**Mostly Good News for Minorities in TV and Radio … a Mixed Picture for Women**

**by Bob Papper**

* Minority workforce in TV news up at record or near-record levels
* Minorities in radio news up as well
* Mixed picture for women in both TV and radio

The latest RTDNA/Hofstra University Annual Survey finds the minority workforce in TV news rose to 24.4%. That’s up more than a full point from a year ago … and is the second highest level ever in TV news. The minority workforce at non-Hispanic TV stations rose to the highest level ever.

The minority workforce in radio is up 2.3 … but still well below the level in 2014.

Women numbers were mixed in both TV and in radio.

Still, as far as minorities are concerned, the bigger picture remains unchanged. In the last 27 years, the minority population in the U.S. has risen 12.1 points; but the minority workforce in TV news is up just over half that at 6.6. And the minority workforce in radio is less than 1 point higher.

**Minority population v. minority broadcast workforce 1990 - 2017**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1990 | 1995 | 2000 | 2005 | 2010 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
| Minority Population in U.S. | 25.9% | 27.9% | 28.6% | 32.8% | 34.9% | 37.4% | 37.7% | 38%\* |
| Minority TV Workforce | 17.8 | 17.1 | 21.0 | 21.2 | 20.2 | 22.2 | 23.1 | 24.4 |
| Minority Radio Workforce | 10.8 | 14.7 | 10.0 | 7.9 | 5.0 | 9.8 | 9.4 | 11.7 |

\*projected

**Television**

**Television news work force - 1995 - 2017**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1995 | 2000 | 2005 | 2010 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
| Caucasian | 82.9% | 79.0% | 78.8% | 79.8% | 77.8% | 76.9% | 75.6% |
| African American | 10.1 | 11.0 | 10.3 | 11.5 | 10.8 | 11.1 | 10.9 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 4.2 | 7.0 | 8.7 | 5.8 | 8.2 | 8.9 | 10.5 |
| Asian American | 2.2 | 3.0 | 1.9 | 2.3 | 2.9 | 2.6 | 2.6 |
| Native American | 0.6 | <1.0 | 0.3 | 0.5 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 0.4 |

The minority workforce in local television news rose by more than a point to 24.4%. That’s the second highest level ever – just a hair behind the all-time high of 24.6% in 2001. All the gains came with Hispanics, who rose from 8.9% to 10.5%. African American slipped slightly from 11.1 to 10.9%. Asian American and Native Americans both stayed the same. Minorities are highest in top 25 markets, followed by markets 26 to 50. Both as usual. Other market sizes are nearly identical to last year. Newsroom staff size made little difference except the smallest newsrooms were higher in minorities. “Other commercial” was a lot higher in minorities; network affiliates came in at 21.8% overall. Also, as usual, stations in the South and West were far more diverse than stations in the Northeast or Midwest.

**Non-Hispanic TV**

The minority percentage at non-Hispanic TV stations rose more than a point to 22.6%. That’s the highest level ever, breaking the previous record of 21.8% set in 2001. As with the overall figures, all the increase came from more Hispanics. African Americans dipped very slightly. Asian American and Native American were unchanged.

At non-Hispanic stations, the minority breakdown is:

* 11.2% African American … down from 11.4%
* 8.4% Hispanic … up from 6.7%
* 2.7% Asian American … same as last year’s 2.7%
* 0.4% Native American … same as last year’s 0.4%

**Hispanic TV**

Overall, 87.6% of the TV news workforce at Hispanic stations are Hispanic. That's down from 98.1% last year. Another 10.8% are white; 1.2% are black; 0.4% are Asian American. The survey found no Native Americans at any Hispanic stations participating in this year's or last year’s surveys.

**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 in that equation. At least part of it.

While the greatest disparity between men and women has always been among Asian Americans, this year it edged at least a little closer: 61.5% women and 38.5% men. Close behind in disparity are the 58.6% white men versus 41.4% white women. African American is extremely close at 52.3% women and 47.7% men. Both Hispanics and Native Americans came in exactly the same for men and women. Hispanic women had been heading that way, but this is the first time it came out evenly.

