

RTDNA / Hofstra Survey Finds Mixed News for Women & Minorities in TV, Radio News

Percentage of Minorities Up Slightly for TV, Radio; Percentage of Women Stays Flat for TV & Drops for Radio

By Bob Papper

The latest RTDNA/Hofstra University Annual Survey finds that the percentage of minorities rose in both television and radio. The percentage of minority news directors in television hit its third highest level ever and is the highest ever at non-Hispanic stations. On the flip side, most of the gains were small, and the percentage of minorities in TV news remained at the low end of the narrow band within which the percentages have floated for the last decade.

There was no good news for women in radio and television news. Women in TV news and women TV news directors stayed largely the same -- each had a slight dip -- and women in radio news and women radio news directors both fell noticeably.

As far as minorities are concerned, the bigger picture remains unchanged. In the last 21 years, the minority population in the U.S. has risen 9.5 percent; but the minority workforce in TV news is up 2.7 percent, and the minority workforce in radio is actually down from what it was two decades ago. Still, TV news diversity remains far ahead of newspaper.

Minority Population v. Minority Broadcast Workforce

	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2000	1995	1990
Minority Population in U.S.	35.4%*	34.9%	34.4%	34.0%	33.6%	33.2%	32.8%	28.6%	27.9%	25.9%
Minority TV Workforce	20.5	20.2	21.8	23.6	21.5	22.2	21.2	21.0	17.1	17.8
Minority Radio Workforce	7.1	5.0	8.9	11.8	6.2	6.4	7.9	10.0	14.7	10.8

*projected

Broadcast News Work Force ... Television

	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2000	1995

Caucasian	79.5%	79.8%	78.2%	76.3%	78.5%	77.8%	78.8%	79.0%	82.9%
African American	9.3	11.5	9.6	10.1	10.1	9.5	10.3	11.0	10.1
Hispanic	7.3	5.8	8.8	10.3	8.7	9.6	8.7	7.0	4.2
Asian American	3.5	2.3	3.0	2.7	2.3	2.7	1.9	3.0	2.2
Native American	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.3	<1.0	0.6

Broadcast News Work Force ... Radio

	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2000	1995
Caucasian	92.9%	95.0%	91.1%	88.2%	93.8%	93.6%	92.1%	90%	85.3%
African American	3.9	2.9	5.4	7.8	3.3	2.5	0.7	5	5.7
Hispanic	2.6	0.7	2.3	3.6	0.7	1.9	6.0	3	7.5
Asian American	0	0.4	0.6	0.4	1.1	1.8	0.7	1	0.6
Native American	0.6	1.1	0.6	0	1.1	0.2	0.5	1	1.0

In TV, generally, the smaller the market, the lower the minority population: 15.1% in markets 151+ ... up to 30.4% in the top 25 markets. There are slightly more female minorities than male minorities in markets 101+, but the edge becomes increasingly male as you go up in market size. By staff size, there's no consistent pattern, and newsrooms with 1 - 10 staffers have the highest percentage of minorities (41.1%) because of the number of smaller, major market news operations and small Hispanic TV news shops.

Differences weren't large, but Fox affiliates, at 24.1%, had a higher percentage of minorities than the others, and NBC affiliates, at 16.1% were a little below ABC and CBS stations. Other commercial stations, at 78.6%, were at the top, and non-commercial stations, at 17.5% were near the bottom.

As usual, stations in the West and South were the most diverse; stations in the Northeast and Midwest had minority percentages under half the South and West.

The minority percentage at non-Hispanic stations again dropped slightly from the year before -- down from last year's 19.3% (which was down from the previous year's 19.6%) to this year's 19.1%.

At non-Hispanic stations, the minority breakdown is:

- 9.4 percent African American (down from 10.3 percent)

- 5.7 percent Hispanic (exactly the same as a year ago)
- 3.5 percent Asian American (up from 2.8 percent)
- 0.4 percent Native American (down from last year's 0.5%).

Overall, 84.2 percent of the TV news workforce at Hispanic stations are Hispanic. That's up noticeably from last year's 73.9 percent. Another 14.3 percent are white; 1 percent are Asian American; 0.5 percent are Native Americans. I found no African Americans at Hispanic stations.

