



# The Color of Leadership

By Cynthia Linton



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# THE COLOR OF LEADERSHIP

How Newspapers Can Reflect  
the Diversity of Their Markets

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By Cynthia Linton



NORTHWESTERN  
UNIVERSITY

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**The Color of Leadership:  
How Newspapers Can Reflect the Diversity of Their Markets**

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**The Color of Leadership**

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# Preface

When Knight Ridder editors sat down last year to define good journalism, one of their critical measures was something they called “people like me.” When readers look at our newspapers, do they consistently see themselves reflected?

The same measure holds true for our advertisers. More and more businesses are owned and operated by women and people of color. Do these businesses feel wanted and served by our newspapers? Do our sales and marketing teams reflect the growing diversity of the business people we serve? Look around you.

For years, I could look in our newspapers and see my reflection: a white business and civic leader, father, golfer, skier, runner and avid follower of sports and business news.

But seeing just my reflection isn’t good enough. A newspaper that reflects mostly white males in its content, its staff or its advertising isn’t going to make it. If we fail to reflect the growing number of non-white-males in our communities, we will not survive.

As chairman of the Newspaper Association of America, diversity is my first priority. Not just diversity among the employees and in the content of our newspapers, as desirable as that is. I want to encourage more initiatives that will lead to more women and minorities in the management ranks, up to and including the publishers.

Clearly, we need more training opportunities, more ongoing measurement of our progress in increasing diversity within our newspapers, and a better understanding through research of how to serve our minority communities.

And we need to expand our understanding of what diversity means. Years ago, we might have thought only of women, African Americans and Hispanics. Today, our definition has expanded to include Asian Americans, people from the Mideast and all people of color, as well as members of the gay and lesbian communities. We must also understand the very real value of diversity of thought — so that all manner of opinions and ideas and experiences are welcome at the table.

To be successful, we will need people throughout our industry to show leadership on this key challenge. This report, “The Color of Leadership,” offers practical suggestions and inspiring stories to help you identify what you can do to help with this all-important work. A year from now, what will you be able to say you’ve done for the cause?



A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Tony Ridder".

**P. Anthony Ridder,**  
*Chairman, Newspaper Association of America,  
and CEO and Chairman of Knight Ridder*

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# Introduction

Most newspaper companies buy into the idea that they need racial and ethnic diversity in their newsrooms. They realize that without it they will be out of touch with their demographically changing markets. So most — though certainly not all — are recruiting journalists of color. But retention problems make it hard to make significant strides.

Minorities make up 12.53 percent of newsrooms, far short of the American Society of Newspaper Editors' goal of parity with the general population, which is 30.9 percent minority. In one recent year, 2001, the percentage of people of color in newsrooms actually declined slightly, though the numbers are now edging up again.

Without the same kind of industry push, the business side of newspapers has lagged behind the newsroom in recognition of the problem and initiative to solve it. The news side cannot solve this problem alone. And if it isn't solved, newspapers will continue to see their share of the marketplace erode.

Newspapers have traditionally neglected — and sometimes purposely avoided — neighborhoods with large numbers of minorities or low-income people. They have pursued mostly white, mostly affluent suburban markets. There are several reasons for this:

- They have stereotypical ideas about whether minorities or low-income people read newspapers and how much money they spend,
- They believe advertisers aren't interested in those demographics, and
- Newspaper executives and managers — being mostly white, affluent and suburban themselves — aren't familiar with these populations, don't grasp how large a portion of the market they represent, and don't know how to work with them.

The traditional model — reporting about and seeking advertising from the mostly white, affluent suburbs — is comfortable for them and has led to profits, so why change?

The 2000 Census tells us why.

## Demographics

The Census shows us that the country is getting less and less white — even in the suburbs — and that newspapers are losing readership and potential advertising dollars.

African American and Hispanic growth is outpacing that of the white population. The Census shows the Hispanic population grew 58 percent between 1990 and 2000. The black population grew nearly 16 percent. Asian Americans, though smaller in numbers, grew at a rapid 48 percent. Much of that minority growth is in young people, the potential newspaper audience of the future.

People of color also are spreading throughout the country, so diversity is no longer an issue for just a few locations.

While more Hispanics still live in the Southwest, Florida and big cities, the fastest growth is in the upper Midwest and the Southeast. Places like Georgia, Tennessee, Arkansas and Alabama more than doubled their Hispanic population in the decade of the '90s.

The African American population has moved into non-traditional places like Minnesota, Nevada, Maine and Idaho. And there has been considerable black migration to the suburbs and rural areas.

Asian Americans can be found in communities all over the nation, with larger concentrations in California, Hawaii, Maryland, New York, New Jersey and Washington.

### **Advertising**

A growing amount of advertising is targeted at these burgeoning minorities. But newspapers are being beaten out by other media, which are seen by many businesses and ad agencies as a better way to reach people of color.

Yet the Readership Institute at Northwestern University's Media Management Center tells us the ads in newspapers are ranked higher in importance by African Americans and Hispanics than they are by whites, and that these two minority groups spend significantly more time reading newspaper ads than white readers do.

Newspapers are not appealing to this large and growing audience with their ads. Even papers that make a great effort to include all demographics in their news and features photographs are not doing likewise with images in their advertisements. And minorities often don't see ads for the places where they shop.

### **Circulation**

The Readership Institute found that local daily newspapers reach 80 percent of African Americans and 66 percent of Hispanics in the course of a week. Yet these minorities spend less time with the paper, averaging 15 minutes for Hispanics and 19 minutes for blacks, compared with 22 minutes for whites.

Why is that?

Compared with white readers, these two minority groups are far more likely to buy single copies, and far less likely to subscribe. On weekdays, 35 percent of African American readers and 29 percent of Hispanic readers are single-copy buyers. On Sundays, the numbers go up to 42 percent and 38 percent, respectively. This is more than double the percentage of whites buying single copies on weekdays or Sundays.

Why are these groups less likely to subscribe? One reason may be that they don't find the paper compelling enough to read it every day. Also, the cost of a subscription is an issue for many Hispanics, the Institute found. Another reason for a lower subscriber rate may be that many circulation departments avoid going into black or

Hispanic neighborhoods. Often this is based on stereotypes and lack of familiarity with the neighborhoods in question.

## **Content**

Newspapers and other media owned, managed and staffed primarily by whites often are out of touch with what minorities want in the way of content — and what they dislike.

The Readership Study found that African Americans are particularly interested in health, home, food, fashion and travel, as well as community announcements, obituaries and stories about ordinary people.

“Unfortunately, most newspapers do a poor job reflecting the daily lives of people of color,” the Institute said in its 2002 report, titled “How Newspapers Can Better Serve African Americans and Hispanics.” In an analysis of more than 700 newspaper front pages, the Institute found that only 18 percent of the pictures showed a face of color. And 26 percent of those photos were about police and crime, with another 9 percent about sports. By comparison, just 15 percent of the front-page pictures of white people were related to crime and 4 percent to sports.

“The message from this study seems to be that in order to appeal to Hispanics and African Americans, newspapers should show the lives of ordinary people and cover community events, rather than covering them only in the context of crime, disasters and sports,” the report said.

## **Diverse methods to reach diverse audiences**

In order to optimize readership by minorities — African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, Asians, Arabs and other immigrant groups, and low-income people — newspapers must recognize that the populations they’ve been neglecting are not monolithic. Different approaches may be needed for different groups.

Newspapers can’t simply transport what they do in the mostly white, mostly affluent suburbs into areas with very different cultures. They need to learn about and understand what these readers and potential readers want, how to best give it to them and how to make money at it. That involves everything from format, content and staffing to ad sales, marketing and distribution practices. Having people on board who understand the audience is key, as is meaningful research.

This report will look at what newspapers can do to attract and keep minority employees, what they can do to attract minority readers, and how they can grow their bottom line.

First we’ll look at 40 best practices — things newspaper companies and individual papers are doing today to improve their staff diversity and develop minority markets.

Next we will look at the success stories of eight publishers and editors of color.

Then, we’ll hear from leaders of various journalism organizations about how far

we've come and how far we still need to go.

Finally, we'll take a look at what demographic studies show about one minority market — Hispanics — to help you understand more about the opportunities to reach what is projected to be, by 2010, the largest minority group in the United States.

# 40 Best Practices

## *How Newspapers Reflect the Diversity of Their Markets*

*“A diverse workforce is central to developing a diverse market.”*

— **Michelle Foster**, former vice president for market development, Gannett Co.

*“If you have an environment where [people of color] can develop  
and be successful, they will find you.”*

— **Virgil Smith**, president and publisher, *The Asheville (N.C.) Citizen-Times*

*“It’s not difficult to recruit African Americans where an African American is in charge.”*

— **Joe Grimm**, recruiting and development editor, *Detroit Free Press*

### **THE NEWS SIDE**

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#### **Scholarships, internships and special programs for youth**

Scholarships and internships expose minorities to educational opportunities and often lead to permanent jobs. Some newspapers are involving students during their high school years.

**1.** *The Washington Post* is developing candidates by reaching out to 26 area high schools and four universities. It is helping 15 high schools in the D.C. area revitalize their school newspapers, many of which were defunct. It also holds workshops for high school students and for their advisors, provides scholarships, and donates computers to high school journalism programs. “Once you get kids excited about having a paper, it’s like a light bulb goes on in their heads,” says the program’s director, Athelia Knight. The program has 142 volunteers from the *Post* newsroom, a number that has increased each year. The program also partners with the University of Maryland, American University, and George Washington and Howard universities, where *Post* staffers teach for-credit classes. In addition, *Post* scholarships help excelling students from the program attend college or graduate school to study journalism. Former scholarship winners are now working for the *Post*, the *St. Petersburg (Fla.) Times*, *The (New Orleans) Times-Picayune* and *The (Minneapolis) Star-Tribune*. In the 2002-03 school year, the Young Journalists Development Program reached 611 high school and college students.

2. Knight Ridder provides a Minority Scholarship Program for five to six high school seniors nominated by its papers each year. Each gets \$40,000 over four years plus a paid newsroom or business-side internship every summer and a job at graduation. Scholars are obligated to work for Knight Ridder for a year. At least 10 former scholars are working full-time for Knight Ridder, says Larry Olmstead, vice president for staff development and diversity. Each year the company also provides three two-year scholarships to juniors at historically black colleges and universities Morehouse, Spelman and Florida A&M. The students get up to \$10,000 in scholarship money plus a summer internship. In addition, Knight Ridder has a one-year minority Specialty Journalism Program that provides development in a specialized field. This program, at five newspapers, takes advantage of a newspaper's specialty; for example, graphics at *The Miami Herald* and business news at the *San Jose Mercury News*. The goal is to get people of color into specialties. Those selected also are sent to outside seminars for enrichment. In addition to individual newspapers' internships, Knight Ridder has about 45 summer internships for minorities, both in news and on the business side.

3. METPRO — the Minority Editorial Training Program — is a highly competitive two-year Times Mirror program that the Tribune Co. took over when it bought Times Mirror and then expanded to all Tribune newspapers. Recent college graduates are selected. They get a year of paid classroom and on-the-job training at *Newsday* (for copy editors) or the *Los Angeles Times* (for reporters). Then they “graduate” and are “drafted” by a Tribune paper for a one-year job. About 30 are in the program at a time. Tribune Co. also has about 300 paid summer interns, 53 percent of whom are minorities, says Jeff Dorsey, former director of diversity management and now director of finance, operations and planning.

4. Chips Quinn Scholars get a \$1,000 scholarship and an internship through the Freedom Forum. The program is for journalists of color who show high potential. About 75 scholars are selected each year, 50 for summer, 25 in the spring. They attend a four-day orientation at the Freedom Forum and receive a \$500 housing stipend for their internship, plus minimum pay of \$450 a week for 10-12 weeks. The program has a waiting list of newspapers, says Director Karen Catone. Smaller papers (under 50,000 circulation) that hire one intern can have a second one funded by Freedom Forum. Kathleen Rutledge, editor of the *Lincoln (Neb.) Journal Star*, says the Chips Quinn Scholars program has been the best source for minority staffers.

5. *The Oregonian* has a two-year minority internship program. The paper identifies three young people with some experience in journalism and gives them the opportunity to specialize and be mentored. The program is tailored to the individual. Areas of specialty have included politics, sports, graphics and copy editing. The paper recruits nationally and gets the “cream of the cream,” says George Rede, director

of recruiting and training. In addition, *The Oregonian* has a summer internship program, for which it recruits at state schools and HBCUs. About half those interns are minorities. A writing coach visits the students during the summer program. Newhouse, which owns *The Oregonian*, also gives out 12-14 minority scholarships a year.

### **Growing your own: High school and mid-career people**

Journalists of color are in great demand and may be wooed away. Some newspapers are meeting that challenge by recruiting locally — looking for high school students and non-traditional journalists they can bring in and develop — in essence “growing their own” journalists with local ties.

**6.** The *South Florida Sun-Sentinel* takes eight high school students each year, from an applicant pool of about 70, for a minority summer intern program. They spend two weeks in “boot camp” with two editors and then four weeks assigned to a department in the newsroom, where they shadow a staffer or work on stories, says Kathy Pellegrino, recruitment editor. They are paid minimum wage. “It gives them a very positive experience,” she says. While the paper has not tracked these students afterward, she knows a number of them are studying journalism. She can tell about the three who were hired onto the staff, one who graduated from law school and wants to come back to journalism and another getting a master’s degree. “Something else happens, in the relationship with their families,” Pellegrino says. The staff is able to show the parents that journalism is a “respected and financially sound profession.” At a dinner for the families and a tour of the newsroom, she says, the newspaper “connects” with the families, many of whom are not traditional readers.

**7.** A number of newspapers are recruiting non-traditional, mid-career minorities to send to the Freedom Forum Diversity Institute for 12 weeks of intensive journalism training, at Freedom Forum expense. The only obligation on the paper’s part is to hire those who successfully complete the course. The first class of eight graduated the summer of 2002. Some of those recruited have a connection to the newspaper, says Wanda Lloyd, executive director of the Institute. Some come from another department of the newspaper. Others are freelancers or editorial assistants wanting to move up. The important thing is to find local people, who are more likely to stay and not be recruited away, Lloyd says. Lloyd suggests that newspapers seeking people for the program get to know leaders of the minority community, find out who’s been rejected for lack of experience, and consider those who’ve written opinion pieces or letters to the editor that show talent or interest in local affairs. Participating papers include *The Denver Post*, *The Commercial Appeal* in Memphis and the *Tucson Citizen*.

*“We’re contributing to the pool instead of constantly subtracting from it.”*

— John Thomson

8. The *Dayton Daily News* has a Professional Development Program to bring in non-traditional journalists. Journalism schools aren’t likely to produce enough minority journalists to bring the industry up to racial parity with the market in 2025, says Deputy Managing Editor John Thomson. Newspapers will just be fighting over the same small pool of graduates, so the solution is to bring people in from other places, he says. “We’re contributing to the pool instead of constantly subtracting from it.” For a decade, the *Dayton Daily News* has been hiring part-timers from the community and training them on the job, Thomson says. At any given time, about 10-15 are employed. And many who came in that way are now working as full-time journalists throughout the country. One example is an African American who came to the *Daily News* with a master’s degree and background in market research. He had returned to Dayton to take care of his sick mother. He wanted to be a photographer but had no professional experience. They gave him a chance and his talent blossomed. Today he is a top photographer at another paper. Participants are recommended by a network of educators, professionals and alumni of the program. In particular, the newspaper has a close relationship with area colleges, including several HBCUs. Thomson points out that many newsroom veterans came through non-traditional avenues, so this isn’t a revolutionary concept. The program also places people on the business side.

