

Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

Kaitz: Less Dinner, More Swagger

Don't call it the Kaitz Dinner—and leave the three-piece suits at home. Next week's Kaitz fundraiser promises to put a new spin on the 42-year tradition.

"I'm just kind of giddy about it. Because, personally, I decided last year I could not go to another dinner. At the close of last year's dinner, along with really digging in on the what our mission would be for the Foundation itself, I said we've got to change it up. I do not want another dinner," said *Nilda Gumbs*, **NCTA** Chief of Staff and head of the NCTA Education Foundation, which took over the annual fundraising dinner in 2024 and absorbed **The Walter Kaitz Foundation**. "This is going to be what I like to call a reception on steroids. But it's the same quick type program that we've always had."

So, on Wednesday night the Kaitz Dinner transforms to the [Kaitz Event](#)—and no more dressing up. "You can wear your favorite tennis shoes. You get to be relaxed. And the room is set up in a way that the energy and the places you want to be in the room are in the center," Gumbs explained. "Sponsors have their own lounges within the room, and they get to show up in a big way. Whereas before, you would always look to the stage for everything, it's now down and around you."

The 2024 Kaitz Dinner had the theme "Do Good. Be Better. Impact Tomorrow." It's morphed into the overall mission for the Foundation. That'll be on display with the night's Change-Maker Awards, which recognize recently retired NCTA CEO *Michael Powell*, **C-SPAN's** StudentCam initiative, **FutureNow**

Media Foundation, **BroadFutures** and *Michael Sipala*, a leader on **AMC Networks'** sales team and co-chair of its Business Employees Resource Group AVID (Advocates for Visible & Invisible Disabilities).

Organizers didn't want to give too much away, but we're promised live entertainment, a live auctioneer alongside the returning silent auction and, of course, some good food. The Kaitz Event is the capstone of Leadership Development Week, which kicks off Monday with [The WICT Network Leadership Development Conference](#) and continues Tuesday with the [NAMIC Annual Conference](#).

Previously referred to as Diversity Week, the gathering's new Leadership Development moniker is a nod to inclusivity. And so is the reimagined Kaitz Event, according to Gumbs. "You actually get to learn more about the people you're in the room with. It is as inclusive as you could possibly be. And the bar sits in the center of the room, which is really where the energy and the action is," she added.

Wednesday's shindig will also see the return of the invite-only Chairman's Reception, with everyone else arriving for the general reception at 6:30pm. "By 7pm everyone's in the room. They're eating, they're drinking, they're listening to music in the background. They're enjoying themselves. Program starts—nice, tight program—auction, live entertainment, right into DJ and dessert," she said. "It feels on trend. It feels fresh and inviting and inclusive, and it really will promote celebration of our industry."

Media and broadband executives'
NUMBER 1
TRUSTED SOURCE
for the industry's most
important developments

1 Cablefax Daily

PARTNER WITH US TODAY: Harry Singh • 917-832-0064 • hsingh@accessintel.com

APPLE TV REACHES FINISH LINE ON F1 DEAL

Apple has finally closed a rights deal to make its DTC streamer the exclusive broadcast partner of **Formula 1** in 2026. Negotiation rumors swirled for months, with [reports](#) over the summer that Apple had made a bid worth at least \$150 million per year, far eclipsing the \$90 million former rightsholder **ESPN** was paying annually under its agreement with F1 owner **Liberty Media**. While the financial terms of the Apple deal weren't disclosed, we do know it's a five-year agreement that'll see the streamer exclusively air all practice, qualifying, Sprint sessions and Grands Prix available to Apple TV subs. Select races and all practice sessions will also be made available for free in the Apple TV app throughout the season. As part of the partnership, Apple will also amplify F1 events across its apps, including Apple News, Maps, Music and Fitness+. Apple Sports will deliver live updates from F1 events as well. F1 TV Premium, the org's own streamer, will remain available in the U.S. via Apple TV only and free for subscribers. *Stefano Domenicali*, Formula 1 President/CEO, called the new partnership "incredibly exciting" and that it will "ensure we can continue to maximize our growth potential in the U.S." ESPN wrote in a statement that it's "incredibly proud of what we and Formula 1 accomplished together in the United States and look forward to a strong finish in this final season. We wish F1 well in the future." Apple said it will reveal more production details for its F1 programming at a later date.

