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RADIO INK

VOL. XXXV, NO. 3 3-2-2020 WWW.RADIOINK.COM

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TO
GETTING
A YES

ROY'S
FRIEND
THE
GAMBLER

DEAR
RADIO
CEOS

MORNING SHOW

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IN THE ISSUE

MARCH 2, 2020 | VOLUME XXXV, NO. 3



DEDE MCGUIRE, HOST OF DEDE IN THE MORNING

08 PUBLISHER'S BEAT

By EVP/Publisher
Deborah Parenti
Broadening The Playing
Field

09 WIZARD OF ADS

By Roy Williams
My Friend, The Gambler

10 MANAGEMENT

By James Bahm
Onboarding Or Getting
Them On Board?

11 SALES MANAGEMENT

By Lisa Thal
Six Steps To Getting A Yes!

12 COVER STORY

By Editor-In-Chief
Ed Ryan
Trailblazer
DeDe McGuire

22 ISSUES

By Sherman Kizart
An Open Letter To Radio
CEOs

23 2020 FUTURE AFRICAN AMERICAN LEADERS IN RADIO

38 BLAST FROM THE PAST

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OUR MISSION

Radio Ink's role is passionately to empower radio management to be more successful by providing fresh, actionable, reality-based ideas, inspiration, and education in a quick, easy-to-read, positive, pro-radio environment.

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A portrait of Mariah Carey with long, wavy blonde hair, wearing a black top and multiple diamond bracelets. She is holding a vintage silver microphone to her mouth. The background is a dark, solid color.

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TOGETHER.**

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WELCOME TO THE ASCAP FAMILY

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Emilio Estefan
Distinguished
Leadership Recipient



Gordon Borrell
Is Advertising
Dead?



Matt Sunshine
Getting to
Decision-Makers



Gordon Smith
NAB and Hispanic
Leaders Meet Up



Carlos Santiago
AIMM: Reframing
Marketing in the 21st
Century

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2020 HISPANIC RADIO CONFERENCE AGENDA

25-MARCH

8:00-Noon Exhibit set-up

12:30-2:00 Registration (Exhibit Area)

2:10-2:30 **Opening Video**
Opening Remarks: Deborah Parenti, Publisher, Radio Ink
Special Guest Master of Ceremonies: Edgar "Shoboy" Sotelo, Personality/Host/Content Creator

2:30-3:10 **La publicidad está muerta. ¡Viva la publicidad!**
Gordon Borrell, CEO, Borrell Associates

3:10-3:50 **2020 Election: What's at Stake for Hispanics and Hispanic Radio**
The potential for a windfall due to political advertising this year could not be greater. What's at stake for Hispanic radio and for its listeners, and its bottom line?
Moderator: Roger Rafson, SVP, Political/Issue Advocacy & Strategic Alliances, Gen Media Partners
Jason Bailey, Founder/President, Sun Broadcast Group
Tucker Flood, President, Eastman Radio
Mark Fratrik, Ph.D., SVP/Chief Economist, BIA/Kelsey
Patrick Quinn, CEO/Founder, PQ Media

3:50-4:35 **Live and On the Air: What's Hot, What's on the Way, and Where We Draw the Line**
What's the newest format on the horizon for Hispanic radio? Which formats are delivering the most revenues, and why? And how do you manage personalities in an age of hypersensitivities and "PC," whether on air or in a social post.
Moderator: Bob Perry, International Radio Programming Consultant
Harold Austin, Partner, Global Media Research & Consulting Partners
Haz Montana, VP/Content, Univision/Los Angeles
Jesus Salas, EVP/Programming and Multi-Platform Coordinator, Spanish Broadcasting System
Manuel Fernandez Téllez, Director of Programming & Production, Grupo ACIR Mexico

4:35-5:20 **Hispanic Radio Executive Leadership Roundtable**
Where do Hispanic group leaders see Hispanic radio platforms growing, expanding, and prime for the biggest revenue opportunities?
Moderator: Gordon Smith, President/CEO, National Association of Broadcasters
Jesus Lara, President, Univision Radio
Otto Padron, President/CEO, Meruelo Media
Albert Rodriguez, COO, Spanish Broadcasting System

5:20-6:00 **"Medallas de Cortez" Awards Presentation** - sponsored by vcreative 
Distinguished Leadership Award Presentation: Emilio Estefan
Special musical tribute by 2X Grammy-nominated BMI Latin artist Elsten Torres, 

6:00-7:30 **Cocktail Reception**
sponsored by Spanish Broadcasting System,  Nielsen, Univision/Uforia 
 

26-MARCH

7:45-8:30 **Continental Breakfast**
sponsored by Entravision 

8:30-9:15 **Decision Makers — The Secret to Securing Appointments**
Matt Sunshine, Managing Partner, Center for Sales Strategy and LeadG2

9:15-10:00 **Washington Update on Dereg & Other Issues: Impact on Hispanic Radio**
With the future of further ownership deregulation now in doubt, what's the future for radio

groups struggling in markets saturated not only with traditional competitors, but a slate of digital ones as well? And what about other issues that are of special concern to Hispanic and minority broadcasters, like foreign ownership and tax certificates?

Moderator: Frank Montero, Co-managing Partner, Fletcher, Heald & Hildreth
David Honig, President Emeritus & Senior Advisor, Multicultural Media, Telecom and Internet Council
Tomas Martinez, Owner/CEO, Solmart Media
C. Patrick Roberts, President/CEO, Florida Association of Broadcasters
Alexander Sanjenis, Media Advisor/Office of Chairman Pai, FCC

10:00-10:20 **Break**
sponsored by Triton Digital 

10:20-11:00 **Growing Sales: Doing More With What You Have**
Our panel of outside sales gurus will present easy-to-execute sales ideas that can translate into more revenue for your station tomorrow.
Moderator: Angelica (Angie) Balderas, SVP/Integrated Marketing Solutions, Entravision Communications/Sacramento
Yaman Coskun, CEO /CCO, Yamanair Creative
Pamela Gressman, Sr. Account Supervisor, Site Impact
Gio Punzo, Co-founder/CEO, Streann Media

11:00-11:45 **Leveling the Playing Field**
The browning of America is real. The increasing Hispanic affluence, education, acculturation, and spending are here. Why aren't ad budgets reflective of this? This panel of advertisers, agency buyers and planners, station sales executives will explore the topic.
Moderator: Matt Feinberg, Chief Strategy Officer, HRN
Jason Hall, EVP/Sales, Estrella Media

11:45-11:55 **Información Romper**
sponsored by Nielsen

12:00-1:30 **Lunch**

1:45-2:30 **AIMM: Reframing Marketing in the 21st Century**
The ANA's Alliance for Inclusive and Multicultural Marketing (AIMM) has grown to 100 leading marketers from the world of advertising, agency, media, and marketing with one main goal: accelerating growth from multicultural and inclusive segments. The session will share its impactful initiatives reframing marketing in the 21st century.
Presenter: Carlos Santiago, AIMM co-founder and Santiago Solutions Group chief strategist

2:30-3:15 **Podcasting: What's the Revenue Potential & Can It Help Grow Radio Audiences?**
Hear podcast experts share insights about talent development, brand building, and revenue strategies — and they'll discuss how and why podcasting and radio are so closely aligned.
Moderator: Eric Garcia, Director of Sales/Radio, Univision
Andy Kelly, SVP, Custom Podcasts, iHeartMedia
Oscar Sermenio, Director/Market Development, Triton Digital
Matty Staudt, President/Co-founder, Jam Street Media

3:15-3:35 **Break**
sponsored by Triton Digital 

3:35-4:30 **Multicultural Marketing to Millennials**
Understanding how multi culturally adapted millennials use radio, digital, and social media is critical to anyone who wants to grow and expand market share in the 21st century. And this session will give you at least five crucial insights you absolutely need to know to do just that!
Annette Malave, SVP, RAB Insights
Gabriel Soto, Manager/Research, Edison Research

4:30 **Closing Remarks**



**DEBORAH
PARENTI**

EVP/PUBLISHER
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Broadening The Playing Field



This year's March issues of *Radio Ink* celebrate the growth and progress of diversity within the industry, particularly in the years since *Radio Ink* debuted in 1992. While some would opine that it hasn't been fast or expansive enough – and indeed, progress should be ongoing – we stand today in stark contrast to 28 years ago. That's why we are proud to feature the accomplishments and careers highlighted in these and our next issue's pages and to celebrate the success of some remarkable, inspiring individuals. We have come, if not far enough, at least a long way.