### **Newsroom recruitment takes vigorous outreach**

Newspapers have many resources at their disposal to find and recruit journalists of color — job fairs, college journalism programs and internships, to name a few. It is important to build relationships over time, recruiters say, and to maintain a database of people who may not yet be ready for that newspaper but who can be called upon when they are. Some recruiters are creative about how they find and hire people — and it shows in the numbers.

9. *Newsday* Associate Editor for Recruitment Walter Middlebrook says the key to good recruiting is “being out there — making sure everyone I meet, I really get to know.” He goes out of his way to help people, not just to find them a job at *Newsday*, but to get them into the industry. “One of the first things I do (at minority job fairs) is find out who’s got jobs available.” Often his main role is to persuade a young candidate to take a job at a smaller newspaper they wouldn’t have considered, in order to get the experience necessary to move on to a big paper like *Newsday*. *Newsday* puts on a minority job fair every January, one of the larger ones in the country. “People have actually walked away with jobs,” he said. Who companies send to job

fairs is important, he notes. They need to be people who really will get to know the candidates and won't just pass the time sitting at a table. Middlebrook himself maintains a sophisticated database, showing when and where he met prospective candidates, as well as notes about them and when he should check back with them.

**10.** Joe Grimm has been recruiting for the *Detroit Free Press* since 1990, which he says is a big advantage because he has established a broad network of relationships. Some newspapers, he says, change recruiters frequently or cut back during hard times. Grimm goes to all the minority journalism conventions, he says, to meet people and speak on behalf of the *Free Press* and Knight Ridder. He goes to college campuses, focusing locally — on the University of Michigan, Michigan State and Wayne State universities. He puts on an annual minority job fair in Detroit. He follows up with the people he meets, sometimes helping them get jobs at other papers. When he goes to college campuses, he talks with former interns. He has a large network of potential job candidates all over the country. “It’s about building relationships, and listening,” Grimm says, rather than “just looking for a job candidate for now. If you just do that, it won’t work. I’ll encourage almost everyone I meet. I keep up with them over a period of time.” Grimm himself has “an industry profile,” according to Larry Olmstead, and has helped Knight Ridder improve in its recruiting. The company has a mutually supportive network of recruiters.

**11.** *The Oregonian* went out of its region to find minority employees, because there weren’t enough candidates in Oregon. “You can’t just look in your backyard” if the region isn’t very diverse, says George Rede. In 2002, the newspaper had 17.6 percent minority full-time professionals in the newsroom, up 6 percentage points from 1993. The turning point came in 1994, when the recruitment director was appointed, after Editor Sandra Mims Rowe came to the paper. It’s been a gradual process, Rede says. Word-of-mouth is very important. “You need to get plugged in.” He attends minority job fairs and regional fairs in places with more minorities, like Detroit and Raleigh. He recruits at colleges with people of color, such as San Francisco State and Florida A&M universities. *The Oregonian* lends staff to enrich minority journalism conventions, which helps it gain visibility and access, and the paper gives professional support to HBCUs. *The Oregonian* also keeps a database to track potential candidates.

**12.** Gannett does aggressive college recruiting, says Jose Berrios, vice president for staffing and diversity. “We look for individuals we can keep in touch with and bring in at the right time. I have a newsroom recruiting staff. We’ve trained editors who are doing the searches. They’re good at assessing talent.” The company recruits at colleges where it has ongoing relationships, targeting HBCUs as well as schools in the Southwest, Florida and New York.

## **Retention: The importance of development and advancement**

Newspaper companies can keep valued employees by paying more attention to their careers, giving them opportunities to develop their skills and advance into better jobs.

**13.** Gannett has made a constant effort over 20 years to identify and develop minorities, in the newsroom and throughout the company, and give them opportunities to take on new responsibilities, says Jose Berrios. “We assign people to the right papers, mentor them informally and take risks to move them up.” With 100 newspapers, there’s a lot of opportunity for movement. The first year, the company watches employees closely, giving them an intensive orientation and talking about goals. The second year they teach them more skills. Then they assess them and discuss where they can go next. “We tell them about the options we see,” Berrios says. People are promoted based on their performance and their interest. After three to five years, their potential for leadership is assessed and those with promise are sent to management training programs. Typically, this training takes place over a year. In 2002, Gannett had 11 minority publishers. Overall, the company was 25 percent people of color, with department heads at 11 percent, according to Berrios. Publishers and general managers are rated on how well they manage resources, including diversity, which affects their bonuses and their careers.

**14.** Knight Ridder hires many entry-level minorities, often with subsidies from corporate headquarters. The company emphasizes development and retention, says Larry Olmstead. Knight Ridder has been looking at the supervisory ranks throughout the company, to identify and promote prime management talent. As part of a development plan, they tell candidates what experiences they should have in the next six months in order to position themselves to move ahead. The company in 2002 was 29 percent minority, with officials and managers at 18 percent. MBO goals include increasing the percentage of minorities and women reporting to division directors. Publishers had four goals in 2002, one of them diversity. Knight Ridder had three publishers of color and two minority executive editors in 2002, plus three Spanish-language newspapers and one Vietnamese paper, all with minority leadership, he says.

**15.** *San Antonio Express-News* former Managing Editor Carolina Garcia (now editor of *The Monterey County Herald*) says a few years ago the *Express-News* took a hard look at the newsroom staff to see who the future leaders would be. The paper, with a majority Hispanic market, had a diverse staff, but not enough diversity in leadership. “We identified those with potential as leaders and began grooming them to become editors as soon as possible,” she says. “We talked with them about their aspirations and told them they had potential to be good managers.” The result was that soon several people were promoted to assistant editor or editor positions —

some of them newly created. The new managers, several of them Latino, were sent to management training programs. The newsroom in 2002 was 31 percent minority. Eleven of 41 supervisors were people of color.

### **Making content reflect the community**

When the diversity of the newsroom doesn't match the diversity in the community, it takes a much more conscious effort to understand and reflect the entire market in the news pages. Many newspapers whose markets have a high percentage of blacks, Hispanics and/or Asians have felt the urgency to change their coverage and are leading the way for the industry.

**16.** The *San Jose Mercury News* has a race and demographics department comprising a seven-person news team, plus two dozen others representing every department in the newsroom who meet weekly with the team. Diversity is a core value and the mission statement on Page 2A says so. One-third of Santa Clara County, heart of the Mercury News circulation area, is foreign-born. The area is 25 percent Latino, 24 percent Asian American, 6 percent mixed race and 3 percent black, said former Executive Editor and Senior Vice President David Yarnold. "It is remarkably diverse. It's what all California is going to look like." Foreign news coverage is tilted toward Asia and Latin America. In the business section, a digest is divided into world, national and Asian news. The newsroom staff in 2002 was about one-third minority, with 17 percent being Asian. Management in the newsroom was about 20 percent people of color. The race and demographics team has a mix of Latinos, Asians and Anglos. Most of their stories go on 1A. In addition, the features AME gave every reporter a week off to develop a diverse source list. The music critic went to Mexico to improve his language skills and write about the top rock band, El Tri, which has been popular for three decades. He ended up touring with the band in the United States and says they're as good as the Beatles or Rolling Stones, but ignored by the English-language press.

**17.** At *Newsday*, Focus 2020 is a framework for reaching out to an increasingly diverse market, says Managing Editor Charlotte Hall. As part of the initiative, which started with educating all departments on the area's demographic changes, the newspaper has a cluster of reporters covering race, Hispanic affairs, aging and immigration. They follow not just the big news stories, but also how issues play out in people's lives. The public affairs department of the newspaper also sets up a series of four or five breakfasts each year, for editors and reporters to have a dialogue with 20-25 leaders of an ethnic group. Inviting them into the newspaper goes a long way toward establishing a relationship, Hall says, and

reporters come away with a long list of sources and story ideas. The same applies to ethnic community forums, where reporters explain how they cover the community and then answer questions from the public. Focus groups with Hispanic readers of *Newsday* revealed some shortcomings, so the paper responded by adding an “Americas” page, and a Latin music column. Understanding different communities is greatly enhanced by having a diverse newsroom, says Hall, noting that reporters learn from the people sitting next to them. *Newsday* puts a high priority on recruiting and hiring people of color, she says. “Otherwise, you can’t get the content you want.” The newsroom was 26 percent minority in 2002, according to Hall, while Long Island, the primary market, was 24 percent minority. That number is projected to rise to 40 percent by 2020.

*“If you’re serious about covering diversity, you have to give it resources.”*

— Sharon Rosenhouse

**18.** The *South Florida Sun-Sentinel* has developed a team to cover racial and ethnic beats, a concept Managing Editor Sharon Rosenhouse brought with her from *The Examiner* in San Francisco. African-American reporter Greg Lewis, who followed her from San Francisco, where he had pioneered the African-American community beat, now covers the African-American community in South Florida. After Sept. 11, a staff reporter was assigned to the Muslim community as a sub-beat. Later, as plans moved forward to put together a team to cover the region’s growing diversity, Rosenhouse brought in a Hispanic affairs reporter, and one to cover the Caribbean communities (previously included in the African-American beat). A bilingual reporter, who is learning Creole, handles the immigration beat. An editor, who previously oversaw the *Sun-Sentinel*’s hemisphere coverage, leads the race and demographics team. Another staffer, though not part of the team, covers the Cuban exile community from the Miami bureau. The new team has broken many national stories, Rosenhouse says. “If you’re serious about covering diversity,” she says, “you have to give it resources,” to “cover the community, know the names and break the stories.” Broward County, where the *Sun-Sentinel* is based, is about one-quarter minority “and is changing faster than we are,” she says. Puerto Ricans are the largest Latino group in Broward, followed by Cubans. There’s a large Haitian community and people “from just about every island” in the Caribbean, as well as every country in Central and South America. The newsroom is 26 percent minority.

*“Our staff is conditioned that they need to reach Hispanics as sources, experts and readers.”*

— Don Flores

**19.** The *El Paso Times* has a market that is 80 percent people of color, so it becomes important not to forget about the 20 percent, says Don Flores, executive editor. “We cover topics relevant to most of the market, in such a way that readers see themselves,” Flores says. The newsroom, which is about 60 percent people of color, is encouraged to know Spanish (tuition reimbursement is available) and to understand the Hispanic culture. Sometimes that is done through a mentor or buddy system. “Our staff is conditioned that they need to reach Hispanics as sources, experts and readers,” says Flores. Partnering with Univision, Spanish-language TV, the paper does a daily spot on popular issues like education and health, planting the seed that the *Times* is the expert on such issues. Knowing the community well leads to important stories, such as one they did on high school drop-out rates. The state had said those rates were small, but the staff knew otherwise from the community. They investigated and found that many students who said they were transferring were really dropping out.

**20.** *The Arizona Republic* uses mainstreaming, a long-standing program at Gannett, to get diverse sources into the newspaper. “You look at the make-up of the community and develop source lists,” said former Executive Editor Tom Callinan (who now is executive editor of *The Cincinnati Enquirer*). That way, the news staff doesn’t rely on the same old institutional sources, who tend to be white males. In looking at big stories and planning enterprise stories, “there’s no excuse not to include diverse sources,” he says. “It’s something we notice if it’s not happening,” and the staff is diverse enough to hold top editors accountable, he said. In an area that is about 23 percent minority, mostly Hispanic, the newsroom in 2002 was 20 percent minority — a big improvement from a couple of years earlier, Callinan said. The need to court the rapidly growing Hispanic audience is obvious, with that population expected to be in the majority by 2045. Younger Hispanics are a challenge, he said, and naming a 30-something Hispanic columnist and paying attention to music and culture are among the first steps in courting that audience. In Phoenix, most Hispanics are English-dominant or bilingual, so the newspaper itself is focusing on them, rather than starting a Spanish-language edition.

**21.** The *Lincoln (Neb.) Journal Star* has a diverse advisory council of 10-12 readers who meet five or six times a year to critique coverage, make story suggestions and provide resources the staff might not know about. It takes time, says Editor Kathleen Rutledge, but it keeps the staff in touch with readers and reinforces

the importance of diversity. Although Lancaster County is nearly 90 percent non-Hispanic white, Hispanics and Asians are the most rapidly growing groups. The *Journal Star* has four Native Americans on staff, including News Editor Jim Johnson. Although Native Americans make up less than 1 percent of the circulation area, there are four tribes and three reservations in Nebraska and the Great Plains is the historic home for many tribes, says Rutledge. “It’s part of our history,” she says. The *Journal Star* covers Native American issues for all the Lee Enterprises papers. “It’s a service to the Native community nationwide,” she says. “We all need to understand it.” And besides, “it’s interesting stuff.” The newsroom in 2002 was 12 percent minority.

### **Teaching journalists about different cultures**

Diversity is not just about skin color or language. Understanding cultures is essential to developing sources, knowing what stories to cover and how to cover them, and avoiding gaffes that could get a community up in arms against the newspaper. Many newspaper companies provide some type of diversity training. “Newspapers don’t understand the culture of the potential audiences in their service area,” says Deborah Gray-Young, vice president and director of media and strategic services for E. Morris Communications. “They need to make a concerted and sincere effort to do so. Once they do that, they will understand how viable the audience is from a business perspective, the purchasing power and political power.”

*“The eye of the beholder has such an important part in deciding what stories to cover and who to cover.”*

— Jean Mavrelis

**22.** The *San Jose Mercury News* had the team of Jean Mavrelis and Tom Kochman, an anthropologist and a linguist, in to conduct sessions in cultural archotyping. The two teach segments on a variety of cultures, Mavrelis said, including African Americans, Latino/Hispanics, South Asians, East Asians, Native Americans, Russians and Arabs/Middle Easterners. “The eye of the beholder has such an important part in deciding what stories to cover and who to cover,” Mavrelis said. The team’s goal is to help its clients understand the cultures represented in the newsroom and in the community. For example, in the Latino community it’s important to build trust, she said. “You just can’t go there and say, ‘We’ll put your name in the paper.’ ” It’s important to have a strategy for building long-term relationships in minority communities, she said. And how you do that depends on understanding the community. In the main (predominantly white) culture, people avoid talking about differences, she said. In the sessions, “we give [people] permission to talk about culture and make suggestions,” based on

their point of view. Among cultural differences: “In the mainstream, people say, ‘If you can’t say something nice, don’t say anything.’ But in the African-American culture, they say, ‘Don’t sugarcoat it. Give it to me straight.’ ” Also, from a business standpoint, it’s important to know coupons don’t work very well with Hispanics, Mavrelis says. “If they know someone at the store, they’ll get a better deal than if they have a coupon.”

## THE BUSINESS SIDE

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Newspaper companies acknowledge that they’ve placed more emphasis on diversity on the news side than on the business side. The newsroom “knows who their readers are, is more cognizant, much more aware of the issue, perhaps because the industry focuses on it,” says Jeff Dorsey of Tribune Co. Perhaps the business side lacks that focus because “nobody has really painted an intense business case” showing that “it’s about money and not just doing the right things,” he says. Intuitively, it makes sense, Dorsey says, that diversity is good for business. *San Antonio Express-News* Executive Vice President and General Manager Tom Stephenson, with a large number of Hispanics in his market, says there “absolutely” is a business case for diversity. “If you’re going to sell advertising and the newspaper to Hispanic households, you need to reflect them in the workforce.” This makes sense even in markets with less diversity, he says.

