

THE BEST MANAGERS IN RADIO

It takes many skills to lead a cluster of radio stations heading into 2016. The successful radio manager of today must not only understand every aspect of how a radio station operates, from engineering to sales to programming, but also the new issues and challenges radio is tackling in a technology-driven world. Is programmatic going to drive new revenue? Should you be part of NextRadio? How important is having a mobile app for your listeners? Is Pandora convincing clients to move in its direction? Is search something radio sellers need to learn about and teach to advertisers? The list goes on and on — not to mention the ultimate responsibility of driving revenue in what has been a nearly no-growth industry.

We asked the 2015 class of top managers what motivates them to lead people to success every day. And just about everyone on this list told us first about the importance of having great people, employees who care about their radio stations, their clients, and their listeners. Some helped us understand how they are dealing with challenges, both locally and industry-wide. And others gave advice on how radio can be stronger and generate more — and new — revenue.

There are hundreds of great ideas you can use right away in the pages that follow. So let's get to it. Here is *Radio Ink's* list of the 30 Best Radio Managers for 2015.

DAVID ABEL

**VP/General Manager
Apex Broadcasting
Charleston, SC**

Abel says watching his team create, thrive, and accomplish their goals is what motivates him more than anything else. "Our core culture is built around the talent of our employees, and I encourage creative solutions that support our overall strategies within each department," he says. "To me there is no better feeling in my job than when I see my team members' passion and creativity fuel our efforts as a company to achieve new heights."

What is his number one challenge? Making sure his team is doing a great job at keeping



David Abel, out front with
Apex staff.

radio relevant in the hearts and minds of listeners and advertisers in an age where technology has changed the landscape for media. Abel says, "Radio is battle-tested, and I tell my team that as long as we continue to innovate and keep our brands relevant to our

audience, we will continue to come out on top, delivering a strong ROI. I often share a bit of a history lesson, stating that the record player was the first technology that was going to kill radio. Then there were 8-track tapes, cassette players, Walkmans, CD players, MP3 players, satellite radio, and now pureplay streaming services. What's next?

"Time and time again, radio continues to stay relevant and maintain a dominant position among all media. The reality is that radio was and continues to be the ultimate mobile medium that has a larger reach and a much better ROI for advertisers than any other medium."



Alpert with his Kansas City staff.

DAVE ALPERT

**VP/Market Manager
Entercom/Kansas City**

Dave Alpert is a dynamic and experienced leader who has built a market-leading cluster in Kansas City. His focus on developing integrated opportunities and world-class events has helped grow the Entercom stations and engagement with their listeners. Alpert says he looks forward to the daily challenges of motivating his staff. "I love the fact that every day is different from the previous day," he says. "We have eight radio stations with a full on-air staff committed to providing Kansas City with the best live and local content working side-by-side with 32 local sellers, so there's never a dull moment. In our building you will find baby boomers, Gen X, Gen Y, Gen Z, and now millennials, and each group has different motivations. It's challenging, rewarding, and fun to adapt management styles to meet the motivations of each generation and each individual."

Alpert says the number one challenge he faces today is on the revenue side of the business. "At Entercom, one of my roles as market manager is to think like I am the cluster's chief revenue officer. With that being said, increasing new-business development, growing and superserving your existing direct and transactional business, growing revenue in the ever-changing world of digital, and expanding our opportunities in the experiential and event business are all part of being that chief revenue officer. My biggest challenge currently is wrapping all of these vital, long-term growth initiatives into one cohesive, organized, and executable plan."

For radio, Alpert says the challenge has been all about perception. "First is the perception that radio is a 'traditional medium'

that is in decline. We may be traditional in the sense that we have been around a while, but we are anything but in decline. Second is the perception that radio is suffering major time spent listening losses to the pureplays of Pandora and Spotify. We are not suffering

major losses, and the new reach figures just released prove that. Third is the perception that radio is only about the audience that hears what comes out of the speakers. Again, not true. We are brands with listeners who absorb our on-air content, stream our signals, surf our sites, interact with our personalities on social media, and attend our events. The fact of the matter is,

with all of the challenges facing other media, we as an industry are in great shape. We offer enormous reach, stronger engagement through our local personalities, affordable campaigns on a relative basis, and local activation that digital, TV, cable, print, and pureplay can't even come close to matching."

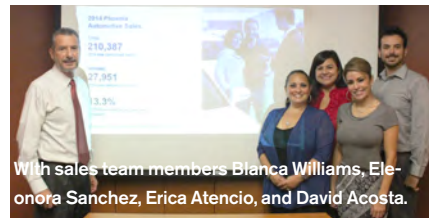
DEAN APOSTALIDES

**SVP/Integrated Marketing Solutions
Entravision
Phoenix**

Dean Apostalides has 32 years as a sales and management leader, and he's approaching four years with Entravision. He has great leadership and visionary skills and always looks for new and exciting ways to accomplish goals set for himself and his stations. These skills, as well as his superior attention to detail, have enabled him and his team to make the Phoenix unit successful — and



Apostolides (r) with sales staffers David Acosta, Esmeralda Rivas, Eleonora Sanchez, Eva Esparza, recording artist Gerardo Ortiz, and sales team member Erica Atencio.



With sales team members Blanca Williams, Eleonora Sanchez, Erica Atencio, and David Acosta.

profitable — for Entravision. He's a leader by example, and one who always offers his time and efforts to help the team.