In 1992, there were few women in management roles, Hispanic radio was not heard in many markets, and few African Americans or other people of color held top positions. There are still not enough women and minorities in boardrooms or executive suites, but one way to encourage more progress is to point to the success of those who have achieved it and continue to move us in the right direction. At the very least, it can't hurt.

In this issue, the spotlight is on African Americans and Urban radio; later this month, the focus will be on Hispanic radio. In May, the annual MIW (Most Influential Women in Radio) list of honorees and their accomplishments will take center stage. Readers will also be treated to issues featuring independent groups and how they

are recasting their business models versus those of the "Goliaths" in the industry. We'll be telling the stories behind those in the running to become tomorrow's industry leaders, the people who will chart the future course of radio and its many platforms. Then in December, the pages will turn to the next generation, those 30 and under who are making fast tracks in their career ascents and demonstrating quite possibly the widest diversity in culture, ideals, ambition, and goals the industry, and society as a whole, have ever witnessed.

Every one of those features involves an enormous amount of time in gathering materials, researching nominations and submissions, and developing the content that appears in the magazine. We believe, however, that these lists and features provide an important service by acknowledging individuals whose talent, dedication, and professionalism offer the kind of inspiration that makes our businesses stronger, more prosperous, and more inviting to others on the outside who might be considering a career in radio. And we take this opportunity seriously.

One note here: while some companies join the celebration by placing congratulatory ads in the magazine, that's never a prerequisite for inclusion.

In the end, it's a mission designed to tap "the best of the best" and spotlight those in power who have affected or

are affecting the industry in major ways – sometimes for the better, sometimes based on impact alone.

Most of these features not only reflect the changing industry and recognize deserving professionals, but perhaps, if we are fortunate, they give someone an "aha" moment. "Am I taking advantage of all of the available talent who might help move my organization to the next level? Do I have people like this on board?"

Because in the final analysis, it really does boil down to making a station, a group or company, an industry, and a community in which we do business and serve, better. Great companies are not confined to a single silo, not if the goal is to enhance marketability or growth and profitability. Not to mention, to demonstrate social responsibility. Great companies diversify. From geographic and product line diversification found in general industry segments to radio's multiple platforms that bond with listeners today, diversity makes a difference.

The same holds true for staffing, promotions, and leadership. Every person who participates brings unique and invaluable background, experience, and perspective. Listen to those voices. Seek out new and different ones. They can offer volumes to help you grow and make your station the best of the best in more ways than one.

My Friend, The Gambler



ROY H. WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT
WIZARD OF ADS INC.
ROY@WIZARDOFADS.COM



My friend has been important to me for six or seven years. I had no idea that he had any money until about three years ago.

My friend is a professional gambler.

No, he doesn't gamble on green felt tables with cards or dice. He gambles on NASDAQ and the New York Stock Exchange.

"Oh, he's an investor," you say.

"No, I'm a highly informed gambler," he responds.

My friend wins seven out of every eight bets and makes about \$100,000 a week.

No, I won't give you his name, and it wouldn't do you any good if I did. He won't share any tips with you or me or anyone else and he certainly doesn't need our money. He is a lone wolf hunting a lone wolf's prey.

My gambling friend doesn't embrace traditional stock market wisdom but calculates the size of his bets according to his degree of confidence using the Kelly Criterion, an obscure formula used by professional gamblers since 1956.

I, too, am a professional gambler who determines the size of his bets according to the degree of his confidence. But I don't gamble my money on the stock market. I gamble my clients' money on ad campaigns.

Investors don't like to think of themselves as gamblers. That's why so many of them lose. The same is true of advertisers. Investors and advertisers like to believe they are scientists.

My ads make millions of dollars a week, but I don't get to keep the money. It goes to the advertisers who believed in my system. And as you know, my system often involves

radio. Make no mistake, each of the media can deliver results. I use radio more often than any other media simply because it is so very cost-effective when you know how to write great ads.

Investors fall in love with stocks.

Advertisers fall in love with media.

Gamblers love only the dance.

My friend taught me that. And in his honor, I will teach you this: the dance that radio professionals need to learn is ad writing.

He and I agree that traditional wisdom is usually more tradition than wisdom. Do you agree with us? If you do, here are a few of those non-traditional thoughts about advertising that have been responsible for those millions of dollars a week.

1. Your choice of media doesn't make your ad perform. Your ad makes your choice of media perform. So be careful not to depend on "reaching the right people." Instead, be careful to say the right things.

2. If you win the heart, the mind will follow. The intellect will always create logic to justify what the heart has already decided.

3. Don't try to "educate the customer," believing they would choose you "if only they understood." Talk about something they already care about. Speak to a felt need.

4. If you win the heart, the mind will follow. The intellect will always create logic to justify what the heart has already decided.

5. If you try to reach the right person at the right time with the right message, you will forever be frustrated with feast-and-

famine results. But if you reach the masses with a memorable message long before they need you, and continue to reach them until they do, you will be the person they think of immediately and feel the best about.

6. If you win the heart, the mind will follow. The intellect will always create logic to justify what the heart has already decided.

7. If you have a product with a short purchase cycle (like food and entertainment,) you can expect quick results to your advertising. But if you have a product with a long purchase cycle, you need to prepare yourself for dismal results at first, but those results will get better and better when your ad campaign finally gets traction.

8. If you win the heart, the mind will follow. The intellect will always create logic to justify what the heart has already decided.

9. Entertainment is the only currency with which you can purchase the time and attention of a too-busy public.

10. Without an element of surprise, there can be no delight.

11. Repetition is effective. Repetition is effective. Repetition is effective.

12. If you win the heart, the mind will follow. The intellect will always create logic to justify what the heart has already decided.

If you want to read some fascinating case histories, take a look at the new blog written by my four dozen Wizard of Ads partners: <https://wizardofads.org/articles-and-advice/>

And never forget that you are, in fact, gambling.



**JAMES
BAHM**
BAHM CONSULTING

Onboarding Or Getting Them On Board?



“The moment you doubt whether you can do something, you cease forever to be able to accomplish it.”

I saw that quote some months back on LinkedIn and realized it is a variation on a line from *Peter Pan* about flying (“The moment you doubt whether you can fly, you cease forever to be able to do it.”). I thought how well that equates to onboarding, especially in relation to a few places I’ve worked.

Talk to a hundred hiring managers and you’ll get just about as many opinions on what constitutes great onboarding. All too often stations bring in new hires, some of whom have no experience, and think taking a day to go over the rate sheet and current promotions is all that’s required.

In 1995, my first radio GM handed me a copy of the Yellow Pages and said, “Pick out a hundred businesses and go call on them.” At least he took a few minutes to go over the sales sheet and tell me how to fill out an order before letting my fingers do the walking. It’s come a long way since then, but some stations still provide onboarding that is not too different from my boss in Nowhere, Kentucky.

Here are a few easy-to-implement ideas to make onboarding easier and more effective, and set up your new hires for success.

Don’t have someone do the training who doesn’t know the answers. I met with a cluster sales manager last year who asked me about digital solutions. He added, “I’m the sales manager now, and I would have

no idea how to answer that question if a client were to ask me.” Not only did I know the answer, I explained the best way to implement it. He was genuinely surprised.

If you do everything in-house, make sure whoever leads the training can actually train on the topic. It’s best to have extensive training on various solutions and platforms, with someone available to continually provide additional training, clarification, and answers to questions so new hires have can have an intelligent conversation with clients and answer their questions.

Onboarding is not just a series of meetings. Most places like new hires to spend an hour or a half-day with a department to learn what it does, who the point of contact is, and what forms have to be filled out in triplicate. Then they turn them loose. Knowing that Rachael is the accounting manager and Jordan oversees production is great, but make sure their doors are always open and training is ongoing.

Even the most seasoned sales professional may need a couple of followup meetings to fully learn how to enter an order into WideOrbit if they’ve only ever used SDS. Meeting all the department heads, ops managers, and on-air talent is great – just be sure to emphasize that the initial meeting isn’t the only one they’ll have.

Get technical. How long are we on our phones, tablets, or PCs throughout the day? Why not move your onboarding materials to the cloud, or create an app new hires can use for instant access to internal items they need, as they need them?

