Please note the new partnership on this research as it becomes the RTDNA/Newhouse School at Syracuse University Survey. I am privileged to have joined the outstanding faculty at Syracuse. That's the name you'll see on the research from here on … and that's what you'll see on the painfully long survey questionnaire later this fall.

Bob Papper

**New Records for Minorities and Women in Local TV News**
**by Bob Papper**

The latest RTDNA/Newhouse School at Syracuse University Survey finds the minority workforce in TV news rose to 26.6%. That's up 0.7 from last year's record high. The minority workforce at non-Hispanic TV stations also rose to the highest level ever. Again.

And women news directors also hit another record high.

Still, as far as minorities are concerned, the bigger picture remains unchanged. In the last 30 years, the minority population in the U.S. has risen 13.4 points; but the minority workforce in TV news is up just 8.8. Still, it's a lot better than many other industries, and after seeing the gap widen after 2005, it's encouraging that the last four years have seen steady progress.

**Minority population v. minority TV news workforce 1990 - 2020**

| | 1990 | 1995 | 2000 | 2005 | 2010 | 2015 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Minority Population in U.S. | 25.9% | 27.9% | 28.6% | 32.8% | 34.9% | 37.4% | 38% | 38.3% | 38.7% | 39.3%* |
| Minority TV Workforce | 17.8 | 17.1 | 21.0 | 21.2 | 20.2 | 22.2 | 24.4 | 24.8 | 25.9 | 26.6 |

*projected

**Television news work force - 1995 - 2020**

| | 1995 | 2000 | 2005 | 2010 | 2015 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Caucasian | 82.9% | 79.0% | 78.8% | 79.8% | 77.8% | 75.6% | 75.2% | 74.1% | 73.4% |
| African American | 10.1 | 11.0 | 10.3 | 11.5 | 10.8 | 10.9 | 11.7 | 12 | 13.3 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 4.2 | 7.0 | 8.7 | 5.8 | 8.2 | 10.5 | 10.8 | 11.6 | 10.9 |
| Asian American | 2.2 | 3.0 | 1.9 | 2.3 | 2.9 | 2.6 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Native American | 0.6 | <1.0 | 0.3 | 0.5 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.4 |

The minority workforce in local television news rose by 0.7 to 26.6%. That's three straight years of new, record levels of minorities in TV news. African Americans went up the most: 1.3 points. Native Americans edged up; Asian Americans held steady; Hispanic fell by 0.7.

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Minorities are again highest in top 25 markets. After that, it's become more and more even across market sizes and staff sizes. "Other commercial" continues to be a lot higher than other station groups. Network affiliates came in at 24% overall. That's up 1.2 from a year ago … which was up 1.4 from the year before. Also, as usual, stations in the South and West were far more diverse than stations in the Northeast -- with the Midwest lagging well behind that. Fox affiliates returned to their place as the most diverse newsrooms… but just by about 5 points over the others.

**Non-Hispanic TV**

The minority percentage at non-Hispanic TV stations rose by half a point to 24%. That's the fourth record high in the last four years.

At non-Hispanic stations, the minority breakdown is:

- 13.8% African American … up from 12.4%
- 7.8% Hispanic … down from 8.8%
- 2% Asian American … no change
- 0.4% Native American … no change

**Hispanic TV**

Overall, 98.9% of the TV news workforce at Hispanic stations are Hispanic. That's just below last year's all-time high. Caucasians make up 0.7% and Asian Americans 0.4%.

**TV: Men vs. Women**

Historically, in TV, men have outnumbered women for all groups except Asian Americans (where women have always outnumbered men) and Native American (which have commonly been about even). But there have been some slow, steady changes over the years.

The greatest disparity between men and women had always been among Asian Americans, but that's no longer the case. Among Asian Americans, 55% are women and 45% are men. That's the closest I've ever seen it. Native Americans came in exactly even. Hispanic women outnumber men 53.2% to 46.8%; African American women outnumber the men 54.9% to 45.1%. The biggest gender disparity is now among whites with men dominating the field, 58.7% to 41.3%.

Minority men and women are not distributed evenly across market sizes. Men outnumber women in top 50 markets, but women increasingly outnumber men in all market sizes below that.

**TV News Directors**

Minority news director numbers edged back up 0.2 from last year … leaving 2020 tied with 2018 for the highest percentage of minority TV news directors ever.