Apostalides says knowing that what radio does every day benefits listeners, clients, and the community motivates him to lead his people to do great things. The three biggest challenges facing radio as we head into 2016, according to Dean, are, "Other audio competitors, diversifying our advertiser mix to protect against a downturn within any key category of business, and getting our fair share of political revenue." And, as a manager, Apostalides says managing time while ensuring he spends quality time with his team and clients is always a challenge. "There is never enough time to do all the things you have to do."



DAVID AYERS

**Vice President/General Manager
Flagler Broadcasting
Palm Coast, FL**

In 2007 Jim Martin and Gary Smithwick founded Flagler Broadcasting with the purchase of an unbuilt construction permit in Bunnell, FL, and they hired David Ayers to run the station. There was no local commercial radio station in the county, so he had to start from nothing. Since then, Flagler has added three full-power FMs and two FM translators. Smithwick says of Ayers, "He did this through his skill and magnetic personality and by contributing hours and hours of time to local causes in Flagler County. We have an extremely high retention rate among our staff members, due in large part to his leadership. I've been in the business since 1962, and I've never worked with a more dedicated or more professional general manager. He truly exemplifies excellent management skills coupled with a strong commitment to providing public service to his audiences. David is truly a standout."

Now, with 40 years as a manager, Ayers says empowering his staff to perform with trust and freedom is what motivates him every day. "Motivation is self-perpetuating when people love what they do," he says. "Once those fundamentals are in place, motivation is easy and it awaits you every day."

STEPHANIE CALLIHAN

Vice President/Market Manager
Entercom
Austin

Stephanie Callihan is a talented and motivational general manager who has rein-vigorated Entercom's Austin cluster, where her focus on employee development and culture is driving great results. She's client-focused and fosters a culture that develops creative, integrated solutions for clients.



What motivates her? "After 26 years in our business, I have never been more passionate about radio," Callihan says. "Radio has evolved into a vital marketing tool for local, regional, and national brands. We are one of the few mediums that can activate the consumer at multiple touchpoints. Whether we engage the listener via our airwaves, via rich digital platforms, or activate them personally on the street, we have the ability to create innovative solutions that will move the needle with our abundant toolbox."

"I'm so grateful to spend my day doing something that I'm deeply passionate about. I've never woken up in the morning to that horrible feeling of not wanting to go to work. I truly love our business, and most importantly, the people that I work with and for. My mantra: 'Live well, laugh often, and love what you do.'"

For the future, Callihan hopes we can do a better job of telling young people about radio and why they should pursue a career in our industry. "It's very difficult to identify, recruit, and develop our next generation," she says. "People are our single most important asset."

MATT CARDENAS

SVP/Integrated Marketing
Solutions
Entravision
Los Angeles

Matt Cardenas not only has the ability to achieve revenue and ratings goals, he also possesses an uncanny magnetism that attracts other talent. "I am motivated every day by the opportunity I have to support, lead, and mentor my team," he says. "It really is an honor to see people you work with every day achieve their goals both



(L-r): Entravision VP/Programming Nestor Rocha, KSSE (Super Estrella 107.1 FM)/Los Angeles midday personality Carlos Alvarez, and Matt Cardenas.

professionally and personally."

Cardenas believes there are many challenges facing managers today. "One of these challenges is identifying, recruiting, and hiring the best employees," he points out. "I believe it is imperative to the growth of our team, and industry, that we continuously strive to bring the best and brightest on board in order to lead the future. The challenges that I see for radio in 2016 are growth- and recognition-related. Radio is a dynamic medium that connects directly to listeners. I believe it is vital for our growth to tell this story and capture a larger portion of the available marketing dollars. Radio also has the

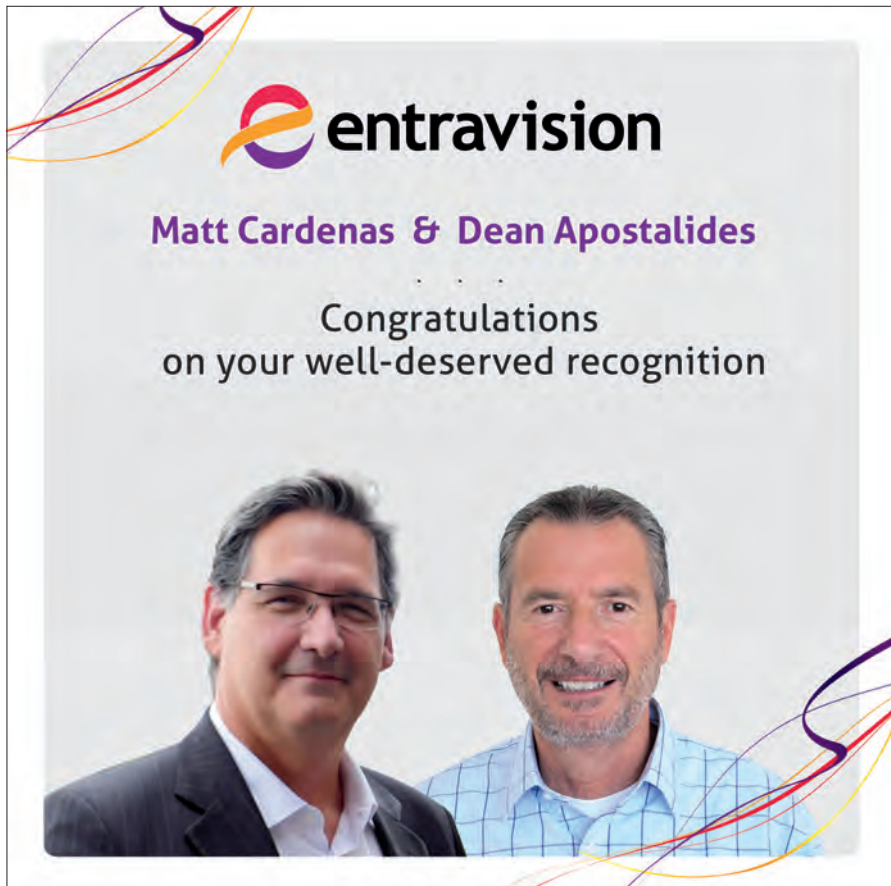


ability to incorporate a multitude of digital opportunities that will provide continued revenue growth. I am also excited for the challenges that 2016 political opportunities will create, allowing us to provide greater reach and impact for this vital category."

