

Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

CABLE CENTER HALL OF FAME

Introducing the 2020 Cable Hall of Fame Class

That 2020 in the title is no typo. It's been a long road to get here, but the extraordinary individuals that made up last year's Cable Center Hall of Fame class will finally have a moment to celebrate their illustrious careers. Tune in to C-SPAN 3 on November 15 at 8pm ET to take part in this year's virtual celebration, which will also be available in the C-SPAN Video Library immediately following the event. Join us in learning a more about these leaders and their contributions to the industry.



Bridget Baker
CEO
Baker Media, Inc.

What surprises you most about how different the industry is today vs. when you were running distribution at NBCU? There are

far fewer independent cable companies and their primary business has moved beyond video. Today's dominant distribution platforms are global conglomerates reliant on numerous streams of revenue, whether that's high-speed internet, mobile and regional sports; or housewares, grocery delivery and search optimization. It's certainly well beyond Bruce Springsteen's now quaint lament: "57 Channels (And Nothin' On)."

What would be your advice for a new content company launching today in this chaotic environment? None of us will ever watch all the content we've got queued and more great shows appear every minute, not to mention everything we missed the first time around. ("Game of Thrones," anyone?) At the same time, aren't each and every one of us our own content company now? My advice is to prepare for a long haul, be well funded, and pray for your viral sensation moment.

So many execs are bouncing between traditional media and streaming (Ex: Mike Hopkins, Albert Cheng, Jennifer Salke, etc).

What "cable" skills do you think will serve them best in their new roles? Mike, Albert and Jen are all terrific executives with whom I've crossed paths for years, and Amazon is lucky to have them. The early days of cable and content distribution were great training. We moved at a breakneck pace, no two days were ever the same, well-funded competitors were around every corner, and everything seemed possible. The skills honed in cable's symbiotic businesses of content and distribution—high-stakes negotiation, creative collaboration, versatility to manage the hits and misses, and expertise in overseeing large scale businesses—are for life.

How have your Alaska roots informed the direction of your career—and what values from your upbringing do you bring to your current work? Growing up in Alaska's remote capitol of Juneau, inaccessible except in good weather by boat or plane, sparked an early interest in the technology and services that

could connect far away places and people. As a young girl, my bright orange Touch Tone Trimline phone was my treasured possession, connecting me to friends "out the road" or family "in the Lower-48." One might say that the temperament of many Alaskans—undaunted in spirit and fiercely independent—is recognizable in plenty of cable pioneers, as well.

How does it feel to be inducted into the Hall of Fame? It's a capstone moment! I am honored, humbled, and privileged to be recognized, yet I share this honor with many others. All my coworkers and industry colleagues, people whose business savvy, drive and dedication I admire, are with me in spirit.



Jim Blackley
Former EVP, IT and Engineering
Charter Communications

You've been a part of a lot of important advancements, from Cablevision's introduction of the network DVR to the development of Charter's highly rated

Spectrum App. What's your advice for spotting opportunities for innovation? Technology generally evolves before the service that will utilize it most effectively is fully defined. I point to the cable modem as an example. The value in the very first modems wasn't really the speeds/cost advantage they provided over dial-up—although those were very nice attributes... The value was the modem was always on. No need to tie up a phone line and, more importantly, when you needed to get online, you already were. The key to spotting and moving forward with innovation is having teams that understand what and where technology is evolving and trends... It truly takes the whole company to take a science experiment and turn it into a technology innovation that provides value to the customer.

What sort of impact has COVID-19 had on the industry's technological path? I'd say the first impact was that the pandemic truly proved the flexibility and capability of our network architecture. The world changed almost overnight as the world population sequestered in-place. As a result, the network usage changed overnight as well—both in terms of overall load and time of use. More

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Jim Blackley for his induction into
the Cable Hall of Fame.



Jim Blackley
Former EVP, Engineering and IT

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people and devices than ever (including boatloads of telephones) connected to the WiFi and network technologies we provide—and they and their devices stayed connected. Our networks didn't skip a beat. And it should be noted that wasn't the case everywhere. I also think the pandemic has changed the way we work and will continue to work. We've had to develop new collaboration skill sets and team metrics as team dynamics changed from in-office to remote. We had and will continue to have to motivate, teach, evaluate & perform—but without the legacy in-person feedback loops. I think the tools we use in this new paradigm will continue to evolve.

