



FACT SHEET

WHO WE ARE: The Minorities in Broadcasting Training Program is a 501(c)3 organization formed in 1993 to provide training opportunities to minority college graduates in radio and TV news reporting and news management.

We offer opportunities to those individuals who have encountered substantial difficulty in gaining access to broadcast careers.

The goal of the program is the development of writing, editing, producing and reporting skills. Each trainee will complete the program with a thorough understanding of all aspects of television and/or radio news broadcasting or production. They will then qualify for entry-level positions in small-medium size markets.

Need for Program/Issues To Be Addressed

According to the Public Research Institute's report entitled, "What Color is the News," only 2% of most broadcast newsroom managers are ethnic minorities. These newsroom managers are people "who make the judgements with respect to news coverage, to overall approaches to assignments and to hiring," according to David Bartlett, former president of the Radio and Television News Directors Association.

Target Population and How Will They Benefit

Making contacts and networking is critical to the success of the film and broadcast professional. If qualified applicants are given the chance to work for a short period of time in the industry, they are likely to make contacts and develop mentors who can help advance their careers in the long run. This can be an attractive arrangement to stations as long as it involves *little cost* to them.

Statement of Organization's Goals and Objectives

MIBTP's places up to ten trainees per year into training positions within the film and broadcast industry. MIBTP trainees must be four-year college graduates and must have been out of school for two years or more.

During that time they must document their extensive job seeking efforts, but still show how they have not been able to secure employment within the industry despite demonstrated talent, dedication and hard work.

Most potential trainees fall in the 25-40-age bracket. These trainees will be given the opportunity to break into the field through a nine-twelve month training program at a radio or television station.

Collaborating Organizations:

National Association of Broadcasting (NAB)

Radio & Television News Directors' Association (RTNDA)

Supporters:

Sam Donaldson (ABC), Cokie Roberts (ABC), Dan Rather (CBS), Montel Williams, Congresswoman Diane Watson, Jane Pauley, (NBC), George Lucas, James Garner, Chas. Johnson, Tom Selleck, Paul Moyer (NBC), Colleen Williams, (NBC), ABC Foundation, American Express, etc.

INTERNSHIPS / TRAINING

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a B.A. and experience on nonlinear digital editing equipment.

Contact: www.ace-filmeditors.org/newace/abt_intern.html

ASSISTANT DIRECTORS TRAINING PROGRAM

Details: The program, sponsored by the Directors Guild of America and the Alliance of Motion Picture & Television Producers, trains second assistant directors. With 400 days of training, the program provides an inside look at the organization and logistics of motion picture and TV production. Upon completion, trainee names are placed in the Southern California Area Qualification List, making them eligible for employment as second assistant directors.

Contact: www.trainingplan.org

NEW YORK DGA ASSISTANT DIRECTOR TRAINING PROGRAM

Details: A two-year program that provides opportunities for a limited number of individuals to become assistant directors in film, television and commercials.

The program provides 350 days of on-the-job training, combined with seminars and special assignments. Trainees work on a variety of productions shot primarily in the New York area. After completion, trainees are eligible to join the guild as second assistant directors.

Contact: www.dgatrainingprogram.org

AGENCY TRAINING PROGRAMS

WILLIAM MORRIS AGENCY TRAINING PROGRAM

Details: Long-established training program for the development of agents at William Morris. Trainees go through positions in the mailroom, floater assistant and full-time assistant.

Contact: www.wma.com

NONPROFIT ORG TRAINING PROGRAMS BROADCAST TRAINING PROGRAM/MIBTP

Details: Provides training opportunities to minority college graduates in radio/TV news reporting and news management and TV/film production. Selected applicants are placed in radio and television stations across the country as trainees. Training includes the development of writing, editing, producing and reporting skills. Org helps find graduates permanent employment within the broadcast industry.