### Recruiting and development on the business side

Newsroom recruiters can select from large numbers of journalists — people who dream of working at a newspaper — but the business side has a much tougher sell and many industries are competing for the same people. There aren’t the same kinds of minority associations and job fairs to pull from. Scholarships and internships are less plentiful as an entree to the industry. Furthermore, there has not been the same industry pressure for the business side to diversify.

**23.** Cox Ohio Publishing, which includes the *Dayton Daily News* and several smaller papers, has started Diversity Action Plans for each department. The diversity effort in the newsroom is being expanded to the entire newspaper, says Emily Chambers, vice president of human resources. “Editorial people have good contacts in the community, so they’re helping the other departments come up with interns,” she says. Chambers also provides awareness training. “The majority of the workforce has no clue what it’s like to be a minority,” she says. Bonuses are paid to department heads, based on achieving diversity goals. “It has made a big difference,” she says, noting bonuses help give diversity priority and attention. Twenty-one percent of the total

workforce at the *Dayton Daily News* were people of color in 2002, according to Chambers. One department head, Mark Stange, vice president for advertising, says his department's action plan for 2002 called for one in every three new hires to be a minority. He says experienced outside salespeople are hard to find, and he does better developing inside sales people or sales assistants. Sometimes he finds people who have sales experience, but not at newspapers. There's another frustration: "I've lost two minority sales managers to bigger papers."

*"Editorial people have good contacts in the community, so they're helping the other departments come up with interns."*

— Emily Chambers

**24.** It's difficult to sell college students on a career in production or circulation, says Gannett's Jose Berrios, who goes after business majors. "You have to sell them upfront and get them excited about it." Berrios says he is having success at some smaller colleges. Gannett also offers a circulation management-training program to develop a career path for recruits. News and advertising staffers visit the colleges once or twice a year. Some even teach, he says. "It's absolutely critical to have a relationship." About 30 percent of Gannett's internships are on the business side. The company doesn't go to graduate schools of business because it can't compete on pay and there's a lack of interest, he says. Michelle Foster, former vice president of market development, said Gannett has a companywide commitment for the workforce to reflect the composition of the community. That also holds true for the most skilled positions. The company offers a variety of management and skills training opportunities and has a leadership development program for middle managers in marketing, advertising, news, circulation and production.

**25.** Tribune Co. has a University Initiative to help bring in young people of color for the business side. It recruits at HBCUs and colleges with a high proportion of Hispanics. Someone within Tribune with personal ties to a college (often a graduate) establishes the connection, says Jeff Dorsey. The company then helps the school with its program and provides scholarships and internships. They offer scholarships to sophomores and summer business internships to juniors. The summer of 2002, the company had 12 summer interns. Usually it's difficult to recruit for the business side, Dorsey says, though the poor economy helps. "You have to educate them about newspapers' business side." The company also makes an effort to identify minority employees with potential and move them up, Dorsey says. He acknowledges there is little diversity among Tribune Co. publishers (in 2002 the only minority publisher was at a Spanish-language paper) and their direct reports. "If you move down to the next level and look at who might succeed them, candidates become more diverse." The goal

now is to move succession planning to the director level. There is a “diverse-pool directive,” he says, that requires diversity among candidates for director or above, or someone with significant management responsibilities. “It has brought people in the door,” he said. Recruiters know they need diverse candidates so they are “laser-focused on this.” It makes the company consider candidates it wouldn’t have found in the past. Quarterly reports track progress, which helps make it a priority. “It puts it more in line with business models,” he says. “We can show results. We report it so we know how we’re doing. We can hold people accountable.”

**26.** *The New York Times* has relationships with many organizations, such as the Black M.B.A. Association, National Association of Black Accountants, and Black Data Processing Association. Those connections are used when the company recruits for the business side. In addition, they post jobs with national job boards. Experience has shown that this process brings in a wide array of candidates, says Senior Vice President Cynthia Augustine. The *Times* Job Market and Recruiting Team also partners with a company called Community Connect to gain access to more than 9.9 million minority candidates through resume databases called Black Planet, Asian Avenue and Migente. About two dozen interns are brought in on the business side each summer, though there is no formal program. Many of the interns are minorities, she says. A mentoring program is open to all employees, according to Augustine, but most who participate are women and minorities. About 30 to 40 percent are people of color, she says.

### **Diversifying advertising**

Mainstream newspapers’ efforts to attract national advertising targeted at minorities have been largely unsuccessful. National advertisers and their agencies prefer to use niche publications, television or radio, even when a newspaper’s market is heavily minority. In Columbus, Ga., which is 50 percent black, the *Columbus Ledger-Inquirer* tried to sell advertisers the “black belt” along with two other Knight Ridder papers in Macon, Ga., and Tallahassee, Fla. All three newspapers showed very strong black readership, but the experiment, which was “one order, one bill,” was a “resounding failure,” according to John Greenman, president and publisher in Columbus. “Agencies are looking for niche products,” he said. “No one wants to test it [mainstream papers] with a client’s money.” The *San Antonio Express-News* had a similar experience when it tried to put together a plan for several papers in the Southwest to go after national advertisers looking for a Hispanic market. “It didn’t succeed,” said General Manager and Executive Vice President Tom Stephenson. “They’re using Spanish-language publications. It’s a matter of budget.” Some mainstream papers have been more successful

selling their minority audience to local advertisers. The best way to get advertisers, says Deborah Gray-Young of E. Morris Communications, is to make sure the editorial product appeals. Get out there and do market research to find out who is in the minority audience, go to clients and talk about the value of that audience, and learn about consumer products that audience buys.

**27.** In Baltimore, *The Sun* is zeroing in on African Americans — who make up 66 percent of Baltimore and 30 percent of the *Sun*'s market — with a targeted Total Market Coverage (TMC) product. A tactical team formed in the summer of 2002 knew that African Americans are more likely to buy single copies than subscribe. They decided the many stories about blacks scattered throughout the newspaper could be repackaged in an editorial jacket for inserts targeted to ZIP codes with a high black population but low newspaper penetration. This very visible product would expose non-subscribing blacks to the *Sun* brand and eventually could turn them into subscribers, says Mireille Grangenois, vice president of marketing and interactive media. She says advertisers are spending \$20 million a year to reach the half-million African Americans in this market, 50 percent of whom are homeowners. The area ranks second in the country in blacks earning more than \$50,000 and is sixth in African American-owned businesses, she says. "Without much increased expense, we have a vehicle for advertisers and readers," Grangenois says of the TMC, launched in early 2003. Most ads are local. A second step, to reach African Americans with national ads, is to insert the Tribune-owned *Black Voices* magazine, which is published about seven times a year, into the *Sun* in ZIP codes with a high black population.

*"Many advertisers were not aware we have good reach in those markets."*  
— Mark Stange

**28.** At Cox Ohio, Advertising VP Mark Stange says, "It's important to let advertisers know you can deliver the [minority] market." Cox shows advertisers its Scarborough research, broken down by race, showing black readership is high, especially in the upper incomes. "We broke it down by age, income and education. Many advertisers were not aware we have good reach in those markets." This approach has not brought in national advertising, but has helped locally. Cox Ohio shows those demographics at every presentation. Even if advertisers are not targeting those groups, "it still shows we're strong overall." Department stores show the most positive response, he says. They want to reach every segment of the market and are pleased they don't have to put ads targeting African Americans elsewhere, Stange says. One area that's often overlooked is recruitment ads, he says. "If you have strong penetration in diverse markets, especially with high demographics," it can be an advantage in getting those ads. "We use our own paper to reach minorities and tell advertisers

that.” Cox Ohio holds an annual diversity job fair and markets the event to attract minorities. “We bundle it with an ad in the paper. Our message is we can deliver who they are looking for. We’re being smarter, realizing the strength of our newspaper. I think it has brought in more ad dollars.”

**29.** The *Columbus (Ga.) Ledger-Enquirer* argues locally that it is the most effective medium to reach the African-American demographic. “We get the lion’s share. We get the auto dealers,” says John Greenman, publisher. “Mom and pop stores are priced out,” however, and “targeted ads are usually made for the black press, which is sustained by them,” he says. The company workforce looks like the circulation area, which is 38 percent black, he says. Most sales personnel at the paper are from the local market. To attract minorities into advertising, the newspaper goes to job fairs and placement offices. It also uses word-of-mouth when there are openings and pays “bounties” to employees who bring in new minority staffers.

**30.** *The Commercial Appeal* in Memphis probably gets some national ads for pharmaceuticals related to heart attacks and diabetes because they have a high incidence in the Delta, said John Wilcox, president and publisher. Those ads often feature African Americans, who are hit harder by these ailments. The newspaper also gets some national auto ads for cars favored by African Americans. And by zoning, he says, they can get smaller black businesses in the paper. That includes zoned inserts as a way to target blacks.

### **Developing minority markets**

“Marketing should take the lead” in developing minority markets, says *Newsday* Managing Editor Charlotte Hall, because they are the ones who work most closely with the research and demographic information and are most likely the first to see emerging trends. If newspapers want to increase the number of minorities using their products, they need specific marketing appeals.

**31.** When Gannett bought the *Montgomery (Ala.) Advertiser* in 1997, the newspaper was totally revamped and re-marketed to reach out to the African-American community, which makes up 50 percent of Montgomery County. Editors and other managers held monthly meetings with a black advisory panel for a year and a half, to get feedback about the paper. Then the newspaper launched a marketing campaign to promote the *Advertiser* to African Americans in a warm, inviting way. The campaign resulted in a significant increase in awareness and a very positive attitude, according to Nell Rankin, who helped design it. Marketing efforts continue to include black faces and appeal to the interests of black consumers. “There had been a negative perception for generations,” said Ceeon Quiett, former sales and marketing manager for the circulation

department. She was surprised how quickly reaching out to the community changed that perception. “The community embraced us.” The *Advertiser* now sponsors the week-long Martin Luther King Jr. celebration and other community events. And about 30 “ambassadors” from management, a third of them black, have joined black community organizations, she says.

**32.** *The New York Times* has created programs to cultivate Asian and Hispanic communities, which helps build the foundation to convert residents to readers in the future, says VP Cynthia Augustine. There are seminars on preparing for college, real estate and developing a small business. The newspaper also has sponsored several literary events around Hispanic and Asian authors. The *Times* has developed in-language and bilingual marketing campaigns directed at both the Asian and Hispanic audiences, using radio and TV, in-language newspapers and direct mail, Augustine says. A multicultural component of the paper’s Job Market campaign was designed to reach the 40 percent of the New York region that is foreign-born, she says. “We believe that is a relatively untapped audience,” she says. “We have created our approach with the expectation it will give them new reasons to turn to the *Times*.” This campaign includes a mix of print, TV, radio, Internet, outdoor and subway signage. Much of it is in the appropriate language or bilingual. “We also have participated in a number of consumer events for Job Market that are identified as minority job fairs,” she says. One example is the Asian Diversity Job Fair.

**33.** When Charlotte Hall was marketing director of *Newsday* in the mid-1990s, she saw the demographics of the market changing rapidly. Overlaying a map of penetration with ethnicity, she found that areas with high African-American or Hispanic populations were not taking the paper at the same rate as others. So Hall began educating each department of the newspaper about demographic changes. She found that managers had not necessarily seen those changes, because of where they lived. One step she took to develop minority markets was to find money in the budget to get Newspapers in Education into schools that couldn’t pay for the program.

**34.** In San Antonio, the *Express-News*, with its majority Hispanic market, hired a Hispanic ad agency to reach that population. They did such a good job, the newspaper now uses them for everything, says Tom Stephenson. Most commercials promoting the paper run on both English and Spanish TV and radio, he says, and the message is the same. “We also use direct mail, tailored to the Hispanic household.” But in general, the San Antonio Hispanic market is acculturated, Stephenson says. Most are third- or fourth- generation. Generally, English is the preferred language among Hispanics there, he says.

## Circulation efforts to reach more minorities

Many newspapers have realized that their penetration falters in lower-income areas. They also know that minorities are more likely to buy single copies instead of subscribing. Here is what some newspapers are doing to change the situation.

*“If you live week-to-week, waiting for a paycheck, this avoids the situation of a big bill coming every three months.”*

— Joe Junod

**35.** Gannett has an Equal Monthly Billing program that started at *The* (Louisville, Ky.) *Courier-Journal* and is expanding to other Gannett newspapers. “Billing for 13 weeks or more is getting above \$50, a resistance point for consumers,” says Joe Junod, vice president for customer programs. Instead, they bill early each month. Equal Monthly Billing is marketed as the first option in low-income areas, as a “save” for other subscribers and as a tool for getting new customers. “If you live week-to-week, waiting for a paycheck, this avoids the situation of a big bill coming every three months,” Junod says. Louisville has used this system for 20 years, he says, and has a high retention rate. “Americans like to pay bills once a month.”

**36.** *The* (Memphis) *Commercial Appeal* is having success in low-income neighborhoods, where penetration is low, by making Sunday subscriptions more affordable. Later, they offer the opportunity to step up to a weekend package and then to the full week. “It seems effective,” says John Wilcox. “We’ve added about 2,000 Sundays and 1,200 seven-days.” *The Commercial Appeal’s* market is about 45 percent black. The program also works well in low-income white areas, he says. “I think the main difference is economics, not race.” The newspaper also concentrates single-copy sales in convenience stores in low-income neighborhoods, so buyers won’t need to have correct change for a box.

**37.** *The Montgomery Advertiser* has several circulation efforts targeting African Americans, especially in lower-income neighborhoods. One church youth group sells the Sunday paper at a discount after church. For subscribers who are price-sensitive, there’s the Equal Monthly Billing option. The newspaper also has “loyalty rewards” such as a coupon book, an opportunity to win a \$10 Wal-Mart coupon for renewing a subscription, and a ticket raffle for the Tuskegee-Alabama State football game.

**38.** *The Courier-Journal* in Louisville sells its Sunday paper, usually priced at \$1.75, for 99 cents in low-penetration neighborhoods. They’re losing money on the deal, says Helen Hoffman, circulation director/sales, “but it’s worth it to reach the community.” Recognizing that money runs short at the end of the month in such

neighborhoods, she plans to partner with stores to offer a double discount, on both the newspaper and some item in the store, on the last Sunday of the month.

### **Niche publications as a way to reach immigrants**

In order to reap advertising dollars targeted at the growing number of immigrants with a preference for Spanish, many newspapers have started foreign-language dailies or weeklies, and it's not just the big metros. Some smaller papers are doing it on a very small budget.

**39.** *El Informador* in Dalton, Ga., is a free-distribution weekly tabloid with a circulation of about 10,500, published by the *Daily Citizen*, a 13,000-circulation newspaper. "We saw the Hispanic market growing very quickly and advertisers wanted to reach the market," says Jimmy Espy, *Daily Citizen* executive editor. A Spanish edition was the most direct way to reach Hispanic people, he says. Otherwise, we "would have left the door open for competitors." While the true size of the Hispanic population is unknown because many are undocumented, about 40 percent of the school system is Hispanic, he says. (Mexicans have moved to Dalton because of carpet and flooring industry jobs.) At one point, there were two competing papers, says Espy, but now there is just one, run by the person who helped start *El Informador*. The 32- to 40-page publication has been profitable for the past three years, he says. It is supported largely by auto and grocery ads. *El Informador* has a full-time staff of four, from four different Latin American countries, and a part-time production person from a fifth country. The paper is growing its own staff, hiring people without a journalism education or background. "We look for smart, energetic people and train them to do the job," he says. The paper focuses on local news, entertainment and sports, as well as news of Mexico and Latin America. It uses the Associated Press Hispanic news service. Staff of *El Informador* and the *Daily Citizen* sometimes work together on stories, he says. They are owned by Community Newspaper Holdings, Inc.

