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2024 WOMAN OF INFLUENCE:
GLAAD PRESIDENT & CEO SARAH KATE ELLIS



WONDER WOMEN OF NEW YORK

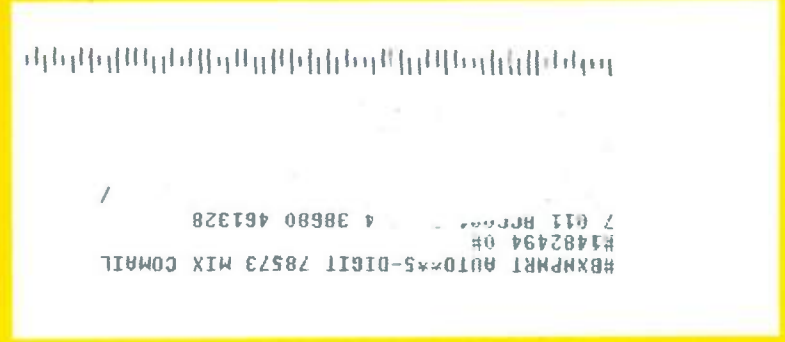
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10 SPECIAL REPORT: WONDER WOMEN OF NEW YORK

FEATURES

**10 SPECIAL REPORT:
WONDER WOMEN OF NEW YORK**
Meet the 15 remarkable female industry leaders who'll be honored by B+C Multichannel News at a gala luncheon at Manhattan's Ziegfeld Ballroom on March 21.

**8 WOMAN OF INFLUENCE:
SARAH KATE ELLIS**
GLAAD's president and CEO takes personally the job of making sure the LGBTQ community is depicted accurately and fairly in all media.
By R. Thomas Umstead

4 LEAD-IN
For years, being a TV antihero was a man's game, but audiences are warming up to less likable women as lead characters.
By Michael Malone



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4 LEAD-IN

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FUTURE

Connectors
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Killer Queens: Why Women Antiheroes Are Winning Viewers Over

Audiences have become increasingly OK with less-than-likable female characters



By Michael Malone
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Well before the fourth installment of *True Detective* premiered, showrunner/executive producer Issa López had a conversation with Jodie Foster, hoping to bring the superstar on board. Foster loved the script, López said, but didn't quite see herself playing Police Chief Liz Danvers.

Foster said the character might be "bitter and tired and a terrible stepmom," López shared.

López countered, "You want me to make her into an asshole?"

Foster's response? "Yup."

Slowly, the concept of a TV rarity — the female antihero — began to take shape. "We've had a lot of beautiful, good TV of the peak era that is based on male antiheroes," López told B+C Multichannel

News before the *True Detective* season premiere. "It would be so interesting to get a female one out there."

The antihero has been a cornerstone of peak TV, but they've almost always been men. That is changing. In *True Detective: Night Country*, Danvers drives her officers to the point of exhaustion. She's a single woman in constant battle with her stepdaughter. Spiky and anxious, she finds a wee bit of comfort in alcohol and sex.

Still, the smiles are rare.

In episode three, Chief Danvers tells her wholesome young protege Peter to have State Trooper Evangeline Navarro transferred to Danvers' squad. Danvers and Navarro, played by Kali Reis, have a stormy history.

"I thought you hated Navarro," Peter says.

"I do," responds Danvers. "I hate everyone. Hate you, especially now."

Nonetheless, the audience roots for Danvers.

Other new antiheroes include Sofia Vergara's title character in *Griselda*

Sofia Vergara stars in Netflix's *Griselda*, the story of a Colombian drug lord's wife who relocates to Miami where she becomes a drug kingpin herself.

on Netflix, Kate Winslet's Chancellor Elena Vernham in *The Regime* on HBO and Nicole Kidman's Margaret in Prime Video's *Expats*.

The trend arises as women continue to grow their economic and social clout, more females move into power positions in television and scripted programs have grown rapidly in recent years, opening the door to more female showrunners and more varied perspectives. It finally "became time to look at women in that morally gray area," said Linda Ong, founder and CEO of consulting outfit Cultique.

It used to be that leading female characters had to be likable and strong female characters were villains. "Society came around to understand that all humans, men and women, can be good and bad," Ong said.

Blame Tony

The male antihero, be it Tony Soprano, Don Draper or Walter White, has been around at least since *The Sopranos* de-

buted on HBO in 1999. Female antiheroes, not so much.

In an issue of *The New Yorker* in January, Sofia Coppola told of her efforts to make a series out of the Edith Wharton novel *The Custom of the Country* with Apple TV Plus, with Florence Pugh cast as Undine Spragg, a temperamental young lady from the Midwest trying to break into high society in New York.

Coppola spoke about how Apple TV Plus killed the show before it aired. "They didn't get the character of Undine," she said. "She's so 'unlikable.' But so is Tony Soprano!"

TV pundits were asked to name female antiheroes over the past few decades, and the brief list includes Shiv Roy from *Succession*, Carrie Mathison from *Homeland*, Annalise Keating from *How to Get Away With Murder* and Raquel "Raq" Thomas from *Power Book III: Raising Kanan*.

In the more recent era, Ong added the female leads from Prime Video's *Mr. and Mrs. Smith*, Apple TV Plus's *Lessons in Chemistry* and Netflix's *Beef* to the list. "Now, women have cultural permission to be as 'difficult' — if not more so — as men, instead of needing to be 'likable,'" she said. "Even Taylor Swift's Grammy-nominated song 'Anti-Hero' recognizes this shift. Women like being celebrated as perfectly imperfect, because that's how a lot of women see themselves."

Griselda sees Vergara as the wife and business partner of a drug kingpin in Medellin, Colombia, who moves with her sons to Miami after her husband asks her to pull off a highly immoral maneuver, and picks up the drug trade there. It debuted January 25.

Expats, set in Hong Kong, has three American women, including Kidman's Margaret, whose lives intersect after a tragedy. It "explores what happens when the line between victimhood and culpability becomes blurred," according to Prime Video. It premiered January 26.

The Regime has Winslet as the leader of a fictional European



Above, Kate Winslet reigns as the dictator of a fictional European country in *The Regime*. Below, Kali Reis and Jodie Foster in *True Detective: Night Country*.

country in the midst of a breakdown. It debuted March 3.

Will Tracy, executive producer on *The Regime*, said he never had the anti-hero concept in mind when writing the scripts. "I think my hope is just to write a character who is interesting," he said. "And if the audience finds them interesting too, then hopefully, with time, they might find themselves caring quite a bit more about that character's well-being than they might have initially thought."

He added, "Perhaps that's the very definition of the antihero, come to think of it!"

Annette Bening, who plays matriarch Joy Delaney in the new Peacock drama *Apples Never Fall* (see page 6), which sees Joy go missing after she invites a mysterious young female stranger into her home, touched on playing complicated characters at the TCA Winter Press Tour in February. "It's not just strong characters. That's kind of a cliché, isn't it?" she said. "It's a strong female character, but a strong character is a nuanced one who has flaws, who screws up, who does the wrong thing, who is crazy or eccentric in some way. That's how people are.

People have all these different colors. So, yeah, strong characters are great, but a strong character that has vulnerability is much more interesting." Having a big name in the lead role may make it easier for the audience to take on the mostly unfamiliar notion of a female antihero. The thinking is, a viewer may stick with a tricky character longer if it is played by Winslet, Kidman, Viola Davis or another actress they

are well familiar with, and perhaps even fans of.

"If it is perceived as a risk to be a female-led series that refuses to soften the protagonist's edges, which is in line with the general stereotypes facing female characters across TV's history," said Myles McNutt, Old Dominion associate professor of communication and theater arts, "it's much easier to take that risk when producers feel confident that audiences will tune in to see big stars in those roles regardless of the character in question."

Staying True

True Detective: Night Country, set in Alaska in the part of winter where the sun does not rise, saw Liz Danvers and Evangeline Navarro as ill-fitting partners facing a cryptic case involving eight scientists who work at a research station who have disappeared, in a remote village where indigenous residents battle with a mining company flagrantly fouling the environment. HBO called season four the most-watched season for the anthology series, averaging 12.7 million cross-platform viewers.

Issa López directed every episode. She is on board for the next season of *True Detective*. Francesca Orsi, executive VP, HBO Programming, and head of HBO drama series and films, called her a "one-of-a-kind, rare talent that speaks directly to HBO's creative spirit."

Time will tell if López dreams up another female antihero for season five. The audience, for what it's worth, is up for it.

Melanie Marnich, showrunner and executive producer on *Apples Never Fall*, said the abundance of scripted shows in recent years has meant "more complex storytelling and more complex characters, and finally women are coming to the fore of that, both in the writing and creating of shows and the performances. We're able to embrace the complexity of a woman, of her drive, of her history, of her desires. I think it's just a very honest approach to our gender." ●



THE WATCHMAN

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



By Michael Malone
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'9-1-1' Dials in From New Network

Cop-and-firefighter drama 9-1-1 debuts on ABC March 14. Produced by 20th Television in association with Ryan Murphy Television and Brad Falchuk Teley-Vision, it has Angela Bassett, Peter Krause and Jennifer Love Hewitt in the cast.

9-1-1 had six seasons on Fox. Cast and producers spoke of the move at the TCA Winter Press Tour in Pasadena last month. Tim Minear, co-creator and showrunner, said the new network has given 9-1-1 new energy. "It feels like the first year of the show in a lot of ways," he said. "The enthusiasm at the network is through the roof ... They're just really engaged, and they already love the show. I just think it's a shot in the arm for all of us."

9-1-1 reaches 100 episodes this season. Season seven offers the usual array of extravagant disasters, including a tsunami and a fighter jet that goes missing in the skies.

Minear said 9-1-1 is more than a disaster show. "It can be a rom-com, it can be a soap, it can be satire, it can be a heartbreaking melodrama," he said. "It can be all of those things in the same episode."

'Apples Never Fall' Is Peacock's New Take on Court Shows

Also premiering March 14 is limited series *Apples Never Fall* on Peacock. Based on a Liane Moriarty novel, the drama features the Delaney couple, played by Annette Bening and Sam Neill, who sell their tennis academy in Florida and plot



their retirement. They get a knock on the door from a stranger — a woman who apparently just escaped from a violent partner. The young woman essentially moves in with the Delaneys, arousing the suspicions of their adult children.

The suspicions multiply when Joy, played by Bening, disappears.

There are seven episodes.

Bening's many, many films include *American Beauty*, *Postcards From the Edge* and *The Kids Are All Right*. She was intrigued to try a TV series. "I thought, wow, this is just such an opportunity," she said at the TCA Press Tour. "It was really fun for me because I had never done something over so many episodes."

There's lots and lots of tennis in the series, and some of the court scenes get pretty hot. Showrunner/exec producer Melanie Marnich said all the tennis gives *Apples Never Fall* its edge. "What's so powerful about it is when you're a family of deeply competitive people raised by deeply competitive people, it's in the blood, it's in the DNA and, to me, that amps up all the mystery," she said. "It amps up what could have been possible, what these people could do to each other in the name of competition, in the name of competing for love." ●



WATCH THIS ...



Season 20 of *Grey's Anatomy* starts on ABC March 14. Chandra Wilson and James Pickens Jr. remain in the cast, while Ellen Pompeo's Meredith Grey is a recurring character. Season three of *Girls5Eva* also premieres on Netflix March 14. The show, about a '90s girl group that reunites in the present day, has Sara Bareilles, Renee Elise Goldsberry, Paula Pell and Busy Philipps in the cast. 📺 March



15, *Manhunt* begins on Apple TV. A thriller about the hunt for John Wilkes Booth after the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, the limited series has Anthony Boyle playing Booth and Hamish Linklater portraying Lincoln. 📺 On March 17, *Alice & Jack* debuts on PBS. Andrea Riseborough plays Alice and Domhnall Gleeson is Jack. She's a financier and he's a biochemist, and their connection is complicated. Also on March 17 is *90 Day Fiance: Happily Ever After?* on TLC. The series features couples that viewers have come to know from the flagship series.



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Woman of Influence

GLAAD's Sarah Kate Ellis Is an Advocate for Media Accuracy

Nonprofit's president and CEO has spent the past decade making sure the LGBTQ community is fairly covered and depicted, with much more to do



By R. Thomas Umstead
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The year may only be a few months old, but GLAAD president and CEO Sarah Kate Ellis already has a lot to celebrate.

Ellis, who will be presented with the 2024 Woman of Influence award as part of the Multichannel News Wonder Women of New York celebration on March 21, recently marked her 10th anniversary as the head of the nonprofit LGBTQ advocacy group. Her efforts in leading the organization's charge to create initiatives, campaigns and programs pushing for the fair and accurate media coverage of the LGBTQ community earned GLAAD the TV Academy's 2023 Governors Award during the 75th Primetime Emmy Awards on January 15.

Yet the former Condé Nast and Time Inc. executive and married mother of two

teenage children has no plans to sit on her laurels. Ellis and GLAAD were set to honor Oprah Winfrey and Niecy Nash-Betts during the organization's 35th annual GLAAD Media Awards in Los Angeles on March 14, the first of two awards ceremonies for the nonprofit. The second will take place in New York on May 11.

Ellis will also continue to guide GLAAD's mandate for greater inclusion in media through the GLAAD Media Institute, which was established in 2018 to foster the organization's research into LGBTQ representation and acceptance.

GLAAD will also look to expand LGBTQ advocacy efforts more aggressively into the social media and gaming platforms, in an effort to make sure that all media offer a true and accurate representation of the LGBTQ and transgender communities, Ellis said.

Ahead of the Wonder Women of New York awards luncheon March 21 at the Ziegfeld Ballroom in Manhattan, Ellis talked about her goals for GLAAD, her accomplishments and

disappointments through her decade-long tenure, and why her family life means that she takes her work personally. Here's an edited transcript of that conversation.