You've been very involved with SCTE over the years, co-chairing Cable-Tec Expo in 2017. We've seen a lot of conferences come and go. Why do you think Expo has had such staying power? The SCTE has a very good leadership team and they understand both the needs of their customers and the value they need to provide. SCTE is important to the technology engineering teams for sure, but it's also a valuable resource to the Technology Operations teams, as well as the Field service organizations that install and support our networks and products in the field. As a result, they include people and leaders from all of these disciplines in all of their planning sessions. The net result being that the materials, abstracts, sessions which make up SCTE Expo continue to prove valuable to a large swath of people in the industry and to those supporting the industry. I'll also note that as other conferences have fallen to the wayside, SCTE Expo is about the only remaining conference that enables us to get together, catch-up and share experiences and thoughts (COVID-19 aside). So, they've also enjoyed a bit of a "survivor" boost.

What does it mean to you to join the Cable Hall of Fame? Honestly, I didn't know how important it was to me until after Michael Wilner told me I was being inducted. The CHOF is for industry titans. I've always regarded myself as a decent offensive coordinator with excellent skill players on a multi-Super Bowl winning team. But upon reflection after the call—it's undeniable we (the industry) completely changed the way this nation, if not the world, works, consumes, sells, communicates, entertains, meets, and lives. So, at the very least, I get props for being in the right industry at the right time and doing my best to continue to help move things forward.



Cathy Hughes
Founder & Chairwoman
Urban One

Cathy Hughes was supposed to follow her mother into music. Her mom played in an all-women's swing orchestra, the International Sweethearts of Rhythm, and, her daughter

says, "she was determined that I would be Beyoncé." Instead, Hughes got into media and has been a ground-breaker for 40 years. Married and a mother at 17, Hughes began her media career in her

hometown of Omaha, Nebraska, where she worked at KOWH, an African American-owned AM radio station. In 1973, the now-single mother moved with her son, Alfred, to Washington, D.C., where she lectured at Howard University's School of Communications and worked as sales manager for the university's radio station, WHUR. There, she created the distinctive "Quiet Storm" format that revolutionized urban radio. She would become Washington radio's first female general manager. In 1980, Hughes purchased her first radio station, WOL-AM, applying to 32 banks before finding a lender to help finance the deal. At WOL, she introduced another new format to the nation's capital, "Talk from a Black Perspective." Unable to afford hiring talk-show talent, she became the station's morning show host. Five years later, Hughes' son, Alfred Liggins, joined the WOL staff as an account manager. WOL turned its first profit in '86, and the next year, Hughes bought WMMJ, also in the Washington, D.C., market. Her company, Radio One, became an urban radio market leader with stations and multiple formats across the country. Liggins took on more responsibility as Radio One grew, and in 1994 he took over day-to-day operations, with Hughes as CEO. The mother-son business partnership has endured and thrived. Liggins became CEO in 1997; Hughes is board chair. Radio One went public in 1999, becoming the first company on the U.S. stock exchange headed by an African American woman. Hughes entered the cable industry in 2004 with the launch of TV One in partnership with Comcast. Radio One was renamed Urban One in 2017, and is today a multi-media enterprise with radio stations, cable, syndicated programs, web, and marketing properties under its umbrella.



Alfred Liggins
CEO, Urban One
Chairman & CEO, TV One

What was it like growing up watching your mother create what is now Urban One, back when it was just one radio station? I don't know life without radio. It's been a constant in

my life because it was my mom's dream to provide an opportunity for Black people to have our own voice and tell our own stories. She sacrificed and put everything she had into her business. I grew up walking the hallways of WHUR at Howard University, being babysat by staff, attending events with my mom, and watching her carve her own path in what has always been a male-dominated world. I even started working at the station when I was 15 years old. As a child, I didn't realize the foundation she was laying for Radio One and Urban One to become what it is today—to provide a voice and be of service to the African American community; it was just normal life for me.

What inspired you to break into cable television in 2004 with TV One? Diversification just made sense and television was a

URBAN ONE SALUTES
CATHY HUGHES
AND
ALFRED LIGGINS



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natural progression for us. I wanted to do with television what we had done with radio, so creating a platform for African American consumers that featured sitcoms and talk shows made sense. At the time, the market was relatively uncrowded and there were only a few networks that offered quality programming for African Americans.

Similarly, how did you know the market was right for CLEO TV in 2019? As a company, we've always been about diversifying media. We want to be a voice for the African American community, and I understand that Black women have not always had a space where their voices can be heard. CLEO TV provides that platform to Black women and millennials.