Contact: www.thebroadcasters.com

INDEPENDENT FEATURE PROJECT LOS ANGELES

Project: IFP East

Details: IFP/Los Angeles Project involve is a mentorship, training, screening, and job placement program designed to promote cultural diversity in the film industry. Through one-on-one mentorships and filmmaking workshops, chosen filmmakers gain practical experience, hone their craft, and make valuable contacts. IFP/New Yorks Project involve is a program for filmmakers from cultural, racial and ethnic minorities, designed to foster mentorship and industry placement opportunities for mid-career filmmakers. In-

cluded in the program are a series of networking workshops with industry professionals on topics ranging from fundraising to distribution that promote new industry relationships for narrative and documentary filmmakers. Honorees meet writers, producers, directors, entertainment attorneys, cast members, talent agents, distribution companies, grant managers, sales agents, sound designers and composers. They get feedback and suggestions on their own projects and strategies for moving forward.

Contact: For applications go to www.ifp.org

STEP UP WOMEN'S NETWORK PROFESSIONAL MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Details: Matches prospective mentees with professionals in the same field. Members in good standing who have recruited 15 members or held a position as a community leader or coordinator and how have participated in four community service events are eligible mentees.

Contact: www.stepupwomensnetwork.com

TR PR ASSIST

Details: Designate a career in the industry. Program classroom, 12 working on audio music video program provides financial counseling, support for career advancement.

Contact: www.wmhc.com

WM HC

Details: A coalition of individuals who are committed to give back in the entertainment industry. Program provides financial counseling, support for career advancement.

Contact: www.wmhc.com

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Getting a Foot in the Newsroom Door

by Tony P. Martínez and Alison P. Martínez



The percentage of minorities in the nation's population has increased from 24.3 percent in 1990 to an estimated 33.3 percent in 2004, according to census figures.

Meanwhile, minority representation in the television news work force has been stuck around the 20 percent mark ever since 1990, according to research by Robert Papper, professor of telecommunications at Ball State University in Muncie, Ind.

Stations serving small markets, which is where recent graduates of broadcast journalism programs have the best chance to get a start, are the least likely to employ minority staff, Papper finds. Two out of three small TV newsrooms (those with up to 10 employees) have no minority staff at all.

"No one talks about it, and I've never followed the logic of it, but some managers are concerned that if they once hire a minority, they may have created a minority slot, and they are always going to have to hire a minority for that slot," Papper explains. The quota concept makes it hard for people of color to get a foot in the door.

Training for Minorities in Broadcasting

There's a young woman in Century City, Calif., who doesn't let quotas stop her. Patrice Williams, founder and CEO of the Minorities in Broadcasting Training Program (MBTP) is opening newsroom doors to minorities, one jobseeker at a time. In a dozen years, her shoestring nonprofit organization has placed approximately 200 people of color in

their first radio or TV newsroom jobs.

"I started MBTP after I had difficulty getting into the news business myself," Williams recalls.



Patrice Williams, founder and CEO, Minorities in Broadcasting Training Program (MBTP)

She had the education, the internship, the influential mentor, even participation in a high-profile placement program. "Employers told me, 'You're interesting, but you need at least a year's experience, so call us back once you've got that year.' But no one wanted to give me that year.

"I was talking to friends who were going

through the same thing. So that's why I decided to start the program. I'd look for people with the same issues as me, with outstanding backgrounds, but no one would give them their first break. I thought I'd start the nonprofit program and place myself and a few other people the first year. I was pretty naive. I didn't realize how much work it is to run a charity. So I ended up placing other people that year, and I've been helping people ever since."

MBTP serves graduates of journalism and broadcasting programs who have been seeking work for two years or more without success. "We get about 300 applications a year," Williams estimates. "Our application is pretty extensive, so anyone who even completes it is showing that they really want to break into the field, and they know how hard it is."

About 20 hopefuls are interviewed, and about half of those are placed as trainees. The selection depends on how each applicant fits the needs of the stations that are participating in the program that year.

"The stations have all agreed to take whomever we send them," Williams explains, "and pay them the going rate, usually about \$700 or \$750

an hour, for a traineeship of 9 months to a year. We provide a list of things the trainee needs to learn, but we don't tell them how to do it, just that the person needs to learn these skills by the end of the training.