**40.** *El Heraldo Hispano* is a free monthly paper put out on a shoestring by a 9,000-circulation daily newspaper, *The Sampson Independent*, in Clinton, N.C., another CNHI newspaper. The *Independent* was fortunate to have found a local Honduran doctor with two businesses and "a lot of connections," who provides all the editorial content in a trade for advertising his businesses, says Andy Rackley, marketing director of the *Independent*. The paper pays a small monthly stipend to one person to deliver the tabloid to Wal-Marts, drugstores and Hispanic businesses. The 20- to 24-page tab was launched in August 2001 and was "profitable from the day it came out," Rackley says. The editorial content focuses on topics like immigration, labor and schools. Circulation is 11,000 and it goes to 10 counties in southeastern North Carolina,

far beyond the two-county reach of the *Independent*. The *Independent* realized the need for such a paper when the 2000 Census figures came out, showing a nearly 900 percent increase in Hispanic population in Sampson County. Hispanics now make up 10 percent of the county and 15 percent of a neighboring county, Rackley says. “This was a market we weren’t reaching” and advertisers felt the same way. It was also a matter of looking to the future, he says. With bigger families, the Hispanic population is likely to continue growing. The Hispanics in southeastern North Carolina come mainly from Honduras and Mexico, but also from Puerto Rico, Peru and other South and Central American countries, according to Rackley. They come for the jobs. Local poultry and pig farms have billboards in Mexico recruiting workers, he says. Competing publications were quick to arise — about a dozen of them, all Hispanic-owned. Those may have a content advantage because they know their market so well, but Rackley said *El Heraldito Hispano* has the advantage with advertisers, especially English-speaking advertisers. Ads are mostly local, with about 20 percent coming from Hispanic businesses.

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# Profiles of Success

*Eight minority editors and publishers tell their stories*

## INTRODUCTION

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People of color are running newsrooms and newspapers, large and small, all across the country. There aren't many of them — few enough that when Gregory Moore, an African American, was lured away from the *Boston Globe* to be editor of *The Denver Post*, it was big news.

Here we introduce you to eight people of color who are charting their newspapers' course. They bring to their jobs something extra — an innate sensitivity to the need for serving diverse markets.

Some are at newspapers where their race or ethnicity reflects a large segment of the market. Others are in a distinct minority. They're in Arizona, California, Colorado, Kentucky, Mississippi, Ohio, Texas and Washington. Their papers range in circulation from 16,000 to 295,000.

Here are their stories: how they got where they are, how they're making a difference, and their concerns about the industry as it faces the future.

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## RONNIE AGNEW

Executive editor, *Jackson (Miss.) Clarion-Ledger* (Circ. 102,000), Gannett, 2002-present

### Career path

Reporter, *Greenwood (Miss.) Commonwealth*, 1984-85

Reporter, *Biloxi (Miss.) Sun Herald*, 1985-86

Business reporter to assistant city editor, *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 1986-93

Managing editor, *Hattiesburg (Miss.) American*, 1993-97

Executive Editor, *Dothan (Ala.) Eagle*, 1997-2001

Managing editor, *Jackson (Miss.) Clarion Ledger*, 2001-2002

### Education

University of Mississippi, B.A. in English and radio/TV, 1984

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Ronnie Agnew was born in rural Mississippi, one of nine children in a share-crop-  
ping family. As a boy, he had a great thirst for reading.

“We grew up kind of rough; books took us out of that,” he says. He remembers that in first grade he tested “really high” in reading. And though his parents had never gone to high school because they had to work, they valued learning and eventually sent eight of their nine children to college. By then, the parents had factory jobs.

Agnew went to Ole Miss, where — because he had seen African Americans on television — he majored in broadcasting. Somewhere along the way he realized, “I didn’t want to do that,” and began taking print journalism classes, as well as creative writing. “I had a couple of really good teachers who took an interest in me.”

After college, he headed to Greenwood, to report for a small newspaper in an impoverished area of Mississippi.

“I grew up similar to those people, but my parents didn’t think that way,” he says. “In a way, that was the first time I understood what poverty meant — how damaging it could be.” The newspaper spoke for the people who couldn’t speak for themselves, he says.

Editor and Publisher John Emmerich felt that any paper, no matter how small, had a strong responsibility to its readers and they deserved whatever the paper could do for them, he recalls.

Agnew later became a business reporter at the *Cincinnati Enquirer*. During a performance evaluation, he was asked about his goals. “I said I saw myself moving into the ranks of management.” He thought the conversation was forgotten, but when the business editor got promoted to metro editor, “he snatched me up to be assistant city editor.”

Gannett should be applauded for teaching its managers how to manage, he says.

*“The message is just not getting out there. [Minority] people are not even thinking about newspapers as a career.”*

“They sent me to extensive training at corporate headquarters.” Then, several years later, he went to the Institute for Journalism Education (now the Maynard Institute) for a couple of months at Northwestern University. “We learned to deal with all aspects of the newspaper. It opened up worlds to me.”

He had several management jobs in Cincinnati, and each step of the way there was training, including a two-year Gannett senior management development program. One of the instructors, Mark Silverman, publisher at *The Detroit News*, “taught me to be direct with people. That’s hard for a young person.” But people deserve the feedback, he says.

Agnew was named one of *Presstime’s* 20 under 40 in the year 2000. Race never caused any obstacles in his career, “or maybe I was too dumb to recognize it,” he says with a laugh. “I refused to see that.”

He left Gannett for 3½ years to be executive editor of the *Eagle*, a Thomson newspaper in Dothan, Ala. There he earned the “Most Improved Paper” award from the Alabama Press Association. At the *Eagle*, he stood out as an African American. “They didn’t know what to make of me.” The town was about 30 percent minority, but the newspaper was almost all white.

He used some of the tools he’d learned at Gannett to make sure everyone was reflected in the newspaper. “I did a lot of staff training. I hired African Americans, but they were snapped up” by other papers. When Thomson sold its newspaper division, Agnew was working to incorporate diversity standards companywide.

“I learned to appreciate a corporate culture where [diversity goals] are already in place. It’s exhausting to try to get that started.”

Jackson is a different situation entirely. The city is 71 percent African American, the three-county area about 48 percent. The newsroom is 32-33 percent black, he says, with its management ranks at about 40 percent. Other departments are similarly diverse, he says.

“The staff is balanced. They bring all different things to the table — except for bias.” And he encourages people to “bring themselves to work,” rather than feeling they have to check their differences at the door.

One of his challenges is making sure the paper serves all the people in Jackson. One white man came to his office with six months of clips of photos of African Americans from the paper. He said, “This is why some white people aren’t reading the paper.” Agnew told him his goal was to do the right thing and to be fair.

“When we get into positions of power, yes, we have to reach back. But we have to be

fair. Different audiences are going to expect different things. We need to be aware of what everyone is thinking.” To that end, the paper has a public editor and holds quarterly meetings with a diverse group from the community — including teachers, business people and a state Supreme Court justice — and meets with various groups to see what’s on their minds. “People will be disappointed if they think you favor one audience.”

He’s concerned about the inability of the newspaper industry to reach the diversity goals set by ASNE. Few young African Americans are interested in working at newspapers, he says. At the *Clarion-Ledger*, applications are 50:1, white to black. In an effort to counter this trend, the paper has partnerships with eight high schools. And for the first time, last year all the summer internships went to African Americans.

At nearby Jackson State there are about 270 communications students, but only 10 are interested in print, he said. The industry’s “message is just not getting out there. People are not even thinking about newspapers as a career.” He said many in his newsroom are so talented they will be editors someday.

“But where is the next wave?”

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## SARAH KWON BAKER

Publisher, *The News-Enterprise*, Elizabethtown, Ky. (Circ. 16,000), Landmark Communications, Jan. 2002-present

### Career path

Application systems manager to benefits manager, Landmark Corporate, Norfolk, Va., 1990-1994

Business manager to vice president/general manager, *The News & Record*, Greensboro, N.C., 1994-2001

### Education

Old Dominion University, B.S. in accounting, 1990

Advanced Executive Program, Media Management Center, 2001

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When Sarah Kwon Baker was a child in Korea, she learned at home and in school that newspapers spoke out against the brutal Japanese colonization her country endured starting in 1909. After WWII and liberation, when the Korean government became a dictatorship, the press kept up its fight and eventually the government was overthrown.

“They had hero status,” she says. “A lot of editors and publishers served jail time. In my early teens, if I’d been asked, I would have said I wanted to be an editor or reporter.”

But when she immigrated to the United States in 1977 she gave up that idea because of the language barrier. Instead, she became a supervisor in an accounting firm, involved in data processing and programming. “I had administrative jobs and did quite well,” but by 1988 she decided she wanted a four-year degree and quit work to go to college at Old Dominion full-time.

One evening in 1990, in her role as a student ambassador at Old Dominion, she had the good fortune to sit next to the president of Landmark Communications, Dick Barry, at a college dinner. She talked to him about her systems background and at the end of dinner he gave her his business card and said to call, that he might have a place for her. “I thought about it for a couple of days, wondering if he meant what he said.” Then she picked up the phone.

She went to Landmark as a summer intern and has been with the company ever since. After the internship, a full-time job opened and she took it, turning down several offers from CPA firms.

“Lem Lewis, the current CFO, hired me.” He became her mentor. “He was the boss of my boss. He was very interested in how I was doing and my future plans. He would take me down to the waterside for a hot dog and talk. He treated me like an equal.”

She moved up within Landmark, first at corporate in Norfolk, Va., then in

*“I didn’t feel I was 100 percent ready for it. But people said I was.”*

Greensboro, N.C., where she was business manager for *The News & Record*.

In Norfolk, she had a second mentor, Human Resources Director Charlie Hill. “Our offices were right next to each other. Every time I walked in his office, he had the biggest smile on his face. He made me feel like I was the only person he was interested in talking to.”

Van King, president and publisher at *The News & Record*, who hired her as business manager, also had an impact on her career.

When the publisher’s job opened up at the *News-Enterprise*, she was encouraged to apply. She felt she wanted to grow professionally, but had self-doubts.

“In my other jobs I didn’t have to deal with the public, I was in the background. Here I would be under more scrutiny. I didn’t feel I was 100 percent ready for it. But people said I was. Van King gave me a wealth of advice. The best was to be myself and not allow anyone to pigeonhole me.”

Her new job is “by no means easy,” but “it keeps me fired up. I like being involved in all aspects of the business. I’m really grateful for meeting different people — I didn’t know that about myself. As much of a hassle as it is to move, the excitement of meeting and working with new people energized me.”

She has faced no obstacles within the company because of her race or gender, she says. But there have been some incidents with the public. One reader came in upset over the paper’s position favoring a Hyundai plant he opposed. “He implied I was not welcome.” She has “sensed a certain hostility from different segments, but it was not job-related.”

What does she bring to the table as a Korean American?

“I was in my late 20s when I came to this country. My values were formed already. I see things from a different angle. It helps enhance decisions.” In Korean culture, work is noble. “Working hard is something to aspire to, not just something you have to do to make a living.”

Before her promotion to publisher, she talked with people she respected who “thought my being female would have more impact” than being Asian American. “They helped me realize it’s not that big a deal to work with someone of a different race.”

*The News-Enterprise* is “a lot less diverse than I would like it to be,” she says. Only two minorities, herself and the retail sales manager, are in management jobs. “I’m talking with my department heads about a plan.” The paper is sponsoring a program at one high school, where community leaders and students come together to talk about race. Landmark also has a minority scholarship program.

The newspaper industry is doing a good job but can do better on diversity, she says.

It has to bring in more minority reporters, salespeople and team leaders. Pay is an issue, industrywide, she says.

Hardin County, where *The News-Enterprise* circulates, contains a military base, Ft. Knox. The minority population of the county, excluding Ft. Knox, is about 25 percent, with African Americans the largest group.

A “substantial number” of Koreans live in two of the communities, she said. “When I first came to the U.S., that was important. The longer I live here, the less important it is.”

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## DOROTHY BLAND

Publisher and president, *Fort Collins Coloradoan* (Circ. 29,000), Gannett, 1994-present

### Career path

Internship, *The (Memphis) Commercial Appeal*, 1978

Part-time reporter, *The Jonesboro Sun*, 1979

Reporter, *Arkansas Democrat*, summer-fall 1979

Reporter to assistant city editor, *Rockford Register Star*, 1980-83

States editor to newsmaker editor to special projects reporter/editor, *USA Today*, 1983-87

Managing editor of library and information services, *USA Today*, 1987-90

Assistant to the president of Gannett Central Newspaper Group, 1990-92

President/Publisher, *Chillicothe Gazette* in Ohio, Aug. 1992-June 1994

### Education

Arkansas State University, B.A. in journalism, 1980

George Washington University, M.B.A., 1988

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Dorothy Bland's introduction to newspapers was as a child, when she "read the funny papers in the *Arkansas Gazette*, now the *Democrat-Gazette*."

She was editor of her school yearbook and recalls her journalism teacher, Julia McGhee, telling her, "You write well enough, people will read your work."

"My mom expected me to do well. She was a maid and a factory worker. I told her I wanted to be a dancer, and she said, 'Uh, uh.'"

Bland worked for the student newspaper at Arkansas State. College gave her good clips, she says, and the opportunity to test different writing styles. "I was like a kid with training wheels." But she had no plans to be a publisher.

"People saw things in me I didn't know I had. They saw leadership skills, I guess." After college she got a reporting job at the *Rockford (Ill.) Register-Star*, and two years into that job, she was made assistant city editor. About this time, *USA Today* was starting up and borrowing staff from other Gannett papers. Because Rockford had a high unemployment rate, *USA Today's* Peter Prichard (now Freedom Forum president) called on Bland to write a column about what it's like to be unemployed. She sent him one, then another. He decided he wanted her to come to Virginia.

He called her boss, who spoke to the ME, who spoke to the publisher, Gary Watson, who said, "Go." So she went on loan. "They liked my stuff and offered me a full-time job" within a year.

"There was a side of me that wanted to prove I could play with the big boys. I wanted to make a difference," she says. So she headed for graduate school to get an M.B.A.

*“If we don’t take diversity seriously,  
we don’t take our business seriously.”*

“I was always intrigued by the business side. I had done retail work in high school and college. I had an aptitude for math I got from my mom.” As she was working at *USA Today* and studying, John Quinn, the editor, “saw something in me and suggested I go to Maynard [Institute] at Northwestern. It was an eight-week commitment and I was trying to finish graduate school,” but because her editors all urged her to go, she took a semester off from grad school. “It was like a mini-M.B.A. that was industry-specific,” she says.

One day in 1987, Editor Ron Martin told her he was looking for someone to manage the library at *USA Today*. “I said, ‘I’m not a librarian.’ I didn’t get it. He asked, ‘Do you think you can run a business?’

“My mom was coming and we were going to Puerto Rico” on vacation. “He asked for my phone number in Puerto Rico and when I got there, there was a message to call him.” He pressed her on the library job. “I asked, ‘If I don’t like it, can I go back to the newsroom?’ That was my comfort zone.” In the new job she would supervise a staff of librarians.

She decided to give it a try. That was her “first step to the other side. It was an opportunity to test some things — run it as a small business.” She would gain line management experience, set up revenue sources and manage a budget.

But apparently somebody didn’t want her managing the department. As soon as she was promoted, “someone sent me a dead rat in the mail,” she says. “But I got through the experience.”

