

# WISCONSIN BROADCASTER

The Wisconsin Broadcaster Association Newsletter • January-February 2025

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## End-of-year efforts

By the numbers: How five stations gave back this holiday

### \$100K for toy drive

Audacy Milwaukee's 105.7 The Fan (WSSP-FM/1250AM) with support from 103.7 KISS-FM hosted an 18th annual toy drive to benefit the Robyn's Nest program at Children's Wisconsin.



### \$27K in cash, toys, food and other items

The southern Wisconsin stations of Big Radio raised funds for E.C.H.O. and the Rock County Salvation Army.



### \$1.6M and 30K pounds of food

WMTV's 29th annual Share Your Holidays surpassed its goal to support the Second Harvest Foodbank of Southern Wisconsin.



### \$156K for healthy meals

The 13th annual Food for Families holiday food drive hosted by WISN 12 and longtime partner Hunger Task Force equated to more than 10,400 turkeys or 1,000 holiday meal boxes for those in need.



### Coats for Kids

Woodward Community Media partnered with Salvation Army for the 2024 Coats for Kids Campaign.



Read the full stories online at [wi-broadcasters.org/community](http://wi-broadcasters.org/community)

#### FROM WBA'S CHAIR

### Opportunities to engage in 2025

Welcome to the New Year from the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association, and your WBA Chair. As we begin 2025, we're excited for a year filled with growth, opportunities, and stronger connections within our broadcasting community throughout Wisconsin. I'd like to share some upcoming initiatives and invite you to join us in making 2025 a truly

*Continued on page 2 >*



By Aleese Fielder

#### FROM WBA'S PRESIDENT & CEO

### Broadcasters partner to help prevent veteran suicides

I'm proud to have represented our Wisconsin broadcasters at a November announcement of a new effort to prevent veteran suicides. The Medical College of Wisconsin and War Memorial Center received a grant from Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment for the development of a Sustainable Public Awareness Campaign that will be aired through our WBA Public Education Program (PEP). The television and radio messages will begin airing soon.

*Continued on page 2 >*



By Michelle Vetterkind, CAE

## FROM WBA'S CHAIR

Continued from page 1

memorable year.

One of our key events is State Legislative Day on Jan. 22. This provides a valuable opportunity for broadcasters to connect with policymakers and advocate for the issues that are so important to our industry. Your participation will help in shaping the future of broadcasting in Wisconsin, so we encourage all WBA members to save the date and join us for a strong showing that demonstrates the unified voice of Wisconsin broadcasters. If you have not already signed up to join us, please reach out to Kyle.

Looking ahead to Feb. 22, we're thrilled to host our annual Student Forum at the

iconic Lambeau Field. This event connects seasoned professionals with the next generation of broadcasters, offering a fantastic chance to interact with aspiring young talent, share insights, and inspire their journey in broadcasting. The day will also feature a Job Fair from noon to 2 p.m., providing a terrific opportunity for your company to meet potential new hires and showcase career openings within your organization. We hope you'll join us for this exciting event.

The WBA is committed to providing valuable experiences and resources for our members throughout 2025. Whether you're engaging with policymakers, mentoring students, or

strengthening your station's team, your involvement is essential to our overall success. We'll be sharing updates and additional events throughout the year, so please stay tuned. And as always, feel free to reach out to the WBA team with any questions or ideas/suggestions.

Let's work together to make 2025 a year of teamwork, innovation, and excellence. Together, we can amplify the voice of broadcasting in Wisconsin!

Wishing you all the best in 2025!

*Aleese Fielder, GM, NRG Media, Wausau/Stevens Point/Rhineland, is the WBA chair.*



## WBA OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### OFFICERS 2024-2025

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**Aleese Fielder** NRG Media, Wausau/Stevens Point/Rhineland

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Vice Chair - Radio

**Jeff Wright** Midwest Communications, Green Bay

Treasurer

**Anna Engelhart** WKOW-TV, Madison

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**Randy Hawke** Mid-West Family, Madison

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**Lupita Montoto** La Movida Radio, Madison

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**Suzanne Hoffman** Sparta/Tomah Broadcasting, Sparta/Tomah

**Betsy Keefe** WSAW-TV, Wausau

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Ex Officio - NAB Board

**Jeanna Berge** iHeartMedia, Eau Claire

### WBA Team

President & CEO

**Michelle Vetterkind, CAE**

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NCSA/PEP Coordinator

**Liz Boyd**

[lboyd@wi-broadcasters.org](mailto:lboyd@wi-broadcasters.org)

Vice President

**Kyle Geissler, CAE**

[kgeissler@wi-broadcasters.org](mailto:kgeissler@wi-broadcasters.org)

WBA Board minutes are always available for members. Please email Kyle Geissler at [kgeissler@wi-broadcasters.org](mailto:kgeissler@wi-broadcasters.org) to request a copy.

### WBA Diversity Statement

The WBA supports initiatives that improve diversity in broadcasting and creates new opportunities for women, people of color, members of the LGBTQ+ community, and other underrepresented communities. Our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion is evident in our programs and partnerships with diverse leaders through the WBA's Diversity Committee as well as other organizations and leaders in the state of Wisconsin.

## WBA out and about



(L) WMTV-TV News Director Jessica Laszewski spoke at the Wisconsin Society of Association Executives Summit in Madison on a panel about working with the news media. (R) Your WBA Executive Committee met in November in Madison to approve the 2025 WBA budget.

## FROM WBA'S PRESIDENT & CEO

Continued from page 1

This is one of many efforts broadcasters undertake every year to serve important public causes. This is a critical one. Broadcasters are proud to be a part of it.

Read more on opposite page.

### Foundation to recognize Boyd Huppert with endowment

Boyd Huppert's reputation among broadcast journalists is unmatched. He's respected across the country for his storytelling, generosity, and support for the future of broadcast journalism.

Boyd has deep Wisconsin connections and many of those in his network are standing up to contribute to a new WBA Foundation endowment focused on helping the future of broadcast journalism.

The Boyd Huppert Education Debt Assistance Grant and Excellence in Broadcast Writing Competition is both an education debt relief grant, and a cash prize for

college students participating in the WBA Student Awards for Excellence. The aim is to encourage strong writing skills among aspiring broadcast journalists. The grant will launch later this year and the writing award prize will be part of the current WBA Student Awards contest.

If you want to be a part of supporting this endowment, contact the WBA office. You can read more on page 12.

### Lambeau Field, here we come!

Your WBA will be at Lambeau Field in Green Bay for two days' worth of events on Feb. 21-22, and we'd love to see you there.

That Friday, the WBA Young Professionals Committee will host the Toolbox, with an afternoon agenda of relevant topics, followed by a custom tour of Lambeau, including media production facilities.

The Toolbox concludes with a reception at Lambeau, which anyone can join. Find the registration under "Events" on the WBA website.

You might be particularly interested in attending if you're also coming to Lambeau on Saturday for our WBA Student Forum. The agenda for the Forum was just released and we're asking you and our partners to spread the word. Last year we hosted more than 400 high school and college students. We're hoping to build on that success in 2025.

You can find more information and registration for all these events on the WBA website.

We hope to see you in Green Bay and at the many WBA events coming up in 2025.

For now, your WBA wishes you a prosperous and inspiring new year. ●



# 'WBDQA' WBA Awards Deadline is Jan. 10



By Robert Jarzen

Wisconsin: Known for cheese curds and cold winters, die-hard sports fans and home to some of the best broadcasters in the country. But don't take my word for it... the WBA Awards are here to prove it.

