

Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

Chosen Ones: Finch, Perrette Earn Bigger Jobs at Warner Bros. Discovery

In the spirit of Opening Day, **Discovery** has finally given us a peek at its lineup card for the **Warner Bros. Discovery** leadership team.

The clubhouse is largely composed of Discovery CEO *David Zaslav's* trusted inner circle and folks who helped manage the transitionary period following the programmer's acquisition of **Scripps Networks Interactive** back in 2018. Discovery CFO *Gunnar Wiedenfels* will hold onto his CFO seat as will *Adria Alpert Romm*, who will continue to serve as Chief People and Culture Officer at the combined company. *Bruce Campbell* will take on the new title of Chief Revenue and Strategy Officer, giving him charge over U.S. advertising sales, distribution revenue and content licensing, legal affairs, global streaming platform agreements, corporate development and strategy. He's led Discovery's M&A strategy for 15 years and has long been key to the company's distribution negotiations.

Kathleen Finch, unsurprisingly to many, was chosen by Zaslav to lead the more than 40 U.S. linear networks that will fall under the Warner Bros. Discovery umbrella post-merger. She'll take on the title of Chair/Chief Content Officer, U.S. Networks Group with her direct reports including Chief Content Officer, Discovery Factual Networks *Nancy Daniels*; General Manager, **TBS**, **TNT** and **truTV** *Brett Weitz* and Warner Bros. Global Kids, Young Adults and Classics *Tom Ascheim*.

Her promotion is in large part due to the magic touch and

treatment she has given **HGTV** and **Food Network** since her days at Scripps Networks Interactive, growing both to be some of the highest-rated networks on linear television and must-haves on any cable provider's lineup. Finch has long been devoted to the creation of high-quality content and has never wavered in her belief that success starts at the production level.

"I think the biggest thing I've learned is a common sense understanding that great content will be successful no matter where it is," she told **CFX** back in 2016 after winning **The WICT Network's** Woman of the Year honor. "What I've learned is you can take the philosophy that works really well at one network in the Scripps family and you can replicate that success with the other networks, provided you have the right team behind you."

Helming the streaming ship will be none other than *JB Perrette*, Discovery's longtime leader on international. Assuming the role of CEO/President, Warner Bros. Discovery Global Streaming and Interactive Entertainment, he'll have responsibility for **HBO Max** as well as discovery+ and other direct-to-consumer and gaming efforts at a global level.

Warner Bros. Games President *David Haddad* will report to Perrette, and *Casey Boys* will move over from **WarnerMedia** to serve as Chief Content Officer, **HBO** & **HBO Max**. First up on Perrette's task list will be analyzing the technological structures of both **HBO Max** and discovery+ and finding creative ways to bundle them while engineers figure out how to combine the two streamers into one content-rich platform.

Mark Your Calendars!

Cablefax 2022 Award Submission Deadlines

The Diversity List Nominations

Deadline: June 3
Final Deadline: June 10

Most Powerful Women Nominations

Deadline: August 12
Final Deadline: August 19

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Questions: Kate Schaeffer at kschaeffer@accessintel.com

His team will also compare the maps of where the two streamers are today and where their global footprints overlap. Perrette wants to craft a strategy that will allow both platforms to grow in the lead-up to the eventual emergence of one service.

“Us being more disciplined and tactical at this stage of phasing the further rollouts of discovery+, for example, is also a view toward we may be able to more quickly fold the content offering into a joint platform at that stage versus having to replatform two existing platforms in a market into one,” he said during Discovery’s 3Q21 earnings call. “There may be an initial phase which allows for more of a quick bundling of services, and a second phase which eventually allows for, obviously, a common service on one tech platform.”

More names will be added to the roster in the coming weeks and months. Discovery is actively searching to fill the role of Chair/CEO, Warner Bros. Discovery Sports, which will report to Zaslav. Turner Sports President *Lenny Daniels* and President, Regional Sports Networks *Patrick Crumb* will fall under that individual. Warner Bros. Discovery also plans to name a new Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer at a later date.

