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WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

## Come Together: Ag Committee Says Don't Forget USDA in Digital Divide

There was plenty of talk at Thursday's House Agriculture Committee hearing on broadband in the Farm Bill about how government agencies will need to work together to meet the goal of universal broadband. However, **U.S. Department of Agriculture** Rural Development Under Secretary *Xochitl Torres Small* and RUS Acting Administrator *Chris McLean* were the only federal officials at the hearing, which was billed as a review of broadband in the 2022 Farm Bill.

"I'd be remiss if I didn't share my utter disappointment and quite frankly shock that representatives from the **FCC** and **NTIA** declined the invitation to testify today. Their absence is noted and it illustrates their indifference toward the needs of rural Americans in our rural communities," said Ranking Member *Glenn Thompson* (R-PA).

Thompson also expressed disappointment that USDA only got \$2 billion of the \$62 billion for broadband allocation for Rural Development's ReConnect program. "USDA, and RUS in particular, is the point to bridge the digital divide in America," he said. "They received significant dollars under the stimulus in 2010 and they failed to bridge the digital divide." Given that USDA has nearly 100,000 employees across 4,500 locations—compared to nearly 2,100 employees combined for FCC and NTIA, Thompson said he'd feel better if USDA was at "the tip of the spear."

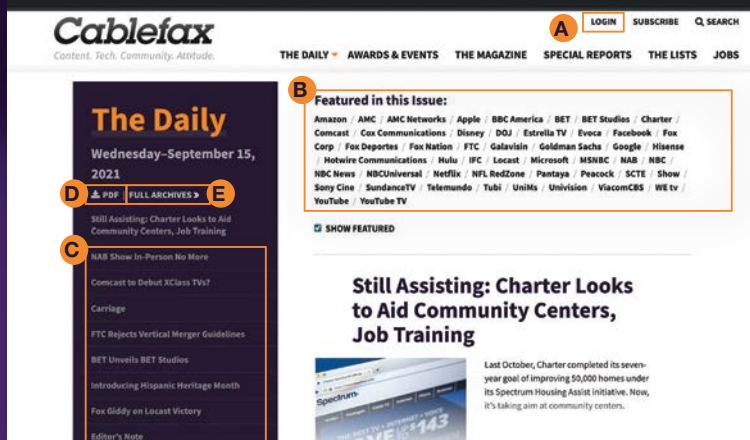
Ag Committee Chair *David Scott* (D-GA) said that with \$62

billion going out through several agencies that often compete with one another, all kinds of problems can develop to slow things down. "Not only do you have your federal agencies that need to coordinate, but then you have your state agencies to coordinate as well. Treasury Department, Commerce Dept, NTIA, USDA, FCC—I think we about have every [letter] in the alphabet," he said, asking Small what procedures could be put in place to ensure that all these agencies are effectively working toward the goal.

"I'll be very honest with you. It's hard. There are silos. People are used to working within their agencies. But there are also benefits in terms of certain community members are used to working with Rural Development or used to working with FCC or NTIA. So, we're learning how to reach different people," Small said. She noted that NTIA helped with some of Rural Development's outreach with tribal communities, while USDA helped with reviewing applications. One of the biggest challenges Small identified is timing, with each agency needing to align program deadlines with one another. That will get even harder when states join the mix. ReConnect Round 4 helped Rural Development learn that lesson. "We were very specific on RDOF and whether entities were ready to authorize those awards, which is a key step in the process. We specifically said if they were made ready to authorize by this point, we would work to avoid overbuild. Having that clarity was really valuable," Small said.

Rep *Rick Allen* (R-GA) said he was disappointed no one from

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FCC and NTIA was at the hearing, and he urged leadership to convene a separate hearing in the future to hear from agency leadership. "I believe at this moment funding is not the number one concern Congress should have. It should be broadband mapping," he said after declaring that more than \$147 billion has been dedicated to broadband in the last four years.