SINCLAIR RESPONDS TO FIRED TENNIS CHANNEL CEO SUIT

Sinclair responded Friday to a wrongful termination lawsuit filed by former **Tennis Channel** CEO *Ken Solomon*, denying the allegations of breach of contract and other claims. What's more, Tennis Channel owner Sinclair argued that Solomon can't pursue actions alleged in the complaint because he entered into an enforceable agreement to arbitrate any claims relating to his employment agreement in final and binding arbitration. Sinclair told the court that the conduct Solomon is complaining about was "just and proper exercise of management's discretion." Solomon filed the [complaint](#) in August (as the US Open was underway). Cockeysville, Maryland-based Sinclair is also seeking to have the case moved from U.S. District Court Central District of California, Western Division to the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland.

RATINGS

Oct. 10 saw the debut of **ION** as the linear broadcast partner for the women's-only track and field event **Athlos NYC 2025** after **Scripps Sports** inked a multi-year agreement with **Athlos**. The inaugural program, which was simulcast on ION's sister network **Bounce**, reached nearly 4 million viewers and averaged a total of 400,000 viewers, per **Nielsen**, beating nearly all other competitive track and field events in 2025 on **ESPN**, **ESPN2** and **The CW**. Viewers consumed almost 2 million hours of Athlos NYC 2025 across Ion and Bounce's platforms.

CARRIAGE

WVUE-TV and **Gray Local Media** announced that non-national Pelicans games broadcast on the RSN **Gulf Coast Sports & Entertainment Network** are now available to **DirectTV** streaming, satellite and U-verse customers across the team's entire three-state home territory. Additionally, Pelicans games are now available to local fans in the Louisiana cities of Lafayette, Baton Rouge, Lake Charles, Alexandria, Monroe and Shreveport. Also getting access are fans in Biloxi, Hattiesburg, Jackson and Meridian in Mississippi, and Birmingham, Montgomery and Mobile in Alabama. The Pelicans' season begins on the road against the Grizzlies, with the matchup being simulcast on WVUE-FOX 8. – Video podcasts are having a moment on television. Not only are they incredibly popular on **YouTube** but they're starting to pop up on SVODs and now on FAST platforms, too. Just a day after **Spotify** cut a deal with Netflix to bring a lineup of its Spotify Studios and **The Ringer** network podcasts to the streaming service in 2026, the company announced that it is also launching its first-ever FAST channel on the **Samsung TV Plus** platform. The channel will air podcasts from The Ringer, including classic film show "The Rewatchables," the NBA-centric "Book of Basketball 2.0," the nerdy pop culture show "The Ringer-Verse" and "The Dave Chang Show," hosted by the popular chef and restaurateur.

FIBER FRENZY

Mediacom is connecting 12,000 households in Clinton, Iowa, to its Xstream Internet network, offering customers download speeds of up to 2 Gigs and upload of up to 1 Gig. – **Astound Broadband** has completed construction in Newport, Oregon, connecting more than 5,000 homes and 900 businesses to its fiber network that offers symmetrical speeds of up to 5 Gigs. – **Altice USA** announced a \$4.4 million investment to upgrade emergency and government infrastructure in Tyler, Texas, with its fiber network, ensuring improved reliability for police

stations, fire departments, hospitals and major government buildings. Construction on 40 miles of fiber routes began last month, with the project expected to be completed next year. – **GoNetspeed** launched a \$7 million construction project in Stratford, Connecticut, to connect more than 12,400 homes and businesses to its fiber network with symmetrical upload and download speeds ranging from 500 Mbps to 2 Gigs. First customers will go online this fall.