"The trainee and the supervisor each fill out a monthly progress report on how they

think they're doing," Williams continues. "Sometimes there's a discrepancy, and we address those issues. Our contract states that if the station is not happy with the trainee and they've tried to correct any issues, the trainee can be replaced with another one, but that's never happened in 12 years.

"Stations stick with us year after year because of the quality of people we're sending them," Williams observes. "They see this as a way to put their money where their mouth is in creating a diverse work force, and at the same time get highly qualified applicants without paying top dollar."

KWES-TV

First to sign up with MBTP was KWES-TV in Midland, Texas. The NBC-Telemundo affiliate has been participating in the program ever since.

"The folks we have hired through this program have all come in with a desire to work," says Jay Hendricks, KWES-TV news director. "They know how to shoot a camera, how to edit, how to write, maybe they've done a live report or anchored a newscast at college. They just have not been able to get that first job.

"For us, that gives us a go-getter. We put them

right to work.

"Our latest trainee is still working with us – a young lady by the name of Ty Fernandes. Ty has become our bureau reporter for Big Spring, a little community about 45 minutes from Midland. She's from New York and has a strong New York accent, but West Texas folks have just accepted her like she's one of their own. They all know her by name. When we took our whole crew over to Big Spring for our annual 'Under West Texas Skies' live broadcast, the people were lined up to see Ty, not us. That made us feel good, the way the community has embraced Ty."

Fernandes prepares and presents two minutes of Big Spring news for the nightly 6:00 and 10:00 newscasts. She also covers assignments. "She has been a huge asset to us," Hendricks affirms. "We know that if we send her out on a story, she's going to come back with what she was sent out to get plus more. We've offered her a contract to stay.

"In most cases, we have hired the MBTP trainees that we have had work for us," the news director continues, "and then several have moved on to larger markets – San Antonio, Waco, Houston, New York City."

Hendricks grew up in nearby Monahans, Texas, listening to the same station where he now leads the news team. From the perspective of his 21 years' experience, colleges and universities are doing better now than in the past in preparing students for careers in the field.

"Instructors have begun to see the industry as it is," Hendricks observes, and to prepare students for ever-changing developments in

cable and Internet communication.

It's also valuable that colleges are arranging internships, so students can get real-world experience.

"I tell young people, if you're in college getting your degree, work an internship," Hendricks emphasizes. "When you come out of college with your sheepskin, you have the same basic background as someone else, and you're ready to work. But if that someone else took the initiative to work an internship or maybe at a cable station just for the experience, chances are we're going to hire that person who already has that experience.

"Another thing I'd like folks to think about is, I don't want to discourage them from being anchors, but there are other jobs within television that are just as challenging – producer, photographer – all important parts of the newscast that we need on a regular basis. When we recruit for an on-air position – sports, weather, whatever, we're typically going to get 100 to 150 tapes. But a good producer is hard to find.

"Everyone wants to be on the air, and I understand that; that's where the glory is," the news director concludes. "But television requires a lot of people behind the scenes. I hope young people will consider these off-cam-



Ty Fernandes, a trainee at KWES



Jay Hendricks, KWES-TV news director

era careers as offering challenges and work they can take pride in, and then they will find their niche within the industry.”

Opening Opportunities

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) projects below-average job growth in the radio-TV industry. BLS counts approximately 450 institutions of higher education offering programs in journalism and mass communications, including radio and television broadcasting. Graduates compete fiercely for jobs that don't pay a living wage. Would we be better off with not so many college programs?

Absolutely not, Williams exclaims. There will always be more wannabees than jobs, she believes. Colleges are providing access to journalistic training, and that's a good thing.

“We ask everyone who is selected for a traineeship if they are financially prepared to take it on,” Williams explains. “Do they have savings or family support? Can they take a second job? We encourage them to get a roommate. There's usually someone at the station that's looking for a roommate. We let them know it's going to be a sacrifice, but you've got to pay your dues.”

Ball State's Paper points out that if students give up hope of entering the field, institutions will redesign or close down programs, but unless and until that happens, “I see no need to reduce the number of programs.”