STEVE CHESSARE

VP/Market Manager
Greater Media
Detroit

Steve Chessare is one of Greater Media's premier market managers; since he took over the company's Detroit-based properties, both ratings and revenue have gone up, and morale has never been better. He says the greatest satisfaction he gets from his job is seeing someone in the organization succeed in their role and knowing they are a vital part of the team's overall success. Chessare says, "We have achieved so much over the





past three years at Greater Media Detroit, and it is the result of so many individuals doing great things every day! The people here make it energizing to come to work every day.

"The biggest challenge is living up to the expectations of the people I am leading. This group has come to expect that everyone bring their 'A game' every day. There is a communal drive to elevate GMD to new heights of ratings and revenue growth. I can't afford to let this team down."

We asked Chessare what he believes radio can do better. "Radio has to do a better job of being a solution provider to the people we serve — the listeners, advertisers, and employees," he responds. "For listeners, we have to create better content that will keep them engaged and coming back for more. For advertisers, we need to help them meet or exceed their marketing objectives through cool, custom, and diversified programs that engage their target consumer. For employees, we need to provide a dynamic, challenging yet fulfilling work experience. I believe radio is in an excellent place. No other source of content reaches 94 percent of America on a weekly basis."

DANIEL A. FINN

SVP/Regional General Manager
Greater Media
New Jersey

This past year Dan Finn was inducted into the New Jersey Broadcasters Hall of Fame. He's considered one of the very best market managers in the Greater Media family — admired by his employees, industry leaders, advertisers, and the communities he serves every day. "What motivates me to lead my people to do great things is the constant focus on winning," Finn says. "This industry is very competitive, and that keeps it interesting and fun. It's never boring. But my motivation alone won't get us where we need to go. When hiring, I identify candidates who share the same motivational drive, coupled with a strong creative mind.



Daniel Finn with Donna Eichmeyer of LiveNation.

Maintaining and sustaining the motivation of the staff is the formula for success."

Finn goes on, "As a manager, the top challenge is actually outside the radio facilities, in the media-buying community. While the properties I oversee have been very consistent with staff and solid in the ratings for a very long period of time, the fact remains that many millennial media buyers don't actually listen to traditional radio and assume everyone's habits are like theirs. So an additional education process is invoked in the buying process that didn't exist in the past."

What can radio do better? "I think the radio industry as a whole has to get back to what made us relevant in the first place, and that is content," says Finn. "I'm a big believer in live and local, and that's what we're doing in New Jersey. This effort is totally supported by Peter Smyth and Greater Media. It's what we are all about as a company. Overall, I believe radio is in a very good place. We still have a lot of ears listening. Digital has affected more eyeballs than ears, yet as an industry, we have taken an undue hit."

CHRIS FORGY

President/General Manager
The Columbus Radio Group (Saga Communications)
Columbus, OH

Chris Forgy has 30 years in the radio business, 15 as a manager, and the folks at the Columbus Radio Group tell us you can go to him with anything, "even with your hair on fire," and he'll walk through a very specific plan to overcome it, leading by example. "G.R.E.A.T" in his organization is an acronym for "Gratitude, Respect,



Enthusiasm, Accountability, and Teamwork." Forgy says, "It is the culture we created years ago here at the Columbus Radio Group. In fact, at the end of each month, through employee nominations, we give the G.R.E.A.T. Award to the one employee that best reflects the culture of G.R.E.A.T.-ness. Then, at the end of each year, one employee is awarded the annual G.R.E.A.T. Award, which includes prizes and time off."

He goes on, "Effective leaders create a vision and a culture, then the employees reflect that culture back to the leader. So when someone in a leadership position says, 'We have a culture problem in our organization,' I would suggest they look in the mirror. Leaders who don't get up every day with the simple objective in mind to grow their people so in turn they can be equipped to grow more people (and so on) are really missing out on a wonderful adventure that will serve their organization, their people, and themselves quite well."

JOHN FULLAM

Senior VP
Greater Media
Philadelphia

John Fullam has been called the "gold standard" as a manager. His resume is a blueprint for success, and the Philadelphia stations continue to set the bar for the company.



Fullam says the question of what motivates him is easy to answer. "I'm fortunate to work with an extraordinary group of people who want to be the very best at what they do," he says. "It's important that our people get the support and resources they need to be successful. Building a strong workplace is important and allows us to better serve our customers and listeners. We are also focused on innovation initiatives for future growth, and that too is a great source of motivation for our entire team. Our stations strive to make a difference in the lives of the people of



Philadelphia, in so many wonderful ways, and that makes our team proud.”