The greatest discrepancy is in markets 1 to 25 (and among the biggest stations in those markets) where men outnumber women for all groups except Asian, where women have an even higher ratio of dominance than they do overall. All other market sizes are either more balanced or have more women.

**TV News Directors**

Minority news director numbers slid back down in TV.

**Television news directors – 1995 - 2017**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1995 | 2000 | 2005 | 2010 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
| Caucasian | 92.1% | 86% | 88.0% | 86.9% | 87.5% | 82.8% | 85.1% |
| African American | 1.6 | 3 | 3.9 | 3.3 | 4.3 | 5.5 | 5.3 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 3.8 | 9 | 5.8 | 6.6 | 6 | 8.8 | 7.1 |
| Asian American | 1.5 | 2 | 1.3 | 2.6 | 1.8 | 2.6 | 2.2 |
| Native American | 1.0 | <1 | 1.0 | 0.7 | 0.4 | 0.3 | 0.3 |

After hitting an all-time high last year (at 17.1%), minority TV news directors dropped back to 14.9% this year. All minority groups fell except Native American, which remained the same.

The percentage of minority news directors at non-Hispanic stations also shrank from last year’s record number … down 2 points to 11.9% That’s still second best overall and more than 2 points ahead of the third highest level, 10.7% in 2012. African American news directors actually rose to a new all-time high of 5.5% … but Hispanic dropped from 5.4% to 3.9% … Asian American fell from 2.7 to 2.3% … Native American held steady at 0.3%.

At Hispanic stations, 91.7% of the news directors are Hispanic. The rest are white.

**TV: The bigger picture**

**Minorities in local TV news – 2017**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | News Staffs  With Minorities | Minority News  Directors | Minorities as  Percentage of  Work Force | Average Number of Minorities on Staff |
| All Television | 95.5% | 14.9% | 24.4% | 9.2 |
| Network Affiliates | 96.8 | 11.7 | 21.8 | 8.5 |
| Independents | 94.1 | 52.2 | 60.2 | 20.7 |
| Market size: |  |  |  |  |
| DMA 1-25 | 100 | 31.7 | 42 | 26.4 |
| DMA 26-50 | 96.6 | 15.4 | 28.1 | 15.7 |
| DMA 51-100 | 96.2 | 10.4 | 19.5 | 8 |
| DMA 101-150 | 95.7 | 14.3 | 18.5 | 5.3 |
| DMA 151+ | 91.1 | 10.2 | 18.3 | 3.7 |
| Staff size: |  |  |  |  |
| Staff 51+ | 100 | 8.3 | 25.5 | 18.8 |
| Staff 31-50 | 98.7 | 16.7 | 23.8 | 9.4 |
| Staff 21-30 | 93.4 | 16.9 | 23 | 5.9 |
| Staff 11-20 | 95.8 | 20.8 | 20.8 | 3.5 |
| Staff 1-10 | 80.8 | 22.2 | 34.9 | 2.3 |

Overall minority gains in TV this year are again impressive – almost across the board. The percentage of stations with minorities and the minority work force went up overall and in most categories of market size and staff size. As usual, minorities generally were less likely to be in newsrooms in the Northeast, Midwest and at non-commercial stations. Fox was the only network where every affiliate in the survey had at least one minority on staff, although all the other network affiliates were in the mid to upper 90s. On the flip side, at least six stations with 21 to 50 news staffers managed to have no minorities on staff at all.

Minority TV news directors dropped 2 points at network affiliates, primarily in markets 51 to 100. Minority news directors remained less common at Fox affiliates and stations in the Midwest and the Northeast. Average number of minorities per newsroom also went up in most categories.