I suppose the title of this needs explaining:

WBDQA... Doesn't everyone love acronyms? LOL, maybe not. But this one is appropriate – When Big Deadlines Quickly Arrive!

Remember this when you submit: our submissions are not judged by locals. They are judged by members from other state broadcasters' associations. Your WBA is careful to make sure entries aren't judged by employees of the same company. That means there is no bias, no recognition of voice, and therefore no playing favorites. A win is dictated by the criteria of the category and how well it adheres to those guidelines.

For instance, take the category of "Best Morning Radio Show". The rules read:

**Best Morning Radio Show** This award recognizes the state's best morning show airing between 5 AM - 10 AM. Criteria: Entertainment value, creativity, production value, presentation, and impact. Requirements: Radio show members must be on the staff of the station entering the category at the time the program aired. No syndicated programs, except where the program is syndicated by the station itself. Entry must be up to a 15:00 minute composite of a single day's broadcast. No PDF narrative.

The key part, that I want to focus on, is the section that says, "up to 15 minutes of a single day." Not 16 minutes and not highlights from your favorite bit that happens every Friday and you really wanted to showcase five snippets.

The rules are followed by the judges and followed to a "T".

Nearly every state has their own version of the WBA's. Let me just list the Midwest region:

- Illinois Broadcasters Association (IBA)
- Minnesota Broadcasters Association (MBA)
- Michigan Association of Broadcasters (MAB)
- Iowa Broadcasters Association (IBA)
- Indiana Broadcasters Association (IBA)
- Ohio Association of Broadcasters (OAB)
- Missouri Broadcasters Association (MBA)
- Us! (WBA)

There's a couple with IBA, an OAB and a

MAB... but LGR (Let's Get Real), the WBA has a nice ring to it and quite frankly is the best acronym. IMO. All awards programs vary in size (although the WBA is the largest) and all, at one time or another, have looked to our Wisconsin Broadcaster Association as the role model, adopting changes created over the years by our esteemed broadcaster members. Especially when it comes to participation and attendance at the Awards Gala.

Where am I going with this? **Well, FYI the deadline for submissions is in a few days. Friday Jan. 10, 2025, at 4 p.m.**

Your WBA not only sets the standard for Wisconsin broadcasters but also serves as a model for other Midwest associations. By comparing its rules and judging criteria with those of other states, we see how the WBA drives excellence and fosters creativity.

For me personally, every year, it's about proving to myself that my best work is still ahead of me. Catch me at the Gala this year and we can talk about how many WBAs line the shelf over my 14 years with Audacy here in the Badger State. Bragging rights are epic.

I really admire the television stations present at the Gala every year, because the ones that take home the overall Station of the Year or News Operation of the Year, always have a commercial running on their station the very next day touting their win. And why not? They worked hard in their respective fields and being recognized as the best of the best—'cause that room at the Madison Marriott West is full of a lot of talent—is something to be proud of.

I hope you decide to challenge yourself, or your team, and enter. For me, this year is my biggest challenge as I will have submissions in the radio, digital and television categories. (Note: Because I read the rules, I know I am not allowed to submit in the TV categories as I am in radio, but a television documentary I filmed with Milwaukee's Elizabeth Kay will be submitted by the TV station that aired it. Thank you My24.) So, be sure to read and adhere to the rules and requirements. There are only a few days left, maybe even hours, depending on when you are reading this, to beat the deadline. Don't be disqualified because you went two seconds over. I know it's cold outside, but don't sit on your hands. Whether it's your morning show, that killer script, that TV live broadcast or a commercial that made waves, get your submission in.

GO WISCONSIN!!!



## Effort brings awareness to veteran suicides

The Medical College of Wisconsin and War Memorial Center recently announced the receipt of a grant from Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment for the development of a Sustainable Public Awareness Campaign to prevent veteran suicides.

The project will determine the feasibility of using public education messaging of veteran suicide prevention factors to decrease mental health stigma and encourage lethal means safety through the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association Public Education Program (PEP). The television and radio messages will begin airing soon.

Participating in the announcement were Dr. Bertrand Berger, Assistant Professor, Psychiatry and Behavioral Medicine, Medical College of Wisconsin, Dan Buttery, CEO, War Memorial Center and Michelle Vetterkind, CEO, Wisconsin Broadcasters Association.



# Major AI Events in 2024



By Chris Brunt

The past year has been marked by rapid advancements in AI, presenting both opportunities and challenges for broadcasters around the country. As AI technologies evolve, they are reshaping content creation, audience engagement, and operational efficiency. Here's a look at the key developments and their implications for Wisconsin broadcasters.

## New Tech Releases

Major AI platforms launched transformative updates in 2024: OpenAI's GPT-4o significantly reduced inaccuracies and became freely accessible. Google released two major updates to Gemini, while Meta and X introduced major AI tools, expanding options for content creators.

AI tools now offer more precise content generation; they hallucinate less and put out text that is more sophisticated than what

they generated in 2023. While not perfect, they provide broadcasters with the ability to produce content faster and more efficiently.

## AI-Driven Content Creation

This year saw breakthroughs in content-specific tools:

- **Udio and Suno** introduced text-to-music platforms that generate songs almost instantly—already adopted by broadcasters for production elements.

- **OpenAI and Adobe** launched text-to-video tools, used by blue-chip companies like Coca-Cola's with their Christmas commercial.

- **Google's NotebookLM** unveiled a podcast-generation tool, creating AI-driven explainers on user-specified topics.

For broadcasters, AI has become an essential resource for idea generation, writing copy, transcriptions, and more—particularly in smaller teams with limited time and staff. As accuracy improves, these tools will only grow in utility in 2025.

## AI's Impact on Revenue

AI's "Wild West" era is maturing.

Lawsuits by media companies have given way to major licensing deals: News Corp signed a \$250 million contract with OpenAI, and Reddit secured \$60 million annually from Google for AI training content.

Broadcasters hold valuable, truthful content—essential for AI training. This creates opportunities for new revenue streams as AI platforms look to license reliable data to improve their systems.

## Challenges & Ethical Considerations

Despite its promise, AI still presents challenges:

- **Misinformation:** AI "hallucinations" remain a concern, undermining public trust.

- **Public Perception:** Coca-Cola's AI-driven ad received backlash, highlighting a consumer preference for human-driven content. Research by many firms, including Jacobs Media, consistently shows that audiences reject AI replacements for people but accept AI tools that enhance content.

- **Fair Compensation:** Ethical use requires ensuring creators—songwriters, photographers, journalists—are fairly compensated when their work trains AI models.

Broadcasters must use AI responsibly, balancing technological benefits with obligations to their audience and the public at-large.

## Preparing for the Future

Success in this AI-driven era depends on enhancing—not replacing—the human elements that make broadcasting impactful. With fierce competition from digital marketers who are rapidly adopting and developing AI tools, Wisconsin broadcasters must continue to embrace AI solutions in 2025 that strengthen our mission to inform and serve our audiences. As trusted community voices, authenticity and public trust remain paramount.

*The WBA Digital Hotline is a free service of the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association and is available to all members – contact Chris Brunt at Jacobs Media at [chris@jacobsmedia.com](mailto:chris@jacobsmedia.com) with any digital questions you have. Receive Jacobs Media's free weekly newsletter on AI – The AI Edge – by contacting Your WBA.*

## Names in the News



Ayisi

PBS Wisconsin News and ICT (formerly Indian Country Today) have named **Erica Ayisi** as an Indigenous Affairs Multimedia Reporter

for a collaborative partnership between PBS Wisconsin and ICT's parent company, IndiJ Public Media. In her new role, Ayisi will work with PBS Wisconsin and ICT to produce news content and reporting on issues from Indigenous communities in Wisconsin. This reporting will be published online and shared on social media and broadcast platforms by both organizations.