Don’t have expectations. I hear from friends and colleagues throughout the country who say turnover is still high and good people aren’t sticking around. When I moved to Louisville a couple of years ago, my GM told me that for the first two months they had zero expectations that I would bring in business. They wanted me learning – learning their system, learning the platforms, absorbing what I needed to be successful. I closed my first annual contract in my second month.

New sellers have enough pressure on them to sell, learn your stations, learn the market (especially when relocating), and learn all you are teaching them – don’t expect them to hit any budget until month three or four, unless you’re including a billing client list to get them there.

I get that radio is a “What have you done lately?” industry and ultimately sellers need to be selling. Don’t make it harder for new hires by muddying the onboarding waters and making them feel like sheep being herded to pasture rather than valued members of your team.

Bottom line: your employee’s success, or lack thereof, is a direct reflection of you. From how you make them feel from the moment they come through your doors to the ongoing training and development you provide.

James Bahm is a 25-year broadcasting veteran and owner of the Bahm Consulting, a marketing and advertising consulting company in Las Vegas.

6 Steps To Getting A Yes!



LISA THAL
GENERAL SALES
MANAGER,
HUBBARD
INTERACTIVE
CINCINNATI



Did you know that two-thirds of all sales executives don't follow a sales process? Follow this process, and the client is more likely to say yes to your ideas! We spend so much time and energy prospecting for the right client, and then we invest more time searching for a valid business reason for us to connect.

Prospecting is everything. We connect on LinkedIn and other social channels. We have the discovery meeting and present our award-winning ideas – sorry, I got carried away! I meant to say, we recommend thoughtful strategic solutions, and the client says they will review everything we talked about and follow up next week.

You then find yourself wondering how much more time they could need. You presented several solutions to their biggest challenge. Let's get moving! Reality sets in and you follow up, get their voicemail, you send an e-mail and get no response. Then you're thinking to yourself, "What happened?"

It is more common than you think to get ghosted. Did you scare off the prospect? No, of course not! It happens to all of us, especially after the presentation. But there are several steps you can take to improve your conversions when presenting your ideas and improve your closing percentage.

1. The most crucial step is making sure the decisionmaker and decision influencers are involved. If they won't be, move the meeting until they can make it. It would also be best if you had a clear path and understanding of the decisionmaking process and timelines.

2. You need to identify the precise, desired business results your client needs help with now. What have you discovered as the one challenge they need help with immediately? I recommend asking if there is anything else you can help them with, in addition to what you just discussed. You need to understand the way your client wants to buy, not how you want to sell them.

3. Do you have an assignment that you and the client have agreed is important enough that they will invest money to address it? You must understand their profit margins and the sales cycle of their industry.

4. As you share the details of the campaign, make sure the timing works for them. I would recommend providing several options. Title your options "Good," "Better," and "Best." Be prepared to answer all of their questions. In doing so, you will build more trust and confi-

dence with the client. You give the client the power to choose the best option for them. If they stall on moving forward with your program and say they need to think about it, schedule a followup meeting that you put on their calendar.

5. It's essential to discuss two to three measures of success. The only measurement cannot be the following sentence: "No one walked in and said they heard my commercial on your station." Your discussion must support the customer journey. How do new clients find them? What are their conversions online and in-store? What was their best month, and why? What is their competitor marketing, and how will that impact them? Remind them that using radio improves awareness with current customers and drives new customers to their online store or website.

6. Follow up. You can determine based on your client's needs how to follow up. They may prefer a bi-weekly conference call, a monthly face-to-face meeting reviewing the progress of the campaign or adjustments you discovered that could further improve the results. You are showing them you're in it together.



By Editor in Chief Ed Ryan

DEDE

IN THE

MORNING

HOST

DEDE

MCGUIRE

THE
DEB
ATE
BET
WEEN
DEB
MCGUIRE

DeDe McGuire is often called the hardest-working woman in radio. And she's a leader in one of radio's smallest clubs: successful female morning show leads. It's a position dominated by men in all formats, all across the country.

McGuire started her radio career as a receptionist. When she was asked to join a host on the air to describe a toy during a Christmas auction, everyone listening knew she was destined for radio greatness. DeDe knew she wanted to be in radio, and she knew she wanted to be on the air. And nobody was going to outwork her.

When she did get on the air, she worked in several markets before landing as co-host with Doug Banks. They started out in mornings and then moved

to afternoons, working together from 1998-2014.

***DeDe in the Morning* launched on KKDA (K104)/Dallas in January of 2013. The show caught on with the Dallas market quickly and became a dominant morning franchise, consistently beating head-to-head competition and then dominating all key demos in the market.**

Compass Media Networks partnered with Service Broadcasting to launch *DeDe in the Morning* into syndication in July 2018. The show already has 40 affiliates.

Here is our cover story interview with DeDe McGuire, along with her producer, Gary Sanders, and K104 head of content and operations George Cook.



DeDe in the Morning host DeDe McGuire



KKDA (K104)/Dallas Director of Operations and Brand Manager/
Program Director George Cook

Radio Ink: How did you get your start in radio?

DeDe McGuire: I worked at a Country radio station, KOOV, in a small town in Texas. I started as a receptionist. They were doing a Christmas toy auction and the afternoon guy called me into the studio and said, “Would you describe this toy?” I got on the mic and described it to the audience, and when I did, he and I had great banter. The wife of the station owner heard us and said, “You need to train your receptionist. She has a great personality and voice.”

Radio Ink: Then what happened?

McGuire: I would go into the production room on my lunch and during weekends to practice. I made a tape and sent it across the street to KIIZ, the Urban station. They said, “You have no experience, but we like you, so we’ll give you middays.” I did that in the Killeen-Fort Hood area for one year. Then I went to San Antonio for one year.

Then I came to Dallas, to K104, for two years. I had just turned 21. When the PD at the time called me, I hung up on him because I thought it was a joke. To get to

K104 was the biggest thing ever. He hired me to do afternoons. I did that for two years and left to go to an AC station in Chicago, WPNT. Then I left and spent three years in Philadelphia at WIOQ, the CHR station.

While I was in Philadelphia, Russ Parr called and said, “Doug Banks is looking for a co-host for his nationally syndicated morning show. Are you interested?” I flew down, and we worked together for one day, and he said, “You’re it.” Doug and I did mornings for 10 years, and then we ended up going to afternoons. What nobody knew was as soon as we went to afternoons, K104 called me back, and the rest is history.

Radio Ink: Tell us what it’s like to get that call about going into syndication.

McGuire: While I was working afternoons with Doug, my producer, Gary Sanders, called and said, “Our new guy is out. Can you fill in mornings for three days?” I said, “I’m doing afternoons with Doug Banks, but I’ll come in.” I went in on a Wednesday. Gary called me that night and

said, “They’re going to offer you a job.” I said, “I have a job.” He said, “No, they’re going to offer you one in the mornings.” I said, “I’m not interested, I have a job doing afternoons with Doug Banks.”

When I got in the next day, they made me an offer I couldn’t refuse. I did double duty – I did Doug Banks in the afternoon and mornings at K104 as a co-host. Ratings started going up, and George Cook came into the picture and took over as the PD. There was a guy doing mornings, but that wasn’t successful. Geo called and said, “You have to be the host of the show.”

George Cook: We were carrying Doug and DeDe on a station called Hot 98.9, where I was doing afternoons and programming, with Charlamagne on at night. It’s interesting for things to come full circle. He looked up to DeDe with great respect.

McGuire: I did both for five years. Eventually, they gave me the show. I learned a lot from Doug Banks and I didn’t want to leave his show, but the responsibility of being the host of a morning show

“This is a seminal moment for morning drive radio. Our beloved industry needs spectacular talent. Years from now we will look back and see how the launch of DeDe in the Morning into national syndication ushered in a new chapter of success for our industry. We are thrilled to support Dede, her team, K104, and all our affiliates and sponsors.”

Peter Kosann
CEO

Compass Media Networks

“Radio helps drive reach and awareness of our brand message. We believe in the power of radio and specifically the influence and engagement that radio personalities like DeDe have with consumers.”

Theresa Thornton
Media Strategist
Procter & Gamble



is a lot. I needed to give it all of my attention. Eventually, Hymen Childs [owner of K104 in Dallas] made me another offer I couldn't refuse.

Radio Ink: Geo, it's clear you saw talent in DeDe. Can you talk about that?