What are some of the challenges for Urban One with some of the other big players getting into Black content? The challenge for Urban One has always been competing with companies that can create bigger content with bigger budgets, like your Netflix and HBOs. You know, we've always created Black content, but now, in the wake of so much social unrest, Black content has become even more popular across the masses. Corporations are clamoring for it; it's now on their radars, but it has always been on ours.

What does this honor mean to you? My mom started this company and provided me with an opportunity to lead it. She trusted my instinct to move into cable as a means of diversifying our company and extending her vision. To see how our company has grown from its humble beginning in radio in the '80s, to where we are today, validates the fact that diversifying our business was the right choice. I'm grateful our collective ideas and passions have allowed us to have a place in these industries and enabled us to be of greater service to the Black community.



Jeff Marcus

Cable Pioneer (Founder Marcus Communications and Marcus Cable)

You began your cable career selling door-to-door. What about that experience shaped the entrepreneur you are today? It was a great way to begin my career in the cable industry.

It put me in direct touch with customers which of course is the foundation of the business. I learned what made them happy and what didn't. And, as we all know, happy customers beget more customers. At Marcus Cable, we always tried to put our customers first, which was an integral ingredient of our success.

As a former part-owner of the Texas Rangers, what's your take on the price of sports in video? Is the RSN model broken?

The increase in the cost of sports rights has been astonishing. And as operators pass the increased programming fees on to their customers, the cable bundle becomes more and more expensive. Not everyone wants sports channels so a la carte via OTT becomes more attractive. Sports programmers are killing the golden goose as fees go to untenable levels and cord cutters proliferate.

In your Cable Center oral history, you said you regret selling Marcus Cable to Paul Allen in 1998. If Marcus Cable was here in 2020, what do you think it would look like? When we sold Marcus

Cable to Paul Allen in 1998 we had 1.25 million subscribers. My guess is that had we not sold we would have continued to grow both organically and through selected acquisitions. But most of all we would have invested in new technologies as they were introduced to ensure we provided the best possible service to our customers.

How has the pandemic changed your outlook, personally and professionally? When the pandemic hit in early 2020, I had already retired from the private equity firm where I was a partner. But as Chairman of WOW!, I worked with our CEO and the board to ensure our employees were kept safe and our customers were well served. Ironically, the last 18 months have been a time of unprecedented growth for WOW!. Adapting quickly to changing circumstances has always been important but never more so than during this difficult time in our world. And on a personal level the pandemic has underscored the importance of family, friends, and community.

What does being inducted into the Hall of Fame mean to you?

When I knocked on that first door back in July of 1967, I had no idea that I would have a lifelong career in the cable television industry. But one thing led to another and 54 years later, I am honored to be inducted into the Cable Hall of Fame. It certainly puts a capstone on a lifetime of work and I am grateful to the Cable Center for including me in this distinguished group of men and women.



Dave Watson

**President & CEO
Comcast Cable**

What have been the most significant learnings you've taken away from your time serving on the boards of CableLabs and NCTA? Having served over these last

few years I've been able to watch our industry react and respond to unprecedented circumstances, pulling together to serve our customers and keep them connected, no matter what. We always knew the important role we played in people's lives, but that was never more apparent than throughout the pandemic. It's been an honor to work with leaders who rose to the occasion to do right by our customers when they needed us the most.

You spent almost a decade with Comcast Cellular before that business was sold, and now Comcast is back in the game with Xfinity Mobile. How much of a stark contrast is the wireless industry now to what it was then? It's a fun parallel. I think the best thing about being back in the mobile business is that the possibilities still feel endless, even 30 years later. Though I began my career in cellular, when we introduced Xfinity Mobile we were entering an entirely different marketplace, which allowed us to completely rethink how we wanted to do business. We were able to reinvent how mobile could be delivered, making it incredibly easy for customers on the best network, wired or wireless, and we're really excited by the runway we see ahead of us.

What did you learn from Comcast's response to COVID-19? What's amazing is that our response to COVID-19 started a

decade ago. By the early days of 2020, we'd spent the last ten years investing \$30 billion in our network because we knew the future would require it to be faster and smarter. We never could have predicted that the country start working from home all at once, or that we'd see 2 years' worth of traffic growth in the first 4 months. But we were able to quickly adapt and keep our customers connected, and even over-deliver, thanks to those years of investment. I've seen our teams do some unbelievable things over the years, but I don't think I've ever been prouder than over the past 18 months.