Nolle

A senior marketing consultant at a Green Bay TV station is marking a milestone. On Nov. 15, **John Nolle** is celebrating 25 years at WLUX FOX 11.



Everman

Green Bay areas culinary professional **Jyll Everman** is the new host of WLUX-TV's long-running lifestyle program, FOX 11 Living. Everman gained

national exposure as a finalist on season seven of Food Network's "Next Food Network Star." She has more than 20 years of experience in the business of combining food with family. The station said Everman is passionate about combining her farm-to-table cooking knowledge with sharing news about shopping locally and highlighting community involvement and connection.



Mendez

Kenosha native **Adriana Mendez** has been named to a co-anchor post on the TMJ4 (WTMJ-TV) morning newscast in Milwaukee. Mendez is anchoring alongside Tom Durian weekday mornings from 5 a.m. to 7 a.m. She's been the traffic anchor on the show since 2019. She started her new role on Dec. 9.



Carlson

**Sarah Carlson** is returning to the anchor desk at News 3 Now (WISC-TV) in Madison, marking a comeback over epilepsy. After an 11-year hiatus, Carlson is returning to co-anchor the 6 p.m. and 10 p.m. newscasts alongside Eric Franke. Carlson stepped away in 2013 to focus on her health. Carlson said her epilepsy is better controlled and she is ready to return to her true passion, reporting the news.



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Find out how the **BFOA** can help broadcasters in your community.

LEARN MORE [www.broadcastersfoundation.org](http://www.broadcastersfoundation.org)



# Educational Sessions | Career Fair | Networking



## WISCONSIN BROADCASTERS STUDENT *Forum* AT LAMBEAU FIELD

**Saturday, Feb. 22**  
Registration Opens at 8 a.m.

**\$25 Early Bird  
Registration**

**\$35 after Jan. 10**  
Registration Deadline Feb. 10

### 2025 Student Forum Sponsors

#### Roundtables



#### Faculty Lounge



#### Job Fair



#### Keynote



#### Event Space



#### WBA Partner



**Learn more and register!**  
Or visit us at [wi-broadcasters.org](http://wi-broadcasters.org)



# AGENDA

## Wisconsin Broadcasters Student Forum

8 a.m. | Doors Open for Attendees - Enter at the Lambeau Field Atrium

8:45 a.m. | Introduction and Orientation

9-9:50 a.m. | First Sessions



### Behind the Scenes: Careers in Broadcasting

You're probably familiar with the public facing jobs in broadcasting, but did you know about the full cast of broadcasters working behind the scenes to make a successful broadcast and broadcast organization? Meet a few of them in this panel discussion.



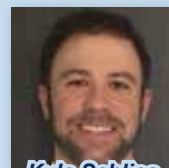
**Kaley Allard**  
Executive Producer,  
WLUK-TV, Green Bay



**Robert Jarzen**  
Creative Services Director,  
Audacy, Midwest Region



**Marty Mangerson**  
Chief Engineer, WJFW-  
TV, Rhinelander



**Kyle Schlies**  
Marketing Consultant,  
WLUK-TV, Green Bay



**Moderator:  
Dr. Rob Snyder**  
UW-Platteville

### Music on the Radio: Programming Strategies

Industry pros from around the state share their station's programming philosophy and give a peek behind the curtain into music programming. Learn how to select adds for different formats, effectively schedule music, and best serve your music-loving audience.



**Ken Scott**  
Operations Manager, Host,  
Kix with Ken in the Morning,  
WJVL-FM, Janesville



**Jordan Lee**  
Senior Director of  
Programming, WYMS-FM,  
Radio Milwaukee



**Kori McKay**  
Program Director WHTQ/  
Morning Show Host, NRG  
Media, Stevens Point/Wausau



**Luis Montoto**  
Program Director, La  
Movida Radio, Madison



**Moderator:  
Kelsey Brannan**  
Director of Student Radio,  
UW-Madison

### Three Things You Should Learn "Write" Now

Boyd Huppert, recipient of an unprecedented 26 national Edward R. Murrow Awards, shares three storytelling techniques that should be in every broadcast writer's toolbox. Put them to work and immediately improve your writing.



**Boyd Huppert**  
KARE-TV, Minneapolis



**Introduction: Mark Zoromski**  
WBA Education Committee Chair

10-10:50 a.m. | Second Sessions

### Making and Marketing A Successful Podcast

How can you cut through the huge catalog of podcasts to be successful? Hear from an array of podcasters from Wisconsin broadcasting who've taken different approaches to both making and marketing their podcasts.



**Bridget Bowden**  
Special Projects Reporter,  
Wisconsin Public Radio



**Tony Categena**  
Executive Producer at ESPN  
Wisconsin and Co-Host of  
Thanasis with Thanasis  
Antetokounmpo



**Bryan Polcyn**  
FOX6 Investigator, FOX 6,  
WITI-TV, Milwaukee



**Alex Strouf**  
On-Air Host/Producer,  
Good Karma Brands,  
Milwaukee



**Moderator:  
Pat Hastings**  
Distinguished Teaching  
Faculty, Emerita,  
UW-Madison

## Women in Sports Broadcasting

Women covering sports occupy a unique space in broadcasting. Hear from the growing ranks of women reporting on your favorite teams.



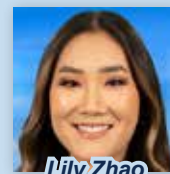
**Ellie French**  
Sports Anchor and Reporter, WLUK-TV, Green Bay



**Jessie Garcia**  
News Director, author, former sportscaster – CBS58 – Telemundo Wisconsin – Milwaukee's first female sports anchor



**Lauren Helmbrecht**  
Anchor and Reporter, Green Bay Nation Host, Local 5 Sports, WFRV-TV, Green Bay



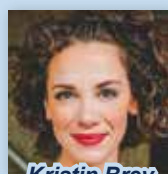
**Lily Zhao**  
Sports Anchor/Reporter, FOX6 WITI-TV, Milwaukee



**Moderator: Justine Stokes**  
Titan TV General Manager, UW-Oshkosh

## Journalism on Social Platforms: New Ways to Connect

Broadcast journalists are finding new and creative ways to use social media to keep their audiences informed and engaged. Meet a group of Wisconsin broadcasters pushing new boundaries telling stories online.



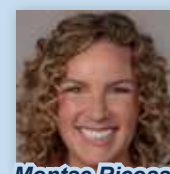
**Kristin Brey**  
Radio Host, 620 WTMJ, Milwaukee and Columnist, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel



**Meryl Hubbard**  
Reporter, WISC-TV, Madison



**Aisha Morales**  
First Alert Safety Desk Anchor, WBAY-TV, Green Bay



**Montse Ricossa**  
Bilingual News Anchor, Senior Producer, Telemundo Wisconsin and CBS 58, Milwaukee



**Moderator: Adam Schrager**  
Teaching Faculty, UW-Madison School of Journalism and Mass Communication

11 a.m.-Noon

**Keynote Address followed by Lunch with Kaitlin Sharkey**



### Keynote Speaker: Kaitlin Sharkey

Kaitlin is a sports anchor and reporter for WGN-TV in Chicago. She graduated from UW-Milwaukee in 2013 with a journalism degree and has worked in several television markets throughout Wisconsin before moving to Chicago in 2020. During the NFL season, Kaitlin is a Bears beat reporter for WGN. She also co-hosts WGN's nightly sports show GN Sports.