Several years later, she was asked to become the assistant to a group officer. “This was an opportunity to grow, to spend time in every department,” and an excellent training ground for a future publisher.

Bland says many mentors helped her — “men, women, whites, minorities, African Americans.” Mary Stier, in Rockford, taught her the importance of work/life balance. John Quinn shared the importance of celebrating and praising others. Mike Coleman, former regional president and publisher in Rockford who’s now in that role in Florida, emphasized the importance of knowing the numbers and details. Curtis Riddle, another regional president and publisher who’s now at *The News Journal* in Wilmington, Del., shared the importance “of inspecting what you expect.”

“And Gary Watson [now president of Gannett’s newspaper division] encouraged me to get outside my comfort zone — that’s a good thing. You have to take a risk. What’s the worst that can happen? You never know what you can do unless you try.”

People are often surprised to find a black woman publisher of a newspaper —

whether it's the man she talked with recently in an airport waiting for a plane, or some members of the Lions Club where she was a featured speaker.

Within the company, her race and gender haven't blocked her progress, she says, because "I was smart enough to go with a company that values diversity."

How does being a woman of color affect the newspaper? "There are certain things they know won't play here," she says, and "no one feels left out."

At the *Coloradoan*, 25 percent of the operating committee (33 percent if she is included) are people of color. They have an Asian American HR director and a Hispanic/Irish executive editor, she says. The market is 90 percent Anglo. Editorially, "we do a good job of mainstreaming."

The newspaper industry "can do better, absolutely," she says. "People want to see people that look like them and they can relate to. Especially the young. In the next 20 years there will be a sea change. If we don't take diversity seriously, we don't take our business seriously."

"We need to have a much better marketing campaign regarding all the jobs in a newspaper. Only 20 percent of the jobs at most newspapers are in the newsroom. We need good folks in every department, whether they're sales professionals, accountants, designers, technicians, online specialists, printers or whatever. We want people, when they graduate, to say, 'I want to work in the media business.'"

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## MICHAEL CHIHAK

Editor and publisher, *Tucson Citizen* (Circ. 39,000), Gannett, 2000-present

### Career path

Photographer and reporter, *Tucson Citizen*, 1970-71

Correspondent, Associated Press, 1971-80

Reporter to assistant metro editor to business editor, *Tucson Citizen*, 1980-84

States pages editor to weather editor to assistant national editor to world editor, *USA Today*, 1984-92

Executive editor to publisher, *The Californian* in Salinas, 1992-2000

Publisher, *The Californian's* Spanish-language weekly *El Sol*, 1998-2000

### Education

University of Arizona, bachelor's in journalism, 1971

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At age 11, Michael Chihak was delivering the *Tucson Citizen*. He'd had to compete for the job. Three boys wanted it, but Michael won out. He read the paper, as well, looking at sports, comics and a page written for and by high school kids. He helped produce a newsletter for carriers and won a contest to name it the *Carrier Times*, he recalls with a laugh, noting that that was a long time ago.

As a high school stringer, he supplied the *Citizen* with sports news, then worked there as a reporter and photographer during his last two years in college. He moved around, but his love affair with the city and the paper brought him back time and again — finally as editor and publisher.

His first supervisory job was there, when he was lured from the local AP bureau “with the prospect — not the promise” of getting into management. He filled in on the city desk when editors were on vacation, and a short time later he was named assistant metro editor.

Chihak has had many mentors. A University of Arizona professor, Donald W. Carson, is still his friend and advisor 30 years later. “He instilled in me a sense of mission and of ethics and integrity in newspapering. He made just about every student feel he was their special friend” — including Chihak's daughter, who studied with Carson the last year he taught.

Gavin Scott, the AP bureau chief in Phoenix, “was a gentle soul who always prodded and pushed me.”

And John Quinn, the first editor of *USA Today* and formerly senior vice president for news at Gannett, “has been watching my career since 1981. He had a lot to do with me going to *USA Today* and told me things I still bear with me. He leaned over his desk one day and peered sharply into my eyes and said, “Take this job very seriously. But

*“I consider myself bicultural. I’m assimilated, but have an understanding of the Spanish roots and culture.”*

don’t take yourself very seriously. Try to have fun.’ That’s great advice.”

Fred Hamilton, publisher in Salinas when Chihak was there, “taught me the business side. He said, ‘You can do anything you want,’ which took off the self-imposed restrictions.”

Chihak’s Hispanic heritage — seven generations have lived in the Sonoran Desert — has a significant impact on his newspaper, he says. “It’s deeper and broader than ethnicity. The Spanish history of Tucson dates back almost 500 years, to the 1530s. You have to understand that this part of the world was never a British colony. It was a Spanish colony. And for 2,000 years or more before that there were indigenous people here.” The Spanish influence is much broader than the Anglo one, he says. “You can see it in the restaurants, the architecture.”

The culture has a spiritualism, a mysticism that he understands. “I had a great-aunt who was a *curandera* — a kind of medicine woman. It wasn’t a big deal, but if you had an ailment, she made you herb tea; she collected the herbs. She had sayings. It was a mixture of Catholicism and other spiritualism.”

That was on his mother’s side. His father was Bohemian. With fair hair, light eyes and a Slavic name, Chihak has never felt he was the target of discrimination. But he’s aware of the prejudice, he says. “I recognize it almost immediately.” It’s the fear that Mexicans are trying to take over the Southwest.

Hispanics spend \$4 billion a year on consumer goods and services in Tucson, he says. They make up about 40 percent of the metro area.

The newspaper reflects that, with 44 percent of the overall workforce Hispanic. In the newsroom the numbers are smaller — 20 percent Hispanic, with a total of 28 percent minority. Minorities hold 23 percent of the decision-making jobs in the newsroom, he says, and are 30 percent of decision-makers overall, including the agency that runs the joint operating agreement for the *Citizen* and *Arizona Daily Star*.

A newspaper with a minority in a top position, he says, “has the potential to give voice to that segment of the population.”

“I consider myself bicultural. I’m assimilated, but have an understanding of the Spanish roots and culture.” He speaks some Spanish, but is not fluent. When his mother was a child, she was forbidden to speak Spanish in school. As a result, she was held back two years. So as an adult, she didn’t speak Spanish in her home and her children didn’t learn it there.

The newspaper industry has a long way to go on diversity, Chihak says. “There needs to be a commitment at the top.” And he doesn’t see that.

“It’s a complex situation. All the old things we tried don’t work.” Newspapers are stealing minority managers from one another and there aren’t enough new ones in the pipeline, he notes. The percentage of minorities in newsrooms is shrinking, while the percent in the general population is growing. “We won’t be able to cover communities adequately.

“I can’t emphasize enough that there needs to be commitment from the top. I don’t hear people talking about it. They’re focused on the stock price. I agree papers have to meet the bottom line. But if they want papers to be good at covering communities, [diversity] is what will improve it.”

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## CHRISTINE CHIN

President and publisher, *The Bellingham (Wash.) Herald* (circ. 26,000), Gannett, 2001-present

### Career path

Research analyst, Paramount Pictures, 1984-86  
Strategic planning internship, Times Mirror, summer 1987

Management trainee, *Press-Telegram*, Long Beach, Calif., 1988-89

Acting employee relations director to home delivery manager to circulation director, *Press-Telegram*, 1989-92

Assistant to the president, Knight Ridder, Miami, 1992

Executive assistant to the publisher, *Press-Telegram*, 1992

Market development director, *The Desert Sun*, Palm Springs, Calif., 1993-99

Strategic development director, Reno (Nev.) *Gazette-Journal*, 1999-2001

### Education

University of California at Los Angeles, B.A., with major in communications, magna cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa, 1980-84

Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration, M.B.A., 1988

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Christine Chin's talent for publishing revealed itself early. As editor, she took her high school paper from an 11x30 offset publication to a 4- to 8-page tab printed by the local newspaper, financing the operation by publishing the football program. She tried her hand at stringing, too, "but I wasn't very good."

"Cable TV was hot" then, she said, and some were forecasting the demise of newspapers. "So I entered UCLA thinking I wanted to be the next Connie Chung. Then I read something she wrote about camping out on a doorstep to get a quote, and I didn't want to do that."

So she turned to business.

An internship at Paramount Pictures led to a job there as a research analyst. But she wanted an M.B.A., so she left after two years to go to Harvard. The appeal of community service was strong, so she took an internship with Times Mirror and "after B school I came back to newspapers." She was fascinated by the way technology was changing newspapers into information companies, she says.

She was one of four M.B.A.s taken into a two-year executive training program at Knight Ridder, with the idea they would one day become publishers.

At Knight Ridder, she learned many aspects of the business, first at the Long Beach *Press-Telegram*, then at Miami headquarters, then back to Long Beach as executive assistant to the publisher for six months.

At that point, she moved to Palm Springs to be with her husband. She called the

*“I made it clear to him I wanted to be a publisher.  
You have to be clear about what you want.”*

publisher of the newspaper there, *The Desert Sun*, to find out about local job opportunities, and learned he was looking for a market development director.

“Timing is everything,” she says, “and luck.” Her skills, talent and interests were a perfect fit for the job. Palm Springs was a growing market. “It was a great time because the emphasis was changing from marketing services to market development — research and analysis, what I really enjoy.”

Mentors have played an important role in her career. “I’ve been helped by a lot of people. Tony and Peter Ridder — I learned a lot from them. Peter gave me experiences in classified advertising and home delivery most M.B.A.s wouldn’t have.” She recalls that he invited her to a strategic planning retreat, and when she made suggestions about what to discuss, he said, “Why don’t you lead it?”

“A consultant friend helped me put together a two-day planning retreat. I was only 27 and so nervous. I didn’t sleep the night before.” But it all worked out.

“Tony taught me to ask for help and not to be afraid to ask stupid questions — lessons I try to pass along. In a new job, you have to ask for real help. If you don’t get the information you need to understand a situation, you may make a bad decision. You need to put your ego aside. That’s hard for most young people.”

Bob Dickey, the publisher at Palm Springs, also gave her good advice and opportunities to lead major projects. “Learning from him was great for me. I developed my abilities to see market opportunities and to work on products and projects across disciplines. We had great discussions about organizational structure, strategic opportunities and developing teams. “I made it clear to him I wanted to be a publisher. You have to be clear about what you want.”

Then along came an opportunity to work for publisher Sue Clark-Johnson, as strategic development director at the *Reno Gazette-Journal*. This time the timing couldn’t have been worse. At age 37, she was eight months pregnant with her first child when the offer was made. “My husband had his dream job and my hormones were raging. Fortunately, Sue gave me time to decide.” Three months later Chin accepted the position and moved her family to Reno.

“I still wanted to be a publisher, to stretch a little more and work for Sue. It was a bigger role in a paper with a great team of people. I thought I could grow and learn. She challenged me to focus on ‘What does it mean?’ from a long- and short-term perspective.”

The granddaughter of a Chinese immigrant, Chin notes she came into the newspaper industry when it was starting to wake up to the need for diversity, and has faced no

barriers because of her race. “Any obstacles were based on jobs I didn’t take or experience I didn’t have. I could have been publisher faster if I’d been an ad director.”

Because of her background, she says, she can set the tone for valuing different perspectives and experiences. “I can help start a dialogue about diversity.

“I ask about diversity when I do interviews” for management positions, she says. “I tell all candidates, ‘These are our goals. How can you help me achieve those goals?’ These are questions any leader or manager can ask, but they don’t always think of it.”

The Bellingham market is about 12 percent minority, a mix of Hispanics, Native Americans, Asians and African Americans, she says. The newsroom is 14 percent minority. The circulation director is Hispanic and has two minority managers. There are three minority advertising staffers, two of them outside salespeople. And in production there are two minorities in the top four EEOC categories. A diversity committee at the paper is designed to continue the dialogue and educate employees about the value of diversity.

“I want to reflect the diversity of people and the views of the market,” Chin says. That goes beyond race and ethnicity to include such things as age, lifestyle and political viewpoint. “You have to reach out and try to understand everyone’s perspective. It’s important to our goal of trying to help people live, work, and play in a multicultural, multi-ethnic, non-majority century.”

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## JAMES CRUTCHFIELD

President and publisher, *Akron Beacon Journal* (Circ. 146,000), Knight Ridder, 2001-present

### Career path

Reporter, *The Pittsburgh Press*, 1968-71

Public information officer, Pittsburgh Model Cities Program, 1971

Reporter, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 1971-76

Reporter, *Detroit Free Press*, 1976-79

Press secretary for Sen. Carl Levin (Mich.), 1979-81

State capitol bureau chief to assistant city editor to deputy city editor to city editor to metropolitan editor to deputy managing editor for news, *Detroit Free Press*, 1981-89

Managing editor, *Akron Beacon Journal*, 1989-93

Senior vice president & executive editor, *Press-Telegram* in Long Beach, Calif., 1993-97

Assistant to the publisher to director of single copy sales and distribution, Philadelphia Newspapers, 1998-99

General manager, *Akron Beacon Journal*, 2000-2001

### Education

Duquesne University, bachelor's in communications, 1992

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Jim Crutchfield grew up in the projects of the Hill District of Pittsburgh. “There were always newspapers in my house,” he says, and he mainly was interested in the comics and sports. In eighth grade, he noticed the word “journalism” in a book. When he found out what it meant, he decided, “Maybe that is something I could do.” He got involved in the school paper and in ninth grade became a high school stringer for the black-owned *Pittsburgh Courier*. He wanted to become a sports writer.

In 1968, when Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated, Crutchfield was studying journalism at Duquesne University. “My neighborhood went up in flames,” he recalls. *The Pittsburgh Press* had a new editor who wanted to cover the story and understood the need to be fair. The paper had no African American reporters so they asked Crutchfield, the only black journalism student in Pittsburgh, to come as an intern and cover the story. He later won a national Dow Jones internship prize. The newspaper asked him to stay on.

He worked nights and was supposed to finish college in the daytime. But he liked working better than going to class, so he stopped going to school, something he later realized was a mistake.

In 1990, as managing editor of the *Akron Beacon Journal*, he was asked to speak to college students about the importance of education. Having pangs of regret about his own unfinished education, he wrote the Duquesne dean and asked what it would take to get his degree. About a year later he was “directing the paper by cell phone from the

*“I was ready to stand behind my decisions as a leader.  
I had come to believe I could do that.”*

Pennsylvania Turnpike,” as he took night classes two hours away, Saturday classes at closer-by Cleveland State and summer classes during vacation time. It was difficult, but ultimately rewarding.

It had taken Crutchfield 15 years to move into management. In Pittsburgh, he’d supervised a few reporters and moved copy, but he’d never felt comfortable “being somebody’s boss,” he says.

After eight years working in Pittsburgh, he was ready to leave his hometown, because “where you grow up, expectations can be limiting.” Taking a job at the *Detroit Free Press* “was a great thing for me.” As state capitol bureau chief in 1983, he was mainly reporting. When his assistant city editor left, he applied for the job and has been a manager at Knight Ridder newspapers ever since.

“I was ready to stand behind my decisions as a leader. I had come to believe I could do that. I just wasn’t ready before. Others had seen me as a potential manager, but I didn’t feel it in my bones.” Now he realizes, “I’m probably better at managing than reporting.”

He learned a lot from a series of editors at the *Free Press* and even today wonders how they would handle a situation. From Kurt Luedtke, he learned how to figure out where the competition was going and then go another way. And how to spot talent. David Lawrence “was perhaps the most energetic person I ever met. He taught me there are two kinds of people — those who are trying to get things into the newspaper and those who are trying to keep things out.” Kent Bernhard was the consummate hard-news person, straight-ahead and hard-driving. From him, Crutchfield learned “how presentation is as important as what you are saying.” And Heath Meriwether, recently retired publisher of the *Free Press*, was a big-picture person and yet practical about getting things done.