B+C Multichannel News: Over the past decade, how far has the entertainment industry come in terms of its acceptance and inclusion of the LGBTQ community?

Sarah Kate Ellis: I think our role with media — whether it be TV shows or streaming or journalism — has gone from a watchdog to more of a partnership as the culture has changed. We've moved into more of a partnership with the media. I'll also say that as new forms of media, like social media, have grown and evolved, we've taken on more watchdog roles. So with traditional media, including streaming. I would say that our relationship has grown in a positive direction. With other, newer platforms, we've had to take more of a watchdog advisory role in those spaces.

B+C: With that, has GLAAD changed its focus on the audience it wants to reach?

SKE: What never changes is our audience, and our audience has consistently been what is "the movable middle," those folks who understand the humanity of our community but might not have the education or information about our community. How we reach them has changed dramatically. We've also shifted our focus more toward the transgender community. About 90% of Americans say they know somebody who's lesbian or gay or bisexual, but only 30% of Americans say they know somebody who is transgender. So our focus has shifted in a way around transgender and nonconforming folks, and helping to educate people about who they are as their visibility has grown through TV, theater and on video games and other various media platforms.

B+C: Last month, GLAAD was honored with the Television Academy's Governor's Award at the Emmys. What did that recognition mean to you personally and to the organization?

SKE: We're going to be 40 years old next year, so that was a true recognition for what our founders set out to do, which was to increase the visibility of the LGBTQ community through television. And so to be recognized by the Television Academy with their Governor's Award was a full-circle moment for the organization. And personally, having spent the last 10 years at the organization and making it a bigger partner with Hollywood by increasing storytelling, it was, for me, a moment of real validation.

B+C: During your acceptance speech, you said that GLAAD's advocacy efforts are personal to you and your family. How does your work at GLAAD influence and gratify you on a personal level?

SKE: For me, I came to GLAAD when my kids were 4. Being married to a woman and bringing kids into this world, I thought it was my duty to create a better tomorrow and protect my family. In my opinion, there is no better place to do that than GLAAD and all of the work that the organization does. So for me, it's been personal since day one of accepting the job, and it's why I accepted the job. One of our rally cries at GLAAD is, 'it's personal,' and

for everyone at the organization, it means the world to us to be able to do the work that we're doing to protect our community and advance acceptance for our community.

B+C: What has been your biggest accomplishment during your 10 years at GLAAD?

SKE: I would say creating the GLAAD Media Institute, because that has enabled us to scale our work in an unprecedented way and has increased our impact tremendously. The institute works as an adviser for Fortune 500 companies, all the major gaming companies and the major studios. We're embedded in over a dozen Hollywood projects at any given time. Through the institute, we do a TV report and

“ I thought it was my duty to create a better tomorrow and protect my family. ... So for me, it's been personal since day one of accepting the job, and it's why I accepted the job.”

Sarah Kate Ellis

recently released our gaming report. So it's a consultancy, a think tank and an advocacy arm on the ground, both local and globally, where we work with LGBTQ activists.

B+C: How about your biggest disappointment?

SKE: I think the backlash we've seen recently has been the biggest disappointment. When I started at GLAAD we didn't have marriage equality yet, and pretty quickly after we were able to achieve that. To think that all of the accomplishments we had made in becoming a more equal, just and accepting society are now so fragile. How quickly they are being rolled back is my biggest disappointment.

(Editor's note: Ellis later said she was referring to recent state legislation and local and federal court rulings she said were harmful to LGBTQ people and other diverse communities, including the overturning of Roe v. Wade, rulings on voting rights and more than 500 state-level anti-LGBTQ bills introduced last year, as well as to the group's effort to mobilize to pass the federal Respect for

Marriage Act after conservative Supreme Court justices signaled a potential rollback of rulings affirming the legality of same-sex marriage.)

B+C: What goals have you set for yourself and GLAAD in 2024?

SKE: We have some strategic initiatives set for next year. One of them has been really focusing on the gaming industry. No. 2 is our work on the election. We want to work through the media to make sure that it is accountable and to make sure that the candidates are being asked LGBTQ questions, and that any kind of LGBTQ conversations that come up are accurate and real and not misinformative. We also want to ensure that every LGBTQ person

that's eligible is registered to vote and has a plan to go to vote. We've been doing that work since 2018 and it's been incredibly successful.

I would say third is making sure that trans stories are being told across the board. We're on the ground now in Oklahoma where there was the beating death of a young, gender-nonconforming person named Nex. [Nex Benedict, a nonbinary 16-year-old student, died February 8 after they were beaten up in a women's room at their high school in Owasso, Oklahoma, according to published reports.]

The negative forces against our community have grown and been emboldened, especially over the past six to seven years. The use of media platforms to distribute misinformation and disinformation about our community and targeting our community has led to an onslaught of anti-LGBTQ legislation that we've never seen the likes of. We want to make sure that Nex's story is being told, and that the world sees the culture that's being created by anti-LGBTQ activists and what it's doing to our youth. ●

Ingrid Ciprián-Matthews

President
CBS News



By Michael Malone
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It is an eventful time at CBS News to say the least. CBS Mornings is seeing real growth against its well-entrenched rivals on ABC and NBC. CBS News Streaming is focusing on the election with daily program *America Decides* and the CBS Evening News franchise “Eye on America” is expanding from a weekly segment to four nights a week and a presence throughout the CBS News and Stations portfolio.

Overseeing it all is Ingrid Ciprián-Matthews, who was named CBS News president last August, promoted from executive VP of newsgathering. Though the competition is as fierce as it has ever been, she believes it’s an ideal time to deliver CBS News content to America. “It’s a great opportunity to not only maintain the legacy of CBS News but also create more opportunities for all of our journalists to reach many more people on every single platform,” she said.

The platforms are numerous and Ciprián-Matthews has hired a key person to streamline the blast of news coming in each day and pinpoint the ideal slot within CBS News for stories to inhabit. In February, Alturo Rhymes was named executive producer of daily news, working with newsgathering teams and producers to find the best home for their content.

“CBS News is known for its storytelling;

CBS News is known for its reporting,” she said. “We could help fuel that and organize that, reporting in a more streamlined fashion, with a daily news executive producer who can help all of our stories and our reporting funnel to all of our platforms.”

Ciprián-Matthews joined CBS News in 1993, after a run as managing editor of CNN’s New York bureau. She started at CBS as a senior producer for live segments in the morning newscast, and was also London deputy bureau chief, senior producer on the CBS Evening News, and CBS News VP of news, among other posts.

George Cheeks, CBS president and CEO, said she is “the ideal journalist and executive to lead CBS News in this critical moment when fact-based, unbiased reporting means so much. Her unique blend of work and life experience helps infuse perspective and empathy into our coverage and culture across the division.”

CBS News and the owned stations became one division in 2021, and Ciprián-Matthews said national and local continue to work together more. Station voices will play a key role as the election season heats up, with local reporters working alongside such network figures as Ed O’Keefe, Nancy Cordes and Robert Costa, to provide insights into key issues and races from Middle America and beyond. Ciprián-Mat-

thews mentioned “embeds” in the communities of America, “listening to people, what the issues are that matter to them, why they matter to them” and sharing those insights in both local and national broadcasts.

A Unique Perspective

Ciprián-Matthews was born in the Dominican Republic and moved to the U.S. around the age of 4. That has given her a different perspective than most network news chiefs. “I look at things through a very different lens,” she said. “When I came to this country, I was not what people were used to seeing. I was not supposed to be president of CBS News. I was not supposed to be a journalist.”

Through sheer determination she made it happen.

Ciprián-Matthews embraces the role of mentor these days, saying it is the responsibility of everyone in a leadership position and doesn’t have to be a formal corporate role. “You mentor in your conversations, listening to someone and exchanging an idea and perhaps disagreeing with what they’re saying,” she said, “but doing so in a way that actually expands horizons.”

When Ciprián-Matthews is not running a news operation in the era of the nonstop news cycle, she unwinds with meditation before the workday, and watching British mystery series and films with her husband after work.

Wendy McMahon, president and CEO, CBS News and Stations and CBS Media Ventures, said CBS News has the right person steering the ship. “Ingrid’s editorial expertise, her depth of knowledge and sensitivity to the nuance of the subjects we cover around the globe and her impeccable news judgment make her an incredible leader,” she said. “I am also in awe of her unwavering commitment to our journalism and to the people and culture of CBS News.” ●

“I look at things through a very different lens. When I came to this country, I was not what people were used to seeing. I was not supposed to be president of CBS News.”

Ingrid Ciprián-Matthews



CBS NEWS
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INGRID CIPRIÁN-MATTHEWS
PRESIDENT, CBS NEWS

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“WONDER WOMAN NYC”**

Lucilla D'Agostino

Head of Evolution Media and
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By Stuart Miller
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In the softball diamond, every player faces the batter except the catcher, who looks out at all the action, taking a broader view of the game.

Young Lucilla D'Agostino played catcher on her high-school varsity team.

"My stepfather helped me understand that the catcher was calling the shots and because I saw everything and could position players, I could help everyone on the field realize their potential and see how we could all win together," said D'Agostino, one of unscripted television's leading creatives and producers, with credits across virtually every content genre, including documentary, docusoap, lifestyle, and competition. Last summer, she was named head of both Evolution Media and Big Fish Entertainment (both MGM companies), overseeing creative strategy, original programming and development and leveraging intellectual property for growth across different platforms.

"I still feel that's my job," she said. "If I see talent in someone and put them in the right gig I'll make a warrior out of that person."

D'Agostino grew up in rural New Jersey, loving writing. Fantasizing about being a war correspondent, she studied broadcast journalism at Syracuse University. Being on camera early in her career, though, changed her mind.

"I was so insecure," she recalled. "When they told me I needed to cut my hair, I called my mother crying. She said: 'You are not meant for this. Don't you love plugging everything in?' She meant I was good at putting things together. 'Just do that, then you won't cry.'"

Putting things together and plugging them

in is another good metaphor for D'Agostino's work. In her new role, she's now heading up two companies with properties including Evolution's *Vanderpump Rules* and *Real Housewives*. She had previously produced *The Real Housewives of New Jersey* for Sirens Media.

D'Agostino, who splits her time between her Brooklyn home and Los Angeles hotels, joined Big Fish in 2018 as its first chief creative officer and co-president. While she strives to ensure the folks at Evolution know "I'm not here to mess with your culture; I'm here to be your cheerleader," she does intend to keep pushing both companies in new directions. "There's such a compression in our business and wins are fewer and far between," she said. "The status quo won't get us where we need to go. We have to adapt."

Adaptable Across Genres

D'Agostino has varied enough experience to adapt. She has executive produced such series as *Amy Schumer Learns To Cook*, *A White House Thanksgiving With First Lady Jill Biden*, *History's Greatest Mysteries* with

Laurence Fishburne and *On Patrol: Live*, as well as documentaries and other series for networks such as Discovery, National Geographic and Bravo.

"Some people have a skill set as a show-runner but not as a businessperson or the other way around but she does both well," Barry Poznick, the MGM Alternative general manager to whom she reports, said. "She is thoughtful and mindful of people — crews love working with her — but she doesn't waste time and is always aware of budgets and deadlines. She can walk into any room, whether it's the White House or a *Housewives* house, and get you exactly what you need."

In an era before reality TV flourished, D'Agostino went through her own evolution. She started doing satellite video news releases. She worked with Dan Cesareo, who would later launch Big Fish and bring her aboard, making content on a nonexistent budget.

"We were the producers, the writers, the shooters, the editors," she said. "We used to pool our money and sit on the curb and share a sandwich."

A job creating content for Sony Music on the lives of pop icons like Britney Spears and Destiny's Child also required her to be producer, camera operator and editor, creating graphics and picking the music. The job was "wildly gratifying" and those years are "the secret to my success," she said.

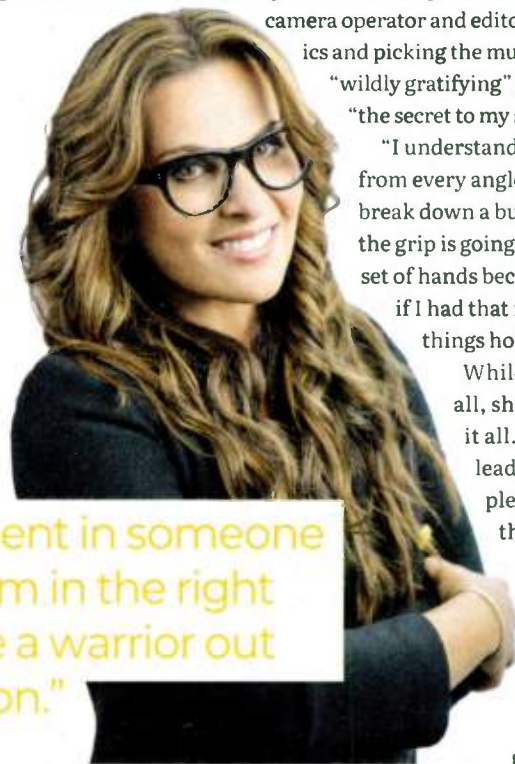
"I understand the business from every angle," she said. "I can break down a budget and know the grip is going to want an extra set of hands because I would have if I had that many lights. I see things holistically."

While she has done it all, she doesn't know it all. "I'm the type of leader that's quite pleased to admit that I don't know everything,"

D'Agostino said. "If I have something to learn, that means I'm still growing." ●

"If I see talent in someone and put them in the right gig, I'll make a warrior out of that person."

Lucilla D'Agostino



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Lucilla D'Agostino

Head of Big Fish Entertainment and Evolution Media

*and all the
Wonder Women Awards NYC 2024 honorees*

Stephanie Dorman

Chief Customer Officer

Mediaocean



By Jon Lafayette
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When Stephanie Dorman joined Mediaocean to run its client support team, the company was a small software startup called Media Bank. “We were maybe not as professional as we needed to be to support some of these large agency customers that we’d won,” Nick Galassi, Mediaocean president and chief financial officer, recalled.

