

NewsGuild-CWA Study of Pay Equity in 14 Gannett Newsrooms

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Arizona Republic Guild
Indianapolis News Guild
Kitsap News Guild
Knoxville Newspaper Guild
Ledger News Guild
Memphis Newspaper Guild
Milwaukee Newspaper Guild
Palm Beach News Guild
Sarasota Newspaper Guild
South Bend News Guild
Southwest Florida News Guild
Florida Times-Union Guild

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Key findings

Our analysis of salaries in 14 newsrooms at Gannett, the largest newspaper company in the U.S., found pay disparities among women and people of color, as well as a dearth of diversity, in nearly every location that participated.

We also found unions made a difference. Units with pay scales in their contracts had smaller gender and racial pay gaps than units bargaining their first contracts.

Our key findings:

- **Women who worked at least 30 years at newspapers currently owned by Gannett earned \$27,026 less, or 63% the annual median salary of male peers.**
- **Women of color earned \$15,727 less, or 73% of white men's median salary.**
- **Women earned \$9,845 less, or 83% of men's median salary.**
- **Women 50-60 years old earned \$6,642 less, or 90% the median salary of men in the same age range. The gap grew to \$10,677 when including part-timers.**
- **Journalists of color earned \$5,246 less, or 90% of the white median salary.**
- **Experienced female journalists and journalists of color were rare.** Men outnumbered women age 30 and above, or with at least 10 years at the company, by about 2 to 1. White journalists outnumbered journalists of color age 40 and above, or with at least 10 years of service, by more than 4 to 1.
- **Thirteen of 14 newsrooms were whiter than the communities they covered.** Only the Knoxville News Sentinel was more diverse than its county.
- **The Arizona Republic was the most diverse newsroom but had the largest gender and racial pay gaps.** Women made nearly \$30,000 less in median wages than men. People of color earned about \$25,000 less in median wages than white employees.
- **Unionizing improves pay equity.** Newsrooms with union contracts had a gender pay gap that was \$6,846 smaller and a racial pay gap that was \$5,443 smaller than newsrooms currently negotiating first contracts.

Purpose of this study

Members of the NewsGuild, an international union of journalists, have led the way in calling for fair pay in the media industry.

Guilds at the New York Times, Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, Wall Street Journal, Philadelphia Inquirer, San Francisco Chronicle and others have found pay gaps of thousands of dollars. Guild members have successfully advocated for

overall raises, individual raises, diverse hiring and more.

This is the first time, to our knowledge, a pay equity study has been released for multiple newsrooms across Gannett.

Gannett [pledged in 2020](#) to hire and promote more women and employees of color to reflect national and local demographics.

In 2021, a [company report](#) found Gannett's executive team was 84% white and 73% male, while its newsrooms were 58% male and 79% white. (Similarly, our study of 14 newsrooms found 59% of employees were male and 78% were white.)

The company announced "inclusion, diversity and equity are core to our business," and all employees should have "equal opportunities to thrive."

"(W)e are committed to ... driving positive change. While this will, at times, mean addressing and combating systemic barriers and having uncomfortable conversations, we believe silence is not an option. We want to ... become a leader not just in what we do, but who we are as a company," CEO Mike Reed said.

However, neither report promised to ensure fair pay or correct pay gaps, key parts of attracting and retaining talent. And though the company touted its commitment to transparency, Gannett has not publicly released a pay equity study.

We believe our 14 newsrooms are not outliers but examples of the problems with, and potential solutions to, pay equity across Gannett.

Our recommendations to Gannett

In response to this study, we call on Gannett to:

- Release anonymized pay data for the entire company, broken down by location, department, job title, years at the company, age, gender and race. Additional data, such as sexual orientation, military service, educational attainment or religion, is welcome.
- Take swift action to eliminate pay disparities, including back pay.
- Raise the starting salary to a living wage and implement pay scales based on experience companywide.
- Create policies and ongoing reviews to improve hiring and retention of people from underrepresented groups, as well as to eliminate future pay disparities.
- Voluntarily recognize and bargain in good faith with employees that unionize.

Who is included in this study?