Cook: DeDe is an incredible talent. Everyone in the industry looks up to her. There is no one in radio that gets in and out of a break better. She beat Rickey Smiley for over three years. She has a unique brand of content and humor, a real strong community connection and culture.

It's feeding a revolution of perception of how women can lead and dominate ratings in morning drive. She's authentically herself. We're blessed to have a talent that shares and reveals herself with the audience in such an authentic way. It's a deep connection she's created with listeners in Dallas.

Gary Sanders: When I worked with her on *The Doug Banks Show*, sometimes when he would go on vacation, DeDe would slid into the big chair, so I knew and convinced

Hymen when we had an opening that she could hold it down. She was already doing it nationally; we weren't heard in Dallas. As soon as we put her in the big chair, it took off, and the response has been overwhelming.

McGuire: Well, they're not telling you the whole truth. There were a few hiccups. I had to go to PPM school. One of the things going from co-host to host of the show, there was a transition. I had to make sure I took control of the show. They worked with me on doing that. They allowed me to make mistakes as well. There is a transition.

Sanders: The personality was always there. When she was on Doug's show, she would cover all the awards shows. We would go out to these red carpet events, and there were many times where CNN and others would position their microphones around DeDe. As the stars would go down the carpet, they would stop – Beyoncé, Jay-Z, etc. People were gathering around DeDe because she knew the



DeDe in the Morning's Mike Shawn, DeDe McGuire, and Lady Jade

questions to ask, what the styles were. She always had the skill set.

Cook: She can make anyone interesting. DeDe loves to get in people's business. It's different than other shows – there's no gotcha games. It's a natural, authentic connection with people; she's able to make them comfortable enough. She gets the artist or celebrity to say what the people want to hear, and not in an offensive way.

Radio Ink: In addition to having a connection to people you interview, you have to have that connection with the audience. How do you do that?

McGuire: I am a person who loves the culture. I love entertainment. I'm not a person who loves nice restaurants; I'm a simple country girl at heart. I'm inquisitive. I grew up in the military and lived in Germany on a military installation, which is a melting pot of people. It's all cultures living together, like family. I think that helped me be able to connect to a lot of people.

Radio Ink: It's such a different world now, with social media and easy ways to stay connected. What is your interaction today with the listeners compared to when you were working with Doug?

McGuire: One of the differences is they're DM'ing us, whether on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter. They have more of a personal touch with us, more so than back in the day. I post a lot with me and my husband or my mom. I do behind-the-scenes here at the station.

They get a more intimate feel of us, and vice versa. There are more direct conversations, much more now than back then. Before we could only have that with our audience if they called in and maybe if we were at a business they work in, now it's 24/7.

Cook: I think DeDe operates with a unique approach; she wants to add to the dialogue that's happening in pop culture every day. It's about conversations and connectivity. She filters things through the idea "Is this piece of content going to be useful and unique to the audience?" We're

seeing the results from that.

Radio Ink: What are your thoughts on why there aren't more women in the lead role on radio morning shows?

McGuire: I'm not sure we can make it about gender so much. We're in a situation with radio, I don't know if the training is out there, if the interest is out there. Nowadays people want to get into radio thinking they will be a star, but don't want to put in the work. I came in during an in-between time, before radio changed totally. There are a lot of women who would like to have their own show, but there's a training issue.

Cook: It was more of a strategic decision. Not only did she have the talent and pedigree of working with Doug, and being around legends like Tom Joyner, she had a unique approach. She had the talent, and we were looking for points of differentiation, having a female lead.

When we first started talking about it, peers around the industry didn't think it would work. You have women who talk

“To call DeDe in the Morning a syndicated show diminishes the strength of the partnership. DeDe is part of the Jammin’ 98.3 family and a friend to the audience.

She and her staff bend over backwards to weave themselves into the fabric of the station and connect with the audience. She’s like a best friend who just happens to live in another state. The ratings? Well, they speak for themselves.”

Annmarie Topel
President
Milwaukee Radio Group
WJMR-FM (Jammin’ 98.3)



“She is a very creative person who will work very hard to be number one in her field.”

Hymen Childs
Owner
KKDA (K104)/Dallas

to their besties, mothers, friends, and co-workers all the time, and a lot of these stations are targeting women. What’s better than a woman talking to other women? It makes sense.

Her success has given other programmers the confidence to put women in morning drive. Even the show we just dismantled – because of her success both locally and nationally, they did a local morning show that emulated our show. They wouldn’t have had that confidence if they couldn’t see that example of success with DeDe here.

Radio Ink: Why do you love doing radio?

McGuire: I’m silly. I get to be me, have fun, and educate the audience. I like taking them on that emotional roller coaster. There’s the immediacy of having a conversation. It has always been something I loved.

Radio Ink: Who has mentored and inspired you along the way?

McGuire: Tom Joyner. When I worked with Doug as a co-host, working for ABC Radio Networks, we were across the hall from each other, and I watched his work ethic. I watched him build his show and take ownership of it. I have always been a fan of his. Doug, as I mentioned before. Russ Parr. Way back in the day, Terri Avery gave me advice and helped me out.

Radio Ink: What are your general thoughts on the radio industry? You hear the younger generation say radio is dying. What’s your impression?

McGuire: I don’t think radio is dying at all. We have a generation right now that loves podcasting, which is easier to do. Many don’t want to get into radio and learn the craft and have to follow some rules. I think people love radio. Personality is coming back. For a long time, programmers would say, “More music, less talk.” Now people can get music anywhere, and it means personality will be the big differ-

ence. Personality radio will be around for a while.

Radio Ink: What do you want other managers and PDs to know about your show?

McGuire: Number one is funny, and I have always believed funny wins no matter what. It's not predictable. We have great chemistry. You can throw some shows together, but if you don't have chemistry, it won't work. We're authentic, fast-moving, and transparent with the people. We get naked with the audience.

Cook: We get to the funny faster and have more comedic speech than most shows. We approach it with intention. We think of it almost like a reality show. It's all about the awkwardness, fun, and drama that's found in relationships. That runs through the content.

Sanders: As the producer, it's easy because of the chemistry and the effort everyone puts into the show. I could easily come in as a producer and pass out assignments, but what we do is, everyone brings stuff to the table, we work it out, throw stuff against the wall to see what sticks. It's a team effort.

The show works hard. There are a lot of shows that just mail it in, take phone calls with generic topics of the day. Our co-host comedian, Michael Shawn, has struggled with some addictions; he's a recovering alcoholic. He had to go to rehab on the show. Our other co-host, Lady Jade, struggling to find love, so she froze her eggs. She was married for a year. We went through the wedding on the air, and then she got divorced.

DeDe thinks her husband cheated on her this past summer, and she brought that to the airwaves and we talked it out – that type of realization, mixed with the listeners' comments, because nobody wants a perfect morning show. Nobody wants generic topics. We go for different angles.

Radio Ink: Did he cheat?

McGuire: He was seen coming out of a chick's room while we were on vacation. He claims he was only in there five minutes. I give him hell for it every day.

Cook: He has offered to take a lie detector

test, so we thought about doing that on the air. It will either destroy their relationship or give us more content.

McGuire: If it destroys it, we have content. Compass Media would love to sell this.

Radio Ink: What is your show prep for each day? How do you stay on top of what your audience wants to hear?

McGuire: I love the show prep today: it's the cell phone we have. Back in the day, people would walk in with newspapers, magazines, etc. We still get all of that, but it's at the tip of our fingers with our phones. I follow every single hot website and Instagram page.

The audience will also let you know. They will say, "OMG, DeDe, did you see this? I can't wait to hear what you have to say about it tomorrow." That is the beauty of it. Show prep is 24/7 now. If something breaks, my phone goes off.

Cook: The audience has access to the information. We give context to that and let them know why it matters. They want to hear it from DeDe's perspective.

McGuire: I have heard from people in other markets who ask how I get this done. I say you can record people with your cell phone. I do that a lot. We were on the elevator the other day and a girl got on saying, "Oh, I listen," and I pull out my phone and interview her right there. I send it in an e-mail to Gary, and it's on the air. There are apps you can use. I create videos showing people where I am on my Instagram page. Show prepping is right there.

Sanders: When DeDe interviewed the lady on the elevator, it turned out she had just divorced her pastor husband, and it turned out she was a lesbian.