That wasn’t the last problem she would fix. After Media Bank merged with Donovan Data to become Mediaocean, Dorman reluctantly agreed to run the combined company’s human resources department.

“We’d done some big acquisitions and they weren’t going super well,” Galassi said. “We were having personnel issues. She put the needs of the business first and she did an awesome job with it. She got everything working again. People love working for her.”

Once the HR department was running smoothly, Dorman moved from chief people officer to chief customer officer, which made her the main point of contact for all of its major agency holding companies. “Stephanie’s had a number of different roles at Mediaocean and she’s excelled at all of them,” Galassi said.

Dorman grew up in Huntsville, Alabama, and (Roll Tide!) went to the University of Alabama. After the pandemic, she moved back down south to be near her family.

She said she was never one to make five-year plans. “I knew what I didn’t want to be,” Dorman said. “I didn’t want to be lazy. I didn’t want to be poor. I didn’t want to be alone. And I didn’t want to be in a position where other things dictated the choices I needed to make.”

After college she wound up on Wall Street. A former supervisor moved to Yahoo’s Right

Media startup and asked her to join him.

Bill Wise, the CEO of Right Media, left to start Media Bank. About a year later, he called, and she’s been there ever since.

Dorman won over Kevin McEville, senior VP for technology at ad agency Canvas Worldwide, with an unusual plan to use a special team to onboard the agency rather than the team that would support the agency.

“I was skeptical, but by the time it was done,

“I knew what I didn’t want to be. ... And I didn’t want to be in a position where other things dictated the choices I needed to make.”

Stephanie Dorman

I was a fan of the approach, but a larger fan of hers,” McEville said. “Her personality got me over the hump and then the outcome was really very solid. That personality starts with humor, but “we work at what needs to get done,” he said.

It’s part of the way Dorman is overseeing the transformation

of client service at Mediaocean, including the implementation of artificial intelligence as a way to let employees focus on providing bespoke services instead of answering basic questions.

Lisa Painter, senior director, executive experiences at Zendesk, called Dorman “one of our favorite customers.”

It didn’t start that way. After installing Zendesk’s software, Dorman was furious about the service Mediaocean received and emailed Zendesk’s chief customer officer and chief technology officer, saying she wanted out of their contract. On the very same day Zendesk went public and rang the bell at the New York Stock Exchange, its management sent Painter to address Dorman’s issues.

“She did a great job,” Dorman said. “She has a talent for bringing people together.”

Dorman became one of the founding members of Mindshare, an executive community started by Painter for Zendesk clients that has grown to about 500 people. “A lot of people look up to her,” Painter said. “She’s really articulate. She’s also a very straight shooter.”

Leading the Way for Women

Adina Salah, senior VP, corporate operations at Mediaocean, said that when she started at the company, she was “struck by the positive spirit that [Dorman] exudes as a leader and a woman executive.”

Dorman has been “a game changer,” Salah said. “The amount of women leaders has grown within the company and they have a voice when critical things are happening.”

Dorman has a son, four stepkids, two grandkids and a beagle named Charlie. Her husband is opening a cabinet store and Alabamans are charmed by his British accent.

What’s next for Dorman? She said she’s in the process of trying to

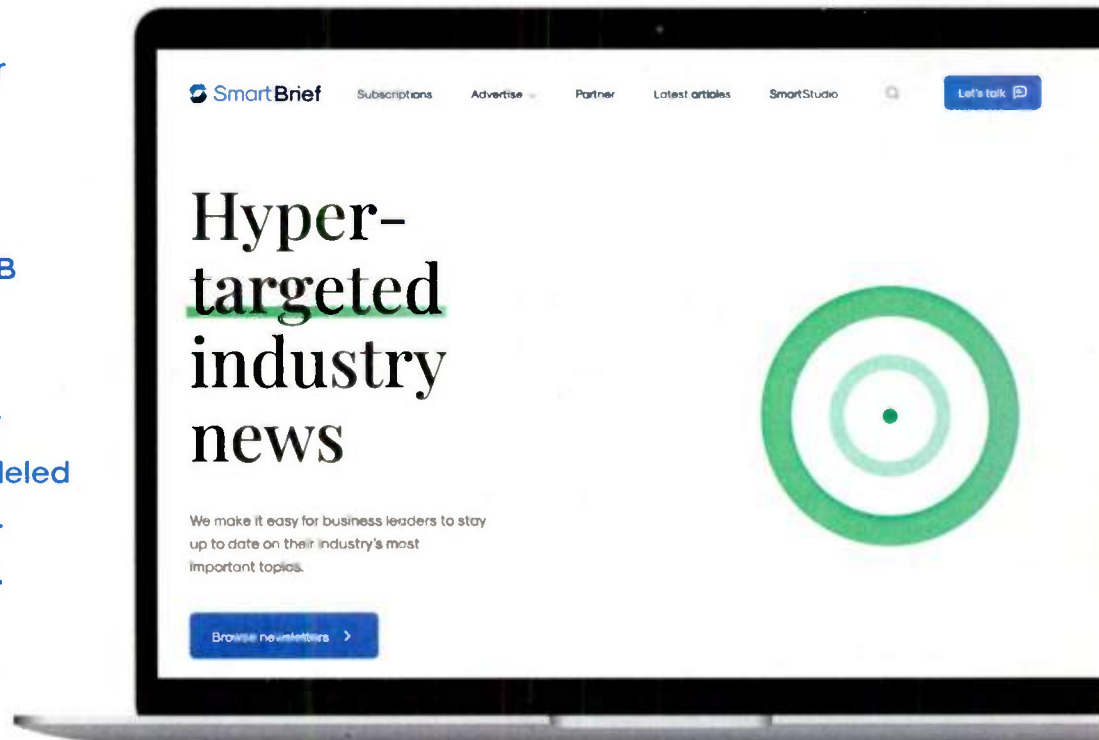




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Kim Granito

Chief Marketing Officer
AMC Networks



By Paige Albiniak
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A chief marketing officer of AMC Networks, Kim Granito must seamlessly oversee multiple disparate brands under one overall umbrella.

AMC is focused on premier franchise scripted originals like *The Walking Dead* and the Anne Rice universe, while streaming service Acorn TV offers international dramas. Then there are anime streaming service Hidive and horror, thriller and supernatural streaming service Shudder, which each have their own sets of fans.

"There's not a one-size-fits-all audience," Granito said. "Each brand is highly nuanced and very specifically tailored to the audience and their behaviors."

"Gone are the days when you show up on a specific day and date to watch a show," she continued. "There are real advantages for businesses who understand their audiences in a very complex and data-driven way, while also showing up with one voice and the same message across business verticals. We are massively focused on creating campaigns that don't only drive our audiences to watch our shows, but advertisers to buy and distributors to reach their goals."

Understanding that data and implementing strategies to take advantage of those learnings is part of what makes Granito a great marketer and leader, her colleagues said.

"Kim has a fantastic ability to transform large amounts of raw data into compelling, targeted performance campaigns, expertly balancing data-driven precision with the power of branding and strong creative," AMC Networks chief commercial officer Kim Kelleher said.

Granito also leads her teams through dif-

ficult tasks while maintaining high levels of collaboration between them.

"Kim can distill the most complex business challenges into winning strategies, pairing that superpower with an incredible creative sensibility and deep empathy for people," AMC Networks executive VP of media and marketing strategy Sylvia George said.

Added Kelleher: "Kim's leadership style is collaborative and caring — no one knows better how to get incredible work out of a team."

Less than a year into the job as CMO, Granito has worked to unify AMC Networks' entire

“I love the process of creative collaboration. It's my favorite part of the job.”

Kim Granito

marketing organization while retaining oversight over its branded integrations shop, Content Room, where "brands meet fans."

"Kim faced the daunting task of unifying multiple talented but disconnected groups into one seamless team, moving to the same drumbeat and activating the full power of AMC Networks and its many partners to develop innovative campaigns," George said. "She's done this time and time again, including rallying the entire organization around reinvigorating the cornerstone franchise for the company — *The Walking Dead* Universe — with celebrated and highly successful campaigns for the new spinoff series: *Dead City*, *Daryl Dixon* and now *The Ones Who Live*."

Right before Super Bowl weekend, Granito and her team were in Los Angeles for the red-carpet premiere of the latest *Walking*

Dead franchise, *The Ones Who Live*, starring Andrew Lincoln and Danai Gurira in their much-anticipated return as Rick Grimes and Michonne.

"With everything we have launched, this is arguably the most anticipated moment of the franchise since *The Walking Dead* series finale," Granito said.

Also coming up is AMC original series *Parish*, starring *Breaking Bad* and *Better Call Saul* alum Giancarlo Esposito, and the critically acclaimed Anne Rice's *Interview with the Vampire*, which shoots in New Orleans, returns this spring.

"We have a lot of fun tactics for *Interview with the Vampire* that we'll be launching around Pride in June," Granito said. "The Anne Rice IP offers dozens of stories that we think will have real longevity across all our platforms." Previous marketing efforts for *Interview with the Vampire* included the online branded *Night Market*, which is only open for shopping from sunset to sunrise.

Making Acorn Ripen

The team also is rebranding streaming service Acorn TV, which mostly serves up U.K. and internationally-produced crime dramas, "because we believe there's a broader audience for that platform," Granito said. In January, Acorn gained visibility with five-episode limited series *Monsieur Spade* starring Clive Owen. That series also airs on AMC and streaming service AMC Plus.

"Because it's a gorgeous scripted original, AMC was the right home for it," Granito said. "But because it also offers layers of crime and drama and lean-in for the audience, something we know Acorn fans really love, it made sense to co-premiere it there. It's one of our top-performing shows on AMC and it's driven significant subscribers to Acorn."

All of the different requirements of AMC's diverse brands make for a challenging and ever-changing role, but Granito relishes it.

"I love the process of creative collaboration," she said. "It's my favorite part of the job. I love getting different areas of the business together, understanding everybody's goals and breaking that down into a campaign that works for everyone. To get to be the orchestrator of great campaigns is a dream." ●

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Barbara Maushard

Senior VP of News
Hearst Television



By Michael Malone
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With primary season heating up and the monumental election looming in November, the reporters and anchors at Hearst Television stations are hustling to cover the key issues, and candidates, in their communities. Barbara Maushard manages news operations for the 35 Hearst TV stations, which include WBAL Baltimore, WCVB Boston and KCRA Sacramento. Maushard expects the Hearst TV stations to provide the most timely, relevant and accurate reportage in their markets.

"Local journalism, any journalism, is hard today," she said. "And I'm just so proud that they continue to deliver really relevant, meaningful content in these markets and provide that service that we are required to provide, but that everybody has a real passion for."

While every news operation in the Hearst group has its own issues and stories to cover, a couple of group-wide initiatives give the local newsgatherers some common ground. Forecasting Our Future was launched late in 2021 and addresses the issues people face in navigating changing weather patterns and their impact on communities. The stories come from stations, Hearst TV's Washington bureau and its national investigative and consumer reporting units. Around 120 meteorologists contribute their research and observations to the mission.

Stories include WESH Orlando's investigation into how coral reefs damaged by climate change recover and WLKY Louisville's report on a renewable natural gas plant in Southern Indiana that is turning garbage into energy.

"We really think that effort is critical, not only to the day-in and day-out weather

coverage we provide, but to help viewers understand the impact of the weather and the climate in those individual communities," Maushard said.

Another group initiative is Project CommUNITY, which covers the issues that divide the nation and the efforts to unite communities. Stories include WVTM Birmingham's "Women Breaking Barriers" series; KETV Omaha hosting and airing a Teen Summit in 2023 that brought teenagers in to talk about key issues; and WBAL hosting a panel in 2020 to address and improve race relations.

All Politics Is Local

All Hearst TV newsgatherers are also focused on election coverage. Hearst TV has partnerships with factcheck.org as well as PolitiFact, both ensuring that viewers get fact-based reporting. Maushard called fact-checking in the era of deepfakes and disinformation "more important than ever."

As much as the presidential race gets the big headlines, Maushard noted that every market has key issues surrounding local elections, too. "The presidential race is important, is critical and we're going to be covering that," she said. "But every state has something. Every community has something that they'll be focusing on."

"I absolutely want to be as active and as helpful as I can be to women, and to men. To anybody who wants to grow in this business."

Barbara Maushard

Jordan Wertlieb, Hearst executive VP and chief operating officer, said Maushard is "absolutely tireless" in thinking how to improve local content.

Before moving up to corporate, she had been news director at KHBS-KHOG Fort Smith-Fayetteville, Arkansas; WISN Milwaukee; and WESH Orlando. Wertlieb said Maushard was a logical choice to slide into a larger leadership position in New York.

"I describe her as one of those great athletes who move into management and just excel because they understand the playing field so well," he said.

Most of Maushard's mentors early in her career were men and she's eager to fulfill that role for aspiring female employees in the Hearst TV newsrooms. She is an executive sponsor of Hearst TV's employee research group, and proudly shared that more women are running Hearst TV news operations than men: 16 females and 13 males. She hopes she can inspire more women to move up to leadership positions.

"I absolutely want to be as active and as helpful as I can be to women, and to men," she said. "To anybody who wants to grow in this business."

When she's not working, Maushard enjoys family time, including quality time with her 11-year-old son.

She also enjoys singing and had planned to learn piano after retiring, then decided there was no reason not to learn it sooner.