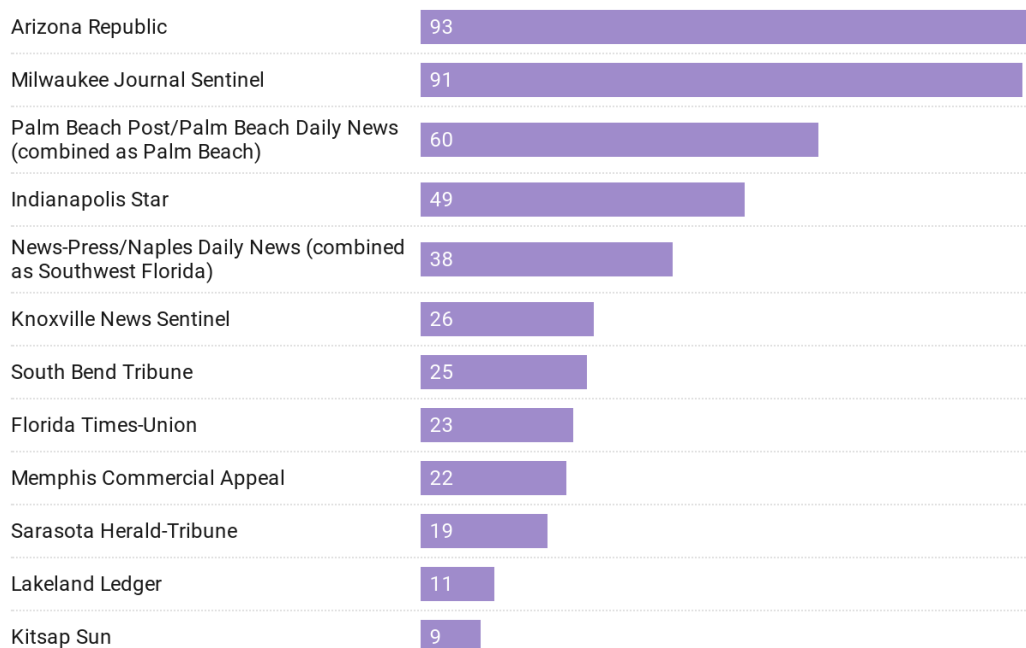
Fourteen unionized newsrooms requested salary and demographic data from Gannett in fall 2020 as governed by U.S. labor law.

The anonymized data comprised 466 non-management employees (441 full-time and 25 part-time*). The company did not provide data for managers. The study conclusions and graphics refer to full-time employees, unless specified.

The newsrooms that participated in the study were:

- The Arizona Republic
- Indianapolis Star
- Florida Times-Union
- Ft. Myers News-Press and Naples Daily News (combined)
- Kitsap Sun
- Knoxville News Sentinel
- Lakeland Ledger
- Memphis Commercial Appeal
- Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
- Palm Beach Post and Palm Beach Daily News (combined)
- Sarasota Herald-Tribune
- South Bend Tribune

Size of each Gannett bargaining unit



Based on annual pay data from 466 full- and part-time workers in 14 NewsGuild newsrooms as of fall 2020

Chart: Andrew Mollica and Chris Persaud • Source: Gannett • Created with Datawrapper

Methodology

Anonymization: Names were removed from the data before it was analyzed and in some cases before it was received. Six reporters securely accessed the data.

Binning: All charts that include binned numbers, such as 10-20 and 20-30, actually reflect a 0 to 9 format. That means 10-20 is actually 10-19 and 20-30 is 20-29, etc.

Colors: Orange and teal graphics typically signify gender. Purple is typically race.

Data collection: Fourteen NewsGuild bargaining units requested and received salary data from Gannett in fall 2020 under U.S. labor law. The data included newsroom workers' pay, age, gender, race, years at Gannett and job title.

Geography: The study includes employees from newsrooms throughout the U.S., including the South, Midwest, Southwest and Northwest.

Journalists included only: This analysis is limited to non-management journalists such as reporters, photographers, producers and columnists. The data represented too few non-newsroom employees to preserve anonymity. In most cases, part-time employees were excluded for the same reason. When they are included, the graphics specify.

Median vs. average: We used median pay instead of average to more accurately reflect the range of salaries in a workplace. The median is the midpoint between the higher paid half of employees and the lower paid half. Average, on the other hand, can obscure the middle range of salaries when an extreme high or extreme low salary swings the calculation.