**TV General Managers**

**TV general managers – 2017**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Percent Caucasian | Percent Minority | Percent Men | Percent Women |
| All Television | 92.4% | 7.6% | 83.5% | 16.5% |
| Network Affiliates | 94.5 | 5.5 | 83.1 | 16.9 |
| Independents | 56.2 | 43.8 | 93.8 | 6.2 |
| Market size: |  |  |  |  |
| DMA 1-25 | 79.4 | 20.6 | 73.5 | 26.5 |
| DMA 26-50 | 85.7 | 14.3 | 74.4 | 25.6 |
| DMA 51-100 | 95.3 | 4.7 | 93.2 | 6.8 |
| DMA 101-150 | 95.9 | 4.1 | 84 | 16 |
| DMA 151+ | 97.7 | 2.3 | 80 | 20 |

Minority TV general managers dropped a point overall, but the percentage at network affiliates remained exactly the same. I found no minority general managers at Fox affiliates or non-commercial stations. The number was highest at CBS affiliates and lowest (as usual) in the Midwest.

Minority general managers at non-Hispanic stations edged up slightly from 5.6% to 5.9%. Same thing happened last year. More than half were Hispanic, at 3.7%. That’s up from last year. African American, at 1.1%, dropped from a year ago (again), while Asian American, at 1.1%, held steady. I found no Native American GMs. A surprisingly low 62.5% of GMs at Hispanic stations were Hispanic. The rest were white.

Percentages of women general managers are almost alternating going up and down. This was a down year, with a decrease of 2.4, following last year’s increase of 1.6. Women GMs are now most often found in top 50 markets … and at stations with both the biggest and smallest newsrooms, Fox affiliates (again) , non-commercial; stations, and stations in the West. Way fewer at stations in the Northeast.

Keep in mind that all the general manager figures for TV are for stations that run local news. I don't collect this data from others in the survey, so it's not possible to project these numbers to the general universe of TV stations.

**TV and Newspapers**

Historically, I’ve always compared the diversity in TV news with newspaper employment as compiled by the American Society of News Editors. But, as some of you may be aware, ASNE changed all of that in 2016. It now compiles diversity numbers in a completely different way (thus eliminating comparisons with TV), and it has stopped, altogether, calculating total newspaper employment.

**TV: Women**

**Women in local TV news – 2017**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | News Staffs  With Women | Women News  Directors | Women as  Percentage of  Work Force | Average  Number of  Women on Staff |
| All Television | 99.2% | 29.8% | 44% | 16.6 |
| Network Affiliates | 100 | 29.7 | 44.2 | 17.3 |
| Independents | 94.1 | 17.4 | 40.6 | 14 |
| Market: |  |  |  |  |
| DMA 1-25 | 100 | 34.1 | 43.3 | 27.2 |
| DMA 26-50 | 96.6 | 44.2 | 41.4 | 23.1 |
| DMA 51-100 | 98.7 | 20.8 | 43.6 | 17.9 |
| DMA 101-150 | 100 | 27.1 | 45.4 | 13 |
| DMA 151+ | 100 | 30 | 48 | 9.8 |
| Staff size: |  |  |  |  |
| Staff 51+ | 100 | 27.8 | 42.1 | 31 |
| Staff 31-50 | 100 | 23.5 | 44.8 | 17.8 |
| Staff 21-30 | 100 | 31.8 | 45.6 | 11.6 |
| Staff 11-20 | 100 | 20.8 | 46.7 | 7.8 |
| Staff 1-10 | 92.3 | 29.6 | 50.6 | 3.3 |

After two years in a row of record highs, women TV news directors dropped from last year’s 33.1% to 29.8% this time around.

Women TV news directors were a little more likely at CBS affiliates and non-commercial stations … and less likely at other commercial stations and stations in the Northeast.

At 44%, women are at the second highest percentage of the TV news work force ever, slipping 0.2 behind last year’s all-time high. Those of you who memorize these reports may remember that I noted what appeared to be a growing discrepancy in the size of the female workforce based on market size. The discrepancy isn’t growing, but it’s also not going away. Women make up 42.4% of the workforce in the top 50 markets, but they make up 43.6% of the workforce in markets 51 to 100 and 46.7% in markets 101+. Affiliation made no difference in the numbers, but geography did (unlike last year). Stations in the South and West were both about 6 points higher in women staff than stations in the Northeast and Midwest.

