**Mostly Good News for Minorities and Women in Local TV News**

**by Bob Papper**

The latest RTDNA/Hofstra University Annual Survey finds the minority workforce in TV news rose to 24.8%. That’s up just 0.4, but it’s enough to beat the old record high set in 2001. The minority workforce at non-Hispanic TV stations also rose to the highest level ever.

Women news directors and women in the workforce also hit record highs.

Still, as far as minorities are concerned, the bigger picture remains unchanged. In the last 28 years, the minority population in the U.S. has risen 12.4 points; but the minority workforce in TV news is up just 7.

**Minority population v. minority TV news workforce 1990 - 2018**

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

\*projected

**Television news work force - 1995 - 2018**

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

The minority workforce in local television news rose by 0.4 to 24.8% – just above the previous record of 24.6% in 2001. African Americans rose the most, followed by Hispanics. Asian Americans and Native Americans both dropped.

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. “Other commercial” is a lot higher in minorities; network affiliates came in at 21.4% overall. That’s down 0.4 from a year ago. 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 were about 50% more diverse than any of the other network affiliates – which were all about the same.

**Non-Hispanic TV**

The minority percentage at non-Hispanic TV stations edged up 0.1 to 22.7%. It may not be much of an increase, but it, again, sets a new record high, edging out last year. All of this year’s increase came from African Americans. Hispanics and Native Americans dropped slightly; Asian Americans dropped 0.6.

At non-Hispanic stations, the minority breakdown is:

* 12.1% African American … up from 11.2%
* 8.2% Hispanic … down from 8.4%%
* 2.1% Asian American … down from 2.7%
* 0.3% Native American … down from last year’s 0.4%

**Hispanic TV**

Overall, 93.6% of the TV news workforce at Hispanic stations are Hispanic. That's up from last year’s 87.6%. The other 6.4% are white. The survey found no African Americans, Asian Americans or Native Americans at any Hispanic stations participating in this year's survey. I cannot recall that ever happening before.

**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 at least some of those ratios.

The greatest disparity between men and women has always been among Asian Americans, and this year it got worse: 70% women and 30% men. Close behind in disparity are Native American at 66.7% women and 33.3% men. Caucasians broke down 58.6% men versus 41.4% women. That’s exactly the same as last year. African American is closer at 53.8% women and 46.2% men. That’s a slight gain for women. Hispanics came in exactly the same for men and women. That’s the second year in a row that Hispanic men and women have been exactly even.

Markets 1 to 25 used to have the greatest discrepancy of men over women, but this year there’s little distinction by market size and size of newsroom. Fox affiliates are slightly more balanced than the other network affiliates, and other commercial stations and non-commercial stations are the most male-dominated of all the groups.

**TV News Directors**

Minority news director numbers rose to the highest level ever in TV.

**Television news directors – 1995 - 2018**

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

Up two and a half points from a year ago, minority news directors rose to 17.4% … breaking the old record of 17.1% set two years ago. All groups went up except Native American, which remained the same.

The percentage of minority news directors at non-Hispanic stations also set a new record at 14.3% -- also up about two and a half points from last year and 0.4 ahead of the previous record set two years ago. African American news directors rose to a new all-time high of 6.7% … Hispanic rose from last year’s 3.9% to this year’s 5% … Asian American held steady at 2.3% … Native American also held steady at 0.3%.

At Hispanic stations, 100% of the news directors are Hispanic. That’s the first time that’s happened since I’ve been calculating those numbers.

**Minorities in TV news**

**Minorities in local TV news – 2018**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | News StaffsWith Minorities | Minority NewsDirectors | Minorities asPercentage ofWork Force | Average Number of Minorities on Staff |
| All Television | 94.7%  | 17.4%  | 24.8%  | 9.5  |
| Network Affiliates | 95.8  | 12.9  | 21.4  | 8.4  |
| Independents | 90.5  | 65.2  | 60.1  | 22.6  |
| Market size: |  |  |  |  |
| DMA 1-25 | 100  | 33.3  | 38.7  | 26  |
| DMA 26-50 | 100  | 20.9  | 29.8  | 19.9  |
| DMA 51-100 | 98.6  | 15.7  | 19.6  | 8.3  |
| DMA 101-150 | 91.9  | 16.4  | 19.3  | 5.5  |
| DMA 151+ | 87.9  | 7.8  | 18.9  | 3.3  |
| Staff size: |  |  |  |  |
| Staff 51+ | 100  | 12.5  | 25.5  | 19.1  |
| Staff 31-50 | 98.5  | 16.4  | 21.9  | 9  |
| Staff 21-30 | 94.7  | 16.9  | 24.7  | 6.2  |
| Staff 11-20 | 97.1  | 18.9  | 33.5  | 5.3  |
| Staff 1-10 | 69.2  | 18.5  | 30.2  | 1.7  |

Almost all the numbers are the same or higher this year. Every newsroom in the top 50 markets had at least one minority and, on average they were nearly a third minority. The number of minority news directors in the smallest markets actually dropped from an embarrassing 10.2% to a worse 7.8%. As usual, minorities generally were less likely to be in newsrooms in the Northeast and especially in the Midwest. While all the network affiliates are in the 90s for minorities on staff, not one of them hit 100%. And how low a priority does it have to be for stations with 20 or more staffers – even 31 to 50 staffers – to have no minorities at all in the newsroom? Really?

