

For immediate release:  
June 14, 2022

**32 public media leaders graduate from national diversity program**  
*SCETV and the Riley Institute have partnered to explore opportunities and challenges related to diversity, equity, and inclusion in the public media sector*

**COLUMBIA, S.C.** – As public media leaders navigate how to best foster diversity and equity in their workplaces and boards while making content inclusive for a wide array of audiences, a program is providing them with tools and perspectives that they can apply in their efforts.

Thirty-two public media professionals from across the country were part of the third class to graduate from the Public Media Diversity Leaders Initiative (PMDLI), a program of the Riley Institute at Furman University, on June 8. It is offered in partnership with South Carolina ETV (SCETV) and modeled after the Institute's award-winning South Carolina Diversity Leaders Initiative.

Over the course of five months, participants took part in a highly interactive curriculum comprising scenario analyses and other experiential learning tools that supports public media leaders in their efforts to apply diversity, equity, and inclusion principles to behaviors, systems and cultures within their organizations.

Graduates of PMDLI become Public Media Diversity Fellows and will help identify future program participants. Collectively, they reflect a vast public media ecosystem, representing both television and radio as well as a variety of geographic regions, audiences, affiliate organizations and diversity dimensions. A fourth PMDLI class will start the program in September.

Below are the graduates of the third PMDLI class. For more information about PMDLI, visit the [Furman University website](#).

**Jorge Briseño**  
Director, Instructional TV  
KLCS Public Media  
Los Angeles, CA

**Bob Culkeen**  
President/CEO  
WTCI  
Chattanooga, TN

**Heather Daniels-Whitson**  
Director of Education Media  
Alabama Public Television  
Birmingham, AL

**Gavin Felix**  
Director of Television Production  
Nebraska Public Media  
Lincoln, NE

**Ron Hetrick**  
President and CEO  
WITF  
Harrisburg, PA

**Dani Iannelli**  
Director, Immersive Learning  
PBS HQ  
Arlington, VA

**Rachel Knight**  
General Manager  
Ozarks Public Broadcasting  
Springfield, MO

**Katie Koskenmaki**  
Director of Station Relations &  
Communications  
ITVS  
San Francisco, CA

**Tony Martin**  
Senior Manger, Development Operations  
WETA  
Arlington, VA

**Suzanne Masri**  
VP of Marketing, Communications &  
Engagement  
Fred Rogers Productions  
Pittsburgh, PA

**Thom Mayer**  
Director of Human Resources  
South Carolina Educational Television  
Columbia, SC

**Heather Mazzoni**  
Chief Content Officer  
WHRO Public Media  
Norfolk, VA

**Mallory Mbalia**  
Director of Education  
PBS NC, Education and Innovation  
RTP, NC

**Carla McCabe**  
President and CEO  
WVIA  
Pittston, PA

**Rachel Morrison Parsons**  
Senior Director, Education Strategy  
NETA  
Columbia, SC

**Roger Mukasa**  
Finance Manager  
PBS Wisconsin  
Madison, WI

**Tom New**  
President/CEO  
WQLN Public Media  
Erie, PA

**Staci Orlando**

Assoc. GM-Operations / CFO  
PBS KVIE  
Sacramento, CA

**Sonja Pasquantonio**

VP/Human Resources, Training, and  
Development  
Connecticut Public Broadcasting, Inc  
Hartford, CT

**Kristen Penczek**

Managing Director, Audience Engagement  
Maryland Public Television (MPT)  
Owings Mills, MD

**Molly Phillips**

Executive Director and General Manager  
Iowa PBS  
Johnston, IA

**Stephen Schram**

Executive Director - General Manager  
Michigan Radio - WUOM - University of  
Michigan  
Ann Arbor, MI

**Julie Sochay**

Senior Director of Content and  
Communication  
WKAR Public Media  
East Lansing, MI

**Jayme Swain**

President and CEO  
VPM  
Richmond, VA

**Julie Thomsen**

Chief Administrative Officer  
Nebraska Public Media  
Lincoln, NE

**Aaron Turner**

Development Director  
WGVU Public Media  
Grand Rapids, MI

**Brad VanOsdel**

Director of Content for Entertainment  
South Dakota Public Broadcasting  
Vermillion, SD

**Stephen Wilkins**

SVP for HR and DEI  
Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB)  
Washington, DC

**Susan Wolfinger Schmitt**

Managing Director, Human Resources  
Maryland Public Television (MPT)  
Owings Mills, MD

**Olivia Wong**

Vice President, Marketing &  
Communications  
American Public Television  
Boston, MA

**Tara Wren**

Deputy Director of Education  
Mississippi Public Broadcasting  
Jackson, MS

**Randy Wright**

Executive Director  
WUFT-TV/FM, FPREN  
Gainesville, FL

**QUOTES:**

“Today’s heightened awareness of racial and other inequities in American institutions has magnified and accelerated organizational and stakeholder expectations that public media leaders establish diversity, equity, and inclusion as core values within their organizations. Recognizing that, we are proud to partner with the Riley Institute to offer this unique virtual program to our peers from across the country.”- **SCETV President and CEO Anthony Padgett**

“The Riley Institute is proud to play a role in connecting a network of public media professionals who are committed to managing, leading, and meeting the needs of increasingly diverse workers, clients, and audiences. We look forward to seeing the positive impact this program will have in communities across the country.”- **Executive Director of the Riley Institute Dr. Don Gordon**

**FAST FACTS:**

- Thirty-two public media professionals from across the country were part of the third class to graduate from the PMDLI.
- PMDLI is a program of the Riley Institute at Furman University, offered in partnership with SCETV.
- Participants took part in a highly interactive curriculum comprising scenario analyses and other experiential learning tools.
- Graduates of PMDLI become Public Media Diversity Fellows and will help identify future program participants.
- A fourth PMDLI class will start the program in September.
- More information about PMDLI can be found on the [Furman University website](#).

**About the Riley Institute at Furman University**

Furman University’s Richard W. Riley Institute advances social and economic progress in South Carolina and beyond by building leadership for a diverse society, hosting expert speakers to broaden perspectives on critical issues, supporting public education, and creating knowledge through community solutions-focused research. It is committed to nonpartisanship in all it does and to a rhetoric-free, facts-based approach to change. Learn more at [furman.edu/riley](http://furman.edu/riley).



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### **About South Carolina ETV and Public Radio**

South Carolina ETV (SCETV) is the state's public educational broadcasting network. Using television, radio and diverse digital properties, SCETV's mission is to enrich lives by educating children, informing and connecting citizens, celebrating our culture and environment and instilling the joy of learning. In addition to airing local programs, such as *Carolina Classrooms*, *Making It Grow*, *Palmetto Scene* and *This Week in South Carolina*, SCETV also presents multiple programs to regional and national audiences, including *By The River*, *Expeditions*, *Reconnecting Roots*, *Reel South*, *Somewhere South*, *Yoga in Practice* and *Live from Charleston Music Hall*. In addition, SC Public Radio produces the national radio production, *Chamber Music from Spoleto Festival USA*.

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