Fullam says radio’s three biggest challenges today are growing revenue, changing advertisers’ perception on how effective radio is today at reaching every consumer group, and monetizing online listening. “Growing revenue in a flat market is a significant challenge,” he says. “It has forced us to deal with the brutal fact that if we don’t adjust our sales strategy, we will not grow. It requires us to invest in our future and be equipped to build new sources of revenue — particularly digital and integrated solutions for our customers, which are excellent opportunities for future growth.”

Fullam also believes radio must invest in talent and innovation to make content great, and indispensable. “Like many industries, radio is being challenged by a changing economy and a variety of disruptors. If we evolve, invest, and provide great content, radio can remain an important part of consumers’ daily lives in communities across the U.S.”

MARK HANNON

SVP/Market Manager
CBS Radio
Boston and Hartford

Mark Hannon was appointed SVP and market manager of the Boston cluster in 2007, and in 2015 assumed an expanded role that includes overseeing CBS Radio’s stations in Hartford. Before his current role, he was SVP/GM of various stations in Boston — Hannon has spent his entire career in Boston, having started in sales at American Radio Systems in 1989. He says he’s fortunate to work in radio and as excited to come to work today as he was 26 years ago, when he broke into the business. “The industry has changed dramatically over the years, but what hasn’t changed is that it is a people business first,” Hannon says. “It is so gratifying to work with an amazing group of professionals every day, and to marvel at their achievements.”



Hannon says having enough time to get things done is always a challenge for radio managers. “We are all multi-tasking and managing complex operations relative to the past,” he notes. “Having the appropriate amount of time to think, read, strategize,

understand the competitive landscape, and stay accessible to all of your people is a monumental challenge, but exhilarating at the same time.”

Heading into 2016, Hannon says radio needs to do three things well: “Making sure our brands are relevant and connected to the local communities that we serve every day. Understanding how audiences, especially younger audiences, are consuming media and radio in the digital era, and creating and distributing content through any and all means to stay connected to them. And, while core business continues to contract, finding ways to grow our business through creative thinking, developing programs that deliver optimum ROI for clients, and finding new revenue streams in the digital era are essential.”

DEBBIE KENYON

SVP/Market Manager
CBS Radio
Detroit

Debbie Kenyon has been SVP and market manager for CBS Radio’s Detroit cluster since 2008. She is a constant on our Best Managers and Most Influential Women in Radio lists, as well as a finalist in the 2015 Radio Ink Radio Wayne Awards.



MARSHA LANDESS

Station Manager
Radio One
Richmond

One employee told *Radio Ink* that you can sum up Marsha Landess in one word: *integrity*. “If you look up the definition of integrity, it states, ‘The quality of being honest and having strong moral principles; moral uprightness. Synonyms: honesty, probity, rectitude, honor, good character, principle(s), ethics, morals, righteousness,



virtue, decency, fairness, scrupulousness, sincerity, truthfulness, trustworthiness.” That employee told us, “All of these words describe Marsha to a ‘T.’”

What motivates Landess every day? “The passion and desire to be the best in everything we do,” she says. “Enthusiasm combined with the passion to win is contagious. When I see these attributes in our staff, then I know we are doing the right things that will lead to greatness. What motivates me every day is seeing the look on our team’s faces when we have worked together to accomplish a goal. Nothing is more satisfying than creating and executing a flawless community event or a client promotion.”

She goes on, “Helping people grow and excel every day is exciting and satisfying to me. I want to know our team’s professional and personal goals so I can help them. My position is as the person who helps to alleviate obstacles, provide resources, coach, train, empower, and listen. We learn together from the mistakes we make and the risks we take. Part of growth is taking the risk to do something new or different, to come out of our comfort zone. We won’t win if we do the same things over and over. We have the ability to change lives, and if we are committed to being the best we can be, then nothing else matters — except, of course, to have fun along the way.”

SUSAN LARKIN

Regional Vice President/GM
Cox Media Group
Orlando and Jacksonville

Susan Larkin is motivated to lead her people to do great things because she’s assembled a group of employees who care deeply about what they do. “I am inspired to walk in every day and be on a team with super-talented people who are passionate about our business, care about engagement, love to innovate, and have each other’s backs,” she says. “I can see the difference our brands and personalities make in our communities. I get to witness it every day. It’s a great feeling to hear from business owners that our sales and marketing folks have helped them to engage their customers and grow their business. Our employees genuinely care about each other. I work with my friends every day. I also work for an amazing



Seen above are CMG's (l-r) Nick Figueredo, Drew Anderssen, Roz Clark, Kim Guthrie, Luis Hernandez, Susan Larkin, Tammie McGrath, and Jimmy Farrell.

company that expects performance, aligns everyone around core values, and wants to make a difference in our communities."

What radio can do better moving forward? "I think we continue to be very creative and have a keen eye on engaging our listeners," Larkin says. "We have apps, events, social media engagement, etc. We must take credit for this. We need to do a better job of educating and marketing to the ad-buying community. I think Erica Farber and the RAB have really done a great job of moving that forward. The broadcasters uniting will always be a good thing — I have seen more of that lately.

"I am very excited about the future. I am not saying that to be Pollyanna, either. We have proven that we aren't competing with pureplays like Pandora, Spotify, etc., for the listener. It doesn't have to be one or the

other for the audio consumer. They will use us based on their needs. As long as we in radio continue to be everywhere the listener wants or expects us to be and we provide the content they want and need, then we are relevant. We continue to be a very important personal part of our listeners' lives. We just have to do a better job of translating that effectiveness to revenue."