Note that the overall percentage of women TV news directors comes from a complete census of all TV news directors. All the subsets on the data come from the survey itself. For survey buffs (both of you), a smaller percentage of women TV news directors return the survey compared to men. For whatever the reason, that's been true every single year since I started the census calculation in 2002. But it was closer than usual this year.

**Radio**

A mixed picture for minorities and women in radio in the past year.

**Radio news work force - 1995 - 2017**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1995 | 2000 | 2005 | 2010 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
| Caucasian | 85.3% | 90% | 92.1% | 95.0% | 90.2% | 90.6% | 88.3% |
| African American | 5.7 | 5 | 0.7 | 2.9 | 4.4 | 3.4 | 2.8 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 7.5 | 3 | 6.0 | 0.7 | 2.7 | 3.5 | 4.2 |
| Asian American | 0.6 | 1 | 0.7 | 0.4 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 4 |
| Native American | 1.0 | 1 | 0.5 | 1.1 | 1 | 0.8 | 0.7 |

The minority workforce in radio rose by 2.3, with big gains for Asian Americans and a decent jump by Hispanic American. African American fell and Native American slipped slightly.

**Radio: Men vs. Women**

In radio news, overall, there are nearly twice as many men as women, although that’s a closer ratio than last year. Caucasian, Asian American and Native American men all outnumber women. African American and Hispanic women outnumber men. Hispanic women have been slowly but steadily gaining on the men, although this is the first time the balance tipped the other way. African American women substantially outnumber African American men.

**Radio News directors**

Bad news for minority news directors in radio.

**Radio news directors – 1995 - 2017**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1995 | 2000 | 2005 | 2010 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
| Caucasian | 91.4% | 94% | 89.0% | 92.9% | 94.9% | 92.5% | 93.8% |
| African American | 5.4 | 3 | 0.0 | 2.7 | 1.7 | 3.1 | 2.3 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 2.4 | 2 | 8.8 | 2.7 | 1.7 | 2.4 | 1.9 |
| Asian American | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.9 | 0 | 0 | 0.8 |
| Native American | 0.8 | 1 | 2.2 | 0.9 | 1.7 | 2 | 1.2 |

After last year’s small increase, the percentage of minority radio news directors fell back by just over a point. Every ethnic group went down except Asian American, which rose from zero to 0.8. Non-commercial stations had almost three times the percent of minority news directors (11.3% vs. 4.3%). As with TV, percentages of minority radio news directors were much lower in the Northeast and Midwest than in the South or West.

**Radio: The bigger picture**

**Minorities in local radio news – 2017**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | News Staffs  With Minorities | Minority  News Directors | Minorities as  Percentage of  Work Force | Average  Number of  Minorities on Staff |
| All Radio | 16.8% | 6.2% | 11.7% | 0.3 |
| Major Market | 50 | 8.6 | 24.6 | 1.1 |
| Large Market | 21.2 | 7.3 | 8.4 | 0.2 |
| Medium Market | 8.6 | 4.9 | 5 | 0.1 |
| Small Market | 8.5 | 6.2 | 4.8 | 0.1 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Commercial | 10.1 | 4.3 | 6.2 | 0.1 |
| Non-commercial | 35.3 | 11.3 | 17.7 | 0.7 |

A mixed picture for minorities in radio this year. Numbers went up for the percent of radio news staffs with minorities and percentage of the workforce – both up by nearly two and a half points. But the percentage of minority news directors fell by 1.3. The news director drop came from a plunge of the percentage of minority news directors in major markets. In all categories, minorities were about three times the level at non-commercial stations as commercial ones: staffs with minorities, news directors and workforce. As usual, stations in the South and West were much higher in minorities in all positions than stations in the Northeast and Midwest.