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**Television news directors – 1995 - 2020**

| | 1995 | 2000 | 2005 | 2010 | 2015 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Caucasian | 92.1% | 86% | 88.0% | 86.9% | 87.5% | 85.1% | 82.6% | 82.8% | 82.6% |
| African American | 1.6 | 3 | 3.9 | 3.3 | 4.3 | 5.3 | 6.4 | 5.5 | 3.9 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 3.8 | 9 | 5.8 | 6.6 | 6 | 7.1 | 8.4 | 10.7 | 10 |
| Asian American | 1.5 | 2 | 1.3 | 2.6 | 1.8 | 2.2 | 2.3 | 1 | 3.1 |
| Native American | 1.0 | <1 | 1.0 | 0.7 | 0.4 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0 | 0.4 |

Overall, 2020 ties 2018 for the best year ever for minority TV news directors with 17.4% of the total. In fact, 2016, 2018, 2019 and 2020 are the four years with the highest percentage of minority TV news directors. But this year's gains were limited to Asian Americans and Native Americans. Hispanic/Latino dropped by 0.7 and African American fell by a surprising 1.6.

Markets 1 to 25 had the highest percentage of minority news directors – as they always do. Otherwise, the numbers were erratic by market size and staff size. Other commercial and non-commercial were well ahead of all others in minority news directors. ABC, CBS and NBC were all similar with Fox lagging behind. A year ago, Fox affiliates were among the highest in minority news directors. Minority news directors in the Northeast caught up with the South and West but, as usual, the Midwest lagged well behind all the other areas.

The percentage of minority news directors at non-Hispanic stations went up from last year's 13.4% to 14.1% this time around. That's just shy of the all-time record of 14.3% in 2018. African American news directors fell from last year's 5.4% to this year's 4%. That the second straight year the number has fallen. Hispanic news directors at non-Hispanic stations slipped from last year's record high of 6.9% to the second highest ever at 6.5%. Asian American news directors soared from last year's 1.1% to 3.2% this year, and Native American news directors went from zero last year to 0.4% this time.

At Hispanic stations, 90.9% of the news directors are Hispanic. That's similar to last year (92.3%). The rest are white. That's not similar to last year when the rest were black.

**Minorities in TV news**

**Minorities in local TV news – 2020**

| | News Staffs With Minorities | Minority News Directors | Minorities as Percentage of Work Force |
|---|---|---|---|
| All Television | 96.3% | 17.4% | 26.6% |
| Network Affiliates | 97.4 | 13.9 | 24 |
| Independents | 88.9 | 45.5 | 62.2 |
| Market size: | | | |
| DMA 1-25 | 100 | 41.2 | 39.6 |
| DMA 26-50 | 100 | 16.7 | 30.4 |
| DMA 51-100 | 96.7 | 10 | 19.9 |
| DMA 101-150 | 98.3 | 15.6 | 24.2 |
| DMA 151+ | 89.1 | 14.3 | 23.6 |
| Staff size: | | | |

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| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Staff 51+ | 97.8 | 8.6 | 26.7 |
| Staff 31-50 | 100 | 18.9 | 26.7 |
| Staff 21-30 | 98.1 | 20 | 24.9 |
| Staff 11-20 | 96 | 4 | 28.3 |
| Staff 1-10 | 75 | 30 | 33.9 |

Almost all these numbers are up – at least a bit. As with last year, every newsroom in the top 50 markets had at least one minority and, on average they were 35%+ minority.

**TV General Managers**

**TV general managers – 2020**

| | Percent Caucasian | Percent Minority | Percent Men | Percent Women |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| All Television | 92.9% | 7.1% | 81% | 19% |
| Network Affiliates | 96.2 | 3.8 | 79.5 | 20.5 |
| Independents | 61.9 | 38.1 | 95.5 | 4.5 |
| Market size: | | | | |
| DMA 1-25 | 73.3 | 26.7 | 83.3 | 16.7 |
| DMA 26-50 | 89.5 | 10.5 | 74.4 | 25.6 |
| DMA 51-100 | 93.9 | 6.1 | 88.2 | 11.8 |
| DMA 101-150 | 100 | 0 | 77.8 | 22.2 |
| DMA 151+ | 97.8 | 2.2 | 79.2 | 20.8 |

Minority TV general managers plunged from 10.3% last year to 7.1% this year. At network affiliates, the drop was nearly 3 points. At non-Hispanic stations, the percentage of minority GMs fell from 7.4% a year ago to 3.9% this year. Hispanics and African Americans both dropped substantially. Asian Americans held steady – from 0.8 a year ago to 0.9 this year. Native Americans remained at zero. GMs in the West were far more diverse than any other region; The Midwest managed to slip from very small a year ago to zero minority GMs this time around.