With the company sales leadership at the annual CMG President's Cup Gala (l-r): CMG's Stephanie Sabota, Aaron Miller, Jason Meader, Melanie Martin, Keith Lawless, Brittany Evans, Scotti Vaughn, Tim Clarke, CMG EVP/National Ad Platforms Kim Guthrie, Jenny Sutton, and Claire Hobby.

KEITH LAWLESS

**VP/Market Manager
Cox Media Group
Tampa**

Keith Lawless is one of the most innovative and creative leaders in the business. Radio has always been about more than just the on-air product for him; it's also the opportunity to work with highly talented people, create

events that enhance listeners' lives, and embrace digital technology as a new way to connect with the audience. Under Lawless' leadership, the CMG Tampa cluster has created new formats that are more than just music machines; they're designed to be a part of the audience's lifestyle. He is also very active in the Tampa community, serving on the board of directors for the Boys and Girls Club, Big Cat Rescue, Tampa Bay Businesses for Culture and the Arts, and more.

Lawless tells *Radio Ink* he's motivated every day by the professionals he gets to work with. "Their competitive drive and innovative thinking are inspiring," he says. "The media industry presents us with new opportunities every day, and having a group of professionals that are excited to embrace it every day is all the motivation I need."

Lawless details what he believes radio's three biggest challenges will be moving into 2016:

1. Keep the conversation going about radio. Don't expect it to sell itself. While most radio stations have their sales departments selling a full marketing solution, including many assets besides radio, they have to make it a priority for radio to get its fair share. While radio has been the most widely used marketing weapon historically, others are doing their best to reposition our relevancy today. We must not forget to position our medium, or else our position will be defined for us.

2. Continue to invest in local content. Continued innovations allow for more accessible, higher-quality content distribution. Many stations are beginning to sound more and more homogenized,

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SALUTES TWO OF OUR STAR RADIO LEADERS. YOUR INSPIRATIONAL LEADERSHIP HELPS US WIN IN OUR MARKETS AND SHAPES THE LEADERS OF TOMORROW.



SUSAN LARKIN
Regional VP
Jacksonville/Orlando



KEITH LAWLESS
VP General Manager
Tampa



with increased voicetracking. That is the path of least resistance in tough times. Radio's localism is one of its biggest consumer benefits.

3. We mustn't eat our young As digital third-party revenues increase, so does the cost of sale. As we strive to maintain our margins, we have to find new and innovative ways to have operational efficiencies — that don't compromise our business operation.

WAYNE LELAND

**President/General Manager
Tidewater Communications (Saga)
Norfolk**

Wayne Leland epitomizes the term "leader." He has a unique ability to get the most from each and every member of his staff. His approach to the team and the workplace make working for him fun, exciting, and enjoyable. He's passionate about our industry and shows that passion each day — whether brainstorming ideas for a client, solving a problem internally, or simply returning a phone call from a listener — Leland does it all, and does it with a smile. He's been in the business for a long time, yet after all these years he shows no sign of stopping and wants every day to be a win. It's obvious to those around him that he simply loves being in radio and wants everyone around him to love it too — and they do.

"I'm motivated by helping my people succeed, helping them grow and watching them achieve more than they ever imagined they would," Leland says. "My role, really, is to be a servant to my team. I serve them so they

can achieve great things and, simultaneously, my company achieves. I firmly believe that not only do I serve each team member, but also their family. Decisions and actions within this building ripple outward and affect many other people who don't work within these walls. It's a big responsibility that I think about every day."

What about challenges? Leland replies, "The number one challenge I face is the ongoing search for upcoming talent — finding and creating that next generation of broadcasters. At Saga, we utilize our internship programs and internal mentoring program to help develop new incoming talent. In support of that effort, we work with state associations and colleges to access their pool of young talent for potential placement in all departments within our organization."

At the end of the day, Leland says radio is in a fantastic place. "We are stronger than ever at a time when other mediums are facing difficult challenges brought about by changing culture and technology. I'd like to see the industry be better at promoting itself, at promoting what radio has to offer — its strengths and values. We've got that all-important local connection, we influence our community and deliver for advertisers. Too often those in a position to buy radio advertising perceive radio as second fiddle. We need to shift that perception to crystalize our position as the most powerful reach medium."

MARK MABEN

**General Manager
WSOU-FM/South Orange, NJ
Seton Hall University**

Mark Maben is an exceptional manager when it comes to people, motivating without micromanaging or coddling. He takes the time to mentor his student managers at this college station, ensuring that they learn. He expects the students to run the station to professional standards, and that's one of the many reasons WSOU enjoys a national reputation for excellence.

Maben says he's fortunate to have a job where he's helping people shape the future, and that is a tremendous motivation. "The opportunity to work with students on a daily basis, to sharpen their skills and mentor their professional growth, is exceptionally gratifying," he says. "And the two professional employees I also manage are simply some of the best folks I have ever worked with. It is deeply satisfying to see those you manage succeed in their positions. Our listeners are another motivation for me.



Mark Maben with student Ryan Kenter and (below) WSOU underwriting sales and marketing manager Jen Kaizer



My team and I want them to have a great experience when they tune to WSOU.

"Finally, I love good audio. Like so many of us in the industry, radio was a companion and inspiration while I was growing up, and I want to see the medium I love continue to evolve and thrive over the course of this century. I know the students I work with today will be leaders in the industry in the future."

Looking ahead, Maben tells Radio Ink he would love to see radio more engaged with colleges and universities at all levels: "It is a relationship that needs to extend well beyond simply taking students as interns. The more stations and groups are engaged with college students, the more likely we will revitalize our programming and cultivate new generations of listeners. So have your PD spend time on your local college campuses to just talk with students. Give some students an hour or two on your station and challenge them to 'Come up with something great.' Work with your business school to develop a curriculum that really prepares students for media sales. Use college kids for your high school sports play-by-play. Invite professors, advisers, student affairs staffers, and others to your station.

