

# Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

## Steady Progress: WICT Network Looks Back on Two Decades of PAR

It's that time of year again for **The WICT Network's** Signature Luncheon, and this Friday's fete will be a massive celebration of 20 years of the organization's PAR initiative.

Standing for Pay Equity, Advancement Opportunities and Resources for Work/Life Integration, the PAR initiative has been helping companies set goals for improving diversity metrics for women, measure progress and more for two decades. It is underwritten by the **Walter Kaitz Foundation** and supported by The WICT Network's local chapters, and The WICT Network President/CEO **Maria Brennan** told **CFX** the impact of the PAR initiative and the change in survey results over the years has been nothing short of astounding.

"Back in 2003, there were very few women in these sort-of high-clout managerial positions, and now we're getting close to parity when it comes to our male counterparts... That's really a big deal because when you have women in high positions of power, they're more likely to hire other women, and so it perpetuates itself," Brennan said. Additionally, in the beginning, few companies had written pay equity policies. Now, 90% of the companies surveyed have those pay equity policies established and setting them apart from the pack.

She's not popping all the champagne bottles just yet as there is still plenty of work left to be done. Women still have not achieved critical mass, and there's still a lot of ground to be gained when it comes to the overall industry workforce.

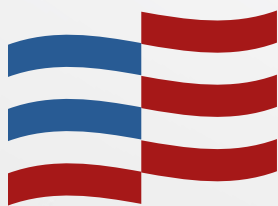
The WICT Network is also constantly keeping an eye on retention-related issues, and that's been a huge focus since the COVID-19 pandemic began.

"We know that retention is a function of feeling like they belong, like the workplace is inclusive, like the benefits are good for families," she said. "And if you have good retention, you'll have more critical mass. If we continue to share the data, share the best practices, gain the best practices from our corporate partners in this survey endeavor, then we will certainly be in a place where we hit those final metrics."

At this year's Signature Luncheon, The WICT Network is honoring six companies that have most consistently ranked as a top company for women to work over the twenty years of deploying PAR, designating them as "Platinum" award winners. The operators earning that recognition are **Comcast**, **Cox Communications** and **Midco**, and the programmers receiving the designation are **NBCUniversal**, **Disney** and **Warner Bros. Discovery**.

"Nobody participates in PAR unless they care about DEI, period," Brennan said. "It's rigorous, it's arduous, so they're consistently participating and they are consistently participating and they are consistently course-correcting... that's what it boils down to." She also expressed particular excitement over Midco finding a spot on that list, saying it illustrates that you don't have to be the biggest operator in order to be gender diverse, you just have to be deliberate in your actions and efforts.

When The WICT Network relaunched its brand in 2021, it did so to become more inclusive and to include women not



## AMERICAN BROADBAND CONGRESS

BEAD & BEYOND IN 2024

JUNE 13, 2024 - WASHINGTON, D.C



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only in media and communications, but also those in the technology sector. Because the technology world is somewhat behind the programmers and the operators when it comes to gender diversity, Brennan knows that the overall WICT Network metrics around overall representation will temporarily go down. But as The WICT Network gets to work and more technology companies dedicate resources to hiring women, the impact of the change will be much larger.

“If we don’t have gender diversity in tech, especially with all the AI and this proliferation of change, then we know that the data tells us that... you’re not going to innovate as quickly,” she said. “It doesn’t happen overnight. It can take years... but you will see a difference if you’re willing to put the resources toward it and be patient and celebrate successes along the way.”