Lynn Follansbee, VP of Strategic Initiatives and Partnerships at **USTelecom**, testified before the committee, telling members that there is room for improvement with the ReConnect program. She said there needs to be a clearer process for its applications and challenges, noting that the results of challenges are often unknown or vague leaving providers wondering whether to proceed with a build. The association also recommends early reporting by states that administer broadband funding programs, particularly those funded by NTIA. This info on areas that will be served by funded projects should help avoid duplication and should also be included in the FCC's Broadband Data Collection maps. "Unfortunately, RUS has not always included FCC deployment data when making grants under the ReConnect program, which has led to some wasteful overbuilding," she testified.

#### CABLE HALL OF FAME

We're looking forward to raising a glass in honor of the newest members of **The Cable Center's** Hall of Fame tonight. Hear from the 2022 class—*Patricia Jo Boyers, Kevin Casey, Chris Lammers, Tina Perry, John Porter* and *Michael Powell*—in this **Cablefax Special Report**. They reflect on what this honor means, their mentors and more.

#### T. HOWARD DINNER MAKES IN-PERSON RETURN

When **CBS** President/CEO *George Cheeks* accepted his Corporate Leadership Award at the 29th annual **T. Howard Foundation** Diversity Awards Dinner, the teleprompter with his speech notes went out. Instead of cutting it short, he turned it into an overarching message for everyone in attendance. "Keep going," he said, going old school with mental notes of whom to thank and what to say. The foundation's first in-person event after a two-year virtual hiatus kicked things off by recognizing its 2021 intern class before awarding **Facebook** News Content Curator *Catalina Mejia* the Rising Star honor. **NBCUniversal** EVP/Chief Diversity Officer *Craig Robinson* was the recipient of the Executive Leadership Award. "I grew up near downtown Los Angeles as the biracial gay child of two public servants, and [knowing] absolutely nothing about the industry," a tearful Robinson said while accepting his award. "The idea of making a living in media seemed incredibly far-fetched to me. But like many of you, I'm guessing, I was fortunate early in my career to be nurtured and supported and championed by people who

believed in me." Next was the Diversity Advocate Award given to **CNN** Anchor & Senior Political Correspondent *Abby Phillip*. It was a full circle moment as the late former CNN anchor *Bernard Shaw* was the first recipient of the award in 1995. NBCU Senior Director of Development *Isaac Ahn* took home the Career Influencer honor, giving thanks to T. Howard for helping him create "the origin story" of his career as an intern. Scheduling conflicts kept **A+E Networks** Group President/Chairman *Paul Buccieri*, but he still found a way to close out the night, accepting the Corporate Excellence Award via video.

### Cablefax Executive Round Up

#### What is your favorite media milestone moment in Hispanic history?



**Claudia Chagui**

SVP of Marketing and Creative

**NBCUniversal Telemundo Enterprises**

"The show-stopping performance by two iconic Latina stars, Jennifer Lopez & Shakira, for the Super Bowl's 2020 half-time show. Seeing Latina powerhouses headline America's biggest event for the first time and bring this Country to

their feet was so powerful! These women reminded the millions watching that our Latino community is strong, diverse, and proud of their heritage. A true testament to our culture: when one Latino wins – we all win."



**Boris Gartner**

CEO

**LaLiga North America**

"It's been fascinating to live through the evolution of the Hispanic community in America for the last 15+ years. The growth of US Hispanics, as evidenced in the 2010 Census and then in the 2020 Census, has consolidated us as a

group that media, brands, and politicians need to pay attention to. The new American reality is younger, more diverse, and multicultural, and acculturated Hispanics (2nd and 3rd generation) are a dominant influence. My favorite media milestone for Hispanics is the expanding interest in fútbol in America, supported by the exponential growth of audiences and media rights values in the past 3 years, and more importantly, what's yet to come with the 2026 FIFA World Cup to be played across the US, Canada, and Mexico."