What does receiving the honor of being inducted mean to you? This is as much a tribute to our incredible team as it is to me. It may be my name up there, but that's thanks to the hard work, passion and dedication of my team and the thousands of employees who have helped get us to where we are today. I dedicate this honor to all of them.



Jeff Zucker
Chairman, WarnerMedia News & Sports
President, CNN Worldwide

It's been a pretty exhausting news cycle over the past 20 months. What have you learned in terms of keeping WarnerMedia's employees recharged and supported? It wasn't easy. But it was something that we took really seriously at CNN, and I hope we did a good job. In the early days of COVID we did a ton of regular calls with every sector of the company—multiple times a week. People were nervous, confused, working around the clock, balancing their lives in ways they never had to before. And in order to keep us on air and online, a number of them never left our workspaces—they kept coming in because it was critical to keeping CNN running. We owe a lot to that group of people. As we approach what we hope are the final weeks and months of the pandemic, I am so proud of our more than 4,000 employees around the world. And we look forward to beginning to get them back and rebuilding some of what we have lost during the past two years.

How has COVID-19 changed the TV news business?

From a production standpoint, there is no question that we were forced to fundamentally change the way we work. And we basically had to do it with almost no notice, in the midst of covering one of the biggest news stories of our time. The analogy about changing the tires on the car while it's barreling down the highway is appropriate. From an editorial standpoint, I think everyone in our business is acutely aware of the need for accurate, honest and timely information—and differentiating facts from conspiracies and lies. This was about life and death, literally.

We're starting to see more live sports move to streaming.

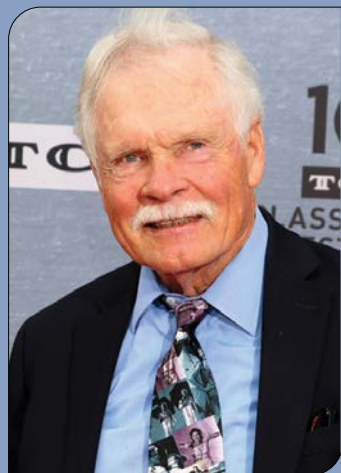
What will it take for there to be a seismic shift away from linear television? One of linear television's biggest success stories right now is live news and sports. With the ongoing shift to streamed viewing wherever, whenever people want it, both news and sports remain a bit of an anomaly to that thinking—the exceptions to the on-demand rule so to speak. So while there are clearly moves to make live sports more accessible in as many ways possible, I think a complete shift away from linear TV is probably still a ways off. The key to finding good solutions for the sports leagues, the linear networks, and, most of all, the fans and viewers, is to come up with ways to put the right kinds of programming in the right places, depending on the content and its target audience.

What most excites you about the pending WarnerMedia-

Discovery combination? I think the opportunities for the new company are incredibly promising. Combining the best-in-class assets we have at WarnerMedia—our brands, our content, our libraries—with equally impressive offerings on the Discovery side has tremendous upside for the consumers—more choice, more options, and ultimately more resources for us to keep creating more of what we love to do. It's very exciting.

What does this award mean to you? It's always humbling to be honored by a group of your peers for work that you have done. In particular, the Cable Hall of Fame is a real standout for me—it has such an impressive list of partners, supporters and past honorees. So much of my success has been a direct result of the people I have been fortunate to work with over the years, so this award is really a tribute to all of them, as well.


Ted Turner Receives Bresnan Ethics in Business Award



Ted Turner needs no introduction. Since 1970, he's worked to create an empire that includes news and entertainment networks and sports teams. Turner Broadcasting merged with Time Warner in 1996, and Time Warner merged with AOL to 2001 to create Time Warner AOL. It went on to change its name back to Time Warner, and we all know it today as WarnerMedia.

He's done it all with personality and swagger that have solidified him as a legend in every industry he's touched. In telling *Cablefax* his predictions for 2003, then Cox President/CEO Jim Robbins wagered that "Ted Turner will say something the PR department at AOL [AOL] will wish he hadn't. It's just a hunch."

We'd need pages upon pages to list out the awards Turner has received over the course of his extraordinary life, but a highlighted few include his win of Time Magazine's 1991 Man of the Year, his positioning as one of the Time 100 World's Most Influential People in 2009 and his Lifetime Achievement Award received at the 35th Annual News & Documentary Emmy Awards in 2015.



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