### NETFLIX GROWS, TO STOP SHARING QUARTERLY MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS

Netflix kicked off the new year with a bang, adding 9.3 million paid subscribers in 1Q24. During the company’s earnings call Thursday, co-CEO Greg Peters said a key component of its ongoing success is the production of must-see series and its ability to find audiences for all of those standout titles. “We seek to maximize the fandom and the impact on the conversation and the cultural zeitgeist that all those titles have, and when we do that, that just feeds positively into that cycle as we launch new titles in terms of what are we doing better, what did we do better,” he said. Revenue was up 15% from the year-ago quarter to \$9.37 billion, and Netflix is guiding for 2Q24 to bring in \$9.491 billion despite an expected drop in paid net additions. Its priorities for the near-term continue to be scaling out its subscriber base and building out its capabilities for advertisers. In its shareholder letter, the company said its ad-supported memberships grew 65% sequentially. But it plans to stop reporting quarterly membership numbers and average revenue per subscriber starting in 1Q25. That’s because it believes its primary financial metrics and engagement numbers are the best proxy it has for customer satisfaction. “In our early days, when we had little revenue or profit, membership growth was a strong indicator of our future potential,” the letter said. “But now we’re generating very substantial profit and free cash flow. We are also developing new revenue streams like advertising and our extra member feature, so memberships are just one component of our growth.”

### DIAMOND SPORTS PREPARES FOR JUNE COMEBACK

Mark your calendars because **Diamond Sports** is inching closer to emerging from bankruptcy. Southern Texas Bankruptcy Court Judge *Christopher Lopez* on Wednesday approved the com-

pany’s disclosure statement laying out how Diamond intends to move forward with the help of new partners like **Amazon** and an additional \$450 million in financing. Now it’s a waiting game to see if the court will approve Diamond’s final plan. A hearing has been set for June 18 at 10am CT, and any objections are due to the court by 4pm on May 22.

### PA AWARDS \$204 MILLION FOR BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT

The **Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority** approved \$204 million in Broadband Infrastructure Program grant awards to 53 projects in 42 counties across the state. In total, the projects will connect 40,000 homes and businesses. The grants will be matched by more than \$200 million in private investment, and the deadline for projects to be completed is Dec. 31, 2026. ISPs winning funding include **Comcast, Verizon, Armstrong, Windstream, Frontier, Blue Ridge, Adams Cable and Brightspeed**. “Now that a significant amount of grant funding will directly support broadband infrastructure, the communities benefiting from the grants announced today can begin to look to the future and prepare for any number of exciting economic, telehealth, educational and technological opportunities that await them,” **Broadband Communications Association of Pennsylvania** President *Todd Eachus* said in a statement.

### NET NEUTRALITY COUNTDOWN

The clock continues to tick as next Thursday’s **FCC** net neutrality vote draws closer. Supporters from both sides are making their voices heard with just days remaining, and Sens. *Ed Markey* (D-MA) and *Ron Wyden* (D-OR) hosted a press conference with FCC Chairwoman *Jessica Rosenworcel* and others in D.C. to reiterate their support for the Title II measure. “It is simply unconscionable that our country’s expert communications regulator, the FCC, does not have the tools to oversee the preeminent communications tool of our time: broadband. That is like the Department of Labor being unable to regulate the workplace, or the Securities and Exchange Commission lacking regulatory authority over Wall Street. It makes no sense,” Markey said. On the other side of the issue, former FCC Chairman and current **NCTA** President *Michael Powell* penned an [op-ed](#) claiming net neutrality gives the FCC unnecessary oversight. “Under the nice-sounding but flawed initiatives on ‘net neutrality,’ ‘digital anti-discrimination,’ and ‘data security,’ the FCC has broken out of its statutory moorings and charted a reckless 270-degree bearing toward total government control over the broadband sector,” Powell wrote. “By smothering the industry with irrational policies, the administrative state will have greater sway over

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**In The WILD**

A Cablefax feature highlighting marketing and media efforts spotted in the real world.



Plenty of industry execs were seen in the wild earlier this month in Vail, Colorado, for Adaptive Spirit's annual event (formerly known as SkiTAM). The weekend of educational panels, networking and, of course, skiing is the top fundraiser for the U.S. Paralympic Ski and Snowboard teams.

This year's gathering had nearly 1,200 attendees with a record silent auction that raised more than \$240,000. Popular auction items included a trip for two to San Diego's Comic-Con, a suite for 12 at a Lakers game and a spot in this year's #PlumeStrong Cycling Challenge, which starts in Zurich, Switzerland, and take riders through the Alps and Dolomites over the course of five days, ending in Venice, Italy (512 miles).



The weekend's educational track included discussions on



AI with Comcast, Charter, CSG, AWS and Cognizant as well as The Cable Center's annual industry icon mixer featuring Advance's Nomi Bergman as the 2024 honoree.