## Noon-2 p.m. | Job Fair, Speed Networking, Hands-On Experiences

- Interview Celebrities on Camera
- Get experience in front of a green screen
- Read from a teleprompter on camera
- Call a game on the radio
- Get free headshots
- Practice live radio reads
- Viewing area for photos of historic Lambeau Field!
- Networking for student advisers

## Student Roundtables

### Noon-1pm | TV Roundtables

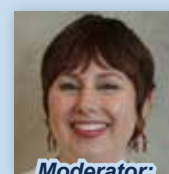
- High school
- Recruitment and retention
- Original programming idea swap
- Managers
- News and sports production roundtable



**Moderator: Justine Stokes**  
Titan TV General Manager, UW-Oshkosh

### 1pm-2pm | Radio Roundtables

- Off-air management (college)
- On-air management (college)
- News and sports (college)
- Creative positions (college)
- Off-air management (high school)
- On-air management (high school)



**Moderator: Kelsey Brannan**  
Director of Student Radio, UW-Madison

## Your MCs

2-3 p.m.

**Scholarship and Award Presentations**



**Elizabeth Kay**  
Host, Elizabeth and Radar Show, 99.1 The Mix WMYX-FM, Milwaukee



**Andrew Haese**  
Afternoon Host, 101 WIXX Green Bay



## Siegler named Wisconsin Public Media Interim Executive Director

Jordan L. Siegler has been named Interim Executive Director of Wisconsin Public Media (WPM), the division at the University of Wisconsin–Madison that oversees PBS Wisconsin and Wisconsin Public Radio (WPR). Siegler currently serves as Associate Director of WPM. The announcement follows the recent death of Executive Director Heather L. Reese.



Siegler

The Upper Peninsula of Michigan native and Madison resident is a graduate of Finlandia University's International School of Art & Design and is a Public Media Diversity Fellow of The Riley Institute at Furman University. Since joining WPM in 2015, Siegler has taken on numerous roles, including Interim Chief Development Officer for WPR and Managing Director of Corporate Giving and Events for PBS Wisconsin.

As Interim Executive Director, Siegler will lead the UW-Madison division of approximately 280 full-time and 60 part-time and student staff, and oversee a budget of \$35 million from multiple and variable revenue sources, including university, state and federal allocations; audience memberships; major and planned gifts; business sponsorships; special events; and sales of goods and services.

"We are all still grieving the loss of Heather, and a change in leadership, especially one that comes after the sudden loss of a colleague, is especially challenging," said Amy Gilman, UW-Madison Senior Director for the Arts and Media. "I am confident Jordan will lead the organization with the same integrity and vision that is the hallmark of WPM leadership. With Jordan's leadership the division will continue to set strategic priorities to ensure that PBS Wisconsin and WPR remain the essential, high-quality services that have such a positive

impact across Wisconsin and help UW-Madison meet its promise of the Wisconsin Idea."

"I have worked with Jordan since he began his public media career and I am inspired by his commitment to our statewide services," said Marta Bechtol, ECB Executive Director. "I look forward to working more closely with him, understanding that although we are grieving, our strategy remains clear and our organization is strong."

"It is a wholehearted honor to answer the call to serve Wisconsin communities through public media and to build upon the remarkable legacies of WPR and PBS Wisconsin," Siegler said. "At the same time, I am deeply saddened by the loss of Heather, my mentor and friend. As executive director, Heather provided a vision for WPM that inspired me, and her coaching and guidance bettered me. Thanks in large part to her, I am now prepared to carry our mission forward with resilience."

## Allan joins WDJT-TV as sports director

Sportscaster Lance Allan joined WDJT-CBS 58 in Milwaukee as sports director, starting Dec. 1.

With more than three decades of experience, Allan brings a wealth of knowledge and passion for Wisconsin sports to CBS 58.

Allan grew up in Rice Lake and is a 1992 graduate of UW-Madison. He has spent 32 years in the industry, including 28 years in Milwaukee. His dedication to sports journalism has earned him recognition as a two-time NSSA Wisconsin Sportscaster of the Year (2005 and 2012).



Allan

"I am excited to join CBS 58 and continue to share my passion for Wisconsin sports with our community, since this is home, where the community is engrained into my soul and means so much to me," Allan said. "I've covered everything from high school athletics to the pros, and I look forward to bringing that experience to our viewers."



## In Remembrance

### La Crosse station mourns loss of Local Broadcast Legend

Long-time La Crosse talk show host Mike Hayes has died, a few months after being diagnosed with terminal pancreatic cancer.



Hayes

Hayes was a familiar figure in La Crosse broadcasting for nearly 40 years. The Michigan native had worked on radio in several cities before arriving at WIZM in June of 1986. Hayes had hosted "La Crosse Talk" mornings on WIZM-AM from that time until a few

weeks ago, according to the station.

Hayes also carried his show over to the weekends, hosting the "Mike's Market" buy-and-trade program on WIZM on Saturday mornings. On Thursday mornings, he celebrated his love for cooking on the weekly "Coulee Region Cooks" show.

In a message to fans in September, Hayes publicly revealed his health situation and said he was making plans to get back into the studio. He concluded the message with a familiar line from his program, "Don't forget to hug your kids."

Hayes was inducted as a WBA Local Broadcast Legend in 2022.

## Two promoted at Mid-West Family Madison

Mid-West Family Madison has promoted Randy Hawke to the position of General Manager and Lyndsey Bishop to the position of Vice President of Business Development.



Hawke



Bishop

Hawke has been a cornerstone of Mid-West Family Madison for more than 22 years. As General Manager, Hawke will oversee the day-to-day operations of the stations/company, working closely with the leadership team.

Bishop first made a lasting impact at Mid-West Family Madison from 2014 to 2017 and returned in May 2023. In her new role, she will spearhead efforts to identify and expand new business opportunities, forging strategic partnerships, and building new revenue streams. She will work closely with the sales team to focus on growth and retention. Bishop will also play a role in recruitment.

"We are incredibly excited about the future of Mid-West Family Madison with these leadership changes," said Tom Walker, President of Mid-West Family Madison. "Randy and Lyndsey are both passionate and accomplished professionals who have long been integral to our team."



# Wade retires from WISN-TV

The president and general manager of WISN-TV in Milwaukee, Jan Wade, retired at the end of 2024, capping a career of more than four decades at leading television stations in seven major markets.

"Leveraging her deep industry experience, Jan has led WISN to a consistent level of excellence and quality in all facets of the organization while further solidifying its position as Milwaukee's news leader," said Michael J. Hayes, Hearst Television president. "Jan is a broadcaster and she has led by example while expanding and strengthening WISN's important role in the community."

"I feel blessed to have spent the past four decades working in a profession that I am so passionate about," Wade said. "I am also greatly honored



Wade

to have worked beside many valued and talented colleagues all along the way. I will cherish them. I am also particularly grateful to have spent the past several years with Hearst Television. Finally, it is my hope that I have made a small difference in the stations and the communities I've served."

Wade was Milwaukee's first female television general manager and, under her leadership, WISN – which recently celebrated its 70th anniversary – substantially expanded its local news and programming. During her time there, WISN expanded weekday morning news, adding newscasts at 4:30 a.m. and 11 a.m., as well as afternoon and evening newscasts at 4 p.m. and 9 p.m. The station also added an award-winning Sunday morning public affairs program, "Upfront," and a weekly sports magazine show, "Big 12 Sports Saturday."