McGuire: She let me get in her business right there on the spot. I go to a basketball game to see my favorite player, LeBron, and I'm looking around trying to figure out what I can talk about the next day to bring into the show.

Radio Ink: So you are constantly using Instagram and Facebook Live to help promote the show?

McGuire: Yes, you have to be as visible

"DeDe's enthusiasm for her show jumps out of the speakers, as well as her desire to do whatever it takes to drive success. She understands that it takes hard work to launch a new show on an affiliate and is available to win over clients and listeners, no matter how zany the request. She's fun, she's real, and she's relatable, and she was the natural choice for us on 94.3 WYBC."

Kristin Okesson
SVP/General Manager
Connoisseur Media
Connecticut

"DeDe McGuire is not just a great female air talent, but a great air personality who can rival anyone in the business"

Terri Avery
Cox Media Group
Atlanta

“DeDe McGuire is not just a great female air talent, but a great air personality who can rival anyone in the business”

Terri Avery
Cox Media Group
Atlanta



Mike Shawn, DeDe McGuire, and Lady Jade

as possible. It's still so much fun to me. It doesn't feel like work.

Radio Ink: What are your goals with the show?

McGuire: I do a vision board every year. I write down goals for what I want to do with the show. By the end of the year, I want 50 affiliates. By the end of next year, we better have 75 to 100.

Cook: Where things are normally mandated by companies, everybody that's a DeDe affiliate loves and wants DeDe. Part of our mission is spreading love and laughter across the country. Sometimes we will get in meetings and say it's not about the ratings. If we have the beloved brand and show, if we want to make change in people's lives, the ratings will come.

Sanders: A lot of that is customer service, too. Stations need their liners and promotions turned around. We can't sit on the liners. We're their morning show, and it's important.

McGuire: Working with us is easy. Some people doing radio these days aren't radio people; it's not their first love. It's my first love and all I have done. I understand the immediacy of making sure liners are done correctly. I know what they're looking for and where to put the inflection because this is what I do.

I have worked several formats. I have to thank Hymen Childs, the owner here at K104, for believing in me and allowing me to do this. Compass Media, too, has been the best to work with.

Cook: ABC Networks, American Urban

Radio Networks, Superadio, everyone had an interest in working with DeDe. Peter Kosann came down to see us and spent time. We shared our vision with him. He saw the opportunity, particularly in the Urban space, but also saw the overall appeal of DeDe's show. What's amazing is the show is on multiple formats. Everything from Hip Hop to Rhythmic to throwbacks to R&B because funny works no matter what.

McGuire: We're on 40 stations, but on several different formats. They can take the content and do what they want. That is the beauty of what we do and how I'm able to position it.

I'm coming for Howard Stern's title, "King of all Media." I also launched a foundation last year, the DeDe McGuire Foundation, whose main purpose is to aid women's education. Single mothers certainly need more money to take care of their kids and help them go back to college. Last year we gave out \$40,000 worth of scholarships in our first year, which I'm really excited about.

Radio Ink: What advice do you have for younger kids thinking about getting on the air?

McGuire: If you are afraid of failure, you will never succeed. Sometimes you have to take a step backwards to go two steps forward. They all want to start at the top and not do the work anymore. They all think they should land in a major market. They have to be themselves. Take it seriously. There is fun and the perks of going to the club and the VIP events, but this is a business.

SIDELINES

What are your hobbies?

Watching reality shows, traveling, and reading.

Who is/was your role model, and why?

My mom, because she is the strongest woman I know and because no matter what life has thrown at her, she always gets back up.

Tom Joyner because he was and is truly a radio star. He didn't come from the comedy world or acting world. He was a true radio personality whose talent took him all the way to the top of the food chain in radio. The fact that he took ownership of his show, created Reach Media, and had the success and longevity in syndication is commendable.

What are you reading right now?

I'm reading two. One is fluff that I picked up at the airport called A Well Behaved Woman by Cherese Anne Fowler. Two, a book I took off my boss Geo's desk called Building Strong Brands by David A. Aaker.

What is your favorite movie?

The Count of Monte Cristo, Shawshank Redemption, The Ten Commandments (I always loved the music in it – lol).

What is your favorite TV show?

Real Housewives, anything on HGTV, Black Mirror on Netflix.

Twitter handle?

@dedeinthemornin

Instagram?

@dedeinthemorning

Who are the three most interesting people you know (outside your family), and why?

I love flawed people.

A chef friend of mine who travels between Texas and Louisiana. He's super talented in the kitchen but can't seem to keep a steady job. I marvel at all his missed opportunities. His reasoning why or stories of haphazard things that interfere and why he can't get it right are fascinating to me. I realize some people can't help themselves.

My girlfriend who travels all the time by herself and will leave at the drop of a dime. I love hearing her stories.

My co-host, Michael Shawn. He's a recovering alcoholic who has turned his "mess" into a message. He's talked about it on the air, and I've been impressed with his courage and strength to beat his addiction. He's also a conspiracy theorist like me, so we get to explore a bunch of crazy scenarios together.

If you had 30 minutes and a recorder, who would you interview, and why?

Michelle Obama. I want to know the real inside stuff about the White House. How much input did she have in terms of her husband's decisions while he was president? How did she deal with the racism and scrutiny? Were there days while in the White House where she stayed in bed all day or on the couch and vegged out? When she and her husband got intimate, was she nervous the Secret Service would bust in the room? Lol. Did the old pics in there scare her? Is the White House haunted? How did she sleep in there

with the rumors of a rat infestation? (Which would totally gross me out because that's a phobia of mine.)

Name three radio stations you listened to as a kid.

I spent three years in Germany (stepfather was in the Army), so I had to listen to Casey Kasem on the Armed Forces Network. K104 in Dallas, KIIZ in Killeen.

What apps do you have on your phone that would surprise people?

Facetune, which helps me cheat on all my pics. It's my own Photoshop.

Three favorite podcasts?

Earn Your Leisure is the only one I really listen to.

Your most embarrassing career moment?

Of course, I've had the obligatory non-stop giggles while reading live copy on the air. But I was hosting a fashion show in front of 300 people and walked off the stage in my beautiful dress and high heels and proceeded to fall down the stairs in front of everyone.

What one goal has eluded you?

Television talk show host.

Most proud career achievement so far?

Getting my own syndicated show.



**SHERMAN
KIZART**
MANAGING DIRECTOR
KIZART MEDIA
PARTNERS

An Open Letter To Radio CEOs



To all radio CEOs: I would like to bring to your attention the importance of African American radio ownership, and to strongly suggest that each of you identify the role you and your companies can play to improve it.

Why? African American ownership of the airwaves is the fabric and foundation of Urban radio's success. Yes, Urban radio's success was driven by African American ownership because it was African American ownership that entrenched Urban radio in superserving the needs of the African American community. African American ownership provided Urban radio with a sense of community commitment and pride. African American-owned radio made the African American community believe that ownership of the radio station rests with the entire African American community, rather than an individual or company.

Listeners of WBLS/New York; KBLX/San Francisco; WWDM (The Big DM)/Columbia, South Carolina; and WJMI/Jackson, Mississippi would passionately say these stations belong to them, and that African American ownership of these and other stations encouraged that feeling of ownership. Advertisers have reaped significant results from their campaigns on these radio stations because of that relationship.

As CEOs of the largest radio companies in the country, each of you has a significant investment in Urban radio. Your radio portfolios reflect it.

Will you now consider how you could use your time, energy, access to capital, access to deal flow, and all the resources at your disposal to help increase the number of African American owners?

African Americans make up 12% of the U.S. population. Less than 2% of all radio stations are owned by African Americans.

The common refrain among the industry, including the NAB, is to look for the return of the Minority Tax Certificate. And yes, the certificate was a powerful tool that helped increase the number of African American owners by deferring taxes on the sale of radio stations by mostly non-minority sellers, including large corporations. But after 25 years of advocating for its return, the reality is that the Minority Tax Certificate is not coming back. The political will is not there, and the dysfunctional and highly partisan divisions in Washington, D.C. won't allow for it.

Under FCC Chairman Ajit Pai, the FCC has been focused on creating and implementing initiatives that could help turn around eroding African American radio ownership.

As an appointed member of the FCC Federal Advisory Committee on Diversity, I have been involved and engaged in discussions and worked with FCC Diversity Committee members in recommending initiatives that could help grow media ownership among women and minorities.