Crutchfield stayed on the news side for 30 years. When he went to the *Press Telegram* in Long Beach as executive editor, publisher Rick Sadowski encouraged him to learn about the business side and included him in business decisions.

“Coming out of Long Beach, I wanted to do one of two things: run the news side of a larger paper or be a publisher anyplace.” He sought the advice of Jay Harris, then publisher of the *San Jose Mercury News*. “Jay’s advice was that if I was interested in the business side, I should go work for a publisher.” He went to Philadelphia Newspapers as assistant to Publisher Bob Hall.

Were there obstacles in his career due to race? “I’m sure there were, and at times I felt there were. But I prefer not to focus on those. I can’t control them. I can control

how I perform,” he says.

As an executive of color, he says he may be more conscious of the need for diversity. “I’ve grown up being different, once I left my black neighborhood. I believe it was David Lawrence who told me, “Remember, you’re here because you’re different. Don’t be afraid to be different.” Minorities don’t want to be tokens, he says, but at the same time they bring a certain sensitivity because they are minorities.

The *Beacon Journal’s* market is 11 percent minority, while the newsroom, one of the few to reach or exceed parity, is 16 percent, according to Crutchfield, and the entire company is 21 percent minority.

The newspaper industry needs to be more demanding of itself on the issue of diversity, he says. He has had a policy of insisting that a woman and minority be included among finalists for every position. “We end up picking the best,” he says. “We get more and different candidates. I’ve seen it turn up candidates who are different and good — people we didn’t know were out there.” It’s also important to identify good candidates within the company and train them for advancement, he says. “I have a favorite story. I met Bob McGruder in 1984, when he was managing editor of *The Plain Dealer*. He had three black assistant MEs. I asked, ‘How can you do this?’ He said, ‘Hiring and promoting is risky. I take risks with different people.’”

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## MACK QUINTANA

President and publisher, *El Paso Times* (Circ. 75,000), Gannett, 1998-present

### Career path

Compositor to outside sales rep, *The Miami Herald*, 1968-74

Outside sales manager, *Tallahassee Democrat*, 1974-76

Outside sales manager, *The Miami Herald*, 1977-78

Classified ad manager, *Tallahassee Democrat*, 1978-80

Home delivery manager to assistant to circulation manager to special products manager, Long Beach, Calif., *Press Telegram*, 1980-84

Classified ad manager to pre-press manager to production director, *San Jose Mercury News*, 1984-89

Senior vice president, sales & marketing, *Press Telegram*, 1989-91

Vice president, advertising, *The Miami Herald*, 1992-93

Director, sales and marketing, *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, 1994-96

Senior vice president, marketing and administration, ITS Companies, 1996-98

### Education

Florida State University, B.S. in communications, 1976

Florida State University, M.S. in communications, 1977

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Mack Quintana got into the newspaper business by accident. “I was 18, driving racing cars, and needed money.” A good friend who was a printer at *The Miami Herald* helped him get a job there. That was in 1968.

By 1972, newspapers were going from hot type to cold type and downsizing their composing rooms. He was fortunate to be transferred to classified outside sales, he says. At the same time, he was attending Miami-Dade Community College. Then he was transferred to the *Tallahassee Democrat*, another Knight Ridder paper, to manage a small staff in outside classified sales. Pushed by supervisors to get more education, he earned a bachelor’s degree in communications at Florida State, and then took time off from work to get a master’s degree. In a series of job opportunities, he bounced from Miami to Tallahassee to San Jose to Long Beach — then all Knight Ridder newspapers. All the time, he was advancing.

A number of mentors made a difference in his career. Fred Rasmussen, classified ad manager at the *Herald*, pushed him to get his college degree. And Gus Harwell, publisher at Tallahassee, later to become a vice president of operations for Knight Ridder, also challenged him to move ahead. “You can do it,” he said. “Push for it.” They apparently saw something in Mack Quintana that led them to take an interest in his career.

“I was willing to work — 10, 12 hours a day, whatever was necessary.” He was the top

*“Being Hispanic and Spanish-speaking helps me in our community. I can relate.”*

classified salesperson for the *Herald* his second year, he says. When he went to Long Beach the second time, Peter Ridder, then publisher, was “fantastic. He expects you to work hard and deliver, and if you do, he supports you. Peter said it was important to understand community needs and make a difference. He got me into Leadership Long Beach and the Chamber of Commerce, and said, ‘You have to be one of the leaders of this.’ ”

Later, Sue Clark-Johnson hired him at Gannett regional headquarters in Reno and gave him the chance to spend time in a newsroom, working with reporters, photographers and graphics editors, to better understand the news operation.

“I didn’t know I was a minority,” he says, until early in his career he was told in jest that his transferring from one paper to another was “screwing up their EEOC numbers.” Because of his Hispanic heritage, however, he thinks he brings “a little different perspective. What we are is nothing more than a collection of life experiences, which develops our frame of reference.” Being of a specific ethnicity can mean having different experiences and sensitivities, he says.

At both Gannett and Knight Ridder, he says, “we try to mirror the community we serve.” His market in El Paso is 78 percent Hispanic. “We mirror that. Overall, our employee composition matches our community, and in the top four categories [executive and manager, professional, sales, technician] we also match. Being Hispanic and Spanish-speaking helps me in our community. I can relate.”

The editor, Don Flores, is also Hispanic and a recent recipient of the Robert G. McGruder Award for Diversity Leadership. The operating committee has six Hispanics and two Anglos who are married to Hispanics, he says. He’s convinced the paper has a higher Hispanic readership because readers see faces, names and bylines in the paper that mirror their own.

“In the newsroom we do have a challenge recruiting Hispanics. That’s our biggest issue — hiring and keeping them.” Larger papers often lure them away.

In the El Paso community the single biggest problem is lack of education, he says, and that impacts the newspaper — in both readership and employment qualifications. He says 35 percent of the adult population there doesn’t have a high school education, and 50 percent of adult Hispanic females don’t. “We under-perform in readership because of that.”

So his community involvement focuses on education. He chairs two committees working to improve educational attainment. The Chamber of Commerce Education Committee is working to get people on school boards who are focused on educating

the children, rather than steering contracts to do work for the schools, he says. They meet with each school board candidate and determine who is qualified. The Education Committee of the Leadership Resource Council, a group of 50 CEOs, is looking at Texas public schools with similar demographics and ethnicity in order to find best practices El Paso schools can adopt.

While Quintana believes diversity at his paper is going in the right direction, “as an industry we are nowhere close to mirroring our communities,” he says.

And he worries about the future. “We’ve been focusing on hiring and retaining more women and minorities. But if you were to ask students in college communications programs, ‘What do you want to do?’ they’ll say work for ad agencies or for TV. Not many would say they want to be newspaper reporters. We are not perceived as exciting or cutting edge, and from the perspective of minority students, they may not feel comfortable in an environment where there are few folks that look like them.

“We haven’t done a good enough job selling our industry. We’re too apologetic,” he says, explaining that first it was radio that was going to kill off newspapers, then TV, then cable, and now the Web. “But we needn’t be worried or apologetic. Newspapers are still alive and well. We disseminate very useful news and information through our newspapers, Web sites and other products many of us publish. And we still reach more people.”

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## RICK RODRIGUEZ

Executive editor, *The Sacramento Bee* (Circ. 295,000), McClatchy, 1998-present, and senior vice president, 2000-present

### Career path

Reporter, *The Californian*, 1972-79

Reporter, *The Fresno Bee*, 1979-82

Capitol bureau reporter to editorial board member to capitol bureau deputy chief to assistant managing editor to managing editor, *The Sacramento Bee*, 1982-98

### Education

Stanford University, B.A. in communication, 1976

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When Rick Rodriguez was a boy of 8 or 9 in California, he liked to listen to baseball games on the radio and fill out his own box scores. The next day he would grab the local newspaper to see if he was correct. (He usually was.) He wrote fake sports stories, pretending he was a reporter. By junior high, he was taking journalism courses, was sports editor of the school paper and got the top journalism award. In high school there were more journalism classes and editorship of the school paper. He was well on his way.

His career was sidetracked briefly after high school graduation, when he took a job in a Mexican grocery store and tortilla factory. Fate stepped in, however, in the person of Eric Brazil, city editor of *The Californian* in Salinas, who wooed him away to become a copy boy, even though it meant a 10-cents-an-hour pay cut.

That was 1972. He's been in newspapers ever since, starting at *The Californian*, as an intern and then a reporter doing a little of everything, while attending community college. He earned a bachelor's degree from Stanford, and then he went right back to the newspaper.

Eric Brazil was the first of several mentors who made a difference in his life.

"He took me under his wing and guarded me and guided me," Rodriguez says. "He moved me along. I learned passion for journalism from him. He inspired me to find out what was happening in the world."

Another mentor was Bill Endicott. When Endicott came to the *Sacramento Bee*, Rodriguez was a reporter in the capitol bureau and unsure if he wanted to stay in the business. "There were not many Latino role models," or many opportunities he could see.

"He came in and gave me a chance. He said I was a really good writer and he was going to start moving me ahead. He counseled me on politics and on my temper. He

*“Gregory [Favre] took chances on me someone else might not have.”*

was one of my best friends.”

And then there was Gregory Favre, then executive editor at the *Bee* and McClatchy vice president of news, who promoted him to managing editor and then to executive editor. “It was a huge risk, because I didn’t have much management experience.” Before being promoted to editor, he was given the chance to spend two weeks in each department, to learn how the total operation worked.

How has his ethnicity affected his career? Rodriguez credits his Mexican immigrant grandmother, who was uneducated but had a flare for storytelling. She helped him learn how to listen. And because of his upbringing, he has a passion for covering the entire community.

He says he has come up against no overt bias in his career and that companies he’s worked for have treated him well. Nonetheless, he long felt there was a glass ceiling that couldn’t be broken. “But Gregory took chances someone else might not have,” to help him break through.

As a Latino executive, how is he making a difference at his newspaper?

The groundwork was laid before he took over as editor, he says. “Ours is one of the most diverse newsrooms in the country. They understand we’re about covering the entire community.

“We have diversity of thought and background,” he says. The newsroom is about 28 percent minority, while the county is becoming increasingly diverse and is now up to 31 or 32 percent. “We’re within striking distance.” He does not have a quota system — “that would cause a backlash” — but works hard to get and retain talented people, including minorities.

Recruiting is something he’s focused on since he was an assistant ME. He recruits at all the minority journalism conferences. “I bring in talent and give them the environment to flourish.” He takes interest in journalists and their careers, which makes retention much easier.

Many people of color hold management positions at the *Bee*. They are of different races and ethnicities — Latino, African American, Asian American — and in various leadership roles, including assistant ME, business editor, design director, news editor, deputy city editor and sports editor. Rodriguez has promoted or hired most of them.

“We really have a cross-section of people and they speak up. There are different discussions at news meetings.” This does affect editorial content, he said. They have won awards from the Chinese American community and Muslim community. “They understand there is commitment from the top down. They understand they’ll be reflected” in the newspaper. Readership is as high among Latinos and Asians as it is

among Anglos, he says.

Rodriguez feels strongly that the newspaper should reflect the whole community and he puts a priority on those who are not traditionally covered. There is a consciousness in the newsroom that inclusion is about fairness and accuracy, he says.

He has a special concern that the newspaper industry does not do enough to connect with people at the lower end of the economic spectrum. As a child growing up in sparse conditions, newspapers were his entree into mainstream society. It's an issue he wants to work on as he climbs the ASNE leadership ladder, scheduled for the presidency in 2005.

"I think newspapers will survive as the last mass medium," he said, but to do that they must reach out to everybody and leave no one behind.

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# Reflections on Diversity

## *Journalism Organization Leaders Say What's Needed*

### We must be relevant to contemporary America

BY PETER BHATIA

President, American Society of Newspaper Editors (2003-2004)  
Executive Editor, *The Oregonian*

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The issues around coverage of minorities in America never seem to go away. Some see this as a curse; I see it as a blessing. It offers us a chance to reach into new and underserved audiences, to broaden our definition of news, to reaffirm our place as a vital element of American society.

As the minority populations in the United States continue to grow, newsrooms and newspapers must continue to respond. It is both an obligation for us and an opportunity. Why does it matter? It's really very simple. We in newspapers are about readers and readership; if we want contemporary America to keep reading newspapers, we must be relevant to what contemporary America is.

As the Census has shown us so powerfully, and as the demographers keep telling us, the face of America is increasingly diverse and increasingly of color. The case tends to break down into two imperatives: a moral/journalistic one and an economic one. Both are powerful motivators, but I'll argue primarily here for relentless attention to the journalistic imperative (which arguably feeds the economic one).

To me, it is a measure of our credibility. The research prepared for the American Society of Newspaper Editors' credibility initiative clearly showed that many citizens view us as out of touch with their communities. It showed that their view of the community and their personal worlds are not being reflected in the newspaper day in and day out. Newspapers have always faced an impossible task in this regard — we can't be all things to all readers. And every reader is a community unto him — or herself. But as populations change and household penetration drops, the challenge, particularly with readers of color, becomes clear.

Do we spend the time on the issues that matter most to these readers (potential and actual)? Do we allow our reporters the time to develop sources in these communities? And do we require it? Are we bringing into our newsrooms reporters and editors who have experience in these communities, who can help us break down the barriers and

*“It offers us a chance to reach into new and underserved audiences, to broaden our definition of news.”*

redefine news from points of view that may not fit with our comfortable middle-class experiences or culture? Are we as senior editors getting out into the communities, holding meetings, having lunches, just talking? And most important, just listening. It can safely be said we can do a better job of listening. Our credibility will benefit from it. So will our personal knowledge and skill set.

Many of my colleagues might read these words and say, “We know. We know. We’ve heard it all before.” Fair point. This could have been written in 1993 as well as in 2003. Or even before. That suggests two points: first, that the challenge never goes away and is arguably more pressing given the realities of the present and the not-too-distant future. Second, and perhaps more crucial, that despite recent “diversity fatigue” in our industry — I understand that some feel more than saturated with the proselytizing on diversity — and the difficulty print media has attracting and keeping journalists of color, we need to renew our commitment.

We need to take action. We need to make sacrifices. We need to devote more time to staff recruitment, training and development, and be willing to take risks we haven’t in the past about expanding our range of coverage. To be sure, no one would argue we shouldn’t cover City Hall anymore. But City Hall has some new issues we need to cover better.

Much has been said and written in the past couple of years about a misguided pursuit of diversity that presents an inaccurate view of the news and of this country. I have no doubt that has occurred at times. But that’s a micro view. The larger view is coming into focus.

We need to get to work on these issues yet again. We need new energy and commitment. Failing to do so risks what we hold dearest: the practice of journalism that offers depth and meaning.

# Solutions must come from the highest levels

**BY CECILIA ALVEAR**

Past President, National Association of Hispanic Journalists (2001-2002)

Producer, NBC News, Burbank, Calif.

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Our business is undergoing a profound revolution. A new digital world with hundreds of channels, over-the-air signals competing for audience against newspapers, cable, satellite, the Internet, DVDs and video games. Yet, in the middle of all this, one thing has proven completely resistant to change — the color of the faces in the industry.

This country is undergoing another revolution: the browning of America. In places like Los Angeles, where I live, people of European descent are no longer the majority. Instead, African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, people of color, make up over half the population, but newsrooms do not represent this new America, and neither does the coverage.