During Wade's time at the station and for more than five years, it has

earned numerous awards, including multiple regional Edward R. Murrow Awards and a national Murrow, and the 2023 News Operation of the Year designation from the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association, which also has named WISN Station of the Year 10 times since Wade's 2007 arrival.

In recognition of its community service efforts, WISN earned the prestigious Service to America Award from the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) Leadership Foundation in 2021 for helping raise more than \$1 million to benefit The Hunger Task Force's work to feed Milwaukee citizens impacted by the pandemic.

Prior to joining Hearst Television in 2007 as president and general manager of WISN-TV, Wade served as president and general manager of WATE-TV, the ABC affiliate in Knoxville, Tennessee.

*Continued on back page >*

# Oswald named to lead WISN-TV

Longtime Hearst Television executive Shawn Oswald has been named president and general manager of WISN-TV, Hearst Television's ABC affiliate in Milwaukee. He succeeds Jan Wade, who is retired at year-end.



Oswald

Since 2020, Oswald has served as president and general manager of KETV, Hearst Television's ABC affiliate in Omaha, Nebraska. Before that, he was president and general manager of KHBS-TV/KHOG-TV and The Arkansas CW, the Hearst Television ABC and CW affiliates, respectively, serving the Fayetteville and Fort Smith, Arkansas, television market. The announcement marks a return for Oswald to WISN, where he was the national sales manager from 1998 to 2000.

"Shawn is an experienced Hearst Television leader who brings a

record of success with him back to WISN," said Michael J. Hayes, Hearst Television president. "He draws from a diverse background in complex and competitive markets. Over the last decade, his teams have consistently delivered in news, sales, and community service initiatives."

Among many accomplishments, Oswald continued KETV's legacy of success in Omaha. In 2024 alone, KETV earned the Nebraska Broadcasters Association Station of the Year Award, four regional Edward R. Murrow awards, and the prestigious National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) Service to America Award, for its news coverage, as well as the NAB Leadership Foundation's Celebration of Service to America Award for its "Voices of Gen Z" teen summit.

At KHBS/KHOG, Oswald di-

rected numerous developments including the highly successful premiere of the market's MeTV affiliate, using one of the stations' digital channels, and the launch of local newscasts on the stations' CW affiliate, The Arkansas CW. He oversaw a newsroom build-out, nearly tripling the space dedicated to newsgathering, while also leading a rejuvenation of the stations' sales, marketing, and promotion strategies. The stations achieved ratings growth and numerous journalism awards; KHBS/KHOG-TV's 40/29 News earned several regional Emmy awards for news and weather, among other categories, as well as regional Edward R. Murrow Awards for sports reporting and its website. Oswald also nurtured and expanded several community-service efforts including the annual holiday Turkey Drive with the Northwest Arkansas Food Bank and a back-to-school backpack giveaway, which is now in its 12th year.

# WISC-TV's Lyle Banks retires

After 40 years of leadership, WISC vice president and general manager Lyle Banks retired at the end of the year.

Banks has had a sweeping and successful career as a broadcasting executive, entrepreneur, interim executive and board member



Banks

for major media, healthcare, digital, for-profit and non-profit organizations. He has led teams at some of the largest TV markets in the country.

He joined WISC-TV in 2020 as general manager saying it was always his goal to work at Morgan Murphy Media. "I knew they provided a work culture that would be very compatible with my values."

"Joining the company did not disappoint and I've met so many colleagues that I now consider friends for life," Banks said.

Banks is a decorated broadcaster who has selflessly donated his time and expertise through community and broadcasting boards of directors. Additionally, he has had considerable board and trusteeship experience with roles at major media and healthcare organizations. He's previously served on National Association of Broadcasters TV Board of Directors and sat on the WBA Board of Directors.

Banks is a graduate both of General Electric's exclusive Executive Development Course and the NAB's Broadcast Leadership Training program.

He has mentored hundreds through his career through board and professional relationships.

"Lyle has been a friend for decades and it was so exciting to be able to work with him directly for the past four years," said Elizabeth Murphy Burns, Morgan Murphy Media president and chief executive officer. "We wish him the very best in retirement."



# Young Professionals of the Month

Young professionals are making their mark on broadcasting in Wisconsin and the WBA is recognizing them. The WBA Young Professional of the Month is a nominee for the WBA Young Professional of the Year Award. The award seeks to recognize young broadcasters who have made a significant impact on their stations and communities. A subcommittee of the WBA Board of Directors will select the Young Professional of the Year, who will be recognized at the 2025 WBA Summer Conference on June 18 in La Crosse. Meet November and December's Young Professionals of the Month below.

Nominate here:



## Kelsey Brannan



Company  
**WSUM at UW–Madison**

Position  
**Director of Student Radio**

Years at station  
**7 (three as director, four as student)**

Started in broadcasting  
**2011**

Kelsey was nominated by the UW-Madison James E. Burgess Chair in Journalism Ethics, Katy Culver, who wrote of Kelsey, "Kelsey's stewardship at WSUM epitomizes excellence in leadership, task effectiveness and relational skills. Her exceptional organizational skills and work ethic navigated WSUM through difficult circumstances, producing a string of impressive accomplishments. She is a dedicated mentor along WSUM students' pathways through the UW and out into the professional world."

"Kelsey goes beyond the call of duty by delivering guest lectures on interviewing, media production, and the radio industry to UW courses," Culver also wrote. "She also manages WSUM educational programs that provide broadcasting experiences to develop the communication and technology skills of K-12 students."

Brannan is also a member of the WBA Education Committee and helps organize student roundtables at the Student Forum at Lambeau Field.

### How did you get into broadcasting?

I'm proud to have come full circle to now lead the station that gave me my start in radio. I joined WSUM when I was a student at UW-Madison in hopes of finding a sense of community on a big campus. The experience of hosting radio shows and serving as the station's program director was so transformative that I ended up changing my career path to pursue my love of broadcasting. After graduating, I went on to hold leadership positions at The Current from Minnesota Public Radio and KEXP in Seattle. I've held a few "dream jobs" over the years, but the best one yet is to serve as Director of Student Radio at UW-Madison. I love being in an exciting college radio environment and I feel fortunate to be surrounded by students who are so passionate about their work.

### How do you view the role of young professionals in broadcasting?

At the risk of evoking a Whitney Houston-style ballad, I do believe that young professionals are the future of our industry. The field of broadcasting is constantly in flux with new technologies, content platforms, listener trends, and business models. Those willing to embrace change are the ones poised to become much-needed thought leaders in the industry. Those able to center values such as diversity, equity, and inclusion in their work are well-positioned to shepherd positive change. I feel energized when I can connect and collaborate with other young professionals who share my passion for being a force for good and growth within the broadcasting industry.

### What advice would you give to other young broadcasters?

My students would say that the advice I give most often is "save your work!" However, the best advice I can offer is to take care of yourself. Maintaining a good work-life balance is essential. Many broadcasters pay a hefty passion tax and feel the weight of the responsibility to inform, educate, and entertain the public. Being able to answer this call in a meaningful and ongoing way requires a sustainable approach to your work. Make sure your basic human needs are met, even through the long hours. Take time away to fill your cup amongst loved ones. Find joy in hobbies and recreation outside of work. The ability to show up as your whole, grounded self in the workplace will shine through and elevate your work.

### What does the future of broadcasting look like to you?

To me, it is imperative that the future of broadcasting look – and truly be – diverse. Broadcasters need to prioritize amplifying voices, experiences, and stories from every corner of their community and create opportunities to showcase such content on a variety of platforms. The power of broadcasting is based in community, and we need that now more than ever.