"Engage a college kid as a reverse mentor for you or your team. FM took off in part because radio let a lot of young, passionate people play around and come up with something new and different that



Top: WNOR (FM99)/Norfolk News Director Shelly Ashburn, morning show sports director Rod Fitzwell, and morning personality Rick Rumble. Below: FM99 DOS Carol Commander, Rod Fitzwell, station client Jeff Craddock, FM99 AE Lindsey Seaford, and Wayne Leland.



listeners liked and wanted. I think radio would be better off with real partnerships and engagement with young adults, where we play and experiment together.”

ERIC MASTEL

VP/Market Manager
Cumulus Media
Savannah, GA



Mastel, a 30-plus-year radio veteran, says what motivates him to lead people to greatness is simple: He loves what he does. “Leadership is not a position or a title,” he says. “It is an action and an example. I believe the passion and success I have is apparent and infectious. I have been successful at every level in this business, from seller to president of Max Media,

overseeing multiple markets and over 60 stations. I am now committed daily to helping and guiding others to achieve the level of success they desire.”

He sees three big challenges for radio moving forward and offers these suggestions. 1. Re-emphasizing the value of the local rep. “We are in the relationship business, and our feet on the street are the tip of our marketing spear,” he says.

2. Understanding programmatic buying and its appeal. “We have to be careful not to assume this represents a total paradigm shift for the whole industry. It’s one way of buying media, but not the only way of buying, and it works for some better than others. We must resist losing our competitive edge in favor of speed.”

3. Recognizing that new media is very good at some things, but it isn’t very good at everything. Mastel explains, “Pandora and Spotify, for example, serve a certain market that is growing but will never exceed radio’s reach and localism. We have been in the audio business for far longer and know how to navigate it. We have to do what we do better than them, not necessarily do what they do better than them. Radio, if invented today, would be

hailed as a technological marvel, offering content free of charge to the masses.”

KRISTIN OKESSON

Market Manager
Connoisseur Media
Connecticut

Okesson is a familiar face on our Best Managers list. She’s highly respected in the Connoisseur family, and those who work for her can’t say enough great things about her. “I love identifying what success looks like for an employee and working with them to



Above right: Okesson with singer Andrew McMahon and Connoisseur CEO Jeff Warshaw at a station event.

Congratulations, Kristin!



Kudos to *Radio Ink* for recognizing Kristin Okesson as one of the country's Best Managers in Radio. We are honored to call you our colleague, friend and partner.



CONNOISSEUR MEDIA, COMPASS MEDIA NETWORKS & UNCOVERED RADIO

get there,” says Okesson. “I love watching my team succeed, so to that end I am motivated by helping our employees achieve success in any way that I possibly can. There is nothing like that feeling when an account manager comes running into my office to tell me about a great sale, or watching that new station the team has worked so hard on climb up the ranker, or the implementation of a new idea that came from one of our many talented employees.

“The key to leading my team to do spectacular things is to allow them to feel encouraged to take a leap of faith — to throw out ideas, whether it’s for their personal development, a new project they want to work on, or a zany idea they came up with over the weekend. We have over 100 employees who are relying on us to thrive, and I believe part of the key to our success is in striving to make employees feel appreciated, that their ideas are valued, and that their victory is ultimately my victory as well. I spend a lot of time getting to know the team I work with on a personal and professional level.

“This is not about radio day in and day out for me. We spend 40-plus hours together, and all elements of our employees’ lives are important to me, not just what they do within the scope of our radio stations. I am motivated by creating a culture where employees feel that they have what they need to succeed, have my support, feel an open sense of communication, and know that we are committed to developing them for future career growth.”

DAVE PEACH

General Manager
WCDQ, WIMC & WCVL
Forcht Broadcasting
Crawfordsville, IN

Dave Peach has held many positions during his career — air personality, broadcast seller, general manager, sales manager, sports play-by-play, copywriter, promotions. Forcht CEO Mike Tarter says that in Crawfordsville, Peach has the stations performing at a high level, all with a small but highly dedicated staff. “He brings a positive attitude to the station every day,” says Tarter. “He is always willing to teach and lead others. Dave took over the Crawfordsville stations some eight years ago and rebuilt the sales, our reputation, public service, and commitment to the community.”

Peach, like all of our top managers, credits his people. “We have an excellent team here in Crawfordsville,” he says. “We have several staffers who represent the next generation of leadership, and I want to pass along to these young broadcasters the principles of



L-r: Forcht Sr. AE Phil Thompson, sales rep Elizabeth O'Brien, Franciscan St. Elizabeth Public Marketing Specialist Matthew Oates, and Forcht GM Dave Peach.



exceptional local broadcasting I was taught at their age by broadcasters I admire to this day.”

Knowing when to jump in and try to save the day and when to let the team figure it out on their own is something Peach sometimes finds to be a challenge. “You want to make sure every spot is up to date, every break is tight, and every sales call is well prepared,” he says. “You have to trust your team. Passionate broadcasters will learn from their mistakes.”

Peach says he would like to hear air personalities tell people about the impressive numbers for overall radio listenership. “They are always promoting the top television shows and movies,” he points out. “Why not tell people how many million people listened to radio last week? Why not promote the top 10 radio personalities in the country?”

