Roberts

ABC News Senior National Affairs Correspondent and Contributing Anchor for 20/20
ABC News



Al Roker

Weather and Feature Anchor, TODAY; Co-Host of 3rd Hour, TODAY
NBCUniversal



CHAIRMAN'S AWARD

James Thompson

Past President
Broadcasters Foundation of America
(Posthumous Award)

Iconic Show Award

THE WALKING DEAD

AMC NETWORKS

People

Notable executives on the move



A+E NETWORKS

Deborah K. Bradley has joined A+E Networks in New York as executive VP, global content sales, charged with expanding the programmer's presence across multimedia third-party platforms and FAST channels. She was president, retail division at financial advisory firm The Amherst Group.



ALLEN MEDIA GROUP

Andrew Temple was upped to chief operating officer for broadcast sales and syndication at Allen Media Group. The 25-year veteran of Byron Allen's company had previously held the role of president of domestic television distribution.



CANELA MEDIA

Oscar Padilla has joined Spanish-language digital media company Canela Media in New York as senior VP, commercial operations. He comes from social advertising firm BrandTotal, where he was senior VP, global head of customer success and strategic partnerships.



COMCAST

Comcast Cable has named **Ray Roundtree** senior VP of its Keystone Region, serving western, central and northeastern Pennsylvania, eastern Ohio, northern West Virginia and the Maryland panhandle. He was VP, finance, for Comcast's Beltway region, based in Baltimore.



COMCAST

Melinda Little was named VP of government and regulatory affairs for Comcast Cable's Big South region, comprising South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi, Louisiana and Tennessee. She had been VP of government affairs at Comcast's Central Division headquarters in Atlanta.



CNN

Danny Freeman has joined CNN as a Philadelphia-based correspondent. He comes from NBCUniversal Local-owned station WCAU Philadelphia, where he was an investigative reporter focused on finance, environmental issues and police accountability.



DIRECTV

DirecTV has named **Drew Groner** as senior VP, head of agency and client partnerships. Groner, who had been group VP, head of client partnerships and national offices, will be responsible for addressable, digital and data-enabled advertising sales.



ENDEMOL SHINE

Endemol Shine North America has promoted **Sharon Levy** to CEO. Formerly chief content officer of the Banijay Americas-owned company, she had been executive VP of original programming at Spike TV (now Paramount Network).



EWTN

EWTN Global Catholic Network has tapped **Montse Alvarado** as president and chief operating officer, EWTN News, overseeing its global news media platform. She is an activist and the founding anchor of the news program EWTN News in Depth.



FOX

Fox Television Stations has named **Chris Reed** as executive VP of legal affairs, succeeding David Keneipp, who has retired from the company. Reed had been senior VP of intellectual property, content protection and litigation at parent Fox Corp.



HALLMARK

Stefanie Nimick was named Chicago-based senior VP, portfolio content distribution and platform marketing at Hallmark Channel parent Hallmark Media. She comes from premium channel Starz, where she had served as senior VP, distribution and partnership marketing.



PARAMOUNT

Erin Calhoun has been named executive VP, communications for Paramount Global streaming and cross-company publicity. She had formerly worked as executive VP, communications for Showtime, which is being integrated into Paramount Plus.



RIEDEL

Riedel Communications has promoted **Rick Seegul** to senior VP, technology and business development for the Americas. He had been VP of system consulting for the Americas at Riedel, managing the company's team of system consultants and project engineers.



SCRIPPS

Keisha Taylor Starr was elevated to chief marketing officer at the E.W. Scripps Co., a new post, and has joined the broadcaster's senior leadership team. Formerly chief marketing officer at Scripps Networks, she led marketing efforts for the Scripps National Networks.



SCRIPPS SPORTS

Scripps Sports, a new E.W. Scripps Co. unit, has hired **Tony Lamerato** as VP for sports revenue and sponsorships. Formerly senior director of revenue strategy for Scripps' Local Media division, he will execute a strategic plan to model and value sports-rights opportunities.



SPECTRUM REACH

Jason Brown has joined Spectrum Reach, the advertising-sales arm of cable operator Charter Communications, as senior VP, chief revenue officer, succeeding the retiring Beth Plummer. He had been senior VP, advertising sales at DirecTV.



SSIMWAVE

Saj Jamal was named VP, marketing, at SSIMWAVE, a Waterloo, Canada-based streaming technology firm owned by Imax. He had been VP of marketing at startup accelerator Communitex, which had supported SSIMWAVE's initial development.