"I've been playing for the last few weeks, and I think I might be able to do it," Maushard said. "I won't be a concert pianist, but I might be able to play some songs. I'm super-excited about that." ●



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Congratulations to all of the
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Sheereen Miller-Russell

Executive VP, Ad Sales, Client Partnerships
and Inclusive Solutions

Warner Bros. Discovery



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

When people hear about something thoughtful Sheereen Miller-Russell, executive VP, client partnerships and inclusive solutions at Warner Bros. Discovery, said or did, they exclaim, "That's so Sheereen."

Esi Eggleston Bracey, chief growth and marketing officer at Unilever, first encountered Miller-Russell at a spa in Miami. Bracey didn't know who Miller-Russell was or that she was also there as part of former BET CEO Debra Lee's Leading Women Defined conferences.

"She asked me a question the way only Sheereen can do," and before you know it, they were talking about careers and Miller-Russell was sharing a meditation. "Sheereen is an extraordinary soul," Bracey said. "She's almost like an angel."

Soon, they were doing business together. Bracey, who pushed to pass the CROWN (Create a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair) Act in California, was featured in the docuseries *The Hair Tales*, about Black women's hair, executive produced by Oprah Winfrey, Tracee Ellis Ross and Michaela Angela Davis.

Miller-Russell helped get the series on Disney's Hulu and Warner Bros. Discovery's OWN Network, with Unilever's Dove as a sponsor.

She also persuaded Unilever brands to support other efforts, including OWN *Your Vote*, the OWN *Spotlight: Where Do We Go From Here?*, which aired after George Floyd was killed by Minneapolis police, and the recent premiere of *The Color Purple*.

When Bracey caught COVID-19, Miller-Russell sent a package full of immune boost-

ers. "She took the time to send me the kit," Bracey said. "It's so Sheereen."

Chauncey Wesley, executive VP and managing director for activation at Mediabrands, had been on the phone negotiating a sponsorship deal for L'Oreal for weeks with Miller-Russell. Wesley went to the MTV building and asked the other woman in the elevator if she was Sheereen.

"It didn't feel like she was a stranger," Wesley recalled. "She felt like somebody I knew. I would say one word for Sheereen is passionate."

When Wesley had her first child, baby items showed up via Amazon from Miller-Russell. "I didn't ask for it. She didn't tell me it was coming. It just showed up. That is Sheereen in a nutshell. She shows up for people."

A native of Charlotte, North Carolina, Miller-Russell dreamed of moving to New York and being a part of the *Sex and the*

“My greatest successes didn't come until I finally stood in my truth.”

Sheereen Miller-Russell

City, Yo! MTV Raps life.

Because of her mother's drug abuse, she and her sister were raised by her father. While attending Wake Forest University, she got an internship at Time Inc.

Later, Miller-Russell applied for an ad sales job at MTV. "She had no experience in the

television business and she was far and away my first choice," Dan Lovinger, now president of Olympic and Paralympic Sales at NBCUniversal, said. "She listened better than anybody I've ever interviewed. Her follow-up, based on what she hears, is impeccable."

Miller-Russell is the best gift-giver in the business, Lovinger said. "She's way beyond gift-giving. She's a gift herself."

Learning To Be Her Best Self

Miller-Russell moved to OWN in 2016 and underwent a change in approach. Early in her career, she desperately tried to be like all the white New England men who were shaped by Madison Avenue.

"I didn't know how to be them; I didn't know how to be myself in the room, either," Miller-Russell said. "My greatest successes didn't come until I finally stood in my truth."

At the same time, Miller-Russell's son asked her, "Why aren't there little boys who look like me on TV in the shows I like?"

At that point, Miller-Russell's superpower became "to make sure everyone feels seen," she said.

She spoke at WBD's 2023 upfront. "I felt so honored that [WBD chief ad sales officer] Jon Steinlauf wanted us to talk about our commitment to inclusive content monetization" and how it's critical to have resonance with Hispanic, Black and queer audiences.

"She's a mover and a shaker," Steinlauf said. "Her strong suit is she is able to build relationships for our companies with marketers we're targeting for growth or for multicultural partnerships."

Miller-Russell was a champion for *Rebuilding Black Wall Street*, a series produced by Black-owned

Sunwise Media that appeared on OWN. "Her efforts really are the glue that makes projects like *Rebuilding Black Wall Street* viable to advertisers giving opportunities beyond purely general-market content," Sunwise founder Ri-Karlo Handy said. ●





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A portrait of Sheereen Miller-Russell, a Black woman with short dark hair, smiling. She is wearing a blue blazer, a gold chain necklace, and hoop earrings. The portrait is set against a dark blue background with a large, light blue, stylized 'W' shape behind her.

Sheereen Miller-Russell

EVP, Client Partnerships &
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Proudly Congratulates Sheereen
and All of the Inspiring Wonder Women
on This Well-Deserved Recognition.

Kate Morgan

Chief Product Officer, Executive VP,
Global Media Entertainment and Games
Magid



By Kent Gibbons
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@CableKent

Kate Morgan is all about using data and insights to help the Magid consulting firm's media, entertainment and games clients better serve the changing tastes, needs and desires of consumers. She leads teams in both the development and go-to-market strategy for products created around core areas of Magid expertise and in custom research and consulting work across the media ecosystem.

What kinds of products has her team of about 40 people created? One that got a lot of attention recently is SubScape, which helps predict not only when people will unsubscribe from streaming services but why, and how to plan for and respond to different kinds of churn to grow overall subscriber base and ARPU.

Another is called DiversityLens, which measures the audience perception of cultural authenticity and diversity across most TV shows, providing information for content creators and advertisers.

A third new product, Brand EmotionalDNA, has been rolled out in beta to help media sellers and brands find optimal emotional matches between content, brands and ads.

Magid president and CEO Brent Magid said SubScape has not only brought in new revenue for the firm, but has demonstrably helped Magid customers address a key con-

cern, which is maximizing customer retention and subscription income.

At a recent industry conference, NBCUniversal co-presented with Magid on using SubScape to improve NBCU's projection modeling on a corporate level, to inform and prioritize investments and merger-and-acquisition decisions, he said.

"Kate has two things that are just amazing," Magid said. "One is, she's a brilliant person. She's just exceedingly smart. But I think more than anything, she's really, really good with people. She has built a team and helped us build a culture at Magid that is really outstanding. She's just a tremendous leader, a leader of people."

Moving into Media

Morgan joined Magid in 2016 after working for a couple of financial hedge funds and a software publishing company. She and Brent Magid had both gone to Princeton and were introduced by Magid's brother, who was in Morgan's class there. Morgan said she was ready for a change to a business helping entertainment companies understand what influences customers' decisions and make determinations based on those insights.

"In today's environment, what makes people tick is changing a lot, particularly with the younger generation," she said. "So

what we do is even more important."

Morgan was an English major in college and wrote her thesis on Samuel Beckett, whose works are "all about the human experience."

"I think now I can look back and say what's really always compelled me and motivated me and interested me is strategy, innovation, growth and people management," Morgan said.

She worked for an energy company that was doing deals in Japan and helped steer it toward projects that were appropriate for the culture, such as buying a wind-energy producer. At the hedge funds, she helped visualize and explain an esoteric commodities fund to everyday investors.

Between college and business school (Dartmouth) she lived and worked in Germany, where she worked for BMW. (She speaks German.) She has lived in Munich, Frankfurt and London, and three of her four children were born in Germany.

Morgan appreciates the cultural differences sometimes reflected in different languages. In Britain, they say "take" a decision, which feels more like "take what is offered" than the American "make" a decision, she said. In Germany, they say "meet" a decision, Morgan noted, which seems different still.

Magid research has even helped media clients shape creative directions in programs. One medical drama found that while the viewing reach of the show had not declined, viewer engagement had. It turned out that a romance introduced in the show didn't feel authentic. The romance was mitigated and engagement rose. "That's one example of impact, which is really cool," Morgan said.

Downtime, besides being involved with her four grown children, includes yoga. "And I work out quite a bit because I've gotten quite into hiking," she said. This past autumn, she did the rim-to-rim hike in the Grand Canyon in one day ("24 miles, 10,000 feet of elevation") and a five-day hike in the hill villages of Tuscany. ●

“In today's environment, what makes people tick is changing a lot, particularly with the younger generation. So what we do is even more important.”

Kate Morgan





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Laura Palumbo Johnson

Co-Founder and Executive Producer
Magilla Entertainment



By Nancy Lombardi
nancy.lombardi@gmail.com

Entrepreneurs have a different perspective on life.

"I started small companies when I was a kid without realizing the path I was starting to take," said Laura Palumbo Johnson, co-founder and executive producer at Magilla Entertainment LLC. "I feel that I have a creative side to me and a business side to me. And that seems to be what naturally led me to here."

Where's here, besides solidifying her status as a Wonder Woman? It's successfully running Magilla Entertainment, along with Matthew Ostrom, co-founder and executive producer. Together they built the company — and the unscripted television genre — from the ground up over 15 years. It's the perfect path for someone who ran a babysitting business as an 11-year-old, employing her friends.

Magilla's portfolio features powerhouse franchises such as TLC's *Long Island Medium*, Discovery's *Moonshiners* and HGTV's *Beachfront Bargain Hunt*.

Prior to founding Magilla, Palumbo Johnson worked for City Lights Television, a startup unscripted production company in New York. She launched their production management and gained an understanding of how a company grows and evolves to a much different size. Here, she worked on HGTV's *Don't Sweat It* and the creation of Food Network's *Chopped*.

After *Chopped* became a hit, she transitioned to international sales and was "traveling around the globe, going to MIPCOM and seeing that side of the business," she said. "It opened my eyes to another world, the bigger world of television, and I really loved it."

Meanwhile, Ostrom was a VP at then-production company Original Media. He developed and produced the hit series

Swamp People, *Dual Survival* and *LA Ink*.

"At the time, we had conversations about going out on our own because the synergies were there," Palumbo Johnson said. "And then talent was recommended to us, so we hit the ground running."

Or more accurately, they took a quick ride over the bridge to New Jersey. "We went to New Jersey together with a camera," she said. "In a matter of weeks, we pitched [*Oxygen series*] *Jersey Couture* and sold it."

“I feel that I have a creative side to me and a business side to me. And that seems to be what naturally led me to here.”

Laura Palumbo Johnson

That marked the official start of Magilla Entertainment.

"We both understood development intuitively," Palumbo Johnson said. "We knew that was the root of the company. We had one show up and running and we immediately went into developing other shows. We were pitching as much as we could and that led to an opportunity with Discovery."

That opportunity was *Moonshiners*. Having two series "gave the people we were pitching to the

confidence that we can pivot and that we were capable," she said.

By the end of its first year in business, Magilla was developing what turned out to be *Long Island Medium*. More than a decade later, these franchises are what Palumbo Johnson called reliable IP. She noted that content fatigue has set it for many viewers and it's why they return to the classics of unscripted TV.

Lead by Assisting Others

There are certain people who are natural-born leaders. "Laura is the ultimate powerhouse," Ostrom said. "She's charming, nice, but also a badass. She has a great business mind, is extremely creative and a born leader."

"Laura is building the infrastructure around us," he continued. "She is the nuts and bolts of the company and makes sure the lights stay on. Magilla is so much stronger because of her."

Palumbo Johnson makes it a point to mentor as well as contribute to industry organizations. She's a member of New York Women in Film & Television; is on the executive committee of NPACT, the trade association for nonfiction TV producers; and has participated in the Propelle accelerator program. Administered by Realscreen in partnership with Everywoman Studios, Propelle helps develop the careers of up-and-coming female creators.

Creators gain access to an established production company and a network of industry contacts, while learning how to develop ideas so they are pitch-ready and saleable.

"I'm working with one specific mentee," Palumbo Johnson said.

"We brought her ideas through to a pitchable phase. I worked with her on what we thought could be a saleable concept."

Palumbo Johnson, wife and mom to two middle schoolers, noted that television is a tough industry. Oftentimes someone has great ideas and great talent but they don't know where to go with it. Luckily, she is there to assist. ●



A portrait of Laura Palumbo Johnson, a woman with long dark hair, smiling. She is wearing a dark blue top and a necklace. The background is a dark purple with a geometric pattern of triangles.

CONGRATULATIONS, LAURA,

ON BEING NAMED ONE OF
MULTICHANNEL NEWS'
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Laura Palumbo Johnson

AND CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL
OF TODAY'S HONOREES

MAGILLA

World Radio History

Gina Reduto

Senior VP, Client Strategy

NBCUniversal



By Cathy Applefeld Olson
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During her 10 years at NBCUniversal, Gina Reduto has revolutionized the sales function, bringing the company into the programmatic era and now leading the team that advises brands on how to optimize their messaging to its 227 million monthly customers.

But what elevates Reduto to Wonder Women status is a quality that sits above the numbers and margins. It's her approach to leadership — one that comprises extraordinary emotional intelligence, agility and a relentless dedication to the startup mentality she honed at companies including Atari and Glam Media even as she now helms a team of 23, with six direct reports.

"I do think empathy is a big part of building and leading a team," she said. "Having diverse mindsets and perspectives and facilitating a dialogue to arrive at decisions has always been important, because there is never a singular answer in terms of a way to do something. So having a collective approach to how we problem-solve, hiring people from super-different backgrounds that contribute different lenses to how we're looking at the business or certain solutions is really important."

“Having diverse mindsets and perspectives and facilitating a dialogue to arrive at decisions has always been important, because there is never a singular answer in terms of a way to do something.”

Gina Reduto

Reduto arrived at NBCU in March 2014 as its first standalone executive focused on programmatic sales at a time when that category (now an estimated \$20 billion slice of the U.S. TV advertising pie) was in its infancy.

"The industry was changing, and my role was all about getting people to think differently," she said. "Nothing was broken at NBC. They were a well-oiled sales machine and were beating their goals every year and I had to come in and say, 'But wait, we need to lean into this new way of selling and building product.'"