Regression: We used the R programming language to see what factors influenced newsroom workers' pay. We used multiple regression analysis, a statistical method that allowed us to see how a worker's pay is related to their race, ethnicity, age, years working at Gannett, the newsroom they worked for, and whether that newsroom has a union contract — all at the same time.

Standardization: During the analysis, we compared hourly and salaried workers' annual pay rates. Job titles were also standardized.

Size of each unit: The number of employees represented by the NewsGuild in each newsroom ranged from 93 to 9. The size of each newsroom should be taken into account. One employee's pay and demographics can impact the analysis more in a

smaller unit than in a larger unit.

***Years of Service and Age:** Calculations that aggregate employees based on years of service include 440 full-time employees, because years of service data for 1 employee was missing. Calculations that aggregate employees based on age include 432 full-time employees, because age data for 9 employees was missing.

Contributors

The NewsGuild's Gannett Caucus, made up of 41 unionized newspapers across the company, recruited highly qualified member volunteers to conduct this study:

- Emily Hopkins, data reporter, Indianapolis Star
- Andrew Mollica, newsroom developer, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel
- Andrew Pantazi, data reporter, formerly Florida Times-Union
- Christopher Persaud, data reporter, Palm Beach Post
- Justin Price, data reporter, The Arizona Republic
- Rebekah Sanders, consumer reporter, The Arizona Republic

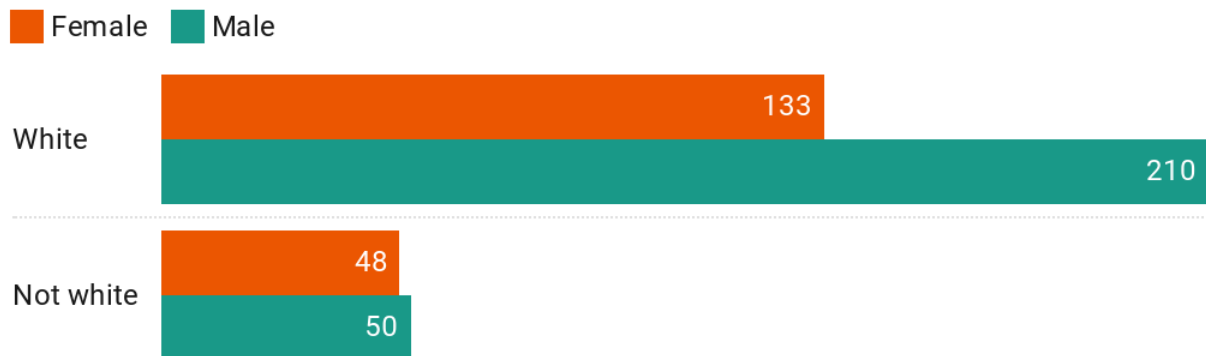
Contact

Questions? Want to share your story? Ready to help make change?
Contact Rebekah Sanders at Rebekah.L.Sanders@gmail.com.

White men make up nearly half of Gannett workforce

Employees in the study were overwhelmingly white and male. About 78% of employees were white, while 59% were men. Nearly half were white men.

Gannett workers by race and gender



Based on annual pay data for 441 full-time workers in 14 NewsGuild newsrooms as of fall 2020.

Chart: Andrew Mollica and Chris Persaud / NewsGuild Gannett caucus pay subcommittee •

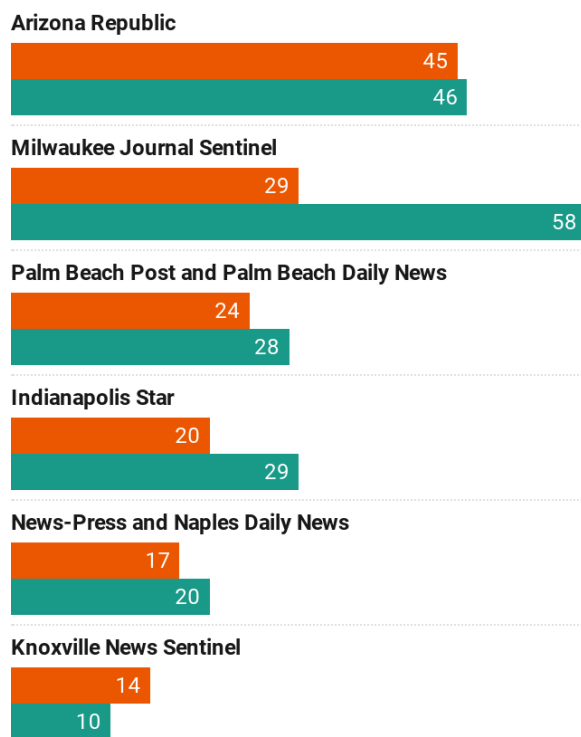
Source: Gannett • Created with Datawrapper

Most newspapers are male-dominated

When looking at individual newspapers, most employed more men than women. The Arizona Republic had a nearly even split. The Knoxville News Sentinel employed more women than men.