Some of those who have paid their dues and made it to the top reach back to help the new generation coming along, supporting MBTP with time and energy as well as money. The long roll of supporters includes such household names as Connie Chung, James Garner, Bryant Gumbel, Jane Pauley, Dan Rather, and Montel Williams. Among the media organizations making donations are ABC, CBS, NBC, Paramount, Sony, Universal, and Warner Brothers.

ABC's Sam Donaldson and Cokie Roberts, who are major donors to the program, joined Fox 11's Rick García as co-chairs of the 10th anniversary

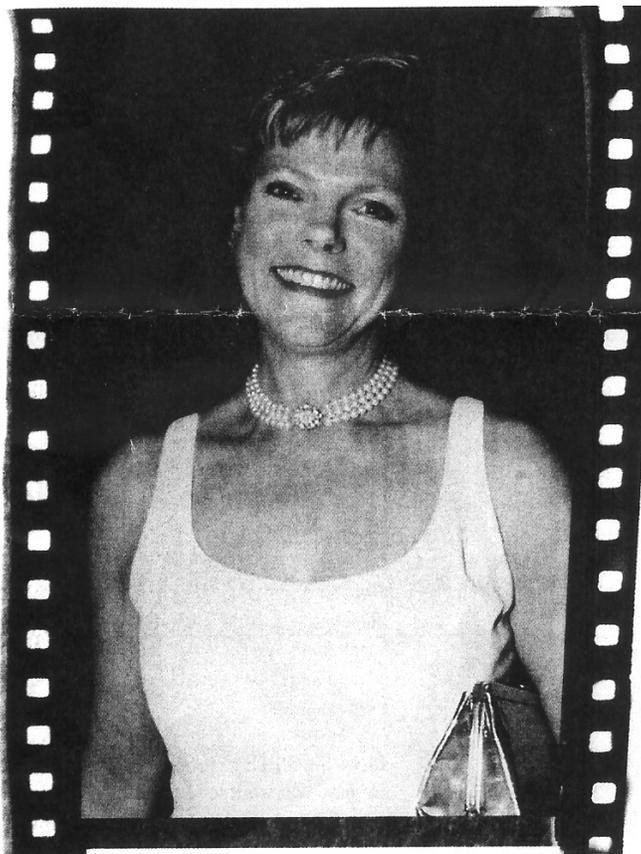
“Striving for Excellence” awards banquet. Honorees at that event included Julie Chen, Ralph Farquhar, Andrés Cantor, and Mitsy Wilson, senior vice president for diversity at Fox Entertainment Group, as well as the sitcom *Scrubs*.

step up and providing opportunities for them.”

Is MBTP making a difference in the news that people see and hear? Williams thinks so. “The whole reason for starting MBTP was to diversify the newsroom and to put a different slant on the way stories are created and presented. We've tried to instill that in our trainees. And from the news stories we've seen, when our trainees send us tapes saying, ‘This is what I've done,’ it looks as if they've kept that message in mind.”

Educators can help MBTP by telling their friends in the industry about the program. “We're always looking for radio and television stations anywhere in the United States that may be interested in trainees,” Williams says. “Right now I have two that speak Spanish fluently, so we can place them at either a Spanish or English-language station. The most important thing is just getting the word out and letting more stations know about MBTP.”

Last of all comes the hard question. After all these years, hasn't the need for an antidiscrimination program begun to fade away? Williams answers straight from experience: “I wouldn't still be doing this if I didn't know it was still needed.”



Cokie Roberts, ABC, major donor to MBTP

This year, instead of an awards banquet honoring industry leaders, MBTP sponsored the first annual Century City Film Festival, screening new, independent films. More than 500 aspiring filmmakers submitted their work. The 65 best films were chosen for a moveable feast of cinema appreciation and critique, spread over five Hollywood-area screens and four days at the end of October.

The festival is one more way to open one more branch of mass media to the new and diverse voices clamoring to be heard. The festival raises funds for MBTP, while at the same time, as Williams explains, “the festival focuses on filmmakers and screen writers, giving them a

Tony and Alison Martínez are writers based in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Tony was an educator; Alison, a research librarian.