Mark your calendars for April 3-6 for next year's Adaptive Spirit event. More than 40 sponsorships are already sold, with it on track to sell out. If you want in, better jump on it by reaching out to Cody Maxwell at [sponsor@adaptivespirit.com](mailto:sponsor@adaptivespirit.com) for more information.

Photo Credits: Adaptive Spirit

what providers and consumers can do with the technology. None of this bodes well for broadband users or a free society, but it seems to fit nicely within the administration's goals."

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**TBT SIGNS WITH FOX SPORTS**

**The Basketball Tournament**, a three-vs-three tournament with a \$1 million prize, signed a multi-year media rights deal with **Fox Sports** to carry games on **Fox**, **FS1** and **FS2**. Fox Sports will carry 27 total games on linear platforms, with three being on Fox and the remainder split between FS1 and FS2. The tournament will begin July 19 before the championship takes place Aug. 4. The full TV schedule and additional broadcast details will be unveiled at a later date.

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**CARRIAGE**

**DirecTV** added more local **CW** stations for **DirecTV Stream** customers Thursday. Customers in Boston, Charlotte, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Phoenix, San Diego, Seattle and Hartford-New Haven, Connecticut, can now access their local CW affiliates.

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**FIBER FRENZY**

As **Glo Fiber** continues its growth in the Buckeye State, the company revealed plans to expand services to more than 40,000 additional homes and businesses in Ohio. Glo Fiber has begun engineering work in Zanesville, Hillsboro, Jackson, Johnstown and Greenfield. Additional details on construction schedules in specific areas will be released in the coming months. Once done, Glo Fiber will bring symmetrical speeds of up to 5 Gbps along with its video services and phone offerings. – **Allo Communications** is adding Evans, Nebraska, to its footprint. Construction of the fiber network in Evans is slated to begin next month. – **Bluepeak** announced it's speeding up its \$100 million project to expand to more than 10 markets in Oklahoma and Texas. Service will soon be available to more than 100,000 homes and businesses in new markets across the two states. Communities will begin to receive service throughout this year and in 2025.

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**PEOPLE**

**NBCUniversal Telemundo Enterprises** is shaking up the structure of Telemundo Studios. **Ronald Day** will become President, Entertainment and Chief Content Officer. His role will be expanded to include Telemundo Studios, the development and production of all scripted content for linear and third-party platforms, in addition to the network's entertainment and unscripted content. **Javier Pons** will oversee the new Studios as EVP, Telemundo Studios. He'll manage all scripted productions for the Telemundo network and streaming platforms. – **Jen Durda** and **Kathy Lydon** are joining the **Fox Sports** ad sales team, with Durda as VP, Advertising Sales and Lydon as VP, Sales for the **Big Ten Network**. Durda was most recently at **Warner Bros. Discovery** for 14 years after nearly six at **ESPN**. Lydon—a fellow former ESPNer—joins from **The Trade Desk**.

# PROGRAMMER'S PAGE

## Out of the Vault, Into the 'Fallout'

For those of us who are fans of the rich stories that have been told through video games over the years, the premiere of HBO's "The Last of Us" last year represented the breaking of a curse. Adaptations from the interactive medium to film or television have largely been mediocre at best, but The Last of Us masterfully struck the balance of telling the original story while expanding the universe to draw in those who will never pick up a controller. I'm thrilled to report that **Amazon Prime Video** has managed to do the same with its adaptation of "Fallout" (all eight episodes available now). There are parallels between the two series—both take their own spins on the post-apocalyptic story, although the causes of the collapse of society are far from the same.

The most famous line from the Fallout video games is "War never changes," and it is indeed a nuclear war that forces U.S. residents underground into vaults as they wait for the planet's radiation levels to fall enough for recolonization. Posters with inspirational sayings line the walls of the units featuring the blond-haired, blue-suited Pip-Boy, the mascot of the company that manufactured the dwellings. In the show, 200 years have passed and an optimistic vault-dweller named Lucy MacLean (*Ella Purnell* from "Yellowjackets" and "Arcane") faces a harsh reality when she comes into contact with those who had to make do in the American wasteland.