TELESTREAM

Nevada City, California-based video technology vendor Telestream has named **Rhonda Bassett-Spiers** as CEO, succeeding the retiring Dan Castles. She previously worked for iTradeNetwork, a food and beverage supply-chain management firm, where she was president.

BRIEFLY NOTED

Other industry execs making moves

Jennifer Algoe Keaton has joined the Broadband Communications Association of Pennsylvania (BCAP) as director of communications. She most recently handled communications and media for state Rep. **Donna Oberlander**, majority whip of the Pennsylvania House, and the House Majority Policy Committee. ... **Heather Olander** has joined The CW as head of unscripted programming. She was VP, of alternative development and programming for Peacock, USA Network and Syfy... Gray Television named **Robby Thomas** general manager of WIS Columbia, South Carolina, and **Valerie Russell** as GM of WTVY-WRGX Dothan, Alabama. Thomas had been the WTVY-WRGX GM; Russell was general sales manager at the stations. ... Warner Bros. Discovery has named **Kenneth W. Lowe** to its board. Lowe was chairman of CEO of Scripps Networks Interactive from its split from E.W. Scripps until its 2018 sale to Discovery.



At WABC New York's "Operation 7 Save-a-Life" Breakfast in Manhattan (l. to r.): Bronx Borough President **Vanessa L. Gibson**; New York City Mayor **Eric Adams** and Fire Commissioner **Laura Kavanaugh**; **Bill Ritter**, anchor, WABC *Eyewitness News*; and **Marilu Galvez**, president and GM, WABC.



Icon Award winner **Sarah Michelle Gellar** (l.), star of *Wolf Pack* on Paramount Plus, and presenter **Molly Hargrave** at SCAD TV Fest 2023 in Atlanta.



On the panel for NBC's *Grand Crew* panel at SCAD TV Fest 2023 in Atlanta (l. to r.): **Nicole Byer**, **Carl Tart**, **Grasie Mercedes**, **Aaron Jennings** and **Phil Augusta Jackson**.



At a critics' screening and panel for Peacock's *Mrs. Davis* at the San Vicente Bungalows in West Hollywood (l. to r.): **Lisa Katz**, president, scripted content, NBCUniversal; **Damon Lindelof**, executive producer/co-writer; cast members **Jake McDorman** and **Betty Gilpin**; **Tara Hernandez**, showrunner/executive producer/co-writer; and **Kelly Campbell**, president, Peacock.



At the New York screening of Hallmark Channel series *The Way Home* at the Whitby Hotel (l. to r.): Hallmark Media SVP, development **Laurie Ferneau** and president **Wonya Lucas**; cast members **Chyler Leigh**, **Andie MacDowell** and **Evan Williams**; Hallmark Media EVP, programming **Lisa Hamilton Daly**; and cast member **Sadie Laflamme-Snow**.

Vivien Killilea/Getty Images for SCAD, Jason Kempin/Getty Images, Randy Shropshire/Peachcock, ABC/Heidi Gutman, Mike Coppola/Getty Images for Hallmark Media



At the TCA Winter Press Tour session for FX's *Justified: City Primeval* (l. to r.) cast members **Vondie Curtis Hall**, **Timothy Olyphant**, **Vivian Olyphant**, **Adelaide Clemens** and **Boyd Holbrook**.



Gabrielle Union (l.) and executive producer **Octavia Spencer** at the season three premiere of Apple TV Plus drama *Truth Be Told* at Pacific Design Center in Los Angeles.



Netflix Films chairman **Scott Stuber** (l.), **Reese Witherspoon** and Netflix co-CEO **Ted Sarandos** at the Los Angeles premiere of *Your Place or Mine*.



(From l.): Producer **Ryan Coogler**, director/producer **Peter Nicks**, **Stephen Curry** and producer **Erick Peyton** at the Sundance Film Festival premiere of Apple TV Plus and A24's *Stephen Curry: Underrated* in Park City, Utah.



(From l.): Cast members **Jerrie Johnson**, **Grace Byers**, **Meagan Good** and **Shoniqua Shandai** at the premiere event for season two of Amazon Prime Video's *Harlem* in Los Angeles.