The minority workforce at non-commercial radio stations is the complete opposite for non-commercial television stations. Underrepresentation of minorities at public TV stations brings down the TV percentages, but the minority numbers in radio were helped enormously by non-commercial stations, which had more than twice the percentage of minorities as commercial radio. Interestingly, having a larger staff did not necessarily translate into having a more diverse one. Nor did having more stations in the local group. Nor was there a correlation with market size. Independent radio stations had almost twice as high a percentage of minorities as did group-owned. Stations in the South were much more diverse than others, and stations in the Midwest lagged well behind.

As usual, in TV, men outnumber women for almost all groups except Asian Americans, where women outnumber men 1.5:1 and Native Americans, which were even. Differences are greatest among whites, where there are 65% more men than women. In contrast, there are 35% more Hispanic men than women and 24% more black men than women. That disparity holds regardless of market size, staff size, affiliation or region.

Broadcast News Directors ... Television 2011 – 1995

	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2000	1995
Caucasian	86.4%	86.9%	88.8%	84.5%	89.1%	86.8%	88.0%	86%	92.1%
African American	3.7	3.3	3.5	3.7	2.0	4.2	3.9	3	1.6
Hispanic	6.5	6.6	6.0	9.3	7.2	6.0	5.8	9	3.8
Asian American	2.2	2.6	1.1	1.7	1.0	1.2	1.3	2	1.5
Native American	1.2	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.7	1.8	1.0	<1	1.0

Broadcast News Directors ... Radio 2011 – 1995

	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2000	1995
Caucasian	94.7%	92.9%	97.8%	94.1%	88.0%	95.6%	89.0%	94%	91.4%
African American	2.7	2.7	0	1.7	4.4	1.9	0.0	3	5.4
Hispanic	1.8	2.7	1.1	3.4	3.8	1.3	8.8	2	2.4
Asian American	0	0.9	1.1	0.8	1.9	0.6	0	0	0
Native American	0.9	0.9	0	0	1.9	0.6	2.2	1	0.8

Minority TV news directors increased by half a percent in the last year to the third highest level ever. The percentage of minority news directors was fairly close in every market size except the largest (1 - 25), which was 4 - 5 points below the rest. Minority news directors were most often found where staff size was 1 - 10 (34.3%), and much less common at the biggest stations, 51+ staffers, where only 3.1% of news directors are minorities. All the other staff groups came in the same.

Affiliation mattered. "Other commercial" led with 72% minority news directors with non-commercial stations at 20%. ABC and CBS affiliates were both just shy of 11% (10.7% and 10.8% respectively). NBC stations were at 6%, and Fox stations lagged well behind at 2.8%. Again, as with workforce, stations in the South and West were more than twice as likely to have minority news directors as stations in the Northeast and Midwest.

At non-Hispanic TV stations, the percentage of minority news directors rose from last year's 8.9% to 9.2%. That's the all time high, just above the record 9.1% of three years ago. At non-Hispanic stations, 3.9% were African American; 2.0% were Hispanic, 2.3% were Asian American; and 1% Native American. That's up for African Americans and Native Americans and down for Hispanics and Asian Americans.

The percentage of minority news directors in radio fell from last year's 7.1% to this year's 5.3 percent. African Americans and Native Americans stayed the same, but Hispanics and Asian American numbers fell. Group-owned or independent didn't matter.

Minorities in Local TV News – 2011

	News Staffs	Minority News	Minorities as	Average Number
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	With Minorities	Directors	Percentage of Work Force	of Minorities on Staff
All Television	90.8%	13.6%	20.5%	7.3
Network Affiliates	91.4	8.3	18.5	7.1
Independents	100	72.0	78.6	11.2
Market size:				
DMA 1-25	91.7	18.2	30.4	16.1
DMA 26-50	100	13.5	23.1	12.7
DMA 51-100	98.5	11.4	17.8	7.3
DMA 101-150	88.0	12.5	13.5	3.4
DMA 151+	78.2	14.0	15.1	2.6
Staff size:				
Staff 51+	100	3.1	23.0	16.9
Staff 31-50	100	11.1	15.8	6.4
Staff 21-30	88.5	13.0	19.9	5.2
Staff 11-20	81.0	12.7	18.5	3.2
Staff 1-10	76.5	37.8	41.1	2.8

Last year we had a large, puzzling drop in the percentage of TV stations with minorities. I suggested that it was just an anomaly, and this year's numbers prove that correct. We're back up where we usually are. Although Fox affiliates have, by far, the lowest percentage of minority news directors, they have the largest percentage of minorities on staff. As with news directors, the West and the South have the highest percentages of minority news staffers overall.