KETANJI BROWN JACKSON CONFIRMED TO SCOTUS

The Senate Chamber erupted into applause Thursday afternoon as legislators voted 53-47 to confirm the nomination of *Ketanji Brown Jackson* to serve as an Associate Justice on the **Supreme Court**. Her confirmation, the first for a Black woman to America’s highest court, was delayed for some time as the Senate waited for Sen. *Rand Paul* (R-KY) to cast his

“no” vote, which he reportedly did from the GOP cloakroom. As expected, Sens. *Mitt Romney* (R-UT), *Susan Collins* (R-ME) and *Lisa Murkowski* (R-AK) broke from their party to support Jackson’s confirmation. “While I do not expect to agree with every decision she may make on the Court, I believe that she more than meets the standard of excellence and integrity,” Romney said in a statement earlier this week. It will be a few months before she officially fills the seat to be left behind by Associate Justice *Stephen Breyer*, who plans to retire this summer. Among the issues Jackson will likely weigh in on during her term are net neutrality regulations, Section 230 and other topics relevant to Big Tech. We’re also keeping an eye on **Sony Music vs. Cox**, a Fourth Circuit review of a \$1 billion jury award against Cox after the provider was found liable for secondary copyright infringement for the illegal music downloads of its subscribers. The case is likely to head to the Supreme Court no matter which way the Fourth Circuit rules and could have far-reaching implications with **Frontier**, **Charter** and **Grande** also being hit with similar suits.

MORE STATES JOIN ROBOCALL INVESTIGATION

Five more state Attorneys General joined the **FCC**’s investigation into robocalls Thursday, bringing the number of states engaging in partnerships with the Commission to 27. Alaska, California, Tennessee, Pennsylvania and Washington signed Memorandums of Understanding with the FCC’s Enforcement Bureau. The partnership provides resources for building cases against bad actors including witness statements and consumer complaints. “It shows that we are united when it comes to fighting robocalls,” FCC Chair *Jessica Rosenworcel* said in



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a release. "Today I invite every state and U.S. territory to join this effort and establish information sharing and cooperation structures with the FCC so we can work together to investigate and put an end to spoofing and robocall scam campaigns."

PRIME VIDEO TO BROADCAST YANKEES GAMES

Amazon and **YES Network** are streaming 21 Yankees games this season on **Prime Video** at no additional cost to Prime members in the Yankees' home footprint. Produced by YES' broadcast team, 19 of those games are Friday night contests, with the first game set for April 22 at 7pm ET. Amazon's X-Ray technology will give viewers in-game stats, team and player details and play-by-play information. Games will be available for replay for 48 hours following their conclusion.

GOOGLE FIBER EXPANDING TO DES MOINES

Google Fiber is coming to Des Moines, Iowa, with plans to start construction to be determined as the company is currently in the permitting process. Google Fiber recently starting rolling out service in West Des Moines, providing customers its 1- or 2-Gig service.

CLEARWAVE FIBER EXPANDS IN PRAIRIE STATE

Clearwave Fiber is expanding its internet network into Harrisburg and Herrin, Illinois, as part of the company's goal to bring service to over 500,000 homes by 2027. Clearwave's plan with up to 250 Mbps upload and download speed checks in at \$65/month, while plans with up to 500 Mbps and 1 Gbps cost \$75/month and \$85/month, respectively. Construction is scheduled to begin within the next two months.

CARRIAGE

Fox Weather expanded distribution with **Vidgo** adding the FAST channel to its lineup. Fox Weather is already available on **YouTube TV**, **Amazon News**, **Tubi**, **Roku Channel**, **fuboTV** and **Xumo**.

VEXUS FIBER EXPANDS TO TYLER, TEXAS

Vexus Fiber is now available to residents in Tyler, Texas. Before the end of 2022, Vexus hopes to bring service to over 10,000 homes in the Tyler region. Vexus also plans to open a store in the coming months.

