An introductory note, if you will. 2019 marks my 25th year conducting the

RTDNA (before that, RTNDA) Annual Survey. First at Ball State University and now at Hofstra University. It has been my privilege to do this, and I want to thank RTDNA, Ball State and Hofstra for the support and opportunity to keep this going. Most of all, I want to thank all of you who spend what I know is way too much time poring over the way too many questions that I ask on this survey. Thank you.

- Bob Papper

**Great News for Women … Mostly Good News for Minorities in Local TV News**

**by Bob Papper**

The latest RTDNA/Hofstra University Annual Survey finds the minority workforce in TV news rose to 25.9%. That’s up 1.1 from last year’s record high. The minority workforce at non-Hispanic TV stations also rose to the highest level ever. Again.

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

As far as minorities are concerned, the bigger picture remains unchanged. In the last 29 years, the minority population in the U.S. has risen 12.8 points; but the minority workforce in TV news is up just 8.1. Still, after seeing the gap widen after 2005, it’s encouraging that the last three years have seen steady progress.

**Minority population v. minority TV news workforce 1990 - 2019**

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

\*projected

**Television news work force - 1995 - 2019**

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

The minority workforce in local television news rose by 1.1 to 25.9%. Another all-time record high. Hispanics rose the most, followed by African Americans. Asian Americans and Native Americans both held steady.

Minorities are 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 22.8% overall. That’s up 1.4 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 had been running ahead of other affiliates in diversity, but that’s no longer the case. All four affiliate groups were between 22 and 23.5% minority. That’s remarkably consistent.

**Non-Hispanic TV**

The minority percentage at non-Hispanic TV stations rose by 0.8 to 23.5%. That’s the third record high in the last three years. African American, Hispanics and Native Americans all moved up; Asian Americans dropped slightly.

At non-Hispanic stations, the minority breakdown is:

* 12.4% African American … up from 12.1%
* 8.8% Hispanic … up from 8.2%
* 2.0% Asian American … down from 2.1%
* 0.4% Native American … up from last year’s 0.3%

**Hispanic TV**

Overall, 99.7% of the TV news workforce at Hispanic stations are Hispanic. That's the highest I’ve ever seen it. The remaining 0.3 are Asian American. The survey found no African Americans, Caucasians or Native Americans at any Hispanic stations participating in this year's Survey.

**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, but that’s only barely true today. Among Asian Americans, 60.5% are women and 39.7% Are men. This year, Native Americans came in at 59.4% men and 40.6% women. And both of those are only slightly more lopsided than whites – who are now 57.6% men and 42.4% women. Hispanics are almost dead even at 50.4% men and 49.6% women. African American women outnumber the men: 53.6% to 46.4%

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

Men also outnumber women in the very biggest newsrooms, but women outnumber men in all newsroom sizes below that.

Interestingly, there are more Hispanic men than women in Hispanic TV newsrooms, but the ratio reverses in non-Hispanic newsrooms.

**TV News Directors**

Minority news director numbers edged down 0.2 from last year’s all-time high … making 2019 the second highest level ever.

**Television news directors – 1995 - 2019**

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

2016, 2018 and 2019 have been the three best years ever for local TV news directors of color. But the gains weren’t across the board. While Hispanic news directors jumped 2.3 points this year, all other groups fell. Other commercial and non-commercial stations were well ahead of all others in minority news directors, and ABC and CBS affiliates lagged behind Fox and, especially, NBC affiliates. As usual, the Northeast ran well behind the South and West … with the Midwest at half the rate as the Northeast.

The percentage of minority news directors at non-Hispanic stations fell back a point from last year’s record 14.3% to this year’s 13.4%. African American news directors dropped back from last year’s record high 6.7% to 5.4%. Hispanic news directors set a new record of 6.9% -- almost 2 points higher than the previous record at non-Hispanic stations. Asian Americans dropped to 1.1% … and the survey turned up no Native American news directors this year.

At Hispanic stations, 92.3% of the news directors are Hispanic. The rest are African American. Note that earlier I wrote that there were no African Americans at Hispanic stations. Obviously, there are, but data for the two measurements come from separate questions, and when news directors don’t answer all the questions, we see these strange, sometimes contradictory results.

**Minorities in TV news**

**Minorities in local TV news – 2019**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | News Staffs  With Minorities | Minority News  Directors | Minorities as  Percentage of  Work Force |
| All Television | 96.6% | 17.2% | 25.9% |
| Network Affiliates | 97.1 | 12.5 | 22.8 |
| Independents | 90 | 61.5 | 60.8 |
| Market size: |  |  |  |
| DMA 1-25 | 100 | 38.1 | 41.8 |
| DMA 26-50 | 100 | 14.3 | 26.3 |
| DMA 51-100 | 98.4 | 11.2 | 21.7 |
| DMA 101-150 | 95.2 | 15.9 | 21.9 |
| DMA 151+ | 92.7 | 14 | 19.6 |
| Staff size: |  |  |  |
| Staff 51+ | 100 | 10 | 25.5 |
| Staff 31-50 | 98.6 | 17.7 | 27.7 |
| Staff 21-30 | 95.9 | 19.6 | 22.6 |
| Staff 11-20 | 100 | 13.5 | 26.3 |
| Staff 1-10 | 75 | 25 | 31.9 |

Almost all the numbers are up from a year ago. Every newsroom in the top 50 markets had at least one minority and, on average they were 30% minority. Every Fox and non-commercial station had at least one minority staffer, and all the network affiliates were at least in the 90s. All had minority workforces in the 20s or higher.