Behind it all is a soundtrack of tunes from the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s that can feel both comforting and eerie in this new world. And of course, she's not the only one trying to get by with several factions, including raiders and those claiming to want to protect the nation's history, fighting to make their fortune in the new land. There is some violence due to the cutthroat nature of survival in a world that has been so shaken to its core. But don't worry—there's no shortage of comedic or comforting moments to cut the tension, and that's why many fell in love with the games. Lucy runs into everything from a slow-moving tumbleweed (the horror!) to radroaches, irradiated cockroaches that just don't quite know when to croak. Seeing the world through her eyes gives the viewer a sense of exploration that I as a player felt when I first picked up "Fallout 3" as a youngster, and the cast of colorful characters she encounters bring back a lightness to the world just when things seem to be getting a bit too gruesome.

When video game properties are adapted, the hope is that a new avenue opens up to share beloved stories or works of art with the people we care about, especially those who find playing a video game as foreign as driving on the wrong side of the road. When programmers and studios commit to bringing these beloved properties to life with the care and affection they deserve, it has the power to bring generations together in the living room to experience something together. And maybe, just maybe, someone will be encouraged to sit down with their loved one and experience the original work. But until then, let's give Fallout its flowers for continuing the trend of great adaptations and making the apocalypse seem a little less heavy and at least a bit like fun. – *Sara Winegardner*

BASIC CABLE		
P2+ PRIME RANKINGS*		
(04/08/24-04/14/24)		
MON-SUN	MC	MC
	US	US AA
	AA%	(000)
<b>FNC</b>	<b>0.654</b>	<b>2061</b>
<b>TNT</b>	<b>0.403</b>	<b>1271</b>
<b>TBSC</b>	<b>0.371</b>	<b>1168</b>
<b>MSNBC</b>	<b>0.364</b>	<b>1148</b>
<b>ESPN</b>	<b>0.329</b>	<b>1036</b>
<b>HGTV</b>	<b>0.248</b>	<b>781</b>
<b>HALL</b>	<b>0.224</b>	<b>707</b>
<b>HIST</b>	<b>0.208</b>	<b>655</b>
<b>CNN</b>	<b>0.200</b>	<b>631</b>
<b>INSP</b>	<b>0.194</b>	<b>613</b>
<b>USA</b>	<b>0.184</b>	<b>580</b>
<b>FOOD</b>	<b>0.160</b>	<b>506</b>
<b>TLC</b>	<b>0.155</b>	<b>488</b>
<b>DISC</b>	<b>0.137</b>	<b>432</b>
<b>TVLAND</b>	<b>0.132</b>	<b>416</b>
<b>ID</b>	<b>0.123</b>	<b>388</b>
<b>GSN</b>	<b>0.120</b>	<b>378</b>
<b>REELZ</b>	<b>0.109</b>	<b>344</b>
<b>HALLMYS</b>	<b>0.107</b>	<b>339</b>
<b>A&amp;E</b>	<b>0.104</b>	<b>328</b>
<b>BRAVO</b>	<b>0.103</b>	<b>323</b>
<b>WETV</b>	<b>0.095</b>	<b>299</b>
<b>AMC</b>	<b>0.093</b>	<b>294</b>
<b>OXY</b>	<b>0.092</b>	<b>290</b>
<b>FX</b>	<b>0.088</b>	<b>276</b>
<b>SYFY</b>	<b>0.083</b>	<b>262</b>
<b>LIFE</b>	<b>0.082</b>	<b>258</b>
<b>TRUTV</b>	<b>0.078</b>	<b>245</b>
<b>COM</b>	<b>0.074</b>	<b>234</b>
<b>NWSMX</b>	<b>0.073</b>	<b>230</b>
<b>ADSM</b>	<b>0.071</b>	<b>225</b>
<b>TRAVEL</b>	<b>0.066</b>	<b>208</b>
<b>BET</b>	<b>0.066</b>	<b>207</b>
<b>NATGEO</b>	<b>0.064</b>	<b>202</b>
<b>PRMNT</b>	<b>0.062</b>	<b>196</b>

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

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