WRESTLEMANIA LIVE EVENT BREAKS RECORDS

"WrestleMania 38" had its highest-grossing and most-attended event in **WWE** history with 156,352 total fans. That beat the previous gate and attendance records set by "Wrestlemania 32" in Dallas in 2016. The two-night event went against men's Final Four games and the Grammy's, but still saw 1.6 billion views on social media.

VIDEOAMP, TIVO REUP

VideoAmp renewed its data licensing partnership with **TiVo** Thursday, giving its access to viewing patterns for anonymized households across all U.S. media markets. TiVo's dataset investigates viewer behavior across both live and time-shifted content by the second, offering advertisers a deeper look into habits ahead of planning campaigns. The renewed contract runs through the end of the 2026 broadcast year and includes additional renewal options.

TELEMUNDO PROMOTES FINANCIAL LITERACY

NBCUniversal Telemundo Enterprises extended its campaign promoting financial literacy among U.S. Hispanics. "Nuestras Finanzas," an initiative launched last year, promotes Hispanic families establishing and maintaining financial security. Nuestras Finanzas will air educational programming throughout April across **CNBC**, **CNBC en Español** and **Noticias Telemundo** beginning tonight. Topics included are financial planning, tax credit tips, small business advice among others.

PROGRAMMING

"Supermarket Stakeout" returns for another season on **Food Network**, premiering May 17 at 10pm. Hosted by *Alex Guamaschelli* and set outside of a grocery store, contestants try to persuade customers to sell their groceries and turn them into a dish that's then judged by a panel. Viewers can also see "Supermarket Stakeout: What Would Alex Make?" starting May 31 at 11pm. – **HGTV** ordered a six-episode docuseries "Christina in the Country." The series follows "Flip or Flop" co-star *Christina Hall* as she expands her design business across the U.S. – **HBO** renewed "Winning Time: The Rise of the Lakers Dynasty" for a second season. The first season ends May 8, with Sunday's episode having delivered 1.2 million viewers across platforms—a 37% bump compared to the first episode. – **Crown Media Family Networks** signed a multi-picture overall deal with *Jonathan Bennett*. Bennett previously starred in "Mean Girls" and hosts "Time Square's New Year's Eve Countdown."

PEOPLE

A+E Networks named *Dr. Kerstin Gühne* as VP of Global Content Sales, EMEA. Reporting to Group Managing Director of GCS *Patrick Vien*, Gühne will oversee the distribution of A+E's content across linear, AVOD and SVOD platforms in various markets including German-speaking Europe and Turkey. Gühne previously spent 15 years at **Sony Pictures Television** as Managing Director and SVP of Sales and Distribution. – Former **NCTA** VP, Associate General Counsel *Svetlana Gans* has joined **Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher** as Partner. Gans is serving in the Antitrust and Competition; Privacy, Cybersecurity and Data Innovation; and Public Policy Practice Groups. – The **FCC** had multiple staff changes, starting with *Justin Faulb* joining as Wireline and National Security Advisor after serving as Associate Bureau Chief of the Wireline Competition Bureau. *Diane Holland* moved to the Wireline Competition Bureau as Deputy Bureau Chief after serving as Commissioner *Geoffrey Starks'* advisor for media and consumer protection issues. Lastly, *Morgan Bodenarain* joined the as Legal Advisor, focusing on issues of digital equity. She replaces the outgoing *Dr. Alisa Valentin*, who's leaving for the non-profit space. – **WWE** named *Elisebeth Collins* General Counsel & Corporate Secretary. Collins joins from manufacturing company **Caterpillar** where she served as Deputy General Counsel and succeeds *Samira Shah*. – *Jason Kuznicki* joined **TechFreedom** as Editor-in-Chief, where he'll lead the editorial content strategy. Kuznicki previously served as a senior fellow at the Cato Institute and was an assistant editor of the Encyclopedia of Libertarianism.