Gannett workers by gender and unit

Female Male



South Bend Tribune



Memphis Commercial Appeal



Sarasota Herald-Tribune



Florida Times-Union



Lakeland Ledger



Kitsap Sun



Based on annual pay data for 441 full-time workers in 14 NewsGuild newsrooms as of fall 2020.

Chart: Andrew Mollica and Chris Persaud / NewsGuild Gannett caucus pay subcommittee

• Source: Gannett • Created with Datawrapper

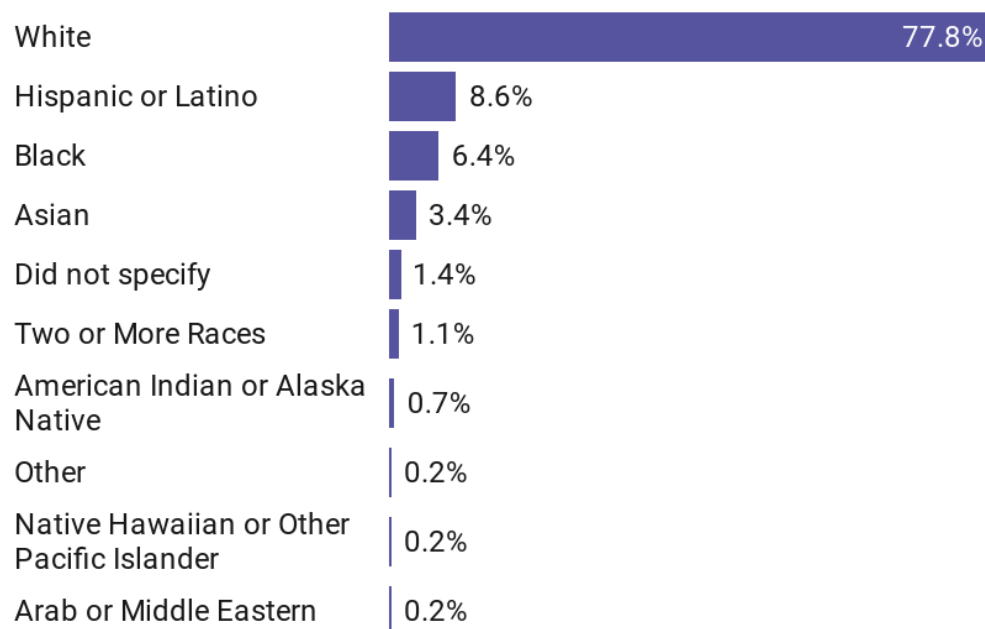
Gannett employees are overwhelmingly white

The journalists in the study were less racially diverse than the U.S. as a whole.

Nearly 78% of workers in the 14 newsrooms were non-Hispanic white. The remaining employees self-identified as 8.6% Hispanic, 6.4% Black, 3.4% Asian and 3.8% other racial groups (Native, Arab, multiracial, other or unspecified).

The U.S. is roughly 60% non-Hispanic white. The remaining population is about 19% Hispanic, 13% Black, 6% Asian and 4% Native or multiracial, according to the [U.S. Census Bureau](#).

Gannett workers' race and ethnicity



Based on annual pay data for 441 full-time workers in 14 NewsGuild newsrooms as of fall 2020.