Minorities in Local Radio News – 2011

	News Staffs With Minorities	Minority News Directors	Minorities as Percentage of Work Force	Average Number of Minorities on Staff
All Radio	16.5%	5.3%	7.1%	0.2
Major Market	40.0	13.6	7.1	0.5
Large Market	33.3	9.1	20.5	0.9
Medium Market	10.3	2.0	4.1	0.1
Small Market	7.1	3.2	3.3	0.1

While the percentage of minority radio news directors fell, the percentage of the minority workforce rose slightly, and the percentage of radio news operations that have at least one minority staffer more than doubled. Non-commercial stations led in all categories. A large staff tended to mean a larger percentage with one or more minorities, but it did not increase the minority percentage in the newsroom. Independent stations did better than group-owned, and the South was way ahead of the rest of the country in all categories.

Women in Local TV News – 2011

	News Staffs With Women	Women News Directors	Women as Percentage of Work Force	Average Number of Women on Staff
All Television	97.3%	28.0%	39.9%	14.2
Network Affiliates	99.6	26.8	40.0	15.5
Independents	77.3	28.0	39.4	4.9
Market:				
DMA 1-25	92.9	28.1	38.2	21.6
DMA 26-50	97.7	30.9	38.1	20.8
DMA 51-100	98.6	20.0	39.4	15.0
DMA 101-150	98.7	22.0	43.0	10.4
DMA 151+	96.6	33.9	43.8	7.8
Staff size:				
Staff 51+	100	29.2	38.5	28.5
Staff 31-50	100	15.8	40.9	16.3
Staff 21-30	100	30.4	42.0	10.6
Staff 11-20	100	28.1	42.0	6.8
Staff 1-10	78.4	27.0	35.7	2.0

Network affiliation makes little difference in TV news director gender. Women news directors are a little less likely to be found in the South. Non-commercial stations brought down the percentage of women in the workforce and the percentage of women TV news directors. There aren't many non-commercial stations, so it didn't bring the numbers down a lot, but women fared much worse at non-commercial TV stations than in the commercial world.

The percentage of women in TV news edged down again, although just by 0.1%. And the percentage of women is also starting to vary more by market size. It's not a big difference, but in last year's survey, the smallest markets had 3% more women than the biggest markets. This year, the spread is 5.6%. I'm suspicious that we could be seeing one of two things. First, it could be that women were more likely to lose their jobs in the economic downturn and job cuts in 2008 and 2009. Alternatively, more women could simply be leaving the business, either due to the growth of one-man-bands and equipment hauling issues or because of the generally family-unfriendly nature of the business. I'm not ready to call this a trend, but it is something I plan to keep an eye on.

Women in Local Radio News – 2011

	News Staffs With Women	Women News Directors	Women as Percentage of Work Force	Average Number of Women on Staff
All Radio	31.9%	10.7%	22.0%	0.8
Major Market	73.3	20.8	36.6	2.7
Large Market	55.6	8.3	23.1	1.0
Medium Market	17.9	5.9	11.2	0.3
Small Market	21.4	11.4	11.7	0.3

There was a big drop in the percentage of women generally and women news directors in particular from a year ago ... which followed a big drop the year before. Women news directors in radio are now at the lowest point in the 17 years I've been doing the survey. Independent stations were almost twice as likely to have women news directors as group-owned stations.

The percentage of women in the radio news workforce fell by more than 7 points to 22%. Again, non-commercial radio helped keep the percentage from being even lower. A bigger staff did increase the percentage of women, but the number of stations in a group did not. Ownership didn't change the picture.

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.

TV General Managers – 2011

	Percent Caucasian	Percent Minority	Percent Men	Percent Women
All Television	92.5%	7.5%	84.2%	15.8%
Network Affiliates	96.6	3.4	84.6	15.4
Independents	42.9	57.1	81.0	19.0
Market size:				
DMA 1-25	80.0	20.0	87.0	13.0
DMA 26-50	91.3	8.7	80.0	20.0
DMA 51-100	94.7	5.3	80.3	19.7
DMA 101-150	96.1	3.9	89.5	10.5
DMA 151+	96.1	3.9	83.3	16.7

Diversity among TV general managers improved slightly this year over last -- up just over 2%. Minority GMs at network affiliates rose from last year's 1.9% to 3.4% this year.

Minority general managers were slightly more likely to be at NBC affiliates than others, and they were most likely to be found in the West and least likely to be in the Northeast.

The gender numbers are virtually unchanged from a year ago.

