

A Statement Regarding Diversity at the New Wave Corporation & On KOPN

Those who began the New Wave Corporation did so in response to their perception that there was a need for more variety in broadcast media in our community, and that it needed to be accessible to all members of our community. They expressed this in the Purpose of the Corporation in the Articles of Incorporation:

“The purpose or purposes for which the corporation is organized are: to provide an educational, non-commercial communication service for and by Columbia citizens that will stimulate the listeners’ awareness of their community and world, and promote a better understanding of their neighbors – next door and across the oceans, and all other acts allowed under the General Not for Profit Corporation Law.”

To further clarify this, in our Mission, it is stated:

“KOPN is committed to educating and enriching the lives of its membership and the community it serves, especially those otherwise under-represented in the commercial or other non-profit media sectors.

“KOPN is free from direct constraints of commercial, political, or religious interests.

“KOPN serves its community by:

- “Encouraging participation by all segments of the community.
- “Training individuals in radio production and giving access to its facilities and airwaves for the local production of quality radio programs
- “Providing a diversity of viewpoints and musical genres through its programs that enhance the quality of life of its membership and the community at large.
- “Providing a neutral forum for the discussion of issues important to its membership and the community at large.”

These documents are touchstone for the Board and staff of the New Wave Corporation and its on-going project, KOPN, in our outreach, recruitment, hiring, orientation, training, and service.

Diversity – with its essential corollaries, respect and tolerance – is fundamental to our community service equally with free thought, free speech and cooperation.

KOPN’s volunteer staff of over one hundred persons, more closely reflects the diversity of our listening community than does the composition of our Board of Directors, our Community Advisory Board, or our paid staff.

According to the 2010 United States Census, the population of Columbia, Missouri – our city of license – is composed of:

- 51.70% women and
- 48.30% men;
- 18.80% persons under 18 years;
- 8.50% persons 65 years and over;
- 6.70% persons with a disability, under 65 years;
- 11.30% Black or African American;
- 5.20% Asian;
- 3.40% Hispanic;
- 77.00% European, not Hispanic or Latino; and
- 3.50% other.

Our whole staff is composed of:

- 30.21% women and
- 69.79% men;
- 1.04% persons under 18 years;
- 15.63% persons 65 years and over;
- 3.13% persons with a disability, under 65 years;
- 9.38% Black, African, or African American;
- 3.13% Asian;
- 1.04% Hispanic; and
- 86.46% European, not Hispanic or Latino.

Our Board of Directors is composed of:

- 40.00% women and
- 60.00% men;
- 50.00% persons 65 years and over;
- 10.00% Black, African, or African American; and
- 90.00% European, not Hispanic or Latino.

Our Community Advisory Board is composed of:

- 20.00% women and
- 80.00% men;
- 25.00% persons 65 years and over; and
- 100.00% European, not Hispanic or Latino.

Our paid staff is composed of:

- 80.00% women and
- 20.00% men;
- 40.00% persons 65 years and over;
- 100.00% European, not Hispanic or Latino; and
- 40.00% persons with a disability, under 65 years.

Obviously we have much to do to make our organizations demographics more closely reflect those of our community.

Our volunteer staff is much more fluid and dynamic in its composition than our Board of Directors, our Community Advisory Board, or our paid staff, and is easier to recruit for participation than the other roles. The Board of Directors and Community Advisory Board change according to our By Laws. The paid staff is even more static.

Changes in the diversity of the New Wave Corporation and its project, KOPN, are greatly affected by the economy, technology, and changing opportunities in our community.

The economy has been a great challenge to our organization in several ways: regarding diversity, the economic down turn of the recent decades as reduced volunteerism. With what recovery there has been benefiting only the most wealthy, the time and money that people have to give does not equal that that they have had to give in the past .

Columbia and Jefferson City, Missouri, and their environs, which comprise the largest population centers of our service area, have enjoyed, historically some insulation from economic tribulations.

However, US Census data for Columbia, from 2010 to 2014, show, that despite 93.6% of residents – 25 years and older – being high school graduates or higher, and 55.9% of residents – of the same cohort – holding a Bachelor's degree or higher, the median household income was \$43,776. And the per capita income for the same period was \$26, 203. And 24.9% of the whole population was in poverty! People struggling to make ends meet, have little time or treasure to spare or share.

We do enjoy the volunteer contributions of retired individuals from all economic backgrounds, but this skews our age demographics. We also have younger out-of-work people productively filling their unemployment time, but with them there is

greater turn-over: they being motivated, engaged, and benefiting from their experience with us, are not as long unemployed. At least four able volunteers have found employment with other area broadcasters, and others have found employment in other fields.

Being in a community rich in universities and colleges, we also experience the turn-over associated. The character of our diversity is ever changing.

We have in the past enjoyed participation by more people of Chinese and South American descent, as well as women and youth.

The decline in youth participation has been attributed to their orientation to web based sharing platforms, as well as the development of media production studios with internal & web-based distribution, by the local public schools.

The strategies that hold the highest promise for re-engagement of youth are capital intensive, which is problematic given the elimination of the NTIA's PTFP grants, and the continued tight economy. We do continue working on these projects as we can.

We continue to participate in, and develop volunteer participation from several internship, study/service, and community service programs engaging individuals of all ages.

We are endeavoring to recruit for greater diversity on our Community Advisory Board and Board of Directors.

Change in diversity in our paid staff will be slowest, as opportunity is only provided by turn-over. We are looking into the possibility of adding AmeriCorps positions.