"I'm not a salesperson but I thought [what] if I put myself in their shoes and think about what it would be like to have someone tell me that," Reduto continued. "That's how I learned to build a collaborative mindset, establish shared goals and really have the sales team be a part of the process."

"I don't own anything as a strategy leader. My success is contingent on sales wanting to partner with me and believing in the opportunity. So the change management piece was the most challenging, but I found my way by finding those little wins, socializing those wins, having everyone be a part of those wins and building from there."

The effectiveness of Reduto's leadership is not lost on Mark Marshall, NBCU chairman of global

advertising and partnerships, who described it in one word: Elevation. "She elevates people to do their best work. She elevates the stories that we tell. She pushes for great work from her team but does it in a manner that is inspiring and team-oriented," he said.

"There is not a meeting, a day, a month that Gina does not make us better as an organization. Her inclusive approach is a model for all of us to follow. She is one of the most respected and admired people in our organization."

Inclusive Team-Builder

Regarding the composition of her team — and perhaps in a nod to her first job as a junior high math teacher — Reduto follows a different kind of equation. One where intangible, often overlooked qualities combine in a whole that's truly greater than the sum of its parts. Her strategy team is organized by industry, including finance, retail and insurance, but those specific categories are not top of mind when she hires.

"Anyone can learn about finance or retail," she said. "It's things like willingness to try new things, fail fast and fail forward and collaborate, that I think are more innate and more of the mindset that allow you to be part of a winning team. And when you hire a team that way you have to flex your leadership style based on that person's preferred way of working."

"I never impose my way of working or my style or my hours on the team," she added.

"It's about adjusting to meet their needs, which I think creates a more productive environment."

When it comes to elevating women in the workforce, Reduto is equally impassioned — particularly in terms of supporting their advancement beyond junior and midtier positions.

"Sometimes I feel like there's an expectation for women to get to a certain level and that's it, or to not have the same expectation in terms of career advancement," she said. "There could be more confidence-building, really deliberate career-pathing." ●





NBCUniversal Congratulates Gina Reduto

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We are proud as
a peacock of all
Wonder Women
Honorees!

Adrienne Roark

President, Content Development and Integration
CBS News and Stations and CBS Media Ventures



By Stuart Miller
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Growing up in Ohio, Adrienne Roark learned about work ethic from her mom, who ran her own personal advertising business, and her dad, who taught high school English but also operated his own roofing and insulating business in the summer, taking young Adrienne along to help. She also pitched in with cleaning up and fixing the family's various rental properties.

"As a kid, I would complain, but I find that to be invaluable now," said Roark, who after two years as president, CBS Stations, was named last fall as president, content development and integration, CBS News and Stations and CBS Media Ventures. She's now responsible for bringing together the teams across these businesses to create and share content while continuing to oversee CBS-owned stations in New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Miami, Pittsburgh and Baltimore. "I have no problem rolling up my sleeves and doing pretty much anything. Plus, it's really handy to be able to fix stuff."

She found her calling all on her own. "I knew that journalism was somewhere in my future when I was a young kid for two reasons: I love to write and I'm incredibly nosy," she said. "I would call up the aunts and the uncles and the cousins and just dig up stuff about our family and create this little newsletter by hand and then send copies to my family. My mom would say, 'You need to stop digging up family secrets and sharing them with everybody.'"

Roark, a three-time regional Emmy Award winner, broadened her view beyond her family, taking journalism courses at Ohio State University and then getting an internship at WBNS Columbus. "The first time I walked into that newsroom and saw the energy of these amazingly creative and passionate and somewhat out there people who had no filter, I thought,

"I wanted to be that person helping to shape what we're doing and protecting and guiding the journalism."

Adrienne Roark

"Oh my gosh, this is where I have to be."

Roark worked her way up, setting her sights on producing and then on being a news director. "I wanted to be that person helping to shape what we're doing and protecting and guiding the journalism," she recalled, adding that's what led her to move up to general manager. She realized she'd have even more power to protect her journalists and resources there.

"If you stay on a story, you can get a law changed or make people's lives better, but it's a big commitment and it can be difficult, especially when economic times get hard," she said. "You have to stick by it."

As Roark moved up she moved on, from Columbus to Miami, Dallas and Portland, Oregon — "I covered all the weathers," she joked — before coming to New York to join CBS in 2021. There, she also built the "Newsroom of the Future" and last year launched CBS News Detroit, a local news organization at WWJ that was built from the ground up with a streaming-first mentality.



Roark also continues to oversee the CBS Local News Innovation Lab in Dallas-Fort Worth, where a curated team experiments with next-generation storytelling, including data journalism, and tests new products, workflows and production models. Most recently, Roark has overseen the CBS News and Stations and CBS Media Ventures investments in data journalism, as well as investigative and environmental reporting, including weather technology and climate coverage, in ways that benefit all of the CBS News, Stations and Media Ventures brands.

Empathetic and Tenacious

"As a leader, she's very warm and engaging, with immense empathy but also a curiosity, which some people lose because they think they know so much," said CBS Philadelphia (KYW-WPSG) president and general manager Kelly Frank, who got her first television job 24 years ago when Roark hired her. "She asks questions and seeks other perspectives, but then she's decisive. That serves her well when she needs to get something done. Then she's tenacious."

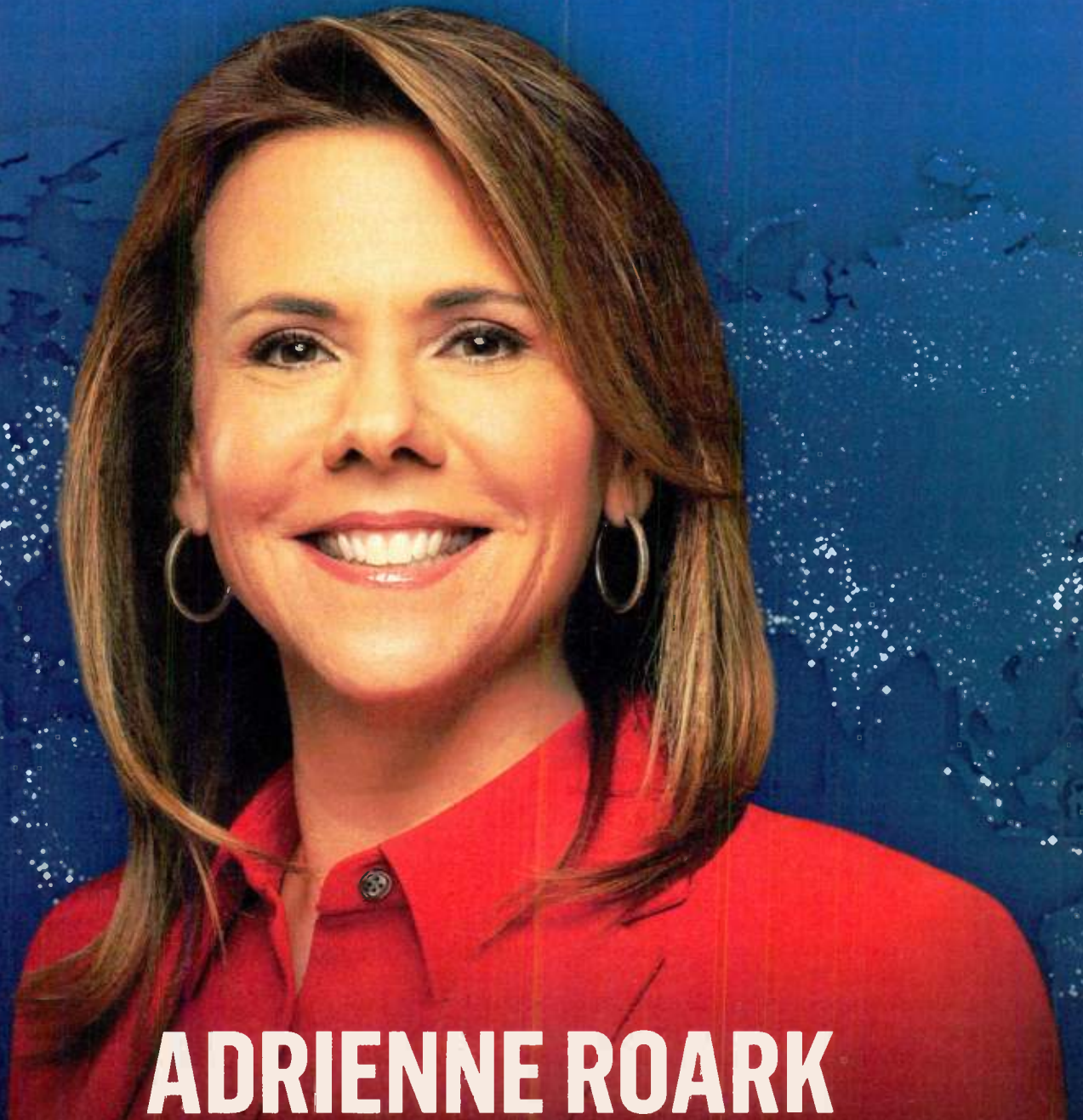
Wendy McMahon, president and CEO, CBS News and Stations and CBS Media Ventures, said Roark has established herself as a "game changer."

"She has the remarkable ability to reimagine content creation and development for the future, building our data journalism and next-generation news-gathering capabilities across CBS News, Stations and CBS Media Ventures," McMahon said.

"Her commitment to distinctive journalism and signature storytelling is unmatched."

Roark remains passionate about journalism, even tearing up a little when she describes why. "It sounds hokey but even though people think I'm goofy, I love this business," she said. "The world needs us. And I've seen the power of what we do. I really believe my job is to protect journalism so we can change the world for the better one story at a time." ●

CBS NEWS AND STATIONS
CONGRATULATES



ADRIENNE ROARK

**PRESIDENT, CONTENT DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRATION
CBS NEWS AND STATIONS AND CBS MEDIA VENTURES**

**2024 MULTICHANNEL NEWS
“WONDER WOMAN NYC”**

Noga Rosenthal

General Counsel & Chief Privacy Officer
Ampersand



By Holly Stuart Hughes
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Lawyers typically look to past legal precedents or statutes to guide their clients. In the field of data privacy law, though, “the technology is constantly changing, and the law can’t keep up,” said Noga Rosenthal, general counsel and chief privacy officer for Ampersand.

In her 15-year career, Rosenthal has forged industry guidelines that govern how consumers’ personal information is collected and used in internet advertising. She now applies her experience to advising Ampersand and its television clients on the responsible use of viewer data to personalize advertising.

“She is one of the absolute leaders, from a legal perspective, in data privacy,” said Nicolle Pangis, former CEO of Ampersand, the ad-sales and technology firm owned by Comcast, Cox Communications and Charter Communications.

Rosenthal was commercial counsel for a WPP-owned tech company when she was first drawn to data-privacy law. “The federal government’s guidance to the advertising industry was: ‘Don’t be creepy,’” she said. “This was a subjective guideline that presents challenges in its practical application. What is creepy? How do we make sure we are not creepy?”

“The federal government’s guidance to the advertising industry was: ‘Don’t be creepy.’ This was a subjective guideline that presents challenges in its practical application. What is creepy?”

Noga Rosenthal

Rosenthal began working with the Network Advertising Initiative (NAI), first as a board member and then for three years as the association’s VP for compliance and policy, to establish standards and compliance rules. “I loved it,” she said. “There were complex moral and ethical dilemmas coming at us rapid-fire.”

Rosenthal hammered out guidelines on issues such as using an individual’s medical information, then convinced companies with different goals and business models — from small startups to giants like Google — to follow the same rules. “They didn’t always agree, but it was in all our interests to set up the right ethical standards for how we collected data and how we used it,” she said.

Industry associations remain her “crucial” resource for staying abreast of new regulations. She currently serves on committees for the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB), the Association of National Advertisers (ANA) and the Coalition for Innovative Media Measurement (CIMM).

In 2016, Rosenthal became chief privacy officer at global retail marketing company Epsilon, just as the regulatory landscape changed dramatically. The European Union had adopted the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), requiring all websites that collect data on EU viewers to ask for their consent. The GDPR has also been the model for most of the dozen data-privacy

laws passed by U.S. states, she noted.

When Pangis became CEO of Ampersand in 2018, Rosenthal was one of her first hires. Pangis’s goal was to collect and use data from numerous sources to help marketers personalize and target ads. “Sensible use of data insights was of incredible importance not only to Ampersand, but to our owners and our partners,” Pangis said. Rosenthal “had the perfect pedigree that we needed within the company.”

Rosenthal was excited by the challenge of learning the television industry and “taking my digital expertise, knowledge and history, and bringing it to the TV world, which was starting to grapple with the same privacy and data-ethics issues,” she said.

A Natural Teacher

Rosenthal is an adjunct professor at Rutgers University and a frequent speaker at industry conferences. She draws on her teaching experience when explaining legal issues to executives, software engineers, and salespeople.

“I think Noga is as good a student of law and privacy as she is a teacher of law and privacy,” Pangis said. “There were many times that we came up with an idea where Noga would say, ‘No, because these three things are likely to happen in the next three months, and you’ll have to rewind all the work on this.’ She was almost always right.”

Rosenthal has recently been studying AI, and how its use might affect time limits on data storage: “When you’re working with AI, you want as much data as possible to make your AI models work better, and you may not care how old the data is,” she said.

Rosenthal “educates, informs, and gets people comfortable with the why and the how,” said Patty Keenan, Ampersand’s chief people officer. “A lot of people seek Noga out for advice and guidance, and she embraces that. She’s a natural mentor, and people are drawn to her as a mentor.”


Rosenthal’s combination of specialized expertise and concern for employees make her “a well-rounded leader,” Keenan said. ●





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Tina Thornton

Executive VP, Creative Studio and Marketing

ESPN



By Paige Albiniak
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For Tina Thornton, executive VP, Creative Studio and marketing at ESPN, leadership means service. “One of my reports has always called me a servant leader,” she said. “I think my leadership style revolves around listening, learning and not trying to be the smartest person in the room.”