Stewart Cook/Apple TV Plus; Scott Kirkland/PictureGroup for FX Networks; Charley Gallay/Getty Images for Netflix; Arnold Turner/Getty Images for Prime Video; Eric Charbonneau/Apple TV Plus

Ad Meter

Who's spending what where

FEBRUARY ADVERTISING RECAP

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



Impressions Spotlight

Highlighted below are looks at top programs and networks ranked by household TV ad impressions delivered in February 2023

Total household TV ad impressions:
588.4 billion (+ 3.9% YoY)

Big Four (ABC, CBS, Fox and NBC) primetime TV ad impressions:
34.0 billion (+ 2.8% YoY)

Key takeaway: iSpot's February TV ad recap showcases how men's college basketball floods the airwaves with advertising inventory in the stretch run toward March's NCAA men's basketball tournament. Live men's hoops accounted for over 14,000 minutes of TV advertising in February — more than double what's delivered by any other program on TV.

TOP 5 PROGRAMS, FEBRUARY 2023

By share of TV ad impressions — new program airings only

- 1. Men's College Basketball**
 Share of impressions: **3.60%**
 Top advertiser: **Progressive (2.43%)**
- 2. NBA**
 Share of impressions: **3.41%**
 Top advertiser: **Google Pixel (2.73%)**
- 3. Super Bowl LVII**
 Share of impressions: **2.34%**
 Top advertiser: **various**
- 4. Good Morning America**
 Share of impressions: **2.19%**
 Top advertiser: **CarMax (2.23%)**
- 5. Today**
 Share of impressions: **1.77%**
 Top advertiser: **Citi Credit Card (3.08%)**

TOP ADVERTISERS

By share of TV ad impressions (Feb. 2023)

- 1 PROGRESSIVE**
 Share of impressions: **0.96%**
 Top network: **CBS (7.90%)**
 Top program: **Men's College Basketball (3.34%)**
- 2 Domino's**
 Share of impressions: **0.80%**
 Top network: **Ion (7.13%)**
 Top program: **Law & Order: SVU (3.47%)**

- 3 inturt turbo tax.**
 Share of impressions: **0.62%**
 Top network: **Fox (6.79%)**
 Top program: **NCIS (1.96%)**

- 4 Liberty Mutual INSURANCE**
 Share of impressions: **0.51%**
 Top network: **Fox News Channel (11.51%)**
 Top program: **NBC Nightly News (3.61%)**

- 5 Downy**
 Share of impressions: **0.48%**
 Top network: **CBS (8.74%)**
 Top program: **The Price Is Right (2.03%)**

MOST-SEEN INDUSTRIES

By share of TV ad impressions (Feb. 2023)

- 1) QSR (4.34%)
- 2) Automakers (3.82%)
- 3) Auto & General Insurance (2.76%)
- 4) Wireless Services (2.18%)
- 5) Vitamins & Supplements (2.12%)
- 6) Streaming Services (2.02%)
- 7) OTC: Allergies, Cold & Flu (1.98%)
- 8) Skin & Foot Care (1.95%)
- 9) Pizza (1.62%)
- 10) Department Stores (1.51%)

TOP NETWORKS

By share of TV ad impressions — new program airings only (February 2023)

- 1) CBS (13.90%)
- 2) ABC (13.45%)
- 3) NBC (10.13%)
- 4) Fox News (10.03%)
- 5) Fox (6.53%)
- 6) ESPN (5.66%)
- 7) CNN (4.73%)
- 8) Univision (4.57%)
- 9) MSNBC (3.81%)
- 10) Telemundo (2.75%)

AUDITED PROVIDERS:

Audit period: From Jan. 16 to Feb. 10

- AMC Plus
- Apple TV Plus
- Discovery Plus
- Disney Plus
- ESPN Plus
- HBO Max
- Hulu
- Netflix
- Paramount Plus
- Peacock
- Crackle
- Pluto TV
- Freevee
- The Roku Channel
- Tubi
- Xumo Play
- Sling Freestream

CURATION NATION

WHAT CONSUMERS SEE when they log into their streaming service homepage can make a huge impact. One Touch Intelligence audited all the major providers and found that content genre remains the most common way to promote content, although “collections” of like-minded content are also popular ways to promote programming to consumers.