Chart: Andrew Mollica and Chris Persaud / NewsGuild Gannett caucus pay subcommittee

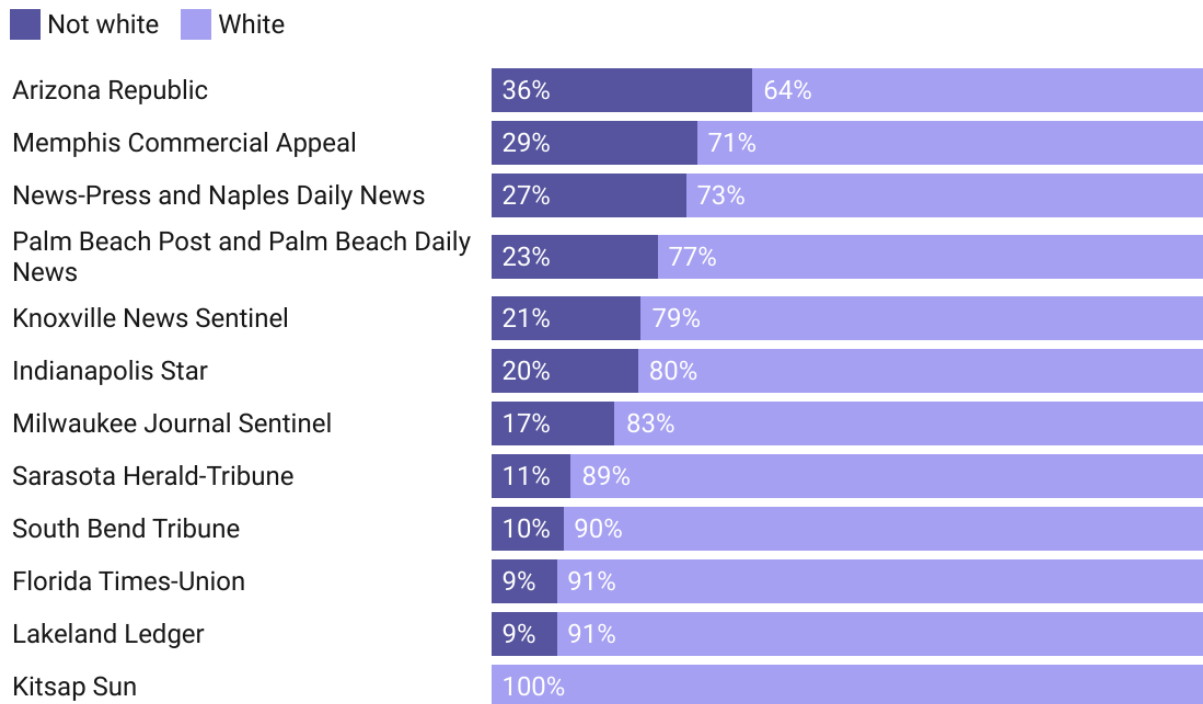
• Source: Gannett • Created with Datawrapper

Newsrooms are less racially diverse than the nation

The largest newsroom, The Arizona Republic, was the most diverse newsroom, with 36% non-white staff. The smallest newsroom, the Kitsap Sun, with nine employees, was the sole all-white newsroom.

None of the newsrooms reflected national demographics. Roughly 40% of the U.S. is not white, according to [U.S. Census estimates](#).

Share of newsroom workers who are not white



Based on annual pay data for 441 full-time workers in 14 NewsGuild newsrooms as of fall 2020.

Chart: Andrew Mollica and Chris Persaud / NewsGuild Gannett caucus pay subcommittee • Source: Gannett • Created with Datawrapper

Newsrooms are less racially diverse than the communities they serve

The Knoxville News Sentinel was unique among newsrooms for having a more racially diverse staff than the county where it was located. All other Gannett newsrooms were less racially diverse than their readers.

The Florida Times-Union in Duval County was the least representative with 91% of staffers being white and the county being 52% white.

Race of Gannett newsrooms vs. counties they cover

Percent white

County Newsroom

Florida Times-Union



Memphis Commercial Appeal



Lakeland Ledger



Milwaukee Journal Sentinel



Indianapolis Star



Kitsap Sun



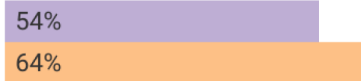
Palm Beach Post and Palm Beach Daily News