**Miguel Roggero**

Chairman/CEO

**Fuse Media**

"In the last decade, we have seen U.S. Hispanic artists take over the music industry. Spanish music has always existed, but newer genres like Reggaeton have topped the charts and broken new records. Diverse Hispanic artists from different Latin American countries have created a fusion of music that appeals to wide audiences. We have witnessed historic moments like the NFL half time with Jennifer Lopez and Shakira, the smash bilingual hit 'Despacito' by Justin Bieber with Luis Fonsi and Daddy Yankee, the phenomenon of Bad Bunny's and Maluma's global success, among others. Hispanic diversity continues to grow and shine bright in all areas."



**HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH BEGINS**

Today marks the start of Hispanic Heritage Month and companies are rolling out initiatives to celebrate. **NBCUniversal Telemundo Enterprises** launched its campaign “Be The Next Story Told” with a theme of calling Latinos to continue seeking opportunities and achievements. The initiative began with a new bilingual spot on “Today” and Telemundo’s morning show “Hoy Día.” Today will also highlight Latino entrepreneurs, authors, medical experts and more during all four hours of the show. Throughout the month, NBCU will have bilingual content across all platforms featuring celebrities such as *Camila Cabello*, *Andrés Cantor* and *George Lopez*. Programming wise, “Noticias Telemundo” will have stories spotlighting Hispanic Heritage during the midday, evening and weekend newscasts. **CNBC** and its digital platform will produce on-air vignettes regarding Latino business leaders and their impacts on their respective industries. NBCU News Group will have in-depth stories on Hispanic history and culture across NBC News, **MSNBC**, **CNBC**, **NBC News NOW** and **NBC News Digital**. Additionally, **Universal Kids** will make an animated spot for kids that ties into the initiative on linear, digital and social platforms. Telemundo is also collaborating with the National Women’s History Museum on a virtual exhibit celebrating Latina women in Congress. For those wanting to participate in the month-long celebration, stay tuned for a social media challenge to be revealed Monday across all Telemundo accounts. – **ESPN’s** “Somos” is returning this year with content and specials throughout Hispanic Heritage Month. The top 15 most influential Latino athletes—determined by a formula created by FiveThirtyEight—will be highlighted on weekdays on “SportsCenter” with video features. “The State of the Latin Players in the WNBA” will focus on past and present Latin athletes in the league, while “The Music of the MLB Latin Players” looks at walk-up songs and other tunes that have taken the league and its fans by storm on Sept. 22. Then, on Sept. 29 and Oct. 6 on **ESPN2**, “UFC Ultimate Knockouts: Hispanic Heritage Month” celebrates the best knockouts from Latin fighters.

**DIGITAL EQUITY FOUNDATION ACT INTRODUCED**

Senators *Ed Markey* (D-MA), *Ben Ray Lujan* (D-NM), *Doris Matsui* (D-CA) and others introduced legislation Thursday that would create a nonprofit foundation dedicated to using public and private investments to close the digital divide and support digital inclusion. The work of the foundation established by the Digital Equity Foundation Act would supplement the work being done by **FCC** and **NTIA** to award grants, support related research and promote digital equity policies. It would be run by a board made up of experts from the areas of technology, telecom and digital equity.

**PARAMOUNT+ TO LAUNCH IN ITALY**

**Paramount+** is launching in Italy on Thursday, bringing new programs and existing global content along with it. The platform will feature Italian originals including the recently announced

“Francesco Il Cantico” as well as “Bosé.” Programs like “Miss Fallaci,” “Beavis and Butthead,” “South Park” and “Are You the One?” will have local voice talents dub the shows in Italian.

**ON THE CIRCUIT**

Monday’s **Cable TV Pioneers** 56th Annual Banquet slated for Monday at the Union League of Philadelphia is sold out. If you don’t have a seat, you’re in luck! The gala will be live streamed thanks to 4th Wave Technologies’ sponsorship. The event can be viewed at [CableTVPioneers.com](http://CableTVPioneers.com) and on the organization’s YouTube Channel

**VANTAGE POINT CLIENTS SCORE BILLIONS**

There’s plenty of broadband funding out there for the taking, and business development firm **Vantage Point Solutions** has been finding it. It celebrated a milestone this week after securing more than \$2.7 billion in broadband funding for its clients to provide service to unserved and underserved areas of rural America.