Thornton emphasizes creating trust and collaboration.

“Tina brings an intentionality around collaboration,” ESPN executive VP, programming and acquisitions Rosalyn Durant said. “Tina lives it and she’s known for it. She thinks about ways she can bring people along and have everyone feel like they’re a part of the same team. I don’t think our teams have ever worked more closely together than they do now. We are intentional about that.”

Collaboration can be difficult to achieve across departments in large organizations, but Thornton focuses on it.

“I really do try to set a vision and goals for my collective team and I prioritize collaboration amongst my teams,” she said. “Collaboration and trust are extremely important to me.”

Thornton’s emphasis on empathy, trust and collaboration gives her reports freedom to express themselves and try new things.

“One of my reports has always called me a servant leader. I think my leadership style revolves around listening, learning and not trying to be the smartest person in the room.”

Tina Thornton, ESPN

“Under Tina’s leadership, we’ve been given the gift of being able to show up as our full selves and give that permission to others,” Carrie Brzezinski-Hsu, senior VP, ESPN Creative Studio, said. “Tina has a unique ability to rise above her purview and lead as a neutral party, across the organization, to coach multiple divisions and leaders to collaborate and solve challenges more effectively.”

“Tina’s leadership is unrivaled,” agreed Celia Kelly Bouza, VP, ESPN Next and social production. “Working with her, I’ve had a front-row seat to see what it means to be a transparent leader first and foremost. She also knows how to identify talent and push them outside of their comfort zone.”

That includes Kelly Bouza, who has worked closely with Thornton over the years, advising her as a producer when Thornton was leading content operations and advising her in developing ESPN’s DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) strategy.

“One of the things we are most proud of was the town halls we ran in which we created some courageous conversations and brought leaders together to talk about their experience,” Kelly Bouza said. “Tina was really a proponent of bringing people together to have hard conversations. She encouraged all of us to be our authentic selves.”

Thornton is a rarity



in the industry, having spent her entire career in one place. She started at ESPN as a production assistant after interning at CNN and Turner in college. Almost 31 years later, she’s still there, leading and thriving.

Most of her years at ESPN were spent producing and storytelling, with Thornton moving up through the production ranks until she was named VP, production and multimedia sponsorship integration and management operations in 2014. In that role, she also oversaw ESPN Next, a program that helps develop early-career production assistants into next-generation leaders. Less than a year after being named to that position, she was promoted to senior vice president. Three years later, in July 2018, she was named senior VP and chief of staff to ESPN chairman Jimmy Pitaro.

In December 2020, Thornton was named head of content operations and creative surround. Less than a year ago, in June 2023, she took her current role, adding marketing to her portfolio for the first time after executive VP, marketing Laura Gentile departed.

A Versatile Player

“She’s not afraid to try new things,” Durant said. “Look at the variety of roles she’s had across the company — any one of those would have made for a successful career. She’s curious enough to be interested in learning new things while knowing that doesn’t come without some unease.”

As Thornton settles into this role at ESPN, she recognizes that things are moving faster than ever, especially as ESPN announced it would be collaborating with Warner Bros. Discovery and Fox to launch a new sports streamer this fall. Through it all, she continues to focus on serving the fans, elevating the brand and bringing in younger sports aficionados.

“Over the past two or three years, we’ve learned to move faster than ever,” she said. “I think that’s just going to continue.” ●

WE PROUDLY CONGRATULATE

TINA THORNTON

BOLD. LEADER. **WONDER WOMAN.**



ESPN

Kavita Vazirani

EVP of Research, Insights and Analytics
Disney Entertainment, News Group and
Networks **The Walt Disney Co.**



By Nancy Lombardi
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Taking a step back helped Kavita Vazirani take a giant leap forward to advocate for others.

Since 2022, Vazirani has led The Walt Disney Co.'s integrated research and insights team, supporting all media and entertainment distribution businesses and functions across the Disney Entertainment Group. Where she started, though, was as a research manager for Comcast Cable. Early on, Vazirani said, Comcast lacked infrastructure, and it was exciting to help build a Media Sciences Group that fueled a data-driven approach to media spend and predictive modeling to forecast outcomes.

She was responsible for strategy development, planning and placement of more than \$1.5 billion in paid or owned media across Comcast's portfolio and rose to senior VP of media strategy and sciences.

"I loved the company and the culture," Vazirani said of Comcast. "It was a big company, but still had that entrepreneurial feel."

In 2013, Comcast completed its acquisition of NBCUniversal and Vazirani became NBCU's executive VP of insights and measurement.

Vazirani focused on aligning NBCUniversal's research, insights and measurement capabilities across all of the media company's platforms and partnerships. She oversaw measurement and research initiatives across marketing and agency partners beyond traditional viewing patterns.

COVID-19's Silver Lining

Then the COVID-19 lockdown changed everything.

"I have three children. One has Down syndrome, and it was especially

challenging to do virtual school with her," Vazirani said.

Though her husband is a stay-at-home dad, the lockdown took a toll on the whole family. At the same time, the industry she worked in for decades was in a state of disruption.

"I was spending a ton of time at work, even though it was from home," she said. "And I'm watching my husband try to do seventh grade with our daughter while our two other children are in their bedrooms in virtual classrooms."

She said she felt overwhelmed with everything.

Over the years while mentoring others, there's talk of work/life balance. Now it applied to her and Vazirani shared great advice she received from a friend: "There's a lot of balls you juggle," she said. "The one that's your family is made of glass and when you drop it, it will break. The other balls will bounce back. That advice stood out in my head."

Vazirani made the difficult decision to take a break from work and focus on her family's needs.

After six months at home, she took on consulting projects and connected with former colleague Debra OConnell, who is

"I always think about, how do we create opportunities for new thinking?"

Kavita Vazirani



now president, News Group and Networks at Disney Entertainment. So, when a role at Disney opened up, Vazirani was ready and OConnell became her boss.

"Kavita is one of the most strategic thinkers in the research and insights area," OConnell said. "Her ability is not limited to simply viewing and analyzing this field as it is, but also discerning how this data may evolve in a changing industry and recognizing opportunities to work holistically across teams to achieve results."

In addition to her role leading a modern integrated research and insights team, Vazirani runs the Disney Entertainment Group's DE&I Council.

"Kavita is the type of person who is always thinking about other people, and how we can all work together to make the world a better place," OConnell said. "It's that kindness and thoughtfulness that makes her an incredible leader and the natural choice to lead our DE&I team."

Advocating for Others

Vazirani was born in India, lived in Hong Kong and came to the U.S. to attend college. Her life's journey and her family's path make her a strong advocate for inclusion.

She supported women through mentor programs. She's passionately dedicated to her local Down syndrome parenting groups, working tirelessly to help parents who are expecting a child, engage school districts and create a strong community for families.

"I always think about, how do we create opportunities for new thinking?" she said.

The brief career break was a move that would have scared many, but not Vazirani. It allowed her to focus on her family while positioning her to jump into a challenging new role stronger than ever. ●

Congratulations Kavita Vazirani for being selected as one of the Multichannel News Wonder Women 2024!

Your vast knowledge, thoughtful insights and collaborative approach
make you a truly wonderful part of our team.



Disney Entertainment

Adriana Waterston

Executive VP, Insights & Strategy

Horowitz Research division, MARC Research



By Cathy Applefeld Olson
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Long before the words diversity, equity and inclusion were staples in the media business, Adriana Waterston was enlisting the power of research, insights and data to educate executives about underserved opportunities and advocate for underserved audiences.

“Doing right by these communities,” she said, “is where I feel my calling is.”

That calling came after Waterston — who had early ambitions of a career in front of the camera and studied theater at Brandeis University, alongside Debra Messing — took a job at Horowitz Research, the firm founded by her sister and brother-in-law, in what she thought was a stepping-stone role. She never left.

“I discovered research and a passion for what we do, which is so fundamental to every aspect of entertainment and, by extension, culture,” Waterston said. “The media industry in and of itself is a critical piece of culture. What we put on screen, and what we deliver to consumers every single day, changes minds and changes hearts.”

Defining moments punctuate Waterston’s decades-long career. She received the CTAM TAMI award for multicultural marketing in 2005, and more recently the Rafael Eli Pioneer in Hispanic Television Award, which she accepted on behalf of Horowitz Research at the 2023 Hispanic Television Summit.

“Awards are most often given to high-profile ‘movers and shakers’ from major media and telecommunications companies,” said Joe Schramm, managing partner/president of Schramm Marketing Group. “It’s less often we get to celebrate the women from the smaller firms that also have made important contributions to our industry. Adriana is one of those.

“Adriana’s work has had a tremendous

influence on the cable TV industry through the research and insights she and the Horowitz team deliver to their cable clients,” he added. “In turn, those clients apply these insights in their programming, marketing and branding strategies.”

Among the most salient defining moments for Waterston was the first time, in the early 2000s, when she realized the power to elevate her work from her own lived experience as a Latina born and raised in Puerto Rico.

“It was the first attempt at doing groups that included Spanish-language groups, Hispanic-descent groups, and it became evident to me that using my experiences as a launching point to advocate for the consumers we were serving was really powerful,” she said.

Changing the Narrative

She shepherded the Horowitz Cultural Insights Forum, a pioneering event with a strategy focus, designed to educate cable companies and networks about the value of investing in multicultural content and communities. It grew from a small group to nearly 400 attendees at its last gathering in 2018 — driving a data-backed narrative that changed the early cable roadmap and continues to spur inclusive decision-making for both on-screen representation in storytelling and in the workforce.

“Every year, every data set, the ones who

were most likely to pay, the people who were most excited about the technology, were Black, Latinx, Asian and other multicultural groups,” she said. “And those were the years when cable was being heavily redlined. All the inner cities, all the Black neighborhoods — people were not laying cable in those areas and the rationale was, ‘These people don’t have enough money to pay for entertainment services.’ It couldn’t have been further from the truth.”

While the pendulum is swinging in the right direction, Waterston said the industry still has a way to go in combatting structural inequities. The solutions aren’t always clear-cut.

“It’s not a question of whether the DE&I department or executive should be there,” Waterston said. “What I’m asking is, where’s the commitment to DE&I in all aspects of the organization? Where is the support for creators of color, what pipeline do you have to bring that type of talent in? If you look at your staff at all levels and see diversity, then you’re doing well. But if without the DE&I practice you don’t see that, then you’re failing.”

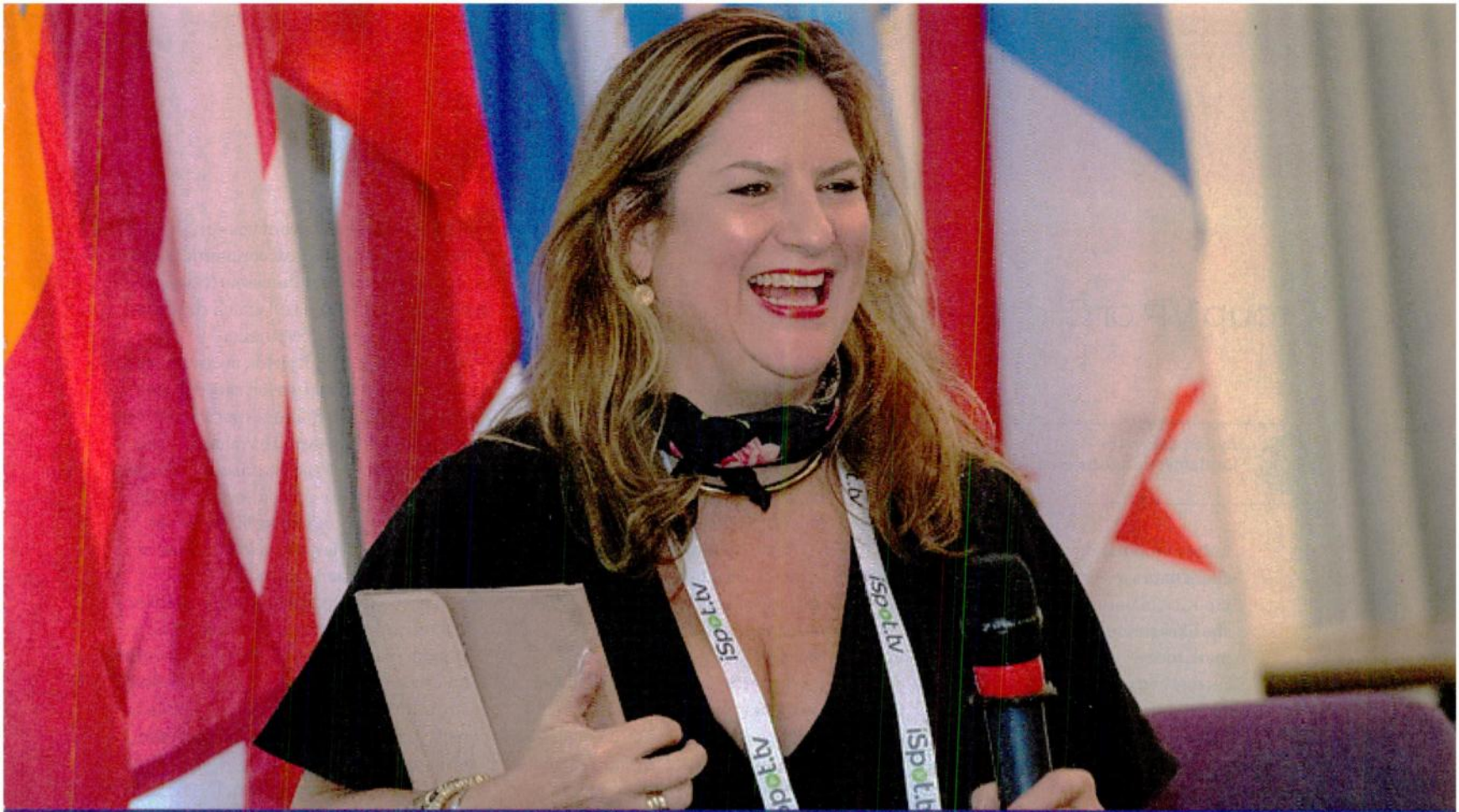
Horowitz last year was acquired by MARC Research, where Waterston now serves as executive VP, insights & strategy for the Horowitz Research division. She’s excited to bring her expertise in multicultural insights to clients in other verticals, while never straying far from her first love.