**Radio General Managers**

**Radio general managers – 2017**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Percent Caucasian | Percent Minority | Percent Men | Percent Women |
| All Radio | 96% | 4% | 79% | 21% |

The percentage of minority radio general managers is virtually unchanged from a year ago, slipping 0.4. Minority GMs were more likely to be found in major markets and at non-commercial stations, and least likely to be found in the Midwest and Northeast. Women general managers rose by nearly 2 points from last year, duplicating last year’s advances over the year before. There were few male vs. female differences, except, surprisingly, in geography. Women GMs were much more often found in the Northeast and the West.

**Radio: Women**

**Women in local radio news – 2017**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | News Staffs  With Women | Women  News Directors | Women as  Percentage of  Work Force | Average  Number of  Women on Staff |
| All Radio | 52.1% | 23% | 36.1% | 0.8 |
| Major Market | 67.9 | 22.9 | 44.9 | 2.1 |
| Large Market | 60.6 | 19.5 | 36.1 | 1 |
| Medium Market | 51.4 | 29.1 | 30.8 | 0.5 |
| Small Market | 40.7 | 17.1 | 29.8 | 0.4 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Commercial | 41.7 | 18.5 | 28.4 | 0.4 |
| Non-commercial | 80.4 | 34.7 | 44.6 | 1.6 |

In radio, women regained most of the numbers lost a year ago. The percentage of staffs with women rose by 8 points, following a 7 point drop the year before. The percentage of women in the workforce rose by more than 4 after falling 7 the year before. But women news directors went down by just over a point. All market sizes dropped except medium markets. Women are almost twice as likely to be news directors at non-commercial stations than at commercial ones (34.7% vs. 18.5%). Women, generally, were more likely in the largest markets, at non-commercial stations and at stations in the South and West.

Major markets are those with 1 million or more listeners. Large markets are from 250,000 to 1 million. Medium markets are 50,000 to 250,000. Small markets are fewer than 50,000.

**For More Information**

Alliance for Women in Media (AWM)

202-750-3664

[www.allwomeninmedia.org](http://www.awrt.org)

Asian American Journalists Association (AAJA)

Phone: (415) 346-2051

[www.aaja.org](http://www.aaja.org)

[national@aaja.org](mailto:national@aaja.org)

Association for Women in Communication (AWC)

Phone: (417) 886-8606

[www.womcom.org](http://www.womcom.org)

[members@womcom.org](mailto:members@womcom.org)

Emma L. Bowen Foundation for Minority Interests in Media

[www.emmabowenfoundation.com/](http://www.emmabowenfoundation.com/)

International Women’s Media Foundation

(202) 496-1992

[www.iwmf.org](http://www.iwmf.org)

National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ)

Phone: (301) 405-0248

[www.nabj.org](http://www.nabj.org)

National Association of Hispanic Journalists (NAHJ)

[www.nahj.org](http://www.nahj.org)

[nahj@nahj.org](mailto:nahj@nahj.org)

National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association

Phone: (202) 588-9888

[www.nlgja.org](http://www.nlgja.org)

[info@nlgja.org](mailto:info@nlgja.org)

Native American Journalists Association (NAJA)

Phone: (405) 325-1649

[www.naja.com](http://www.naja.com)

UNITY Journalists for Diversity

Phone: (414) 335-1478

[www.unityjournalists.org](http://www.unityjournalists.org)

***Bob Papper is Emeritus Distinguished Professor of Journalism at Hofstra University and has worked extensively in radio and TV news. This research was supported by the Lawrence Herbert School of Communication at Hofstra University and the Radio Television Digital News Association.***

**About the Survey**

The RTDNA/Hofstra University Survey was conducted in the fourth quarter of 2016 among all 1,684 operating, non-satellite television stations and a random sample of 3,987 radio stations. Valid responses came from 1,409 television stations (83.7%) and 430 radio news directors and general managers representing 1,151 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.