**CARRIAGE**

**One America News Network** signed a deal with **Zito Media** that will see it launch in 22 states where Zito Media offers telecom services and digital cable television. OAN will be in its channel lineup at channel 28 while **AWE**, another **Herring Networks** offering, will be available on channel 70.

**DOING GOOD**

**Plume** wrapped its second annual #PlumeStrong Cycling Challenge last week, raising €217,000 to help refugee children in Ukraine and Moldova access education programs safely. Plume employees, partners and two-time Tour de France winner *Tadej Pogacar* joined together to complete the 675-kilometer ride and cumulatively spent the equivalent of 46 days in their bike saddles. – **Comcast** awarded another round of grants through its RISE Investment Fund, offering \$5 million to small businesses owned by people of color. From Oct. 3-16, eligible businesses in Chicago, Miami, Oakland, Seattle and Washington, D.C. will have the opportunity to apply for a \$10,000 grant. Some 100 grants per city will be awarded in November. Thus far, Comcast has given \$21 million in grants through the RISE Investment Fund.

**PEOPLE**

**ESPN** promoted three employees to VP/Production. *Bowen Dou* manages content creation for the network’s Chinese partner **Tencent**. She also oversees global studio programming for the international syndication division, whose shows include “SportsCenter Australia” and “Baseball Today In the U.K.” *Kate Jackson*, who’s been at ESPN since 1999, oversees Formula 1, the NCAA Women’s Basketball Tournament, the Heisman Trophy presentation and more. *Pat Lowry* has also spent more than two decades with the network and has managed over 600 events in each of the last four years. Additionally, *Miranda Thorpe* is the new VP, Charlotte Office & Production Management, where she supports senior leaders in business alignment and integration. She’ll also continue overseeing the production management team.

# PROGRAMMER'S PAGE

## Looking Back At 'M\*A\*S\*H' 50 Years Later

There are shows in today's world that take society by storm, but so far none have eclipsed what "M\*A\*S\*H" accomplished at the end of its 11-season run. "M\*A\*S\*H: When Television Changed Forever" premiered Tuesday on **Reelz** and looked back at the comedy-drama that swept the U.S. The show set during the Korean War gained fame for breaking down barriers, addressing issues such as racism, sexuality and war. The mix of comedic moments with heavy emotional themes have influenced countless series since. "Mixing comedy with drama in such a way where you could laugh and cry in the same episode—and sometimes even in the same scenes—was remarkable," EP and Director *Brad Osborne* told **CFX**. "Other series took that lead, and even 'All In The Family,' if you'll recall, got very, very serious in some episodes, but M\*A\*S\*H was really the forerunner of that. So, I thought it would be great to pick and choose scenes throughout the series that helped illustrate that." The documentary featured interviews from *Mike Farrell*, *Jamie Farr*, *Burt Metcalfe* and other cast and crew members, but before the cameras began rolling, Osborne encouraged the interviewees to interact with each other even if they were off camera. That isn't something he's done before, but as Osborne watched the group laugh and reminisce, he knew the more casual approach would help build an honest documentary on the show's impact. "My hope is that people who weren't alive yet when the series was running, and maybe only know it passively from seeing it on the TV or just knowing that it's out there, get a new appreciation for the show because it really is timeless," Osborne said. EP *Andy Streitfeld* reiterated that sentiment, adding the difference in eras and how M\*A\*S\*H ran at a time where there were far fewer shows that viewers today can access. Combine that with being a cultural phenomenon, M\*A\*S\*H set a single-episode record that may never be broken as 106 million people tuned in for the series' goodbye. — *Noah Ziegler*