“My heart is still with what we do here in the media space,” she said. “I’m so passionate about storytelling and seeing the people that are my research subjects come to life on television or on the big screen. It’s so rewarding.” ●

“The media industry in and of itself is a critical piece of culture. What we put on screen, and what we deliver to consumers every single day, changes minds and changes hearts.”

Adriana Waterston





2024 Wonder Woman, Adriana Waterston

The lists of her career and personal accomplishments are too long to fit in this ad.
So, we will simply say....

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Lindsey Woodland

Group VP of Client Data Science

605 and iSpot.tv



By Jon Lafayette
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Lindsey Woodland, group VP of client data service at 605 and iSpot.tv, majored in math because she likes solving puzzles. “I still do math today,” said Woodland, who has a Ph.D. in mathematics from the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Woodland thought she would be a teacher or professor. “After grad school, I realized that you can teach at any job,” she said. “When you lead a department or a team, you’re teaching them as you go, so it’s applicable in most careers.”

Woodland used math to come up with a solution to one of the television industry’s toughest questions: How well is my advertising working?

She started to address that question after one of her professors suggested she go to work for Prognos, which specialized in projecting sales for consumer packaged goods based on pricing and promotion. Prognos was acquired by Antuit.ai, a big data solutions business.

Woodland moved to 605, Kristin Dolan’s analytics company, in 2017 and got more involved in analyzing television and advertising.

“I felt like at my old company, we solved a lot of the math problems we were working on,” she recalled. 605 was a startup company that was planning to grow and offered more

opportunities for creativity and personal career growth.

Woodland dug into the attribution issue. She found a lot of the solutions available at the time weren’t very sophisticated and did the math that proved to be the basis for 605’s attribution product, called 605 Impact.

Woodland said she used modeling and machine learning to calculate how clients’ advertising was performing and provide that information quickly enough for clients to adjust campaigns. She also created visualizations, making the data easier to picture.

“She’s really been the leading light when it comes to product innovation,” Tom Keaveney, president of 605, said. “The most noteworthy thing she’s done is when we talk about how ad dollars work.”

The 605 Impact product is one reason why iSpot.tv decided to buy 605 last year.

Figuring out the impact ad dollars have on various aspects of consumer behavior can be complex, and if clients don’t buy in the best data goes to naught.

But Woodland can do something many other data scientists can’t. “What makes her particularly special is the people skills that she has, and in particular that ability to make complex topics understood at any level,” Keaveney said. “And no academic qualification is going to give you that. That’s

something you either have or you don’t have.”

605 sends her to speak at conferences and to explain to clients what the research says, the methodology involved and which strategies and options they should pursue.

Juan Solana, global director, measurement, advanced analytics and performance-driven marketing at General Motors, first worked with Woodland when he was with Walmart. When he moved to GM, 605 and Woodland “was one of the first vendors I brought on board in order to understand better the impact of TV on foot traffic,” he said. “She’s a very good translator between business and data science.”

Keaveney said Woodland’s people skills are valuable inside the company as well. “She nurtures her team,” he said. “They all adore her. She builds incredible loyalty, but also she’s very much focused on advancing them. I’ve seen her organization and I see a whole bunch of mini Lindseys coming through.”

Woodland also develops herself, asking to understand the company’s profit and loss statement and its strategy going forward. “This is somebody who can achieve a huge amount,” Keaveney said.

A Positive Presence

On top of that, “she’s just a good person to have around,” he added. “When she walks into the office, she just lifts everyone’s spirit. She always has a smile on her face.”

Since becoming part of iSpot, Woodland has become the 605er with the most visibility across the organization, according to Keaveney. “A lot of that is because she really felt we could do better together.”

“We now have access to our combined companies’ data, which is pretty great,” Woodland said.

Woodland has been playing golf with her family since she was a kid and was on the varsity team at her Division III school. Her people skills may not include the rule that you don’t beat clients on the links.

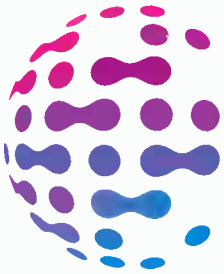
“I’ve heard that, but it’s hard,” she said. “Do you really want to let them win? I don’t know.” ●



“After grad school, I realized that you can teach at any job. When you lead a department or a team, you’re teaching them as you go, so it’s applicable in most careers.”

Lindsey Woodland

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The 2023 *Multichannel News* Wonder Women (from l.): Event host Natasha Verma; 2023 Wonder Women honorees Samira Bakhtiar and Michelle Strong; Zillah Byng-Thorne, former CEO, Future PLC; honorees Kate O'Brian, Annie Howell, Margaret Brennan, Sharon Peters, Rori Peters, Pola Changnon, Melody Smalls, Suzanne Scott, Marnie Black, Monica Williams and Amy Campbell; Shenan Reed, representing Empowerment Award winner L'Oreal USA; honoree Karen Barroeta; Carmel King, VP, Global Head of Content, B2B, Future; and event co-hosts Kaitlan Collins and Kimberly A. Martin.

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WOMAN OF INFLUENCE MARGARET BRENNAN

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Director of Global Media and Entertainment, Amazon Web Services

KAREN BARROETA
Executive VP, Production and Development, Telemundo Global Studios

MARNIE BLACK
Executive VP, Public Relations, AMC Networks

AMY CAMPBELL
Chief Marketing Officer, MTV Entertainment Studios and Paramount Media Networks

POLA CHANGNON
General Manager, Turner Classic Movies

SONIA COLEMAN
Senior VP, Human Resources Disney General Entertainment Content and ESPN, The Walt Disney Co.

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

ANNIE HOWELL
Chief Communications Officer, Hallmark Media

KATE O'BRIAN
President of News, Scripps Networks

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

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Executive VP and Chief Marketing Officer, Charter Communications

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Executive VP, Global Human Resources, Allen Media Group

MICHELLE STRONG
Senior VP of Distribution, A+E Networks

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Executive VP of Ad Sales, Fox Entertainment, Fox Corp.

MONICA WILLIAMS
Senior VP, Digital Products and Operations, NBCUniversal

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VP, Development, Inclusion and Wellness, ESPN

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Executive VP of Ad Sales and Client Partnerships, WarnerMedia

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President and CEO, GLAAD

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President, Advertising & Partnerships, NBCUniversal

ROXANNA SHERWOOD
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Executive VP, Chief Diversity Officer, Comcast Corp.

JOELLA WIND
Group VP, Sales Operations, Spectrum Enterprise

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Television Journalist

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Executive VP, Global Content Licensing, ViacomCBS

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Chief Brand Officer, Discovery Inc., Discovery & Factual

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

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Director of Telco & Video Distribution Partnerships, Google

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Chief Social Impact & Communications Officer, BET Networks

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President, OWN: Oprah Winfrey Network

STEPHANIE PLASSE

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

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Chief Human Resources Officer, Univision Communications

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LEIGH WOISARD

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SportsCenter Anchor, Producer, Director, Philanthropist, ESPN

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Executive VP, General Counsel & Secretary, Viacom

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Promotions, FX

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Cablevision Systems

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and Engineering, HBO

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Services, Insight Communications

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Information, Rentrak

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Showtime

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Cablevision Systems

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SUE NAEGLE

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Univision

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Programming Group

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Senior VP, Network Distribution
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Hallmark Movie Channel

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CNN Worldwide

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Programming, USA Network

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Comcast

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Preschool General Manager, Noggin

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President and CEO, BendBroadband

SANDY WAX

President, PBS Kids Sprout

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President, Central Division, Charter
Communications

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Officer, Time Warner Cable

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President, WideOpenWest

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Oxygen Media

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Production, Bravo Network

NANCY DUBUC

Executive VP and General Manager,
The History Channel

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Comedy Central

JILL LUCKETT

Senior VP of Program Network Policy,
NCTA

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CEO, World Wrestling Entertainment

MARILYN O'CONNELL

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Communications

ELOISE SCHMITZ

Senior VP of Strategic Planning, Charter
Communications

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

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Executive VP and CFO, ESPN

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Marketing, Cablevision Systems

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Charter Communications

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Senior VP, Customer Service, Comcast

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NBCUniversal Cable**CLASS OF 2004****JENNY ALONZO**NAMIC President/VP, Creative Services
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VP, Programming, Time Warner Cable

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Senior VP, Marketing, ESPN

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Cablevision Systems**ELLEN EAST**VP, Communications and Investor
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MTV Networks**ANDREA GREENBERG**President, Distribution,
Rainbow Sports Networks**DENA KAPLAN**

Senior VP, Marketing, GSN

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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**

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Networks**PAMELA EULER HALLING**Senior VP, Marketing and Programming,
Insight Communications**KATHY JOHNSON**

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LAUREN ONG

President, National Geographic Channel

ELLEN SCHNEDSenior VP, National Accounts and
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Cartoon Network**CAROLYN STRAUSS**

Executive VP, Original Programming, HBO

DOMINIQUE TELSONVP, Original Programming,
Showtime Networks**SUSAN WHITING**President and CEO,
Nielsen Media Research**CYMA ZARGHAMI**Executive VP and General Manager,
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MTV Networks**SHERITA CAESAR**VP and General Manager, Subscriber
Network Services, Scientific Atlanta**JILL CAMPBELL**

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Senior VP, AT&T Broadband

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ABBE RAVENGeneral Manager and Executive VP,
The History Channel**PAMELA THOMAS-GRAHAM**

President and CEO, CNBC

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Telecommunications Association
for Marketing**MARY PAT BLAKE**Senior VP, Marketing,
Charter Communications**ANN CARLSEN**

Founder and Chairman, Carlsen Resources

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President, Bravo Networks

JUDY GIRARDSenior 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
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Adelphia Communications**DAWN TARNOFSKY-OSTROFF**Executive VP, Entertainment, Lifetime
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President and CEO, Lifetime Television

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Chairman and CEO, Playboy Enterprises

MINDY HERMAN

President and CEO, In Demand LLC

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Original Films, Drama, Performing Arts
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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**

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Communications**CLASS OF 1999****BETTY COHEN**

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Federal Communications Commission**GERALDINE LAYBOURNE**

Chairman, Oxygen Media

MARGARET LOESCH

President and CEO, Odyssey Network

KATE McENROEPresident, American Movie Classics,
AMC Networks**JUDY McGRATH**

President, MTV Networks

SUSAN PACKARDChief 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

People

Notable executives on the move



AMPERSAND

Mike Dean has joined New York-based TV ad sales and technology firm Ampersand as president. He had been managing director in Deloitte Consulting's Technology, Media, & Telecommunications sector, where he led the ad sales practice.



ASG

Advanced Systems Group (ASG) has named **Jimmy Biro** as a senior account executive, supporting the media solutions provider's growth in the Southern California postproduction market. He had been senior account manager at ALT Systems.



COMCAST

Comcast Cable promoted **Ricky Frazier Jr.** to senior VP of its Keystone Region, comprising systems in Western, Central and Northeastern Pennsylvania, Eastern Ohio, Northern West Virginia and the Maryland panhandle. He had been VP, digital platforms.



DISNEY

The Walt Disney Co. promoted **Debra O'Connell** to president, News Group and Networks, Disney Entertainment, adding oversight of ABC News to her responsibilities. She had been president, Networks and Television Business Operations.



FOX NEWS MEDIA

Fox News Media has named **Trey Gargano** as executive VP, ad sales, overseeing all of the unit's platforms. Formerly senior VP of Fox News Media, he succeeds Jeff Collins, who was promoted to president of ad sales at parent Fox Corp.



FOX NEWS MEDIA

Ryan Roelle was promoted to senior VP national sales at Fox News Media, based in Chicago and tasked with focusing on endemic and national advertising. She had been VP of linear and digital ad sales, Central region, based in Fox News's Chicago bureau.



FREMANTLE

Kimberly Kleid was promoted to executive VP of current programming at Fremantle. Formerly senior VP of unscripted programming, Kleid has overseen game shows such as *Family Feud*, *The Price Is Right* and *Press Your Luck* since joining Fremantle in 2015.



HALLMARK

John Matts was named chief operating officer at Hallmark Media, overseeing commercial operations such as ad sales, distribution, international and streaming. The former NBCUniversal and Viacom executive had been Hallmark's chief financial officer since 2022.



NEXSTAR

Stacey Lynn Schulman was named executive VP, platform marketing and intelligence at Nexstar Media Group, leading Nexstar Advertising's integrated marketing efforts and sales intelligence business unit. She was chief marketing officer at Katz Media Group.



NEXSTAR

Chris Pruitt was named VP and general manager of Nexstar Media Group's operations in Springfield, Missouri, including KRBK (Fox), KOZL (MyNetworkTV) and Mission Broadcasting-owned KOLR (CBS). He had been overseeing Nexstar's Houston stations.



SCRIPPS

E.W. Scripps has named **Tony Song** to the newly created role of head of network sales and advanced TV, responsible for driving revenue growth across the company's national assets. He joins from AMC Networks, where he was senior VP of ad sales and partnerships.



SCRIPPS

Dave Giles has been elevated to chief legal officer at E.W. Scripps effective at year-end, upon the retirement of current chief legal officer **Bill Appleton**. Giles is currently Scripps' deputy general counsel and has served as the company's chief ethics officer.