In fact, Caroline Beasley, CEO of Beasley Group, is leading Pai's Broadcast Subcommittee of the FCC Federal Advisory Committee on Diversity.

As the leaders of America's radio companies, you can actively support the effort to increase ownership among African Americans, women, and other minorities. Your engagement could include but not be limited to:

- Publicly commit to work with Chairman Pai and Caroline Beasley in the FCC effort.
- Identify a minority broadcaster you and your company can strategically align and partner with by encouraging that company's growth.
- Review and discuss with your CFO how you and your company's access to deal flow and capital can be leveraged to help minority owners and women.

Industry leadership in the C-Suites will be pivotal in helping address African American and overall minority ownership.

Thank you for the contributions each of you can make in addressing this important issue for the radio industry.

Sherman K. Kizart is the managing director of Kizart Media Partners. He can be reached at shermankizart@att.net.

FUTURE AFRICAN AMERICAN LEADERS IN RADIO



Now in its eighth year, our Future African American Leaders in Radio list includes people from every aspect of the business and from all over the country. Every member of this list was nominated by a respected peer and voted on by a panel of experienced managers across the industry. Each nominee responded

to an extended *Radio Ink* questionnaire that asked them about their passion for the radio industry, their goals, how they became successful, and what advice they have for young broadcasters looking to break into radio.

Radio Ink is pleased and proud to present the 2020 Future African American Leaders in Radio.



ISAIAH BRYANT

Director of Advertising Sales, Marketing & Promotions
American Urban Radio Networks
New York

“I remember growing up listening to the radio on drives with my father. We would listen to our local Sports station and discuss what was happening. Those intimate moments still resonate with me.”

Isaiah Bryant tells *Radio Ink* he’s passionate about the radio industry for two reasons. “I enjoy the people I work with, and the relationships I’ve built are ones I hold dear. Secondly, radio speaks to me in a way other media does not.”

His advice to the next generation of broadcasters: success is never final, and failure is never fatal. It’s your courage through both that counts. “I have this message on a plaque in my office. I see it every day, and it continues to motivate me to never settle.”



Congratulations ISAIAH!
American Urban Radio Networks proudly celebrates Isaiah Bryant’s recognition as a “Future African American Leader in Radio - Class of 2020”.





BRITTANY FAISON

Insights Manager
Westwood One

“Unfortunately, in recent years the radio industry has become undervalued. I feel it stems from people not understanding the impact radio has. For example, your favorite artist hit number one on the charts? That wouldn’t be possible without radio. I can truly respect the powerhouse entity that radio has been and still is.”

Brittany Faison says her inquisitive nature has helped her achieve success in this business. “It drives me to want to know more, figure things out by myself, and try new experiences. One of my favorite quotes from Zora Neale Hurston is ‘Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prodding with a purpose.’ So having a career in media research is a natural fit for me.

“I know this might sound cheesy, but I completely relate to it: when you love what you do, success is one of the byproducts. Still, I can’t take all the credit myself – I’ve been lucky enough to have amazing co-workers to help me navigate the radio industry and the media research field.”

Faison’s advice to anyone starting out in the business: “Don’t be afraid to ask questions. Radio has a rich history and a lot of moving parts.”



ROBERT FORBES

Promotions Director
SOS Radio
Las Vegas

“Radio thrives through human connection, whether that’s through callers, interviews, or in-person appearances in the community. It’s important that each station realize how they can make a tangible connection with their listeners, and the benefits of doing so.”

Asked to what he attributes his success, Robert Forbes replies, “I’m humbled to have the title of promotions director, yet I believe that where I am today has been a direct result of my faith and following what’s been put on my heart to accomplish. Any successes I’ve celebrated have been a collaborative effort of the team that surrounds me. As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.”

Forbes’ passion for radio stems from the ability of the medium to connect with people. “There’s something special about the impact that radio makes in people’s lives,” he says. “Radio is something that is always there for you. When you turn it on, you feel connected to others and not alone. You are not required to pay a subscription to listen, and you can take radio with you wherever you go. No other medium can claim those exact characteristics.

“What makes me passionate about radio is that each day is a new opportunity to make a difference in someone’s life. The songs and spoken words flowing through the speakers have the power to inspire, bring hope, and inform.”



KENNETH W. FORTE

President/General Manager (Co-Owner)
WDKN
Dickson, Tennessee

“Every day we have the opportunity to touch the lives of our listeners in a positive way.”

Kenneth Forte tells *Radio Ink*, “What drives my passion is the impact that local radio has on the community. We have the ability to really impact individuals and communities. We are truly able to tell the story of our communities and be the voice for those who may appear voiceless. For example, our daily Power Lunch brings civic and business leaders before our audience in an hourlong format that really delves into the details of the issues that affect people’s lives.”

His goal, he says, is to “continue to work hard to have a positive impact on our local community through growing our business and our reach. We, likewise, are working to create more opportunities for minorities and women through our business growth in the future.”

He goes on, “I want to expand opportunities for minorities to gain access to ownership. Create a mentorship program predicated on seasoned executives connecting with new station owners to help them navigate the movement to ownership. The strength in radio must be its diversity, not just in format, but in the ownership numbers.”

What is his advice for those looking to radio as a career? “Never be afraid to fail. If you work hard, you are bound to make some mistakes. Own it and work to get better.”



KELLY N. GUENO

Assistant Program Director of Urban Programming
iHeartMedia Chicago

“I absolutely love being able to help create epic moments our listeners will remember for a lifetime.”

Kelly Gueno tells *Radio Ink* her success in radio comes from her ability to see the big picture. “I have an understanding of how everyone works together to accomplish the ultimate goal,” she says. “I have always been eager to learn new things, continuously asking questions and trying to master new tasks.” And her goal is to always grow. “I want to take in as much knowledge and new opportunity as possible and let that guide me.”

Gueno’s advice to someone starting out in the business is to learn everything. “Talk to everyone. No job or project is too small. And most important, have fun! You are in the entertainment business.”

THANK YOU FOR YOUR
LEADERSHIP & CONTRIBUTIONS
TO OUR INDUSTRY!



CONGRATULATIONS
KELLY GUENO



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JAY JAMES

Morning Drive Host, Sports Director
Saga
Charlottesville

"Our industry is powerful because it is a direct medium that can meet people anywhere in any situation and make them feel like you are talking directly to them. Plus it is the most fun of all media genres, hands down. Always something different every day."

Jay James tells *Radio Ink* he's able to be successful in this business because he keeps everything in perspective. "I say this with respect: it's only radio, meaning that you can't take yourself too seriously and you have to think team, just like in any business. But mostly I have received a lot of grace and great opportunities, and thankfully I have been able to take advantage of some of them, and hope to do that even more."

James' advice to anyone starting out in the business: be willing to take direction and be the person others like working with. "That is far more important than any style or technique or technical acumen," he says. "At the end of the day it's a people business – of, by, and for the people. Always remember that, and things will be just fine."

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DARRYL JOHNSON

**Program Director
Summit Media
Birmingham**

"I have a deep passion for helping people. I think radio plays a big part in that arena. Its ability to touch a person's emotions, whether through music, community service, or just being informative in critical times, is immeasurable."

Darryl Johnson tells *Radio Ink* he wants to be a high-level executive in radio one day so that he can give back. "I love to teach and develop young talent. It is something I pride myself in – that is, helping others grow and learn the business of radio."

His advice to others is to be passionate and learn everything you can. "Stay on top of trends and be willing to go the extra mile to build a path of success," he says. "You have to allow for time to grow in the industry. I see, so often, young people come into the business with unrealistic expectations, only to have their dream deferred by the realities. What's that old cliché, 'Rome was not built in one day'? That definitely applies to the radio industry."

**CONGRATULATIONS
DARRYL JOHNSON
FROM YOUR TEAM
AT SUMMITMEDIA**





DEMARCUS JONES

General Sales Manager
Cumulus
Baton Rouge

“The people we meet every single day make this industry the best in the world. From the new advertisers/clients we meet daily, who eventually become friends after you help grow their business, to the listeners we meet daily who express their admiration and love for their favorite radio stations, to the many great people who work in the industry, my love for the radio industry is unmatched.”

Demarcus Jones tells *Radio Ink* he’s been successful in radio for years because he believes everything he sets his mind to is attainable. “You just have to be willing to sacrifice and work hard for it. That, along with all of the wonderful people that have helped me throughout my career. Relationships and how you treat those relationships are important as well. I always lead with love.” He sees himself in a VP or CEO role someday, or maybe owning a group of stations.