While it is true that we no longer have the apartheid in newsrooms that existed before the 1970s, the diversity picture is nothing to celebrate. How can news organizations pretend to hold up an accurate mirror to American society if their newsrooms and stories fail to reflect the faces of America in the year 2003? The solution has to come from the highest levels.

The CEOs of the companies that own the media organizations have to state loudly, strongly and often their commitment to the ideal of diversity. And they have to make it clear to the people they hire to run their media companies and to the public that this is not a matter of political correctness. Rather it is part and parcel of good journalistic practices, on a par with accuracy and fairness.

To provide incentives for those charged with carrying out these policies, performance bonuses should be tied to how well they manage diversity in their newsrooms, both in hiring and in coverage.

Reporters, producers or editors who know foreign languages or have expertise on ethnic communities should be identified and rewarded. They should be encouraged to explore issues in those communities, and their knowledge should be shared with others in the newsroom.

The starting point for better coverage could be a complete overhaul of the lists of frequently used experts or sources to include the names of their color counterparts.

The coverage of communities of color should not be restricted to special months or anniversaries or to the negative aspects of their culture. In fact, every effort should be made to “mainstream” the members of these communities into the coverage. They are an integral part of America and their stories, contributions, successes, failures, ties to

*“There are no quick fixes on the road to true diversity,  
but there is no choice but that it must be done.”*

their homelands, and interaction with other communities must be reported.

I am not advocating “positive” coverage; that would be public relations. In purely journalistic terms I am calling for “complete” coverage where the good, the bad and the in-between news make it to the printed page or the broadcast.

Recruiting and retaining diverse personnel should be a top agenda item. Managers should be willing to break out of their comfort zones and hire people who don’t look like them. However, a good diversity hire is not just a matter of color or name. These hires should also bring special knowledge and understanding of their communities. Only then will the news organizations become more accurate in their coverage.

Case in point: the events of Sept. 11. There were Latino victims and heroes at the World Trade Center, on the planes and in the Pentagon. Most of their stories were first reported by Latino journalists. That said, journalists of color must not be “pigeon-holed.” They bring more to the table than their race or ethnicity; they also bring intellectual diversity and should be encouraged to cover other stories as well. If they do so from a different angle, so much the better.

Newsrooms should make use of the expertise provided by the ethnic journalism organizations. The National Association of Hispanic Journalists and Asian American Journalists Association have published resource guides on how to cover their respective communities. The Society of Professional Journalists put together a “Rainbow Rolodex” of sources, and the *Detroit Free Press* printed a guide on how to cover Arabs and Arab Americans. Journalists of all colors should acquire knowledge about the diverse communities in their area.

Managing a diverse newsroom is definitely more complex and challenging. There are no quick fixes on the road to true diversity, but there is no choice but that it must be done. One benefit of diversifying news content may well be an increase in readership or audience, an important consideration in these challenging times.

I pray for the day when the people who run the nation’s newsrooms finally put their money where their mouth is and realize that diversity is not only good for the heart and soul of their organizations but also highly beneficial to their bottom line. Only then will diversity be placed on the fast track it deserves.

# We are not yet where we need to be

**BY CONDACE PRESSLEY**

Past President, National Association of Black Journalists (2001-2003)

Assistant Program Director, WSB-AM, Atlanta, Ga.

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*“It is an industry where, for so many years, blacks were kept out. The opportunity today is greater than it has ever been — but it’s not where it needs to be.”*

**— Actor Will Smith on Hollywood**

These comments from a black man about his industry apply to black men and women in almost every industry. Corporate America heralds the achievements of African Americans who now lead their corporations: Richard Parsons at AOL Time Warner, Kenneth Chenault at American Express, and E. Stanley O’Neal at Merrill Lynch. Yet we find only a few CEOs out of how many corporations? While society is correct in noting their achievement, shouldn’t society be even more outraged that the list is not longer?

The American media are no exception. For many years black journalists were kept out of mainstream media. Then, when the stories were in the neighborhoods where white journalists did not want to go, mainstream media trolled the Black Press for talent.

To be sure, there has been progress coloring mainstream media. There are black newspaper editors, news directors and news managers in media outlets across America. Nonetheless, for all the opportunity that exists, we are not where we need to be — not among those who tell the stories, not among those who read the paper or watch TV.

So what’s the problem? For a community of communicators, we are lousy communicators. In 2001, the American Society of Newspaper Editors commissioned an analysis of all the surveys that had been done on journalists of color, in an effort to discern why black journalists were leaving the newspaper industry faster than they were entering it. ASNE found that black journalists are leaving for two reasons. Simply stated, we don’t always enjoy the work and we don’t see opportunities for advancement.

Blacks go into journalism with passion and with purpose. Our passion is for making a difference in the community. Our purpose is to tell the stories not seen in the daily paper or on the evening news. So it is not surprising to find that when these two basic needs are not met, blacks leave the industry — and once again the communities that need them most are not served.

Much the same can be said for broadcast journalism, although there has not been as much substantive research in this area. Moreover, in broadcasting the criteria for success

*“Black journalists are leaving the newspaper industry  
faster than they are entering it.”*

are much more subjective, thus making advancement for journalists of color much more difficult. Not only must one have the skills and credentials to do the job; he or she must also have the look and the delivery the news manager believes will win a greater share of the audience. While this may not be fair, it is the industry practice.

That being said, how can American mainstream media in the 21<sup>st</sup> century improve its delivery of services to the minority and low-income audience? The first thing to do is to stop talking diversity and start practicing diversity.

The 2000 Census shows people of color outnumber whites in many cities across America. Rather than placing ethnic communities in a box and singling them out for “special coverage,” why not include them in the daily digest of stories covered. To do so will require a different look in the daily story and editorial meetings. No longer can it be a group of white men and women sitting around a conference table. It must be a table of blacks, whites, Asians and Latinos.

Mainstream media must embrace the multicultural nature of 21<sup>st</sup> century America and celebrate that diversity. By embracing our differences, we expand our reach, and in an industry where at the end of the day what’s most important is often ratings and revenue or circulation and revenue, the answer seems pretty simple.

Know your product. Know your audience. Know your resources. Be willing to ease out of your comfort zone and make bold decisions for change. Many journalists laughed when Al Neuharth launched *USA Today*. Now it is one of the most widely read newspapers in America. Still others scoffed when Ted Turner launched CNN. We need more mavericks who are willing to break all the rules.

If we all would stop to remember why we got into journalism in the first place, I believe we all would be more accountable to the communities we claim to serve.

# It's back to basics: Know your market

**BY GEORGE BENGE**

Past Board Member, Native American Journalists Association  
News Executive with Gannett Co.

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The key to improved coverage and service to American Indian communities by mainstream media is basic: Apply the same standards of good journalism to native issues and communities that are more routinely applied to other valued peoples and institutions.

It should be simple and easily achievable — in a more perfect world. Unfortunately, there is nothing perfect about the relationship between American Indians and the mainstream media. That relationship mirrors the broader one that exists between America's native people and mainstream America itself.

It is a relationship that from the beginning was based on official policies of discrimination, exploitation and even extermination that are a matter of historic record. The conquest of Indian cultures was fueled by the presumption that native inhabitants were either sub-human savages or pagan earth people who were deserving of whatever fate might befall them.

The cultural residue of those perspectives and the harmful actions they inspired are what the mainstream media must first understand — and appreciate — in order to put themselves in a position from which they can begin applying the principles of good journalism to coverage of native peoples and issues.

The mainstream media should consider these suggestions:

- Understand that Indians are wary and suspicious of the media, for good reason. Lacking knowledge of the context of Indian culture and issues, the scant media coverage that has been provided too often has been based on negative, stereotype-driven perception of Indian culture, usually focused on wrongdoing and tribal conflict.
- Understand that there is great diversity among Indian peoples. There is no single, monolithic Indian culture. There are more than 500 officially recognized tribes in the United States, each possessing its own unique culture, tradition and principles of sovereignty. In addition, while many Indians live on tribal reservations, many others reside in urban areas far from any reservation. Among urban Indians, some are enrolled members of tribes who have been more or less assimilated into the mainstream culture. Many others have Indian ancestry but lack either the documentation or the “blood quantum” to meet their tribes’ enrollment criteria.
- Understand that the concept of news as pursued by the mainstream media is foreign to many Indian cultures. Some tribes’ native languages do not even have a word for news. Freedom of the Press — guaranteed by the First Amendment of the U.S.

*“Indians are wary and suspicious of the media, for good reason.”*

Constitution — is a foreign, elusive concept on most reservations. Attempts by most non-Indian mainstream reporters to apply the traditional practices of investigative journalism on reservations fail because: 1.) Records cannot be demanded and meetings cannot be opened unless the tribe allows it; and 2.) seeking interviews and information from tribal officials or citizens who don't know you and don't trust you will thwart all but the most culturally sensitive, personally credible and determined mainstream reporters.

■ There are experienced and highly skilled native journalists working in the mainstream media, but not nearly enough. There are many talented, dedicated and courageous Indian journalists working for tribal newspapers or newspapers that focus on native issues. These journalists — the founding core of the Native American Journalists Association — often work valiantly and sometimes thanklessly to report tribal news fairly and completely. Because the cultures in which they work differ so dramatically from those of mainstream journalists, the rules, the tactics and even the styles they employ are unique to those cultures. It should come as no surprise to leaders of mainstream-journalism training programs and institutions that superb tribal journalists sometimes face discrimination and even subtle ridicule when they participate in training programs alongside mainstream journalists who lack understanding of what they do and how they do it.

■ Understand that accurate history of American Indian life has not been written or taught in mainstream textbooks. The true history of what has happened to indigenous peoples since the arrival of Europeans has not been told in mainstream culture. As a result, much of what many non-native journalists know about Indian history and culture has been learned from limited history-book accounts, word of mouth, pop-culture mythology, movies, mass media and even the orthodoxy attached to sports mascots and nicknames. This widespread lack of cultural knowledge makes it difficult — at best — for mainstream reporters and editors to bring commensurate levels of substantive, relevant context to coverage of native communities and issues.

All of that having been stated, there are reasons for optimism, growth and improvement in the way mainstream media cover native communities. Those reasons begin and end with one simple guideline: Use the same basic standards of good journalism to cover Indian people and issues — starting with the most basic of basics. Know your market.

*(George Bengé is an enrolled member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma.)*

# Newspapers marginalize people of color

**BY VICTOR PANICHKUL**

Former President, Asian American Journalists Association (2001-2002)

Managing Editor, *Statesman Journal*, Salem, Ore.

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Newspapers have been facing not just an economic crisis due to reduced advertising, but also a growing crisis over our ability to connect with readers. This disconnect to a large extent has to do with our relevance, accuracy and credibility in our increasingly diverse communities.

The important first step to adequately serving all people in the communities where we operate is to recognize that this is not a benevolent or moral obligation, but a business imperative that can determine our survivability. Our pool of potential readers and advertisers is not the predominantly white, educated, upper-middle-class Americans of the past. It is the exploding population of Asian Americans and Hispanic Americans, who are leaving their pockets along the East and West coasts and spreading throughout the country.

If we expect our readers and potential readers to see us as an accurate and credible source of news about their communities and therefore buy our papers, we should make sure that we are covering the entire population. And the more diverse our newsrooms are, the more diverse our stories and coverage will be, and the more accurately we will reflect what's going on in our communities.

We have excelled at marginalizing and misportraying people of color, whether we'll acknowledge it or not. Our ethnic readers still to a great extent see positive coverage of their communities relegated to Cinco de Mayo, Kwanzaa and Chinese New Year, while the predominant coverage is in stories that depict crime or poverty.

When we look at our newsrooms, it's no wonder. Most of the reporters and editors in our newsrooms don't live in, eat in, or even come into daily contact with communities of color. As a matter of fact, most go out of their way to avoid them — rushing home to their Wonderbread, suburban, gated communities.

When people of color look at TV newscasts or read bylines in the paper, they don't see faces or names like theirs.

Our children are growing up in a much more multicultural society than that in which we involve ourselves. The music they listen to, the fashions they wear, the diversity of their friends — whether they're people of color or gay or lesbian. This is where our future is. If we hope to attract these readers, we've got to live in their world and be a part of it.

We should resist the temptation to create niche publications that attempt to cover minority communities or youths — and target them with niche advertising — and

*“[We] face the stereotype that we’re hard workers but that we don’t make good leaders because we’re not assertive enough.”*

instead mainstream coverage and bring these potential readers into our newspapers.

People of color should be mainstreamed into the paper so that they appear as sources on the variety of topics we cover and not just crime or poverty. We should also substantially increase our hiring of people of color, not just in newsrooms but in our advertising and circulation departments as well. Our potential advertisers are as diverse as our potential readers.

In newsrooms, the problem is not one of just recruiting Asian Pacific Americans and other people of color. The greater problem is retaining them. In 2001, for the first time since the American Society of Newspaper Editors has been surveying newsrooms, more journalists of color left the business than were hired.

More attention must be given to developing and promoting editors of color. It is not enough just to send journalists of color to professional-development seminars and programs and create a false sense of expectation when they return to their same jobs or beats. Managers must link participation in professional-development programs to realistic career plans for advancement.

The Asian American Journalists Association has been one of the pioneers among professional journalists associations in providing leadership training, through its Executive Leadership Program. Roughly half the participants have received promotions, increases in job responsibilities or higher-profile beats. When you look at the very top of newsrooms, however, you’d be hard pressed to find many Asian Americans. Only a handful are managing editors or higher.

The AAJA believes that much of this has to do with the continuing battle that our members face the stereotype that we’re hard workers but that we don’t make good leaders because we’re not assertive enough. The Executive Leadership Program strives not only to develop leadership among our members, but also to break down stereotypes by involving high-level editors and publishers in the program and exposing them to our rising talent.

By working more closely with other organizations such as ASNE, the Newspaper Association of America and the other minority journalists organizations, AAJA hopes to increase the pipeline of Asian Americans entering the journalism profession as well as address the growing problems of retention, diversity in newsrooms, and diversity in coverage.

# Majority, minorities are in a power struggle

**BY ASTRID GARCIA**

Past President, National Association of Minority Media Executives (2001-03)  
VP of Human Resources, Labor and Operations, *San Jose Mercury News*.

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The recent Readership Institute study, which looked at the culture in newspapers, bore no surprising messages. It is a sad fact, but we remain at heart a paternalistic, passive, defensive industry. It means we are not pro-active but reactive. We operate in silos. Each department cares primarily about itself. We operate as if the parts are more important than the whole.

I talk about this problem because I believe there is no avoiding it and because it has an impact on the issue of diversity and ultimately on how we cover news.

I grew up in Puerto Rico, where I was part of the majority. It was a revelation to me when I came to the United States and learned I was a minority. It was even more surprising when I learned what that meant: that you were somehow inferior, that you were where you were not because of your intelligence or achievements or any innate rights, but rather because other people “let you,” were being kind to you, and wanted to be inclusive.

Hidden in this message is the threat: You better keep your place, act grateful, behave. (I was somewhat amused and thought it was poetic justice because in Caguas we definitely discriminated against “Americans.”) This attitude or view of diversity persists here in the United States today, even in the most well-intentioned places. The message to minorities is clear: 1.) This is not yours, it’s ours 2.) Act appropriately or this will be taken away. Acting appropriately means: act grateful, don’t make any waves.

While I am sure mine is not a universal experience (over the years I’ve learned there is no such thing), I know these attitudes and issues are recognized and expressed to a larger or lesser degree by a number of people.