## Adam Roberts



Company  
**Good Karma Brands - Newsradio 620 WTMJ, Milwaukee**

Position  
**Reporter/Co-Host**

Years at station  
**2**  
Started in broadcasting  
**2010**

Adam was nominated by 620 WTMJ news director Tiff Pua, who describes him as a "Swiss Army knife" of the newsroom.

"As a reporter, he's highly skilled in providing in-depth and quality interviews, analysis, and storytelling to the information we provide to our audience. But more importantly, he is willing to challenge himself in subject areas he may not be knowledgeable in to bring the most comprehensive story to our listeners," Tiff wrote.

"He's adept at breaking news, severe weather, traffic updates, and general assignment reporting as well as filling-in as an anchor or show co-host as the need arises."

"He continues to grow his leadership skills in the newsroom by training and guiding new staff on newsroom operations, and actively looks for opportunities to grow his career and management skill set."

"Adam's best quality is his wild creativity, which allows him to think outside the normal news storytelling box and challenge the traditional method of news storytelling. He is someone that will make for a great news leader in whatever areas he chooses in the future, as his level of passion for news makes him someone that people want to be around and learn from."

### How did you get into broadcasting?

My interest in broadcasting started with watching the 6:00 news on WBAY in Green Bay and TMJ4 in Milwaukee at my grandparent's house. I also recall that WTMJ was always on the radio whenever they would drive me around. From there, I would practice baseball play-by-



play while watching Brewers games and took broadcasting classes that were offered during my one semester at Fond du Lac High School. I'd even count delivering the morning announcements and lunch menu at St. Mary's Springs as early broadcasting experience. Eventually, I got my first opportunity for limited on-air time while running the board at WMDC in Mayville.

#### **How do you view the role of young professionals in broadcasting?**

Young professionals offer organizations both energy on-air, as well as an unfettered hunger to achieve big results and prove ourselves. But they also play an important role of offering fresh perspectives to veterans in the industry. Perhaps the best example of this is the different ways young professionals in broadcasting incorporate social media and the internet into their craft. As the next generation of broadcasters, we have a responsibility to employ these elements responsibly, while also not falling on them as a crutch to replace old fashioned reporting techniques and practices.

#### **What advice would you give to other young broadcasters?**

Never be afraid to stop learning. The minute you think you've mastered the craft, or are at the top of the game, there will always be someone new gunning for your spot. We can learn so much by acknowledging what we DON'T know. Also, while prioritizing a work-life balance is important for your physical and mental health, take every opportunity you can to try something new. In my time as a broadcaster, I've hosted remote broadcasts at dairy breakfasts, commentated professional wrestling matches, and learned the art of producing a three-hour news talk show. Every opportunity you take is another chance to learn a new skill!

#### **What does the future of broadcasting look like to you?**

I believe the future of broadcasting will be determined by how all-in local organizations want to be in keeping local news and local stories a priority. Companies that make investments in young talent who are passionate about sharing the stories happening in their communities will be viewed most favorably in the eyes and ears of the listener. The future of broadcasting will also be HEAVILY influenced by how much technology is allowed to replace human work. The advent of programs like ChatGPT and other artificial intelligence makes it more imperative than ever that human beings still play a role in media. Finally, the future of broadcasting will also include more required effort from those on-air to utilize critical thinking when hearing a report, receiving a tip, or viewing a picture or video online to ensure what we're seeing and hearing is what's actually taking place.

## ***Diversity Column & Calendar***

# **Dr. King and the beloved community**



By Maxie C. Jackson III,  
Radio Milwaukee

We live during a time of great division in our society. Whether division over race, politics, and/or class, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. would

ask us to take up the radical act of finding redemption and reconciliation by employing love. Yes, L.O.V.E.. In particular, the Love of thy neighbor.

Dr. King adopted "The Beloved Community" from philosopher-theologian Josiah Royce and the author/Buddhist Belle Hooks, including the reference in many of his speeches in 1957. King defined the "Beloved Community" as a society where people recognize the value of others and are motivated by love and compassion. He envisioned a world where racism and discrimination would be replaced by an all-inclusive spirit of brotherhood and sisterhood. King believed that nonviolence was the only way to achieve the Beloved Community. He said that the aftermath of violence leads to bitterness and brutality, while nonviolence leads to reconciliation and the creation of the Beloved Community.

Some would argue Dr. King is amongst the greatest America has ever produced. A man, like too few, willing to die for a cause greater than himself. Some would argue that America has only been a true Democracy for 60 years, coinciding with the passing of the Civil Rights Law of 1964. Whether you are an African-American who has witnessed the erosion

of gains earned through the civil rights movement or a European-American who feels like the world is changing too quickly, King would argue against the violent rhetoric that informed our recent election cycle and distorted notions of WOKE and Critical Race Theory by intervening with the nonviolent advance of the "Beloved Community". No doubt, he'd offer the same for Native, Hispanic and Asian Americans questioning exactly when was America Great? I imagine King would also have compassion for poverty stricken white communities who feel disenfranchised once the racial dog whistles fade out and leave them still in their sunken impoverished state. He'd acknowledge that all are deserving of equality, dignity and humanity. A community wherein we appreciate the differences amongst our patch quilt American democratic experiment and seek a higher ground where opportunity, acceptance and belonging thrive.

As the Executive Director of Radio Milwaukee, I've shared the concept of the "Beloved Community" with my staff at minimum on a quarterly basis. Through music and stories created for a culturally open-minded community, Radio Milwaukee is a catalyst for creating a better, more inclusive and engaged Milwaukee. No easy mission statement considering our organic social circles and social conditioning. To bring our mission to life, we have to desire a deeper curiosity and engagement with the other in pursuit of a love for one another. As you honor Dr. Mar-

tin Luther King Jr., know that while his dream remains deferred, our individual acts of love, redemption, and reconciliation are a pathway to E Pluribus Unum (out of many, one).

## **JANUARY**

**National Poverty Awareness Month**

**Slavery and Human Trafficking Prevention Month**

**National Mentoring Month**

**National Braille Day**  
Jan. 4, 2025

**Korean American Day**  
Jan. 13, 2025

**World Religion Day**  
Jan. 19, 2025

**Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**  
Jan. 20, 2025

**National Day for Racial Healing**  
Jan. 21, 2025

**International Day of Education**  
Jan. 24, 2025

**International Holocaust Remembrance Day**  
Jan. 27, 2025

**Chinese New Year (Year of the Snake)**  
Jan. 29, 2025

## **FEBRUARY**

**Black History Month**

**National Freedom Day**  
Feb. 1, 2025

**Rosa Parks Day**  
Feb. 1, 2025

**International Day of Women & Girls in Science**  
Feb. 11, 2025

**World Day of Social Justice**  
Feb. 20, 2025

# Grant, competition prize to be established in Boyd Huppert's name

Award-winning and widely acclaimed broadcast journalist Boyd Huppert is being recognized by the WBA Foundation with the establishment of an education debt assistance grant for broadcast journalists and a writing competition prize in his name.



Huppert

Fundraising for the Boyd Huppert Education Debt Assistance Grant and Excellence in Broadcast Writing Competition will be led by longtime friends and supporters of Huppert, including WBA Education Committee Chair Mark Zorowski.

"So many of us owe a great deal of our success to my dear friend Boyd, his exceptional writing, and his willingness to help others excel at crafting compelling journalistic narratives," Zorowski said. "He was the key to

my success in the classroom – students were so inspired by his stories that he became a hero to them."