At non-Hispanic stations (which run local news), minority GM numbers went up, reversing a three-year slide. Minority GMs at non-Hispanic stations have gone from 9.8% to 3.1% to 2.6% and now back up to 4.3% in the latest survey. More than half of those are black. Two-thirds of the GMs at Hispanic stations are Hispanic; the rest are white.

Radio General Managers – 2011

	Percent Caucasian	Percent Minority	Percent Men	Percent Women
All Radio	94.0%	6.0%	81.9%	18.1%

Gender numbers are unchanged. Minority GM numbers fell from last year's 8% to 6%. Those minority general managers are twice as likely to be at non-commercial stations and stations in the South.

Age & Tenure - 2011

The typical TV news director remained in the mid 40s. The median and average were both 46. That's up a year from last year (not surprisingly, perhaps). Overall, the age ranged from 23 to 68. Generally, news directors were a little older in the largest markets, but the differences were quite small. Size of newsroom, network affiliation and region made little difference.

News directors continue to be less nomadic than in the past. The typical TV news director has been at his or her station for just over five years (although not necessarily as news director). The average tenure at that station for the news director was almost eight and a half years. One news director had been at the station for 34 years. The differences weren't large, but generally, the smaller the market the longer the news director had been there. Overall, news directors were a little more stable in the Northeast and less so in the West.

In radio, the median age for news director was 50 and the average was 47. That's up two years from a year ago (it's been rough in radio lately). Ages ranged from 19 to 68. Interestingly, the average and median ages for news directors at commercial stations was about eight years older than for those at non-commercial stations.

Radio news directors are even less nomadic than TV news directors. The typical (median) radio news director had been at his or her station for seven years (although not necessarily as news director). The average tenure at that station for the news director was 10.2 years, with a range of half a year up to four decades.

Newspapers and TV

The 2011 survey by the American Society of News Editors (ASNE) found that minority journalists make up 12.8 percent of newsroom employees at daily newspapers. That's down 0.5 percent from the 2010 number.

	Daily Newspapers	TV News
Minority population	12.8%	20.5%
African American	4.7	9.2
Hispanic/Latino	4.5	7.3
Asian American	3.1	3.5
Native American	0.5	0.4
Women	36.9	39.9

	Daily Newspapers	TV News (non-Hispanic only)
Minority population	12.8%	19.1%
African American	4.7	9.4
Hispanic/Latino	4.5	5.7
Asian American	3.1	3.6
Native American	0.5	0.4
Women	36.9	39.9

For More Information

RTNDF Newsroom Diversity Project
 Phone: (202) 659-6510
 Fax: (202) 223-4007
www.rtna.org/pages/best-practices/diversity.php

Alliance for Women in Media (AWM)

Phone: (703) 506-3290

Fax: (703) 506-3266

www.allwomeninmedia.org

Asian American Journalists Association (AAJA)

Phone: (415) 346-2051

Fax: (415) 346-6343

www.aaja.org

national@aaja.org

Association for Women in Communication (AWC)

Phone: (703) 370-7436

Fax: (703) 342-4311

www.womcom.org

info@womcom.org

Emma L. Bowen Foundation for Minority Interests in Media

Phone: (202) 524-6409

Fax: (202) 524-6411

www.emmabowenfoundation.com/

phylis.eagle-oldson@nbcuni.com

International Women's Media Foundation

Phone: (202) 496-1992

www.iwmf.org

info@iwmf.org

National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ)

Phone: (301) 405-0248

Fax: (301) 314-1714

www.nabj.org

nabj@nabj.org

National Association of Hispanic Journalists (NAHJ)

Phone: (202) 662-7145

Fax: (202) 662-7144

www.nahj.org

nahj@nahj.org

National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association

Phone: (202) 588-9888

Fax: (202) 588-1818

www.nlgja.org

info@nlgja.org

Native American Journalists Association (NAJA)

Phone: (405) 325-9008

Fax: (405) 325-6945

www.naja.com

info@naja.com

Unity: Journalists of Color
Phone: (703) 854-3585
Fax: (703) 854-3586
www.unityjournalists.org
info@unityjournalists.org

Bob Papper is the Lawrence Stessin Distinguished Professor of Journalism and chair of the Department of Journalism, Media Studies, and Public Relations at Hofstra University and has worked extensively in radio and TV news. This research was supported by the 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 2010 among all 1,729 operating, non-satellite television stations and a random sample of 3,000 radio stations. Valid responses came from 1,360 television stations (78.7 percent) and 203 radio news directors and general managers representing 603 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.