### REVIEWS

"Industry: Season II," streaming, **HBO Max**. Just beginning its second season, "Industry" might be the best series you've not discovered. It's about a group of young-ish investment bankers in London. OK, indulge us. Watching sharks seeking their prey isn't everyone's idea of exciting television. Indeed, sometimes, like **Showtime's** "Billions," the financial intricacies speed past viewers. Other times, the simplicity of multi-million-dollar transactions seems unrealistic. A few taps of a computer keyboard, a phone call or two and bam, an unfairly rich person has moved a chunk of the portfolio from asset A to asset B, hoping to earn just a bit more interest than the millionaire down the road. Still, "Industry" makes these activities intensely watchable. Indeed, even after the young American, biracial Harper Stern (*Myha'la Herrold*) reels in a financial whale, her bonus is capped and mercurial boss Eric (*Ken Leung*) blasts her technique. The whale played you, Eric insists, mixing nastiness bordering on unprofessional and tinged with a touch of jealousy. While the financial sector traditionally is thought of as a men's club, Industry's most intriguing characters are women. On the opposite side of the spectrum from Harper is Yasmin (*Marisa Abela*): tall, white, privileged and sensual. Is she as ambitious as Harper? Sometimes, though she's not as talented or daring (at least not in her professional life). — *Seth Arenstein*

BASIC CABLE		
P2+ PRIME RANKINGS*		
(09/05/22-09/11/22)		
MON-SUN	MC US AA%	MC US AA (000)
<b>FNC</b>	<b>0.637</b>	<b>1983</b>
<b>ESPN</b>	<b>0.497</b>	<b>1547</b>
<b>MSNBC</b>	<b>0.328</b>	<b>1022</b>
<b>HGTV</b>	<b>0.282</b>	<b>878</b>
<b>HALL</b>	<b>0.257</b>	<b>800</b>
<b>INSP</b>	<b>0.239</b>	<b>745</b>
<b>TLC</b>	<b>0.234</b>	<b>730</b>
<b>CNN</b>	<b>0.217</b>	<b>675</b>
<b>USA</b>	<b>0.200</b>	<b>623</b>
<b>HIST</b>	<b>0.190</b>	<b>593</b>
<b>FOOD</b>	<b>0.180</b>	<b>561</b>
<b>TBSC</b>	<b>0.174</b>	<b>543</b>
<b>TVLAND</b>	<b>0.165</b>	<b>513</b>
<b>ID</b>	<b>0.162</b>	<b>503</b>
<b>DISC</b>	<b>0.159</b>	<b>497</b>
<b>BRAVO</b>	<b>0.129</b>	<b>402</b>
<b>LIFE</b>	<b>0.128</b>	<b>399</b>
<b>WETV</b>	<b>0.127</b>	<b>396</b>
<b>A&amp;E</b>	<b>0.125</b>	<b>390</b>
<b>PRMNT</b>	<b>0.123</b>	<b>383</b>
<b>HBO</b>	<b>0.118</b>	<b>368</b>
<b>REELZ</b>	<b>0.117</b>	<b>363</b>
<b>FX</b>	<b>0.106</b>	<b>331</b>
<b>HMM</b>	<b>0.105</b>	<b>327</b>
<b>TNT</b>	<b>0.101</b>	<b>315</b>
<b>NATGEO</b>	<b>0.099</b>	<b>308</b>
<b>GSN</b>	<b>0.098</b>	<b>307</b>
<b>APL</b>	<b>0.092</b>	<b>288</b>
<b>TRAVEL</b>	<b>0.090</b>	<b>281</b>
<b>OXY</b>	<b>0.089</b>	<b>278</b>
<b>ESPN2</b>	<b>0.087</b>	<b>270</b>
<b>SYFY</b>	<b>0.086</b>	<b>267</b>
<b>FS1</b>	<b>0.083</b>	<b>258</b>
<b>BET</b>	<b>0.080</b>	<b>249</b>
<b>FETV</b>	<b>0.079</b>	<b>247</b>

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

## The Kaitz Dinner

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