**TV General Managers**

**TV general managers – 2018**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Percent Caucasian | Percent Minority | Percent Men | Percent Women |
| All Television | 91.3% | 8.7%  | 80.4%  | 19.6%  |
| Network Affiliates | 94.7  | 5.3  | 79.8  | 20.2  |
| Independents | 56.5  | 43.5  | 87  | 13 |
| Market size: |  |  |  |  |
| DMA 1-25 | 77.5  | 22.5  | 78  | 22  |
| DMA 26-50 | 89.7  | 10.3  | 80  | 20  |
| DMA 51-100 | 93.6  | 6.4  | 88.6  | 11.4  |
| DMA 101-150 | 96.9  | 3.1  | 80  | 20  |
| DMA 151+ | 92.7  | 7.3  | 71.4  | 28.6  |

Minority TV general managers rose 1.1 overall, but the percentage at network affiliates actually dropped by 0.2. I found no minority general managers at Fox affiliates (again). The number was highest at NBC and then CBS affiliates and lowest (as usual) in the Midwest.

Minority general managers at non-Hispanic stations edged up slightly (again) from 5.9% to 6.4%. Same thing happened last year. Two-thirds are Hispanic, at 4.2%. That’s up half a point from last year. African American, at 1.1%, stayed the same, while Asian American, at 0.8%, edged down. Native American rose to 0.4%. A surprisingly low 63.6% of GMs at Hispanic stations are Hispanic. That’s a point up from a year ago. The rest are white.

Continuing its alternating up and down years, the percentages of women general managers rose 3.1 after last year’s drop of 2.4 (and the previous year’s increase of 1.6). While women GM numbers are comparatively good this year, they’re still under the 2014 numbers. Women GMs are most likely found in the smallest markets and at stations with the smallest newsrooms. As in the past, they were most often found at Fox affiliates and stations in the West. CBS stations and stations in the Northeast lagged behind.

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 – 2018**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | News StaffsWith Women | Women NewsDirectors | Women asPercentage ofWork Force | AverageNumber ofWomen on Staff |
| All Television | 98.8%  | 34.3%  | 44.4%  | 17  |
| Network Affiliates | 98.6  | 33.2  | 44.8  | 17.6  |
| Independents | 100  | 26.1  | 41.5  | 15.6  |
| Market: |  |  |  |  |
| DMA 1-25 | 100  | 41.9  | 42.9  | 28.9  |
| DMA 26-50 | 100  | 37.2  | 43.2  | 28.8  |
| DMA 51-100 | 100  | 33.3  | 44  | 18.7  |
| DMA 101-150 | 100  | 33.3  | 47.2  | 13.4  |
| DMA 151+ | 94.8  | 25.8  | 45.7  | 7.9  |
| Staff size: |  |  |  |  |
| Staff 51+ | 100  | 34.2  | 43.3  | 32.5  |
| Staff 31-50 | 100  | 27.4  | 45  | 18.5  |
| Staff 21-30 | 100  | 28.3  | 45.8  | 11.5  |
| Staff 11-20 | 97.1  | 27  | 47  | 7.4  |
| Staff 1-10 | 92.3  | 51.9  | 47  | 2.7  |

The percentage of women TV news directors recovered from last year’s drop to set a new, all-time record at 34.3%. Note that the figure is a precise census number based on every TV station that runs local news. Women news directors were most likely to be found in the biggest markets and, interestingly, in both the largest and smallest newsrooms. Public stations, then Fox and then NBC affiliates were most likely to have women news directors; ABC and CBS lagged a bit behind. Women news directors were less likely to be found in the Northeast than any other region.

The percentage of women in the local TV news workforce rose to 44.4% this year – up from 44% last year … and setting a new record high, beating 44.2% two years ago. 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 43.1% of the workforce in the top 50 markets and 44% of the workforce in markets 51 to 100, but they’re 46.5% in markets 101+. Affiliation made little difference in the numbers, although Fox affiliates are closer to even male/female. Geography, again, did matter, with stations in the South and West about 4 points higher than stations in the Northeast and Midwest. A lot like last year.

I can sort of see (but not much) how a station with 1 to 10 employees can have no women, but how does any station with 11 to 20 staffers manage to avoid having any?

**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. But the industry appears to be just about at parity when it comes to women. 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.

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. The result is that 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 we still have a way to go.

**For More Information**

Alliance for Women in Media (AWM)

202-750-3664

<https://allwomeninmedia.org>

Asian American Journalists Association (AAJA)

Phone: (415) 346-2051

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

Association for Women in Communication (AWC)

Phone: (417) 886-8606

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

Phone: 202-853-7760

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

National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association

Phone: (202) 588-9888

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

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**About the Survey**

The RTDNA/Hofstra University Survey was conducted in the fourth quarter of 2017 among all 1,683 operating, non-satellite television stations and a random sample of 3,542 radio stations. Valid responses came from 1,333 television stations (79.2%) and 415 radio news directors and general managers representing 1,110 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.