BOB PHILIPS

SVP/Director of Sales
CBS Radio
Baltimore

Bob Philips was named senior vice president and market manager for CBS Baltimore in 2000, overseeing the day-to-day operations for the four-station cluster. His successes include



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negotiating the broadcast rights for the Baltimore Ravens, Baltimore Orioles, and Maryland Terrapin Sports. He also launched the very successful Sports station WJZ-FM (105.7 The Fan).

Philips says what motivates him to lead his people to do great things is “the smile that comes along with achieving success and the growth opportunities they achieve with their careers.” He says radio companies succeed when they build on their best asset: people. “As the business evolves, we must continue to attract talented individuals to pursue careers in our industry.”

GORDY RUSH

VP/Market Manager
Guaranty Media
Baton Rouge, LA

Gordy Rush was named the Louisiana Association of Broadcasters’ Broadcaster of the Year in 2013 and Golden Mike



winner in 2009; he’s the first person ever to win both. He also serves as sideline reporter for the LSU Sports Radio Network for football, and WDGL is a finalist for a Marconi Award for the second time in three years.

MIKE SAVAGE

General Manager
WBAA-AM & FM & HD2/West
Lafayette, IN
Purdue University

The desire to be the best is what motivates Mike Savage every day. “We have created an environment at WBAA that encourages creativity,



innovation, and initiative,” he says. “I want my staff to constantly improve and learn, but most importantly, create great public radio content that goes far beyond just being relevant; it is essential and engaging. In my view, the key is to celebrate the success of your station through your staff by giving them the credit. Help them grow as people and as broadcasters, and make the work environment so good it’s difficult for them to consider leaving for other jobs. In 2014, with the help of staff, I created a comprehensive mission statement for WBAA. This drives everything that we do as an organization.”

Savage’s number one concern is digital disruption. “It keeps me up at night,” he says. “As listeners shift away from appointment listening and move to on-demand listening such as podcasting, we as broadcasters can’t count on drivetime listening and formulas to carry us from book to book. We must engage the audience at a hyper-local level. This is dictating changes to our business model that we would not necessarily do on our own.”

CONGRATULATIONS!

Radio One, Inc. believes in the importance of good leadership and is proud to have three of our own named “Best Managers in Radio”.



MARSHA LANDESS
Station Manager
Richmond



GARY SPURGEON
Vice President & General Manager
Houston & Dallas



KATHY STINEHOUR
Vice President & General Manager
Detroit



Spaulding (in front) with staffers.

MATT SPAULDING

**Market Manager
Cumulus Media
Ann Arbor, MI**

A direct quote from one of Matt Spaulding's employees: "Matt is a magnificent manager. He's a constant resource for energy, an inspiration to all those who report to him, he lights up any room, and he leads by example, putting in endless hours, and I mean endless. Actually, he puts in far too many hours, which worries us all. He says that when you absolutely love what you do and who you work with, it's never work."

Spaulding says, "There is no single element of my day that motivates me more than the repeated success of my team. My team's success fuels my passion; their creativity inspires and re-inspires me every day. If I am considered to be one of the best managers in the industry, it is because I have had the pleasure to work with some of the very best people, whose commitment to our audiences, clients, and community provides me a platform to stand proudly upon."

He sees time management as his biggest challenge. "As market managers, we review, assess, address, coach, mentor, lead, balance budgets, forecast performance, train, negotiate, and engage our teams, clients, and partners — daily. Every member of my team is important. Every client is important. Every endeavor and every strategic plan is important and must be given real attention in order to facilitate successful execution. I believe the only thing that limits the level of success realized every day is time."

Spaulding has an interesting perspective on the automotive category moving forward: "In 2016, I believe we will encounter even greater headwinds in the automotive category. Although we work every day to establish a greater level of diversification in our advertiser portfolios, we continue to see significant revenue derived from Tier 3 automotive. Over the last 18 months, I have seen a greater amount of manufacturer-directed reallocation of our revenue into digital. This could have a significant impact

on our industry in 2016 if our industry leaders do not double down on efforts to influence these decisions at a level that has the ability to create effective change. Manufacturer support is vital to our Tier 3 automotive business."

GARY SPURGEON

**VP/GM
Radio One
Houston**



Spurgeon (in back) with Houston team.

Gary Spurgeon points out that when leadership is passionate, it's contagious, and it permeates the workplace. "What motivates me is creating a fun and collaborative work environment, getting involved in the community, and having a true passion and excitement for the radio business," he says. "I am blessed to work with very talented and intelligent people. My goal has always been to surround myself with the best people and then get out of their way and let them do their jobs. There is nothing more amazing than watching an organization grow and seeing individuals become more than they thought they could be. It's about the hard work, competition, mutual respect, collaboration, family, and having fun — and by the way, I did say *have fun!*"

Spurgeon notes that radio is facing a number of challenges: "The decline in radio revenues and the segmentation of advertising budgets from traditional radio to digital outlets — advertising dollars are being moved out of radio budgets faster than at any time in our history. We need to continue to educate and demonstrate to our agencies and clients the effectiveness of radio."

"We've always managed in a multi-generational work environment. However, the millennial generation is dynamically



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In a land where Radio and management collide, one man's journey will determine the fate of all mankind. Wait, no. One man's outstanding performance will distinguish him as one of Radio's best managers this year. Yeah, that's it!

Regional Reps is pleased to congratulate Mike Tarter, President/CEO of Forcht Broadcasting, selected as one of *Radio Ink's* Best Managers of 2015.