I believe the prevailing attitudes profoundly affect the way we cover news. There is a pervasive arrogance that prevents us from really delivering what people want and need. We deliver what we think people should want and what we think people really need. Very paternalistic indeed.

Part of the problem is that there is a kernel of truth here. We do need to report the news we believe is important. A free press is the cornerstone of our society. While I confess I don’t read every word in our newspapers or listen to the news every day on TV, I sleep better at night knowing that the people who cover the news care passionately about the mission and struggle to be accurate and fair. But sometimes we use this freedom as an excuse to shape the news. And the shape of it is not very diverse.

So, what to do? I don’t profess to have any easy solutions because ultimately it’s a

*“There is a pervasive arrogance that prevents us from really delivering what people want and need.”*

power struggle between the majority and minorities, as well as among departments in a newspaper. Centuries of human history will tell you that power is not ceded without a struggle.

I believe we need dialogue. I believe we need to say these terrible things to one another, we need to fight about them, we need to reach compromise.

We can't have the newsroom going one way and circulation another. They need to come to the table as partners and talk about what they need to do to sell more newspapers.

The walls that exist between advertising and the newsroom need to come down without compromising the news. I think there is much more room here than the newsroom would want to concede. And advertising needs to know and understand what they are selling: They need to know the columnists, they need to know the editorial policy, they need to read the newspaper. Every advertising department should have a training program, explaining the newspaper in detail to advertising reps.

Newspapers need to hire all kinds of people. And have all kinds of people in control as managers. It is only then that diversity will permeate the newspaper.

Diversity can't be mandated. Diversity is messy. The power struggles that it will create will not be pretty. There is and will continue to be conflict.

I have only to point to the '50s and '60s in this country and the civil rights movement. It wasn't pretty then and it won't be pretty now.

But ultimately, that is the greatness of this country. Ultimately, that is what we are trying to preserve, what the concept of a free press is all about.

Bring it on.

# Building new bridges takes time, effort

**BY JACKIE GREENE**

Past President, UNITY: Journalists of Color, Inc. (2001-02)

Director of Technology Planning, *USA Today*

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Since the urban riots of the 1960s, the mainstream media have searched for ways to achieve higher levels of diversity in newsrooms and in news coverage. Unfortunately, many of the industry shortcomings that led the 1968 Kerner Report to conclude that “the media report and write from the standpoint of a white man’s world” still exist today.

Despite demographic changes that have increased the number of minorities in many areas of the country, news coverage largely ignores major issues and trends in those communities. In far too many instances, minorities are still stereotyped, appearing primarily in stories about drugs, violence and poverty. When a story needs an expert opinion or the voice of a concerned citizen — from parents to property owners—journalists usually seek out whites.

In a study on race and credibility, the American Society of Newspaper Editors found that readers do not trust journalists and are convinced that journalists do not respect or understand their communities. And response from minority readers was even more distrustful. Far too many readers consider the news biased and incomplete.

The problem has been studied repeatedly. By now, newspapers should understand that diversity can play a significant role in their survival. For newspapers to remain relevant to the communities they claim to serve, they can no longer pretend to provide fair and balanced coverage. In some instances, journalists know so little about minority communities that they have trouble understanding why readers complain that the news coverage is, at best, superficial.

For the past 15 years, the country’s black, Hispanic, Asian and Native American journalists have tried to convince the industry that diversity is good for business, a way to maintain credibility, a way to gain a competitive edge. The solution involves making a major commitment to closing the gaps in coverage and to hiring and retaining minority journalists, advocates for having news coverage reflect a variety of cultures and viewpoints.

For the past two decades, industry leaders have tried primarily moral persuasion to reach the goals set by diversity initiatives. But the newsroom culture has resisted change. Decision-makers seem to fear that any deviation from traditional approaches will cost them critical time and resources. In the daily news business, efficiency is associated with meeting daily deadlines and living within financial limitations.

But building new bridges to eliminate credibility gaps in minority communities requires an expenditure of time and effort. Journalists need to spend time in the communities. Newspaper managers must find ways to convince people that their views

*“The decision makers need to develop the expertise for covering cultures that newspapers once considered insignificant.”*

matter. It is an investment the industry must make.

In the area of hiring and training journalists of color, there has been some progress. But the industry has failed to achieve its major goal — having the percentage of minorities working in newsrooms equal the percentage of minorities in the nation’s population.

One reason for the failure is the industry’s inability to find effective ways to retain journalists of color. For more than a decade, UNITY: Journalists of Color, an alliance of the minority journalism associations, has urged newspaper executives to do more to retain minority journalists, who continue to leave the industry at a much higher rate than whites. They cite the lack of professional challenges and limited opportunities for advancement as the chief reasons for leaving the profession.

The 2002 ASNE survey showed that the percent of minority journalists working at daily newspapers only rose about half of one percent, to 12.07 percent. The number of newspapers with no minorities rose to 431 papers, or 45 percent of those surveyed.

Still, there is reason for optimism.

Over the past five years, the industry has conducted the most intensive studies ever done of newspaper readership and retention of journalists of color. It is now apparent that making strides in the area of diversity requires both a collective effort and individual strategies.

The parity goal could be reached long before the 2025 target date set by the nation’s newspaper editors if there is a coordinated effort that includes ASNE, UNITY, the Associated Press Managing Editors and Newspaper Association of America, and key supporters, including the American Press, Poynter and Maynard institutes.

Media executives have shown a new interest in leveraging information from the studies to create meaningful and achievable goals. It appears that key leaders understand the connection between retaining veteran journalists of color and news coverage that reflects diverse communities.

Newspapers also must make the investment to provide better training for all newsroom managers. The decision makers need to develop the expertise for covering cultures that newspapers once considered insignificant. And to retain journalists of color, we must strive to create a newsroom environment that places more of them in decision-making positions and acknowledges that the diversity of ideas, opinions and voices offered by journalists of color are not only wanted but also highly valued.

If we can do these things, we will improve news coverage and meet diversity goals that have seemed out of reach for decades. In the end, newspapers and the communities they serve will reap enormous benefits.

# Understanding Opportunities in the Hispanic Market

*How demographic research can inform business decisions*

BY HAZEL REINHARDT

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Population projections for 2010 show Hispanics will have taken a commanding lead as the largest minority group in the United States, growing to 47 million.

This population skews young, with a median age of 25.9. More than one-third are under the age of 18. Hispanics already represent 20 percent, or one in five, of all teenagers and will be an important segment of the teen and young adult population for years to come.

Obviously, this is a significant market for media companies.

Demographic studies provide strong indicators about how media companies should go after this burgeoning Hispanic market, and whether they should do it with print or broadcast, in English or in Spanish.

## **A few headlines**

What companies need to understand about the Hispanic market:

- It is not monolithic.
- There are major differences between foreign-born and native-born Hispanics.
- Households are larger than average, with 25 percent having five or more members.
- The average education level is low for immigrants, but rises with successive generations born in the United States.
- Language spoken at home is not as telling as language-dominance.
- Hispanics are more likely to live in the West and South than in the Northeast or Midwest, with 58 percent in California, Texas and Florida.
- Hispanics have distinctive attitudes and values.

## **Buying power**

Hispanic purchasing power, at \$580 billion in 2002, will likely top \$1 trillion by 2008,

*Native-born status is a powerful delineator of income, language use, social attitudes and values.*

outpacing African American spending power, according to the Selig Center for Economic Growth at the University of Georgia. Hispanics spend a higher percent of their income than other groups on food, telecom, furniture, children's apparel, men's and boys' apparel, footwear and autos/trucks. Many of these expenditures reflect the larger family size and high proportion of youth.

The percent of Hispanics earning more than \$50,000 is expected to increase 50 percent between 2000 and 2005, according to the Magazine Publishers of America's "Hispanic/Latino Market Profile."

Native-born status is a powerful delineator of income, language use, social attitudes and values. Hispanic adults born in the United States are more likely to graduate from high school and much more likely than foreign-born Hispanics to attend college, according to the 2002 National Survey of Latinos by the Pew Hispanic Center, which studied 2,929 Hispanic adults. They also are more than twice as likely to have white-collar jobs; and 27 percent earn more than \$50,000 a year, compared with 11 percent for the foreign-born. Native-born Hispanics also are more likely (52 percent) to own their homes, compared with 34 percent for foreign-born.

### **Where they come from**

By far the largest number of Hispanics in the United States are of Mexican heritage, about two-thirds. Puerto Ricans are a distant second, at about 9 percent, followed by Cubans at nearly 4 percent. Central and South Americans from a wide variety of countries combine to make up more than 14 percent.

Ties to their home country seem to be more important than a pan-ethnic identity, the Pew study found. Some 85 percent said Hispanics from different countries have separate and distinct cultures. And while 43 percent said they think Hispanics from different countries are working together to achieve common political goals, 49 percent said they are not.

Given the choice of two terms, Texas Hispanics prefer the word "Hispanic" while those in California and on the East Coast have no preference or lean slightly toward the term "Latino," the study found. We will use the two interchangeably here.

### **Media use**

In 2001, 37 percent of adult Hispanics read a daily newspaper at least once in an average week, while 44 percent read a Sunday paper, according to Scarborough Research.

*By the third generation, more than three-quarters of Hispanics are English-dominant and the rest are bilingual.*

This is about 20 percentage points less than the 57 percent of non-Hispanic whites who read a daily paper and 66 percent who read on Sunday.

At the same time, 95 percent of those age 12 and over listen to the radio every day, a similar percentage to non-Hispanic whites, according to Arbitron (2001).

Comfort with the English language — both spoken and written — is the key factor in whether Hispanics use print or broadcast media and whether they will use English- or Spanish-language media.

Language spoken at home is not a good predictor of the language of radio or television use, however. A better predictor is which language is dominant.

The Pew study found that 25 percent of the adults they surveyed were English-dominant, 28 percent bilingual and 47 percent Spanish-dominant.

Native-born Hispanic adults are 96 percent English-dominant or bilingual, while only 28 percent of foreign-born fall in those two categories, according to Pew.

The study also showed that children immigrating before the age of 10 are more like a native-born person in language preference. Generational differences are compelling:

- Among immigrants, 72 percent prefer Spanish. So Spanish-language media depend heavily on continuing immigration.
- Of the second generation (born in the U.S. of immigrant parents), only 7 percent are Spanish-dominant.
- By the third generation, more than three-quarters of Hispanics are English-dominant and the rest are bilingual.

**PRIMARY LANGUAGE FOR HISPANIC ADULTS**

<b>Can carry on a conversation in</b>	<b>Spanish</b>	<b>English</b>
Very well	74%	51%
Pretty well	12%	9%
Just a little	10%	29%
Not at all	4%	11%
<b>Can read a newspaper or book in</b>		
Very well	49%	44%
Pretty well	25%	14%
Just a little	16%	27%
Not at all	10%	15%

Source: Pew Study

Language preference also varies by country of origin, with Mexicans and Puerto Ricans most likely to be English-dominant and Central Americans most likely to be Spanish-dominant. Mexicans and Puerto Ricans are also most likely to be native-born.

### **Views differ by race and ethnicity**

Latinos hold some values and opinions that differ from white non-Hispanics and African Americans.

In the Pew study, Latinos were less likely than whites or African Americans to say that people can be more successful in the American workplace if they are willing to work long hours at the expense of their family life.

Latinos were most likely among the groups to say it is acceptable to be emotional in public.

On social issues like divorce, homosexuality and abortion, there were substantial differences by race/ethnicity. Divorce was least acceptable to Latinos. Homosexuality was least acceptable to African Americans and most acceptable to whites, with Latinos midway in between. Abortion was more acceptable to whites than to either Latinos or blacks.

On all of these social issues, native-born Latinos were closer to the white non-Hispanic view than were the foreign-born, by percentage points that were in the double-digits.

Latinos were far more likely than whites or blacks to say it is best for children to live in their parents' home until they get married. They also were most likely to say relatives are more important than friends. Latinos and blacks were more likely than whites to say elderly parents should live with their adult children.

Latinos were most willing to pay higher taxes to support government services. Latinos were also most likely to say government can do a better job providing services than religious or community organizations. Here there was a big difference between foreign- and native-born, with the former more trusting in government.

### **Assimilation**

Assimilation and immigration are taking place side-by-side in Hispanic communities, even within families.

“The children and grandchildren of Latino immigrants move up the economic and educational ladder in the United States as quickly as generations of European immigrants did,” says James Smith in the *American Economic Review*, May 2003.

When asked to self-identify, 53 percent of Hispanics said they describe themselves as “American” sometimes. Among native-born, 90 percent say they use the term “American” sometimes.

*Language spoken at home is not the most reliable way to measure language dominance. Generation is.*

## **Summing up**

Newspaper companies looking at how best to reach a growing Hispanic market should consider first and foremost whether their local population is mostly immigrant or mostly second, third and later generations — and what that population is likely be in the future. While immigrants tend to be Spanish-dominant and very attuned to values and interests of their home country, wanting one kind of content, later generations are increasingly English-speaking and assimilated into American society and may want very different content.

For a market with a large immigrant population that is likely to continue to attract immigrants, a Spanish-language publication makes sense. But where there are fewer recent immigrants and most Hispanics are English-speaking or bilingual, a better long-range strategy is to make the main newspaper more appealing to Hispanics.

Language spoken at home is not the most reliable way to measure language dominance. Generation is. There are markets, such as Laredo, Texas, where the population is more than 90 percent Hispanic, where people speak Spanish at home, but where the English-language newspaper has high penetration.

The issue here is not just language, but also content. With each new generation, Hispanics become more “American.” Yet they still want to see themselves in the newspaper and see issues approached from their point of view.

Newspapers have been slow to change coverage, even in many large Hispanic markets. The importance of the Hispanic segment wasn’t widely recognized until the mid-to late-’90s. To serve this segment of readers requires more journalists steeped in the Hispanic culture. People not familiar with the culture can cover a topic without understanding the prism through which Hispanics view the world.

Some Spanish-language papers provide a vehicle for targeting Hispanic markets. Yet often the advertisers don’t understand the generational differences in the Hispanic population. Newspapers should share their research data with advertisers so they, too, understand how to market successfully to various niches.

# About the author



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Best Practices and Profiles of Success were written by Cynthia Linton.

Linton is publications editor of the Media Management Center and teaches the Media Management Project and journalism methods to graduate students at the Medill School of Journalism. With a longtime interest in racial and ethnic diversity, she is editor of *The Ethnic Handbook: A Guide to the Cultures and Traditions of Chicago's Diverse Communities* and *The Ultimate Multi-ethnic Resource*, both for the Illinois Ethnic Coalition. At Northwestern, she has conducted research projects on diversity and the media: *Ethnic Leaders Grade the Chicago Tribune and Sun-Times*; *Immigration and Immigrants — How They Are Portrayed in the Chicago Press* (with Limor Peer); and *African American and Latino views on Local Chicago TV News* (with Bob LeBailly). She is former executive editor of the Lerner Newspapers in Chicago.

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# About the contributor



**HAZEL R. REINHARDT**

Understanding Opportunities in the Hispanic Market was contributed by Hazel Reinhardt.

Reinhardt heads the Media Management Center's market research team and teaches in the Center's executive programs. She also consults with media companies worldwide and conducts demographic analyses for numerous businesses and organizations. She previously was vice president of market development for Cowles Media Company and director of research for the *Star-Tribune* in Minneapolis. Reinhardt has a Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin. Earlier in her career she was a demographic consultant for the state of Wisconsin and then was Minnesota's state demographer.

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