WBA Foundation President and CEO Michelle Vetterkind said this is the perfect way to recognize Huppert's impact on broadcast journalism.

"Boyd has been an inspiration for so many broadcast journalists throughout his career, we hope the grant and writing competition inspire a new generation to aspire to Boyd's high standards for quality, creative journalism and public service," Vetterkind said.

Applications for the Education Debt Assistance grant for broadcast journalists will be accepted starting March 1. The \$2,000 grant is aimed at helping post-secondary school graduates working in broadcast journalism with their educational debt. The application will be available on the WBA Foundation website no later than March 1.

The Broadcast Writing Competition will be a part of the WBA Student Awards for Excellence, which opened Dec. 1 and closes Jan. 10.

Newly revamped news writing categories for TV and radio will now include a cash prize of \$250 for first place, \$100 for second place, and \$50 for third place. The awards will be presented at the WBA Student Forum at Lambeau Field on Feb. 22.

"As the beneficiary of a Wisconsin education, I am honored to have my name associated with this WBA writing award and debt forgiveness grant," Huppert said. "I'm delighted for the students and young professionals this will help."

Huppert grew up on a dairy farm outside of River Falls and got his start in broadcasting as a 16-year-old announcer at his hometown radio station, WEVR. He majored in journalism and political science at UW-River Falls and began his television career in 1984 at WSAW-TV in Wausau. Huppert worked at two more TV stations, KETV-TV in Omaha and WITI-TV in Milwaukee, before joining KARE-TV in Minneapolis in 1996.

At KARE, Huppert produces and hosts the weekly "Land of 10,000 Stories" segment, one of the most

beloved television franchises in the country. He conducts storytelling seminars at local stations and networks worldwide, as well as at journalism conferences across the country.

Huppert courageously continues his extraordinary work while battling multiple myeloma, a rare blood cancer with no known cure.

Donations to the fund supporting these initiatives can be made here. Please be sure to check the box to indicate that the donation is for the Boyd Huppert Education Debt Assistance Grant and Excellence in Broadcast Writing Competition. Be sure to check with your employer to see if it matches charitable donations.



## Grant offers college debt relief for broadcasters

\$3,000 available to individuals to help pay student loans; applications accepted

Applications are now being accepted for the Results Broadcasting Education Debt Assistance Grant to help broadcasters pay off their student loans. This \$3,000 grant is available to individuals currently employed in Wisconsin broadcasting or related media.

Applications will be accepted Jan. 1 through Feb. 28.

### Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- **Must be currently employed at a Wisconsin broadcast radio, television or related media company**
- **Must submit a letter of support from the current employer signed by the local manager**
- **Must have completed a minimum of one year employment with a Wisconsin broadcast radio station, television station, or related media company**
- **Must provide proof of attendance at a university, college, technical school or broadcast school by supplying a copy of transcripts or degree certificate**
- **Company must be a dues paying member of the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association**
- **Must provide proof of current loan balance (documentation will remain confidential).**

"Results Broadcasting is so proud of the dedicated men and women in the Wisconsin over

the air radio and TV industry working in all phases of the business," wrote Results Broad-

casting owner and WBA Hall of Famer Bruce Grassman. "It is an opportunity to help people with some of their student debt and to let them know they are part of the greatest state of broadcasters...Wisconsin. Results Broadcasting is proud to continue this award for many years to come."

Thank you to the Grassmans for their support of broadcasting in Wisconsin.

**Apply Now:**





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Association  
Foundation  
Officers & Board  
of Directors**

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David Sanks  
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Broadcaster

Chuck Steinmetz  
Retired Wisconsin  
Broadcaster

# Enrollment open for 2025 Walker Management Institute

This year's session will be held April 15-17 in Madison

The 26th Walker Broadcast Management Institute is set for April 15-17 on the UW-Madison campus. Enrollment is now open and seats are available.

The 2025 Institute marks the second year of another 3-year cycle (although you may join the cycle

at any time) and is designed for broadcast managers and those seeking or being prepared for broadcast management positions.

For registration information please call the WBA office: 608-255-2600.

## AGENDA

### Day 1

#### Financial Management for Broadcasters

- How do you evaluate lease vs. buy in capital acquisition?
- How do you value a broadcast property for sale? For purchase?
- How do you make crucial financial decisions related to debt? Equity? Venture capital?
- What is the effect of different ownership structures?
- How does the stock market value shares of stock?



Presented by **Tom Walker**, MBA, CPA, Mid-West Family, Madison

**(Evening - dinner with  
group - Porta Bella)**

### Day 2

#### Communication and Delegation Skills

This course explores your behavioral style and how this style influences your effectiveness at work. We'll also explore strategies for strengthening our communications with others and

introduce a model for delegating tasks to others. You'll leave this session with a plan for leveraging your behavioral style, enhancing your communication skills, and delegating a specific task to someone on your team.



Presented by **Jeff Russell**, (MS, UW-Madison) co-director of Russell Consulting, Inc. Russell specializes in helping organizations

achieve their goals by successfully responding to the challenges of continuous change. With a focus on leadership, strategic thinking, leading change, and performance coaching, Jeff has guided organizations as diverse as Fortune 500 firms, social and public sector organizations, and small family businesses toward their goals. Jeff received his Masters Degree in Industrial Relations from the UW-Madison where he serves as an ad hoc faculty member for the Small Business Development Center. Jeff also is an adjunct faculty member at UW-Milwaukee, and UW-La Crosse.

Jeff and his wife and business partner Linda have co-authored nine books. Recent publications include: Change Training, Strategic Planning Training, Change Basics, Strategic Planning 101, Ultimate Performance Management, and, most recently, Fearless Performance Reviews (McGraw-Hill, 2012). For more information on Jeff and his work, visit Russell Consulting, Inc.'s website at [www.RussellConsultingInc.com](http://www.RussellConsultingInc.com).

*Continued on page 14 >*

# Walker Management Institute

## AGENDA cont'd

### Day 2: Evening Guest Speakers at the Fluno Center

#### Generational Workforce

Highlighting the history and impact of CultureCon (CultureConUSA.org), we'll dive into lessons learned from fostering inclusivity and collaboration across generations. Explore the evolving dynamics of generational differences in the workplace and how they shape modern company culture in this engaging talk. Gain insights that inspire stronger connections and innovation in your organization.

Presented by **Zach Blumenfeld** and **Nick Lombardino**, co-founders, CultureCon LLC



**Zach Blumenfeld** is a seasoned entrepreneur with a proven track record of launching and exiting multiple businesses, gaining invaluable

experience along the way. Passionate about growing businesses, Zach's expertise lies in growth, sales strategy, innovation, and workplace culture, where he has consistently proven himself as a thought leader.

Zach has scaled companies across various industries, with particular expertise in company culture, pet insurance, InsurTech, FinTech, SaaS, and HR tech. His motto, "Make What You Do Matter," speaks volumes about how he leads his life and his commitment to improving the lives of others. These qualities influenced the start of CultureCon, a movement dedicated to enhancing workplace culture.

Outside of work, Zach is passionate about travel, sports (Go Badgers!), collecting sports cards, and lunch buffets.



Born and raised in Madison, **Nick Lombardino** is an imaginative social entrepreneur and community builder with extensive experience scaling organizations that

drive positive change for individuals, companies, and communities. With widespread professional services experience, Nick has been in leadership roles spanning marketing, business development, operations, human resources, and finance.