As usual, the Northeast and especially the Midwest lagged behind the South and West. And as I’ve said before, how low a priority does it have to be for stations with 20 or more staffers – even 31 to 50 staffers – not to have a single minority in the newsroom? Really?

**TV General Managers**

**TV general managers – 2019**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Percent Caucasian | Percent Minority | Percent Men | Percent Women |
| All Television | 89.7% | 10.3% | 76.6% | 23.4% |
| Network Affiliates | 93.3 | 6.7 | 75 | 25 |
| Independents | 54.2 | 45.8 | 92 | 8 |
| Market size: |  |  |  |  |
| DMA 1-25 | 73.2 | 26.8 | 71.4 | 28.6 |
| DMA 26-50 | 87.8 | 12.2 | 78 | 22 |
| DMA 51-100 | 86.7 | 13.3 | 82.7 | 17.3 |
| DMA 101-150 | 100 | 0 | 73.8 | 26.2 |
| DMA 151+ | 96.2 | 3.8 | 74.1 | 25.9 |

Minority TV general managers rose 1.6 overall, with the percentage at network affiliates going up 1.4. Other commercial stations led all others in minority general managers, and ABC and Fox affiliates trailed NBC and CBS. As always, the South and West led the way with the Northeast well behind and the Midwest barely in sight behind that.

Minority general managers at non-Hispanic stations rose again from 6.4% last year to 7.4% this time around. Two-thirds are Hispanic, at 4.3%. That’s up 0.1 from last year. African Americans doubled from 1.1 to 2.3, while Asian American stayed at 0.8%. I found no Native American GMs. Just over two-thirds, 69.2%, of GMs at Hispanic stations are Hispanic. That’s up from a year ago. The rest are white.

Women general manager numbers soared to the highest level in the quarter century I’ve been doing the Survey --- breaking the old mark set in 2014 by 3 points. And the percentage is even higher at network affiliates. They were highest at Fox affiliates and lowest at other commercial stations, CBS affiliates and in the Northeast. Again..

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 – 2019**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | News Staffs  With Women | Women News  Directors | Women as  Percentage of  Work Force |
| All Television | 99.6% | 35.3% | 44.9% |
| Network Affiliates | 100 | 32.6 | 45.1 |
| Independents | 95 | 34.6 | 41.7 |
| Market: |  |  |  |
| DMA 1-25 | 100 | 47.6 | 43.7 |
| DMA 26-50 | 100 | 37.2 | 42.3 |
| DMA 51-100 | 100 | 33.8 | 45.4 |
| DMA 101-150 | 98.4 | 26.1 | 47.1 |
| DMA 151+ | 100 | 29.3 | 46.7 |
| Staff size: |  |  |  |
| Staff 51+ | 100 | 30 | 42.9 |
| Staff 31-50 | 100 | 34.2 | 47.3 |
| Staff 21-30 | 100 | 24.5 | 44.9 |
| Staff 11-20 | 100 | 25 | 49 |
| Staff 1-10 | 95 | 55 | 48.3 |

For the third year in a row, the percentage of women TV news directors hit a new, record high – up from last year’s 34.3% to this year’s 35.3%. 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 the biggest markets, and the percentage drops with almost every decline in market size. Women news directors are more often found in non-commercial stations; network and other commercial stations all have similar percentages, except CBS, which is lower than all the others. CBS affiliates lagged a year ago as well. Women news directors were again less likely to be found in the Northeast than any other region.

The percentage of women in the local TV news workforce rose to 44.9% this year – up from 44.4% last year … and setting another new, record 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 going away. Women make up 43% of the workforce in the top 50 markets … 45.4% of the workforce in markets 51 to 100 … and 46.9% in markets 101+. Affiliation made no difference. Geographic areas are getting a bit closer, with the West and South running about 3 points higher in women than the Northeast and Midwest. A year ago, it was a 4-point spread.

I said last year that, “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?” This year, they don’t.

**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)

The 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)

[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)

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

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**About the Survey**

The RTDNA/Hofstra University Survey was conducted in the fourth quarter of 2018 among all 1,685 operating, non-satellite television stations and a random sample of 3,481 radio stations. Valid responses came from 1,310 television stations (77.7%) and 645 radio news directors and general managers representing 1,938 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.