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changing the workplace. We as leaders need to keep an open mind and be ready to adapt to this new generation. We must recruit, develop, and keep local talent. We have no farm team! Where is the next generation of great announcers coming from? We need to find new ways to recruit talent and bring these individuals into our industry.”

KATHY STINEHOUR

**VP/Market Manager
Radio One
Detroit**

Kathy Stinehour is a 25-year management veteran; she’s been a leader in Toledo, Kansas City, Houston, Chicago, and New York City. She started out as an AE



in Detroit, where she now manages the cluster for Radio One. She’s motivated by watching her people succeed at things they weren’t certain they could accomplish, followed, she says, “by the amazing growth in confidence that results from achieving their own success. It is a tremendous feeling you never get tired of.”

Stinehour believes the number one challenge facing managers is sales recruitment. She observes, “Radio is perceived as ‘old media’ by millennials, and being paid a draw against commission earned is inconceivable to them.” And she says radio needs to embrace all things audio: “Pandora is not the enemy. We should be partners.”

MIKE TARTER

**General Manager
WTLO & WYKY/Somerset, KY
President/CEO
Forcht Broadcasting**

An employee at Forcht’s Somerset stations tells Radio Ink the team at WYKY-FM and WTLO-AM enjoys a positive, progressive, educational, and compassionate work environment — due



in large part to Mike Tarter’s leadership: “Mike is held in high esteem by leaders in the radio broadcasting industry,” says the employee. “I have become a better broadcaster working with Mike. He is a general manager who works each day to ensure he provides an environment that lends itself to radio success for his staff.”

Mark Tarter is motivated by working in an industry he loves with people who are highly dedicated, and for a company that supports his efforts. “I’m able to work alongside some of the most loyal and talented people in the business,” he says. “They work very hard every day and help us superserve our communities and customers. Seeing how they perform at a high level every day is very motivating.

“The major challenge I face each day

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is making sure we continue to provide relevant content for our listeners, and helping our clients grow their businesses with strategies that will drive customers to their stores. We want to be able to help our communities in some way every day."



JOHN J WALKER

Regional VP, Birmingham, Huntsville, and Montgomery
Market Manager, Birmingham
Cumulus Media

Nothing defines a strong leader much better than an employee's telling a great story. We heard from an employee of Walker's who told us he immediately made her feel like someone important. "He gave me a chance when he could have chosen from many candidates," she said. "If you ask anyone who works here, they will say the same thing. He boosts our morale and cares what happens to each and every one of us. I couldn't imagine what it would be like without him. I have learned so much from him, because he is a teacher and a great leader."



Walker says he's blessed to have something in his DNA that makes him want to lead people to a better performance. "Because of my father, there has always been something very 'second nature' about it for me," he says. "He was a leader and taught me to accept nothing less than the best. As a manager, my success is dependent upon the strength of my team. By surrounding myself with an enthusiastic, hard-working staff, we continue to strive for greatness together, individually, and as a company."

Walker continues, "The biggest challenge I face as a manager is making sure that I am creating the right culture and environment to attract and retain the best and brightest in the industry. I learned early on as an AE that the radio is always on, and every day has a sense of urgency to it. In order to keep my team moving in the right direction

and excited about radio, I must create and maintain a work environment that allows for the motivation and success of today's generation."

JACKIE WISE

VP/Market Manager
Entercom
Wichita, KS

Jackie Wise epitomizes the small-market leader in a consolidated world. Her focus on providing great, varied brands, great customer solutions, and leadership in the Wichita community show her commitment to our industry and the community. And she says few things are more satisfying than seeing good people work hard and win. "I feel a strong sense of responsibility to do what I can to assist our team and individuals to excel," says Wise. "This may be done in part by providing a healthy environment they can thrive in, setting expectations that allow them to stretch their talents and gifts, understanding what's significant to their motivation, and caring about them beyond what they can put in your pocket on any given day."



"It's energizing to me when an employee performs at a level they didn't think possible in part because someone else believed in their ability to do so. When you see something in someone they don't see in themselves, you can set them up to perform at a higher level than they might otherwise. You increase their realm of possibility."

MICHAEL YOUNG

SVP/Market Manager
CBS Radio
Pittsburgh

Michael Young has spent his entire professional career in radio, and has been with CBS for over 28 years. He joined the company in 1985 as part of the in-house national sales firm. Young held various sales and sales management positions before he moved to Pittsburgh in 1996, where he first served as GSM for KDKA-AM, then as VP/GM of KDKA-AM. He says what motivates him every day is seeing the collective engagement and ownership his team demonstrates in the work they do.

"Our CBS Radio Pittsburgh stations have a number of options that we can create and deploy when it comes to potentially



Top: Young (r) with (l-r) KDKA's PJ Kumanchik, Jim Graci, Rob Pratte, Kelly Pidgeon, Larry Richert, Amy Mauk, and Andrew Limberg. **Below:** Young (c) with KDKA morning duo Larry Richert and John Shumway at the station's annual Spaghetti Breakfast.

reaching new listeners and further engaging the current audience base," Young says. "The challenge for our program managers is determining the right programming and distribution methods for each station. With so many different audience-interaction options to select from, it makes for an interesting challenge — it's actually a good problem to have."

"I am a believer that radio is in a good place. Radio has a great deal of local content that is both unique and very beneficial to the communities we serve. Additionally, radio is filled with many success stories of how the medium has delivered results for advertisers. We constantly receive this feedback from our Pittsburgh advertiser base, and it reinforces how much influence our stations and the medium in general has with our products. It is a strong and confident feeling." **INK**