OTT CONTENT SHELF % BY CATEGORY

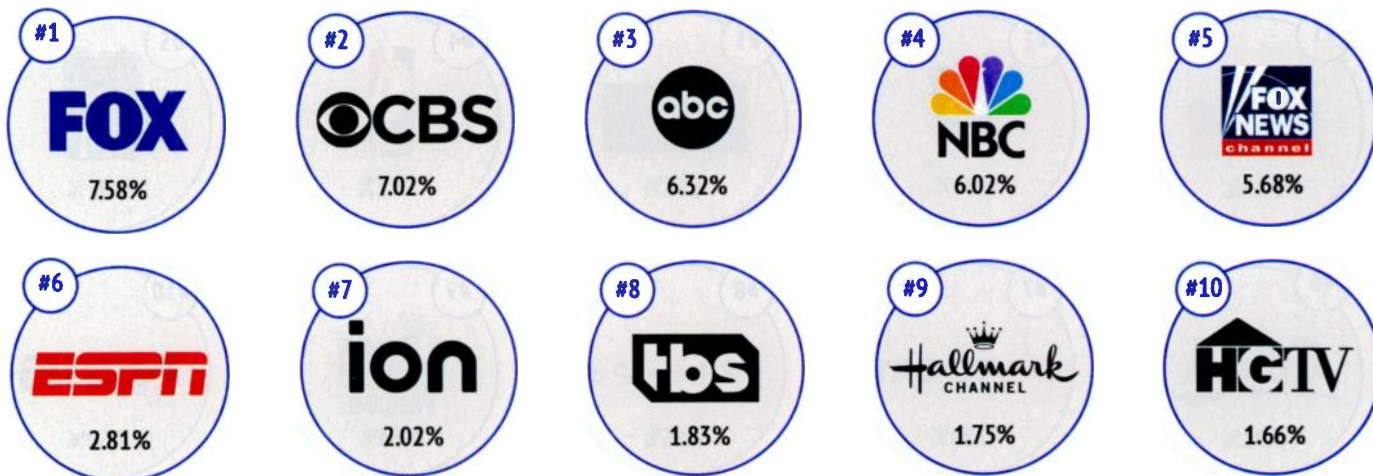
Content Shelf Category	AVOD	SVOD	All Providers
Genre	69.4%	48.6%	56.1%
Collections	9.3%	17.3%	14.4%
Coming & Going	6.0%	16.4%	12.6%
Trending	6.0%	7.1%	6.7%
Personalized	3.3%	6.8%	5.5%
Originals	3.8%	2.8%	3.2%
Featured	1.1%	0.9%	1.0%
Music	0.5%	0.0%	0.2%
Promotional	0.5%	0.0%	0.2%

VIZIO

February's Top-Watched Networks

INScape

Of all the live, linear minutes watched on VIZIO smart TVs in February, 7.58% was spent watching on Fox due to the Big Game. Other sports programming such as college basketball and NBA games fueled viewership for CBS, ABC and NBC.



Via VIZIO's Inscope, the TV data company with insights from a panel of 20 million active and opted-in smart TVs. Data is linear, live TV only and includes all episode types (new and reruns). Rankings are by percent share duration, defined as "of all the live, linear minutes watched from Feb. 1-24, 2023, X% of the time was spent on network Y."

THE REACH OF BALLY SPORTS

AS DIAMOND SPORTS GROUP works through its issues with Bally Sports, data compiled from One Touch Intelligence's Sports Rights Tracker found that the embattled group of regional sports networks accounts for half or more of the locally televised MLB, NBA and NHL games.

LOCALLY TELEVISED GAMES AVAILABLE VIA RSN *(counts approximate)*

RSN	MLB	NBA	NHL
Bally Sports	2,200	1,200	850
All Other RSNs	2,210	980	890

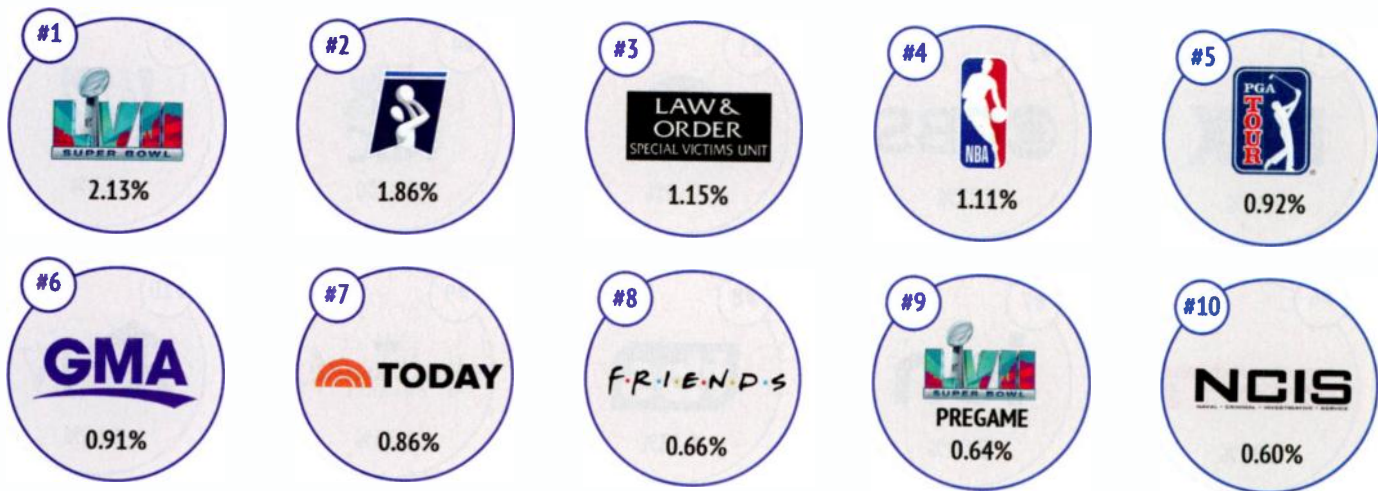
% OF LOCALLY TELEVISED GAMES AVAILABLE VIA RSN *(counts approximate)*