Jones’ advice for anyone starting out in the business: it’s all about relationships. “If you want to be in sales, it’s about your relationships with clients and businesses. If you want to be on air, it’s about how well you can build and maintain a relationship with the listeners and community. Cherish the relationships. Be great at the relationships. Learn to love to give your talents to the world. The return on that investment will be huge.”



WILNIR LOUIS

Station Manager
WSOU-FM
South Orange, New Jersey

“Joining the radio industry has been easily one of the best decisions I have ever made. I want this to be my career because I’ve realized no matter how much time I put into the radio station, I always have fun with it.”

Wilnir Louis tells *Radio Ink* there isn’t enough space in the magazine to list how many things make him passionate about radio. “The connection with listeners helps to drive my passion. Radio is the perfect example of an entity doing a service to the community, and it’s beautiful. The number of people who call in during a shift just to tell you how much they love you or the station is outstanding. It’s crazy to think how talking behind a mic and playing the right music affects people greatly.”

If you want to succeed, Louis says to be open and honest. “To some people, radio can seem either daunting or boring when they first get started, and it’s understandable. However, if you continue to learn, continue to ask questions, and continue to be open to trying new things, you will enjoy every minute of it.”



KWASA N. MATHIS

Morning Drive Producer
Digital Media Manager
WURD-FM
Philadelphia

“Success, to me, is being able to touch the lives of others in a positive way, so that if anything were to ever happen to me, God forbid, at the very least they would say that I was a good person.”

Kwasa Mathis attributes her success to her ability to keep moving forward. “I’m successful because I don’t quit. I’m successful because I get knocked down, but I dust myself off and get right back in the ring. I’m successful because I don’t give up. Every day there is a new struggle and a new obstacle that you have to overcome, but every day that God allows for you to wake up is another day to get it right.”

Mathis tells *Radio Ink* that a promotion would give her the ability to get more voices on the air. “If I were promoted to a much higher position of leadership tomorrow in radio, the answer to me is simple: allow for more diverse voices to have an impact on the country. Currently, I am a producer and digital media manager at WURD Radio. WURD is a Black-owned and -operated station in Philadelphia, and one of only three in the country. We do a pretty good job of being the voice of the Black community for the city, country, and the world, but I want for my station, and stations like this one, to be amplified.

“I’m tired of only hearing news from one perspective, because it doesn’t resonate with me. I want to hear news from Black stations, Latino stations, Asian stations, Native stations, etc. We’re right back to where I started, and that’s giving a voice to the voiceless.”



ZIPPORAH MONDY

Assistant General Manager
Mondy Broadcasting
Memphis

"Radio can meet real needs in a community, provide encouragement, challenge minds, and bring change. It is also an industry that entails various aspects of talent and creativity."

Zipporah Mondy says she owes a lot of her success to her parents. "My dad worked at NBC News Chicago for years. My dad stressed two things: excellence and attitude. Excuses just didn't fly with him. He taught me not to fall into the trap of thinking that my race would, or some 'system' could, hold me back. He and so many others before him were living proof that with determination, focus, diligence, hard work, and a good attitude, one could beat the odds."

Mondy's advice to new broadcasters is to not be afraid to fail. "Building a skill takes focus, time, and diligence," she says. "Be patient with yourself in that process. Realize it's not about you. Be the best you can be at whatever position you hold, even if it's not the one you want, even if it's cleaning the bathroom. Do it well! Learn to be an effective communicator and a good listener."

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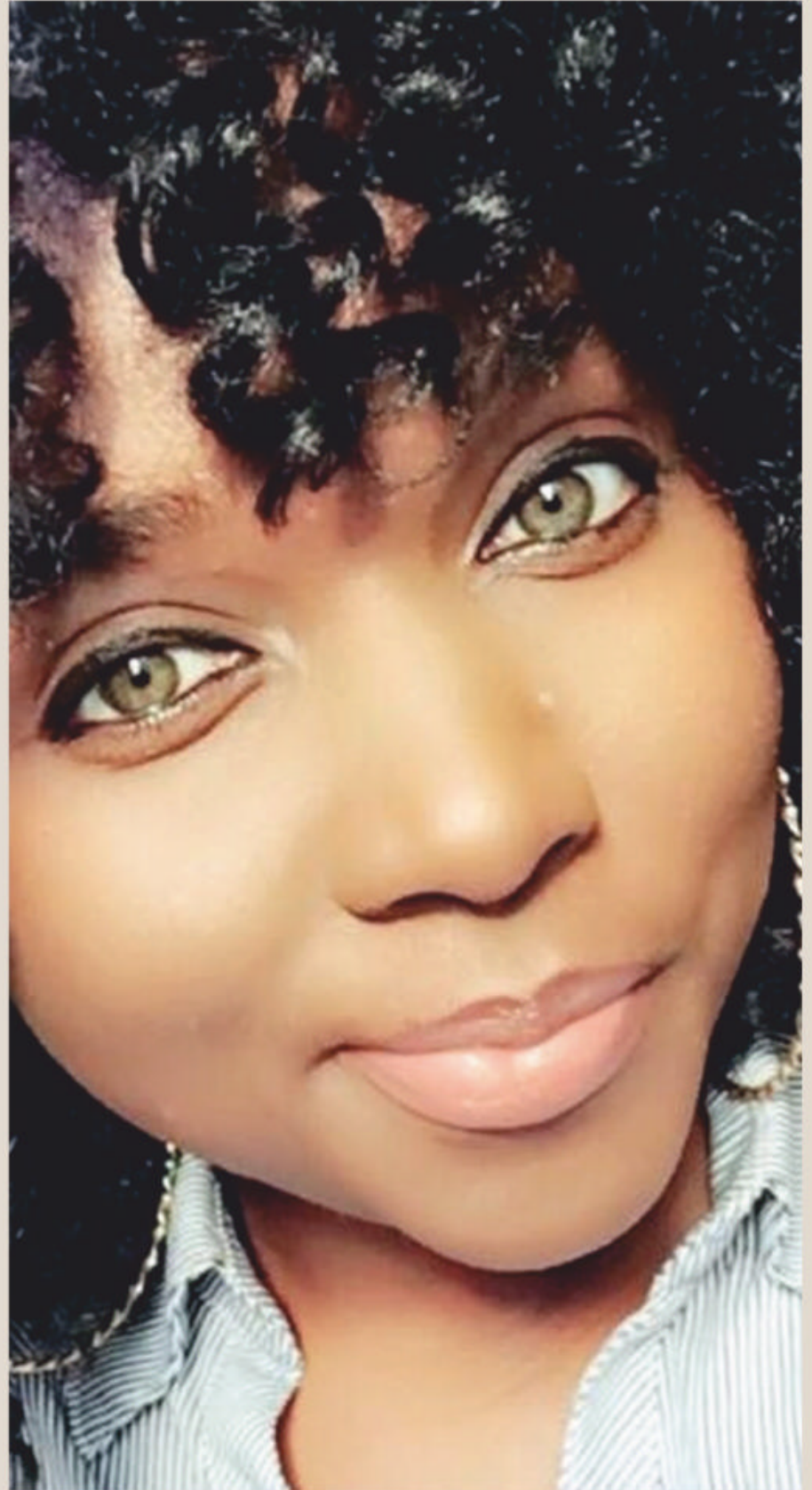
LAFONTAINE OLIVER

President/General Manager
WYPR-FM
Baltimore

“The competition from both legacy media competitors and new media keeps me passionate. I have been on the noncommercial side for a number of years now, and there is such great work happening amongst the stations that is really pushing our entire industry forward.”

LaFontaine Oliver was exposed to radio at an early age because his dad worked in the business, but he got the desire to make it a career when he went to college. “Working at my college station was so much fun and taught me so many things about myself and the type of professional that I wanted to be,” he says. “Radio was also a big part of my childhood, and I always looked up to jocks, programmers, and managers. I knew that I wanted to do something for a living that could have a positive impact on people while not feeling like work.”

He says his goal is always to be great where his feet are, and the future will take care of itself. “This means that while I may have aspirations for my future, I try to concentrate on doing the best I can where I am. For me, that means being a good husband, father, friend, community member, etc. Professionally, I want to continue to be a mentor to other young broadcasters and to champion diversity at all levels of the business.”