PROGRAMMING

C-SPAN announced that House Speaker *Mike Johnson* (R-LA) and House Minority Leader *Hakeem Jeffries* (D-NY) have publicly accepted invitations to appear jointly on “Ceasefire,” the cable net’s new political discussion program where leaders and regulators on opposite sides of the aisle discuss today’s issues in a civil manner. C-SPAN said that it’s currently working with both offices on scheduling the appearance. – The three-part **HBO** documentary

“Alex vs ARod,” chronicling the sports career of former Yankees star *Alex Rodriguez*, is out on Nov. 6 at 9pm. Speaking of HBO, a very spooky treat is hitting **HBO Max** on Oct. 4: the hit horror film “Weapons,” which will also have its linear debut on HBO the following night at 8pm. – **A+E Global Media** extended its content partnership with *Rachael Ray* and **Free Food Studios**, ordering 110 new episodes of Ray’s shows, including “Meals in Minutes.” Production will begin this fall, with new episodes airing across the Home.Made.Nation lifestyle programming block on A+E and FYI in 2026. – **Freeform** will once again put on its “30 Days of Disney” marathon in November, celebrating both **Disney’s** classic titles and modern hits. You should of course expect “Cinderella,” “Sleeping Beauty,” “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs” and “Beauty and the Beast,” as well as the Freeform premiere of “The Sword and the Stone.” Also featured are “Pirates of the Caribbean” and “Home Alone” flicks and a big helping of **Pixar**, including “Toy Story” and “Up.” The marathon kicks off Nov. 1, with last year’s marathon reaching nearly 25 million viewers.



CABLEFAX DASHBOARD

ICYMI



Cablefax
 1,988 followers
 2d • 🌐

Teamwork makes the dream work in the video space. Industry leaders from **Charter Communications**, **Paramount**, **Versant Media** and **AMC Networks** took a deep dive into “The Great Rebundling” during a Cynopsis ScreenShift panel moderated by Cablefax, exploring how hybrid linear-streaming bundles and FAST channels are redefining video. The details here: <https://lnkd.in/eZMkhcyG>



How Linear-Streaming Packages are Shaping Video'...
 cablefax.com

Quotable

“If there are two things jumping into the regular season for us that I’m most excited about, it’s those Monday games [on Peacock]... and the fact that the Tuesday games are on the NBC broadcast network. A game on the East Coast for the NBC affiliates and a game for the West Coast affiliates, and either game available on Peacock. But the fact that the NBA is going to be on broadcast network TV, still the broadest reach of anything in media, every Tuesday night—bar a couple during the regular season—is really cool. I mean, that is so big for just exposing the NBA to more folks and getting a better, deeper pool of fans going toward the playoffs where it really goes up.

- NBC Sports Commentator Mike Tirico on new NBA deal



Up Ahead

OCT. 18-21: [Calix ConnXions](#), Las Vegas

OCT. 19-21: [The WICT Network Leadership Conference](#), NYC

OCT. 20: [Cablefax Voices of Impact and Workplace Culture Awards Publishes](#)

OCT. 21-22: [NAMIC Annual Conference](#), NYC

OCT. 22: [Kaitz Event](#), NYC

OCT. 28: [FCC October Open Meeting](#), D.C.

NOV. 5: [Future of Television](#), L.A.



Cablefax
 1,988 followers
 1d • 🌐

NCTA - The Internet & Television Association wants to shed light on the critical recovery efforts that take place when areas are hit by natural disasters. This awareness campaign includes the release of a new docufilm called “After the Storm,” which follows broadband crews working to restore vital networks in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, Hurricane Milton and the Palisades Fire. CFX caught up with NCTA’s **Brian Dietz** about filming the doc and future outreach plans: https://lnkd.in/eBkryY_g



Docufilm Debut: NCTA Tells the Story of Broadband...
 cablefax.com