RSN	MLB	NBA	NHL
Bally Sports	50%	55%	49%
All Other RSNs	50%	45%	51%

Source: One Touch Intelligence's StreamTRAK service, Sports Rights Tracker.

VIZIO February's Most-Watched TV Programming INScape

Of all the live, linear minutes watched on VIZIO smart TVs in February, 2.13% was spent watching the Big Game. Other sports programming such as college basketball and NBA games were also among the most-watched by audiences.



Via VIZIO's InScape, the TV data company with insights from a panel of 20 million active and opted-in smart TVs. Data is linear, live TV only and includes all episode types (new and reruns). Rankings are by percent share duration, defined as 'of all the live, linear minutes watched from Feb. 1-24, 2023, X% of the time was spent on show Y.'



PAPER POWER

More than half of the energy demand at U.S. pulp, paper and paper-based packaging mills is met using renewable, carbon-neutral biomass energy.

Source: American Forest & Paper Association, 2022



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MY TURN
By Kent Gibbons
@CableKent

Lessons From Wonder Women

There's a lot to learn in looking at the career paths of this year's honorees

Business careers don't always go as planned. Including in show business. But when they do go well — as they have for the 15 media leaders we salute here as Wonder Women of New York and for Woman of Influence Margaret Brennan — they can teach many lessons.

Scanning the Wonder Women profiles gathered here, some themes are familiar.

TV can be a great career, although not everyone is cut out to anchor the evening news like Katie Couric, which was Suzanne Sullivan of Fox's dream (that or becoming an architect). Instead, like Sullivan, you might find out your superpower is keeping the news anchors on the air by successfully selling ads.

Media careers can help women help society, as AMC's Marnie Black discovered early on at MTV, working

on civil-rights and sexual-health campaigns, and as Charter's Sharon Peters has learned through company programs like Spectrum Internet Assist. Black noted that "Judy McGrath, who was chairman of MTV, used to say we had an obligation to use our superpowers for good." And Peters said: "I love to work on projects where you feel like you are helping people get what they need."

Many Multichannel News Wonder Women have persevered through mergers and acquisitions, followed by cutbacks and reorganizations. That can put a strain on any leader — but the ones who help their organization find their way through can really earn their co-workers' respect (as TCM's Pola Changnon has done).

I interviewed both Changnon and Telemundo's Karen Barroeta and came away impressed that both moved up to important new roles at their companies in early 2020, right about the time

employment for so many changed to working from home. If you can make it as a leader in those circumstances, you can make it anywhere.

What you read here is only a fraction of what these Wonder Women of New York have accomplished. It's also just the beginning of what they have to tell us. More will be revealed at the celebration of their award, on Thursday, March 23, at the fabulous Ziegfeld Ballroom in Manhattan. The inside stories of their skill and longevity await that coming-out party.

In the meantime, take a lesson in self-confidence from TV One's Rori Peters ("I'm stubborn. I say, I know I can do this, fix a problem, change someone's mind") and in self-belief from A+E's Michelle Strong ("I wish I knew then all the wonderful things I know now about perseverance and not listening to people that crush your dreams and how you should keep going on with that passion").

Wonder Women have learned much, and have much to pass along. ●

This year's Wonder Women of New York have much to tell us.



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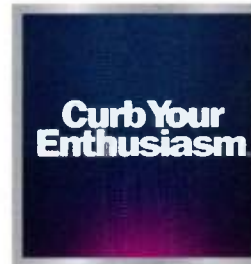
TOM ADAMS

Former Executive Vice President,
Field Operations,
Charter Communications, Inc.



ITALIA COMMISSO WEINAND

Executive Vice President,
Programming and Human Resources,
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