SINCLAIR

Sinclair has named **Amy Calvert** as VP and general manager of KOKH-KOCB Oklahoma City, its Fox-The CW duo in the No. 46 U.S. media market. She comes from KRJH in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where she was VP and general manager of the Scripps-owned NBC station.



SINCLAIR

Jennifer Hansen has been named VP and general manager of Sinclair-owned WBMA-WABM-WTTO Birmingham, Alabama. She comes from Richmond, Virginia, where she was VP/general manager of WRLH, a Fox station also owned by Sinclair.



SPT

Sony Pictures Television promoted **Suzanne Prete** to president, game shows, at Sony Pictures Television. The 29-year studio veteran has led the studio's game-show division, focused on expanding brands such as *Jeopardy!* and *Wheel of Fortune*, for the past two years.



THUNDERBIRD

Vancouver, British Columbia-based Thunderbird Entertainment Group has tapped **Simon Bodymore** to serve as chief financial officer of the production, distribution and rights-management company. He was CFO of software firm Tasktop Technologies.



WCNC

WCNC, the Tegna-owned NBC affiliate in Charlotte, North Carolina, has named **Todd Spessard** as its news director. He was VP of content at Griffin Media in Oklahoma City and has led newsrooms at stations such as KWTV Oklahoma City and KOKI Tulsa.



WPIX

Kendis Gibson has joined WPIX New York, a Mission Broadcasting-owned The CW station operated by Nexstar Media Group, as anchor of the 4 p.m. and 5 p.m. newscasts. He comes from CBS Stations-owned WFOR Miami, where he was an anchor and reporter.

BRIEFLY NOTED

Other industry execs making moves

Ampersand also promoted **Ethan Heftman** to chief revenue officer from senior VP, industry sales. ... C2HR, the Content & Connectivity Human Resources association, has named **Kia Painter**, executive VP and chief people officer at Cox Communications, as its president. Also named to the C2HR board were: **Melissa Dutmers**, VP of performance and engagement, Paramount Global; **Kristin Hansen**, VP of human resources, Hearst TV; **Christiane Sentianin**, VP and HR business partner, Disney Entertainment Television; **Erica Tate**, VP, global people business partner, Roku; **Guillermo Villa**, senior VP of total rewards and human capital operations, TelevisaUnivision; and **John Wilson**, senior VP, people and culture, Warner Bros. Discovery. ... Paramount Advertising president **John Halley** was named chair of the Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB).

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



At the red-carpet premiere of FX's *Shōgun* at the Academy Museum in Los Angeles (l. to r.): **John Landgraf**, chairman, FX Content and FX Productions; **Anna Sawai**; **Hiroyuki Sanada**; and **Dana Walden**, co-chairman, Disney Entertainment.



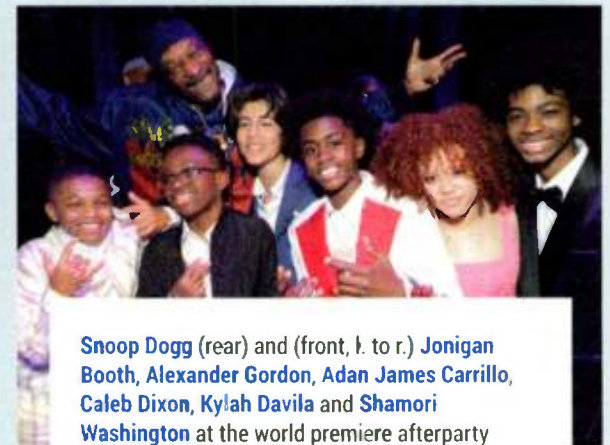
Gina Prince-Bythewood (l.) and **Reggie Rock Bythewood** at the Los Angeles premiere of National Geographic's *Genius: MLK/X* at the Samuel Goldwyn Theater in Beverly Hills, Calif.



At the Los Angeles premiere of Apple TV Plus series *Masters of the Air* (l. to r.): **Zack Van Amburg**, head, worldwide video, Apple; **Eddy Cue**, senior VP, services, Apple; **Steven Spielberg**, executive producer; and **Jamie Erlicht**, head, worldwide video, Apple.



At NBCUniversal's TCA Winter Press Tour reception in Pasadena, Calif. (l. to r.): **Lisa Katz**, president, scripted content, NBCUniversal Entertainment; **Kelly Campbell**, president, Peacock & Direct-to-Consumer; **Frances Berwick**, chairman, NBCUniversal Entertainment; **Corie Henson**, EVP, unscripted content, competition and game shows, NBCUniversal Entertainment; and **Rachel Smith**, EVP, unscripted content, lifestyle and documentaries, NBCUniversal Entertainment



Snoop Dogg (rear) and (front, l. to r.) **Jonigan Booth**, **Alexander Gordon**, **Adan James Carrillo**, **Caleb Dixon**, **Kylah Davila** and **Shamori Washington** at the world premiere afterparty for Prime Video's *The Underdoggs* at The Culver Studios in Culver City, Calif.

Frank Miceolotta/PictureGroup for FX; Frank Miceolotta/PictureGroup for Nat Geo; Eric Charbonneau/Getty Images; Eric Charbonneau/Getty Images for Apple TV Plus; Todd Williamson/NBCUniversal



(From l.): **Kim Kimble**, **Kara Saun** and **Vanessa Riley** of Loveuay's *Sense & Sensibility* at Hallmark Media's TCA Winter Press Tour session.



At AMC's TCA Winter Press Tour session for *Parish* (l. to r.): **Zackary Momoh**, **Giancarlo Esposito** and **Skeet Ulrich**.



Musician **Charlie Puth** (l.) and songwriter **Bernie Taupin** at PBS's TCA Winter Press Tour session for the special *Elton John and Bernie Taupin: The Library of Congress Gershwin Prize for Popular Song*.



(From l.): **Bryan Terrell Clark**, **Jeanine Liburd**, chief social impact and communications officer, BET; and **Diarra Kilpatrick** and **Dominique Perry** at the TCA Winter Press Tour presentation for BET Plus's *Diarra From Detroit*.



(From l.): **Liz Heldens**, **Ramon Rodriguez** and **Sonja Sohn** of ABC's *Will Trent* at the network's TCA Winter Press Tour press conference.

Philip Farone/Getty Images for Hallmark Media; Rahoul Ghose/PBS; Disney/PictureGroup; Michael Tulberg/Getty Images; Andrew J. Cunningham/Getty Images

Most Likable Super Bowl LVIII Ads

Which "Big Game" spots scored the most with audiences this year?

Highlighted below are the most likable ads that ran during Super Bowl LVIII, according to the iSpot Creative Assessment Survey

Super Spotlight: The iSpot Creative Assessment Survey measures the extent to which survey respondents like an ad – in this case, relative to the average score during this year's Super Bowl. Brands deployed humor and a long list of celebrities during Super Bowl ads once again in 2024, in an attempt to maximize appeal across demographics.

1. BMW: Talkin' Like Walken

Likability Score: **17% above norm**

Top Emotion: **Funny**

Brand Recognition: **65%**



2. Volkswagen: An American Love Story

Likability Score: **15% above norm**

Top Emotion: **Nostalgic**

Brand Recognition: **81%**



3. State Farm: Like a Good Neighbaaa

Likability Score: **14% above norm**

Top Emotion: **Funny**

Brand Recognition: **92%**



4. Doritos: Dina and Mita

Likability Score: **14% above norm**

Top Emotion: **Curiosity**

Brand Recognition: **67%**



5. Toyota: Dareful Handle

Likability Score: **14% above norm**

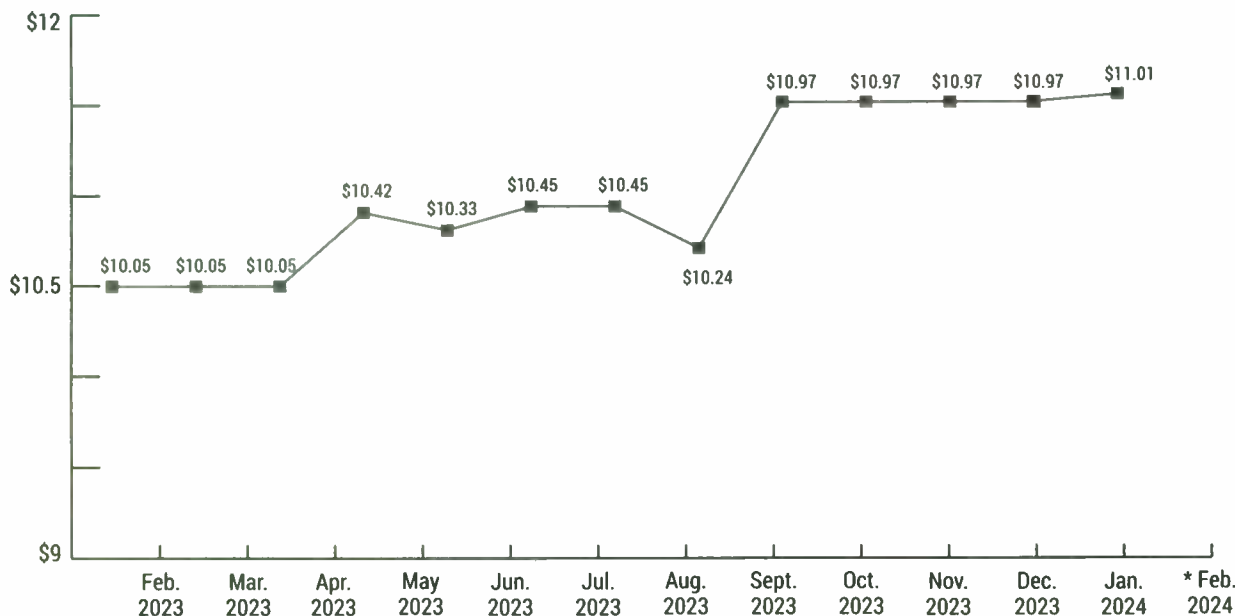
Top Emotion: **Curiosity**

Brand Recognition: **88%**



AVERAGE MONTHLY PRICE FOR SVOD SERVICES OVER TIME

Competition among SVODs for subscribers over the last few years has helped keep prices in check. But with the entire industry now looking to improve direct-to-consumer average revenue per user (ARPU), price hikes have started to proliferate across the board. The chart below, derived from One Touch Intelligence's StreamTRAK video-intelligence service, shows how average prices have crept higher over the last year.



Month	Price
February 2023	\$10.05
March 2023	\$10.05
April 2023	\$10.05
May 2023	\$10.42
June 2023	\$10.33
July 2023	\$10.45
August 2023	\$10.45
September 2023	\$10.24
October 2023	\$10.97
November 2023	\$10.97
December 2023	\$10.97
January 2024	\$10.97
*February 2024	\$11.01

* Data as of Feb. 22, 2024 | SOURCE: One Touch Intelligence's StreamTRAK video intelligence service.

Harris Faulkner

Anchor and host, Fox News Channel

'Faulkner Focus' anchor, 'Outnumbered' co-host is starting 2024 on a ratings roll

With the 2024 presidential election season underway, Fox News Channel anchor and host Harris Faulkner is heating up on the ratings front as the host of two daily shows on the cable news network.

The 19-year Fox News veteran's morning news series, *The Faulkner Focus*, averaged nearly 1.5 million viewers in January. That's a larger average audience than such broadcast shows as *GMA3: What You Need to Know* on ABC and CBS's *The Talk* tallied during the first week of February, according to Nielsen data provided by Fox News.

Outnumbered — Faulkner's other daily series, which she co-hosts with Emily Compagno and Kayleigh McEnany — is marking its 10th year on air in 2024. That show features a panel of regular contributors discussing breaking news and issues of the day.

Faulkner recently spoke to B+C Multichannel News senior content producer R. Thomas Umstead about the upcoming election news cycle and the challenges of competing in a crowded television environment.

How have you been able to build ratings momentum in a noisy, competitive television news environment? It's about consistency. When people tune in, they know what they're going to get. My only goal is to tell the truth and to get the audience to remember some of those words by the way that I deliver it. I don't want to



waste their time and I don't want them to think that I take them for granted.

How has the cable-news business changed since you've been at Fox News? The platforms are all still changing, but when you talk about reaching viewers,

BONUS FIVE

Favorite TV show of all time? *Star Trek* — every version.

TV show you're currently binge-watching? *One Day* (Netflix)

Most recent best meal? River Palm Terrace, right in my New Jersey hood.

Destination on your bucket list? The southern tip of Spain.

The person in history whom you would've loved to have interviewed? My mom.

especially a young audience, staying relevant is everybody's goal. You've got to be there when news happens ... that's what makes you relevant in this business. Whatever they are doing to consume the information, you have to bring the truth to them and tell it in a memorable way.

Has the cable news business improved for women in general, and for women of color in particular? The one place I want to see more of us — and this includes Fox by the way — is as content drivers behind the scenes. We need line producers, senior producers and executive producers. We need people who are handling and driving the content behind the scenes. I think we have representation in front of the camera with people of many diverse lanes, and I encourage networks to look at more than skin color and hair texture when it comes to diversity.

What role will the media serve in the 2024 elections? I do think we have a responsibility to prepare the viewer. The unifying message to me, the nonpolitical, apolitical message to me is to go and to do what my dad fought for — go do your supreme right of freedom and vote. In that sense, that's our most important job. And the way that you do that is to instill confidence in people that you're preparing them and that you're telling them the truth, especially around presidential elections.

What's left for you to accomplish in the news business? It is an accomplishment when you're on a team for there to be a measurable way to show them how you're doing. So while I don't think it's the end-all be-all, when we have good news to share about how the show is doing I'm extremely proud. Sometimes the only measurement that we get besides the beautiful comments from viewers that we get to meet in person are the ratings, and that's of course what our bosses look at. ●

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