In addition to his work at CultureCon, Nick is a faculty member at Edgewood College, teaching social entrepreneurship and small business management. Prior to joining CultureCon full-time, Nick was a member of the leadership team at FarWell, responsible for creating, developing, and implementing the organization's EX strategies.

Outside of work (or during work), Nick is passionate about cribbage, soul music, lunch buffets, and just about anything you'd find in a senior living community.

### Day 3

#### Leading Change in the Workplace

This course is designed to empower you with the knowledge and skills to effectively drive, navigate and lead change within your organization.

Throughout the day, you'll delve into the nuances of discussing change in the workplace, gaining a deep understanding of its various impacts on employees. You'll explore how to appreciate and adapt your natural leadership style to better support your team during transitions.

Effective communication is key to successful change management, and you'll learn strategies to enhance your communication skills. Additionally, we'll cover techniques to measure the effects of change, ensuring you can track progress

and make informed decisions.

Finally, you'll discover how to build a culture of continuous improvement and innovation, positioning yourself as a leader who can drive and sustain positive change.

Presented by **Michelle Somes-Booher**

**Michelle Somes-Booher** is the Director of the Wisconsin Small Business Development Center at UW Madison. The WI SBDC at UW-Madison provides no-cost consulting and training for entrepreneurs.

In addition to her role as Director, Michelle consults with hundreds of clients annually. She works primarily with established businesses and has expertise in management and strategy. She assists founders in improving operations, increasing sales, and incorporating sound financial practices as they grow. Her clients have been featured on Shark Tank, The White House Demo Days, Wisconsin Governor's Business Plan Competition, Wisconsin Innovation Awards, SBA National Showcase, and spotlighted in numerous local, state and national publications. Michelle was named the Wisconsin SBDC State Star in 2020 and the center is the 2024 SBA Great Lakes Region Excellence and Innovation Award recipient.

She understands what it takes to grow a successful business, as she has four generations of entrepreneurs in her family and has also owned her own small business. Furthermore, she has significant experience in teaching entrepreneurship and management in higher and continuing education. She approaches her role with an entrepreneurial mindset and drives innovation within the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Michelle holds a BSBA in Management and Interpersonal and Public Communication, as well as a MBA from Central Michigan University.

*We would like to extend our deepest appreciation to the estate of William R. Walker which graciously donated funds to endow the WBA Foundation Management Institute. The gift is the largest single contribution ever received by the Foundation.*



# Nominations open for WBA Hall of Fame, Local Broadcast Legends

Nominations are now open for the WBA Hall of Fame and the Local Broadcast Legends. The WBA Hall of Fame Committee made a number of changes to the process starting with the 2025 cycle:

- A nominee for the Hall of Fame can now be a person that has contributed to the growth and success of broadcasting through areas such as teaching, technical development, consulting, and service to the broadcasting industry.
- Nominations can now be made by the general public for the Hall of Fame and Local Broadcast Legends.
- To be eligible for the Hall of Fame, nominees must have served a minimum of 20 years in, or in support of, Wisconsin broadcasting.
- To be eligible for the Local Broadcast Legends, nominees must have served a minimum of 20 years at one specific Wisconsin station, or in one specific Wisconsin community or market.

Nominations for both recognitions must be submitted through an online form (see QR codes).

Nominations are due on Jan. 15. The 2025 Hall of Fame inductees will be recognized

at the WBA Hall of Fame dinner on June 19.

The 2025 Local Broadcast Legends will be recognized at a luncheon on June 19. Both events are a part of the WBA Summer Conference which will be held at the La Crosse Radisson.

The Wisconsin Broadcasters Hall of Fame was established in 1989 and formally dedicated by then FCC Chairman Alfred Sikes. Its purpose is to honor individuals who have dedicated their professional lives to the advancement of broadcasting in Wisconsin. Since then, 164 broadcasters have been inducted.

The Wisconsin Broadcasters Association Local Broadcast Legends Award was established in 2015 under the direction of Bruce Grassman, who at the time was owner/president of Results Radio. The Local Broadcast Legends Award is a great honor and recognition for individuals that work behind the scenes and within their communities fulfilling the commitment broadcasters have made to serve their local communities. They are individuals that exemplify localism. This award is a means to extend recognition of these individuals beyond their local communities.



Hall of Fame  
nomination forms:  
[wbafoundation.org/hall-of-fame/hall-of-fame-nomination-form](http://wbafoundation.org/hall-of-fame/hall-of-fame-nomination-form)



Legends  
nomination forms:  
[wi-broadcasters.org/awards/local-broadcast-legends](http://wi-broadcasters.org/awards/local-broadcast-legends)

## Applications accepted for Student Leadership Award

The "WBA Student Leadership Award" is given to a broadcasting or broadcast journalism student of junior standing or above at a Wisconsin college or university who has most noticeably developed and exercised effective and creative skills in leadership.

The student must be nominated in writing by an adviser, supervisor or faculty member. The nomination letter must include specific examples when citing how the student meets the following criteria:

- Is actively involved in a student broadcasting

community;

- Demonstrated instances where they provided a positive influence;
- Demonstrated instances where they motivated others to accomplish a mission, despite challenges or obstacles;
- Encouraged others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of a broadcast-related organization or project;
- Goes consistently above and beyond the scope of their job or project assignment;
- Demonstrated the ability to lead in an ethical

and moral manner.

**The student must also submit a 2-3 page paper describing how their experiences in student media have shaped them as a leader or helped them develop a leadership style.**

WBA Student Leadership Award nominations should be sent by Jan. 15, 2025 directly to: Kyle Geissler at [kgeissler@wi-broadcasters.org](mailto:kgeissler@wi-broadcasters.org).



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## WADE RETIRES FROM WISN-TV

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see. Before that, she served in various roles in top TV stations in Nashville, Tampa, Providence and Minneapolis. She began her career as an assistant promotion manager at Louisville CBS affiliate WLKY-TV, which was later acquired by Hearst.

Among industry duties, she

was board chair of the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association and as a member of its Executive Committee and co-chair of its Diversity and Inclusion Committee. She served for five years on the ABC TV Board of Governors; and she served as a National Association of Broadcasters Ambassador. Among

many civic affiliations, she has served on numerous boards. Wade was included in Milwaukee Business Journal's "Women of Influence" honor roll in 2017, and last year received The Silver Circle Award from the Midwest/Chicago Emmy Chapter.



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## Your wba Calendar

**Jan 10, 2025**  
**WBA Awards Deadline**  
4 p.m. CT

**Jan 22, 2025**  
**WBA State Legislative Day**  
Wisconsin State Capitol

**Jan 22-23, 2025**  
**Rising Above Summit**  
Online

**Feb. 20, 2025**  
**Webinar: A Conversation with  
the Congressional Broadcasters  
Caucus**  
Online

**Feb. 21, 2025**  
**Young Professionals Toolbox**  
Lambeau Field

**Feb. 22, 2025**  
**WBA Student Forum**  
Lambeau Field

**April 15-17, 2025**  
**Walker Broadcast  
Management Institute**  
UW-Madison Campus

**May 3, 2025**  
**WBA Awards Gala**  
Madison Marriott West

**June 18-19, 2025**  
**WBA Summer Conference**  
La Crosse Radisson, La Crosse

**June 17-19, 2025**  
**WBA Duke Wright Media  
Technology Institute**  
La Crosse Radisson, La Crosse

**Sept. 16-17, 2025**  
**Midwest Regional  
Broadcasters Clinic**  
Madison Marriott West



More details  
registration at  
[wi-broadcasters.org/events](http://wi-broadcasters.org/events)



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