KENOSHA SHAW

Senior Account Executive
Courtney French Broadcasting
Birmingham

“I’ve always been passionate about three things; music, communication, and marketing. Working in the radio industry gives me the opportunity to immerse myself in all three.”

Kenosha Shaw tells *Radio Ink* her goal is to eventually start her own marketing and advertising firm. She says, “By doing this I will be able to achieve my personal goal, which is to leave a legacy of wealth, spiritual and financial, for my children and their children.”

Shaw’s advice to anyone starting out in the business: “Stay organized, set goals, and be proactive.”



SAM SIRMONS

Producer/Personality
WAMJ-FM
Atlanta

“Radio can be pain medicine for someone that hasn’t smiled in days or we can be therapy to show that even we are vulnerable and have bad days, just like them.”

Sam Sirmons tells *Radio Ink* it’s the personal connection radio makes with listeners he loves the most. “What made me passionate about radio, especially early on, is that people are emotionally invested in who we are. The audience holds you accountable, and they will remember your break that you were struggling through, but to them, you sounded like you did that break just for them. Listeners will laugh with you, cry with you, but most of all, they just want to know you can feel just like they do.”

He has this advice for those interested in radio as a career: “The game honors the grind. You can’t cheat the process and just get a primetime slot, all the endorsements, and a big contract overnight. It took me nearly seven years before I was even full-time producing.

“If you are going to work, always give it 100 percent, even if it’s just signing your name legibly on the commercial log. Every detail matters, and it adds up. My mentor, Ryan Cameron, told me this, and it couldn’t be more true in today’s society, ‘Respect is never retroactive.’ You get one introduction. Make it meaningful, make it memorable, and make it make sense.”



KENNY SMOOV

Vice President/Urban Formats
Cumulus
PD/Mornings
WQQK-FM/Nashville

“With the addition of the importance of social media, streaming, digital assets, and NTR, it’s an exciting time to be in the game.”

A firsthand demonstration of the power of radio brought Kenny Smoov into the industry. “I have been in the business for years and decided to make it a career after helping to find a missing child back in Killeen, Texas, many years ago. It was intriguing to see how radio could move an entire community into action. It was then I realized that this was more than just DJ’ing in clubs and shout-outs on the air. You can really have an impact in a major way through radio.”

His advice to others getting into the business:

“Start a podcast! You’ll teach yourself some of the things you’ll need to know about creating a show, branding, metrics, building an audience, and other things that translate well into radio.

“Network! Get out of your bubble and learn about the players, the movers and shakers. You can literally get on Twitter and follow every VP, format captain, and executive in the country!”



JEFFREY A. THACKER

VP of Digital
Meruelo Media

“Over the past years, radio has truly been an industry that has challenged every neuron of my brain.”

Jeffrey Thacker says he’s been successful in the radio industry because he gets results. “I’ve approached every project with a realistic end goal, keeping in mind who our audience is and isn’t. Over the years I’ve spent a lot of time strategizing and testing theories to hit my benchmarks.

“Research and hard work yield success. Being in radio for me has never been to compete against the ‘radio market.’ I’ve always thought if you only compete against the radio industry, then you limit the growth potential beyond studio walls. I manage a team who produce content outside of the conventional way of thinking. My success has not been about competing against the radio group, it’s been about carving out a space for the brands I represent in the music industry plus the digital landscape.”

Thacker tells *Radio Ink* his goal in radio is to enhance the market and make people loyal consumers of the brands he passionately represents. He says, “At Meruelo Media, it’s not about doing the bare minimum to meet industry standards, but constantly shifting the market through compelling content that can live off the air for years to follow. I’ve worn many hats and have touched and managed design, web development, podcasts, video, live streaming, editorial, and social. It’s important to continue on this trajectory, not only for my professional growth, but for the radio industry at large. I consider myself one of the gatekeepers, and I am not going anywhere. Neither is radio.”



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JUNIUS THOMAS

Director, Affiliate Relations
Reach Media

"I believe in leaving a minimal footprint (keeping an open mind with my ego in check) while delivering maximum results (goal completion/wins)."

Junius Thomas tells *Radio Ink* his success is based on "conscientiousness." He says, "I take my job and the work seriously. I've always strived to work smart, not hard. Though I do not shy away from hard work when required."

How would he improve radio? "Since radio is in essence the original and still most extensive social media outlet in existence – last I checked, the airwaves are still free – I would work with the top radio programming as well as business/sales minds to better take the digital and terrestrial mediums to another level.

"Using the popularity and strengths of both and merging them would seem to be the logical next step in the evolution of both mediums. Also, radio is still a little too homogenized for my tastes. I would consider providing more local market programming freedom. I do so miss regional flavor in programming."

REPRESENT.



Junius Thomas
Director, Affiliate Relations
& Special Projects
Reach Media, Inc.

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Sam Sirmons
Producer/Personality
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RON TURNER

General Sales Manager

KJLH-FM

Los Angeles

“Using the power of the microphone to reach a loyal base, I’ve been able to utilize my marketing skills to create unique activations on air and online, and to benefit our community.”

Ron Turner tells *Radio Ink* he owes his success to always being active in his community. “That has allowed me to work with people, organizations, and companies on a different level,” he says. “Originally starting at a radio station with limited resources and no ratings, I was able to learn how to navigate and create programs without going through the traditional routes. That experience set me on a path in this industry and has allowed me to become a ‘connector’ in terms of bringing companies with unique needs together. It made me create my own lane, which has been amazing.”

He has a goal of owning his own radio station. “I am a proud member of the NAB Broadcast Leadership Training program, (Class of 2017). It opened an entirely new world of opportunities for my future, and something I can see happening.”

Turner's advice to anyone starting out in radio is to come with "great passion, creativity, a hunter's mentality, and a thirst for knowledge."





ANGELA WILLIAMS

Manager, Business Operations
Crawford Broadcasting
Chicago

"I love the power of radio, and in my opinion no other medium delivers what it does. It has the ability to entertain and inform while also providing an outlet for conversation that brings a sense of community to the areas that it serves."

Angela Williams tells *Radio Ink* a big part of her success is never being closed-minded toward change. "I believe that has helped to create opportunities for me along the way that have given value to those I work with. I came into radio at a time where dynamic change was taking place. Syndication expanded, the introduction of PPM, and the Internet and digital tools were taking over in a way that nobody could have imagined. Through each and every industry change, it has always been exciting to me to work to understand and embrace it and empower those around me to do the same. I believe this practice has carried me far and helped me to grow in every single space that I've been in."

Williams' advice to anyone starting out in the business is to remember that radio people are marketers. "The best decisions don't just come from hard data," she says. "They come from getting out and being among the people to understand your audience and how it moves. Whether you are an on-air personality or budding engineer, understanding the product empowers you in each and every decision you make. For radio people, our listeners are personal. You have to get out and get to know them to understand what it is they expect from you."



BRENNAN WIMBISH

Program Director
WGTS-FM
Rockville, Maryland

"Powerful bonds are created with listeners when personalities connect in a meaningful way to those in that station's lifegroup. It's about finding the talent to build friendship and, ultimately, a tribe, with its audience."

Brennan Wimbish tells *Radio Ink* his passion for the business comes from the nature of radio. "I'm passionate about radio because it is the one mass communication medium that reaches so many people, no matter where they are, yet is extremely intimate and relational. The work that WGTS 91.9 does in Washington, D.C. allows people to find encouragement and helps combat the stress they face on a daily basis."

Wimbish believes those just getting into the business need to take advantage of the expertise and talent around them. "They need to seek out the leaders and innovators in the industry and be a sponge," he says. "Soak up every bit of good advice you can find. That, and do your best to help others achieve. A mentor of mine used to say your job (in a team show) is to make your co-host look good, and vice versa. By doing so, the team sounds better and you both benefit."

"It can seem counterintuitive in more cutthroat environments, but I'm a firm believer in helping others succeed. Eventually it comes back to you, and your gifts will make room for you."

HOLIDAY ON THE AIR

This is young Dennis Sheely on the air on Christmas evening way back in 1981. The station is WQXA (Q106) in York, Pennsylvania, where he was a weekend and fill-in DJ under the name of Dennis Johnson. Sheely also worked at WYCR/Hanover, Pennsylvania and a few other stations in the area. Thanks, Dennis, for this great vintage pic!



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