After soaring to a new record last year, women general managers fell back 4.4. Network affiliates are higher than other commercial stations, but both percentages went down. They were highest at Fox affiliates and lowest at other commercial stations and CBS affiliates. Again. The Midwest and South were lower than the Northeast (that's a change) and, especially, the West (not a change).

**TV: Women**

**Women in local TV news – 2020**

| | News Staffs With Women | Women News Directors | Women as Percentage of Work Force |
|---|---|---|---|
| All Television | 99.1% | 36.8% | 44.7% |
| Network Affiliates | 100 | 30.2 | 44.7 |
| Independents | 100 | 31.8 | 44.8 |

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| Market: | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| DMA 1-25 | 95.5 | 32.4 | 43 |
| DMA 26-50 | 100 | 40.5 | 43.4 |
| DMA 51-100 | 100 | 32.9 | 45.1 |
| DMA 101-150 | 100 | 24.6 | 46.4 |
| DMA 151+ | 97.8 | 28 | 45.4 |
| Staff size: | | | |
| Staff 51+ | 100 | 31 | 43.2 |
| Staff 31-50 | 100 | 35.1 | 45.8 |
| Staff 21-30 | 100 | 23.2 | 44.9 |
| Staff 11-20 | 100 | 16 | 49.1 |
| Staff 1-10 | 90 | 50 | 43.8 |

For the fourth year in a row, the percentage of women TV news directors hit a new, record high – up from last year's 35.3% to this year's 36.8%. Note that the figure is a precise census number based on every TV station that runs local news (rather than projected from the sample of returned surveys). Women news directors were most likely to be found in top 100 markets. In fact, women make up 44% of the news directors in top 10 markets. Women news directors are more often found in non-commercial stations. Network and other commercial stations all have similar percentages. CBS affiliates, which had lagged behind for the two previous years are now even with other network affiliates. Women news directors were again less likely to be found in the Northeast than any other region.

**Parity in the workforce?**

How close is local TV news to parity in the workforce? Still has a way to go with minorities, as the tables here make clear. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that about 63% of the U.S. workforce is non-Hispanic white … 17% Hispanic … 13% African American … 6% Asian American … and 1% Native American. That puts all minority groups except black behind the employment average.

Women make up about 47% of the full time U.S. workforce, and with female unemployment lower than male unemployment, it's reasonable to assume that the difference between the 50.8% of the U.S. population that's female and the 47% of the workforce that's female is largely voluntary. That's likely a mixture of stay-at-home moms – who way outnumber stay-at-home dads – and those who have aged out of the full-time workforce – who are primarily women because they live longer. So women, at 44.7% of the TV workforce, are pretty close.

On the other hand, virtually all jobs in local TV news require a college degree. We can debate whether that should be so, but it is. Women go to college in greater numbers than men, and they graduate in markedly greater numbers than men. According to the Department of Education, 57% of college graduates are women. So if we look at the potential American workforce, ages 25 to 65, who have college degrees (or more), we find that 53.5% of that workforce are women. So maybe we still have a way to go there, too.

**For More Information**

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Alliance for Women in Media (AWM)
202-750-3664
https://allwomeninmedia.org

Asian American Journalists Association (AAJA)
Phone: (415) 346-2051
www.aaja.org

The Association for Women in Communication (AWC)
Phone: (417) 886-8606
www.womcom.org

Emma L. Bowen Foundation for Minority Interests in Media
www.emmabowenfoundation.com/

International Women's Media Foundation
(202) 496-1992
www.iwmf.org

National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ)
Phone: (301) 405-0248
www.nabj.org

National Association of Hispanic Journalists (NAHJ)
(202) 853-7760
www.nahj.org

National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association
Phone: (202) 588-9888
www.nlgja.org

Native American Journalists Association (NAJA)
www.naja.com

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**About the Survey**

The RTDNA/Newhouse School at Syracuse University Survey was conducted in the fourth quarter of 2019 among all 1,702 operating, non-satellite television stations and a random sample of 3,427 radio stations. Valid responses came from 1,313 television stations (77.1%) and 673 radio news directors and general managers representing 1,996 radio stations. Some data sets (e.g. the number of TV stations originating local news, getting it from others and

women TV news directors) are based on a complete census and are not projected from a smaller sample.

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