PROGRAMMER'S PAGE

Smart Crime Reigns Supreme in 'Harry Wild'

Idle hands are the devil's workshop according to some, but in "Harry Wild," they're used to solve murders. **Acorn TV's** latest addition (premiered April 4) centers on retired literature professor Harriet "Harry" Wild (*Jane Seymour*). She's recovering from a mugging at the home of her son Kevin, a Dublin detective, when boredom strikes and she decides to try her own hand at solving his cases. "It's hilarious, but it's also very bright. Of course, I'm playing an English professor, so I spend the whole time correcting everyone's grammar, deciphering terrible murders from my knowledge of English literature and history and the rest of it," Seymour, who also serves as executive producer, said during a panel at **TCA's** Winter Tour. "But the fun part was that my character does go undercover quite a lot... For me to be doing an action thing and have it be that intelligent... if you've never read a book, you are now going to be interested in 'Romeo and Juliet,' 'Wuthering Heights' and a few others." Strict COVID-19 protocols governed the show's production and the social interactions among cast and crew, but it created a bubble effect that only strengthened the growing bond between Seymour and co-star *Rohan Nedd*, who plays Wild's mugger and her eventual crime-fighting sidekick. The two became particularly close after Seymour smashed her kneecap at the beginning of filming and required crutches to move around the set. "I was learning from Jane an awful lot every single day. I feel like all the things that were happening off-screen with her, teaching me about incredible ways to act better and just be better, and all the stuff that was going on onscreen with the mysteries being solved, we got very close," Nedd said. "There's a familial kind of love there between us." – Sara Winegardner

REVIEWS

"Pachinko," streaming, **Apple TV+**. "What works is rewarded" and "nothing succeeds like success." Considering the popularity of Asian-themed entertainment on these shores—the films "Minari" and "Parasite" and the **Netflix** series "Squid Game" to name a few—it seemed almost inevitable we'd see more of it on cable. Fortunately, Apple TV+ has found a solid and, at times, very strong entry in this series, based loosely on an *Min Jin Lee's* excellent book, a National Book Award finalist, about a Korean family that lives a difficult life of poverty and racism in Japan. Fortunately, the family's situation improves over the generations after a member becomes the owner of a pachinko, a gambling machine. Indeed, the book's and series' title refer to the gamble of Zainichi Koreans attempting to make a decent life in Japan. There's so much to like here, besides the cast—Minari fans will recognize Oscar-winner *Yuh-Jung Yoon*—and story. For example, the set design is outstanding, certainly on par with some of the work **HBO** did with "The Gilded Age" or "Boardwalk Empire." And, of course, there's the immersion into Korean and Japanese culture. Similar to other multi-generational tales, there's a tendency to over-utilize flashbacks in Pachinko. As such, it's lean-in television. Some viewers might not want to work so hard. Fine. Their loss. Everyone else, dive in. – Seth Arenstein

BASIC CABLE

P2+ PRIME RANKINGS*

(03/28/22-04/03/22)

MON-SUN	MC US AA%	MC US AA (000)
FNC	1.126	3507
CNN	0.581	1808
MSNBC	0.541	1685
HGTV	0.351	1093
ESPN	0.340	1059
FOOD	0.265	827
TLC	0.262	816
DISCA	0.252	786
HIST	0.252	783
HALL	0.249	774
INSP	0.238	743
TNT	0.203	631
TBSC	0.195	606
TVLAND	0.177	552
LIFE	0.170	528
ID	0.168	524
A&E	0.154	479
AMC	0.141	439
HMM	0.139	433
BRAVO	0.129	403
WETV	0.128	399
SYFY	0.128	399
USA	0.126	394
GSN	0.123	384
NATGEO	0.120	373
FS1	0.115	359
OXYGEN	0.114	354
NAN	0.105	326
BET	0.103	320
FX	0.098	306
TRAVEL	0.091	285
ESPN2	0.090	282
COM	0.089	278
NICK	0.087	271

*P2+ L+SD rankings are based on national Nielsen numbers, not coverage.



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