South Bend Tribune



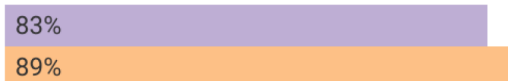
Arizona Republic



News-Press and Naples Daily News



Sarasota Herald-Tribune



Knoxville News Sentinel



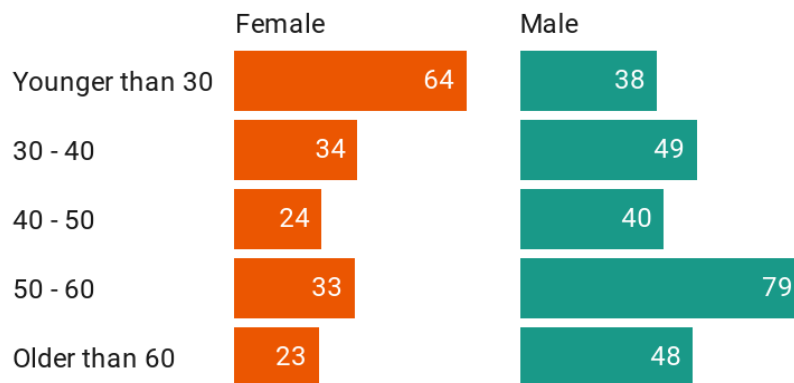
Newsroom demographics based on data on 441 full-time workers in 14 NewsGuild newsrooms. News-Press and Naples Daily News cover Lee and Collier counties.

Chart: Chris Persaud •
Source: Gannett, U.S. Census Bureau •
Created with Datawrapper

Veteran female journalists are rare

Female journalists were typically younger than 30 and had worked fewer than 10 years at newspapers owned by Gannett, suggesting problems with retaining them. Experienced women were rare. Men outnumbered women age 30 and above, or with at least 10 years at the company, by about 2 to 1. (*Years of service indicates how long an employee has worked at Gannett and predecessor companies, not total journalism experience.*)

Age and gender of Gannett workers

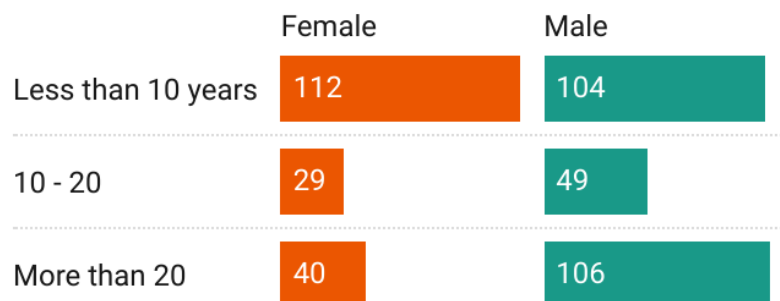


Based on annual pay data for 432 full-time workers in 14 NewsGuild newsrooms as of fall 2020.

Chart: Andrew Mollica and Chris Persaud / NewsGuild Gannett caucus pay subcommittee

• Source: Gannett • Created with Datawrapper

Gannett workers by years of service and gender



Based on annual pay data for 440 full-time workers in 14 NewsGuild newsrooms as of fall 2020.

Chart: Andrew Mollica and Chris Persaud / NewsGuild Gannett caucus pay subcommittee

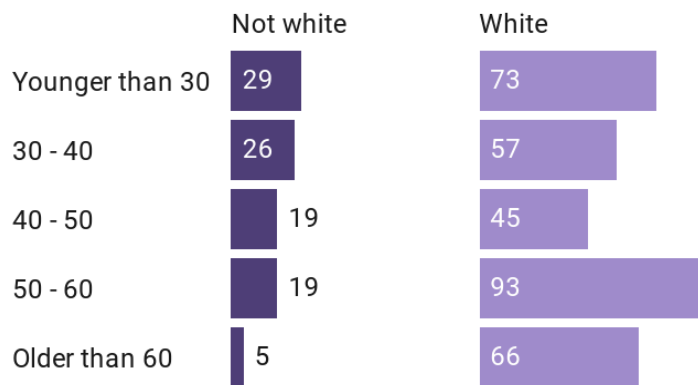
• Source: Gannett • Created with Datawrapper

Veteran journalists of color are rare

Most journalists of color were younger than 40 or had worked fewer than 10 years at newspapers owned by Gannett, suggesting problems retaining them.

Experienced employees of color were rare. White journalists outnumbered journalists of color age 40 and above, or with at least 10 years of service, by more than 4 to 1. (Years of service indicates how long an employee has worked at Gannett and predecessor companies, not total journalism experience.)

Gannett workers by age and race

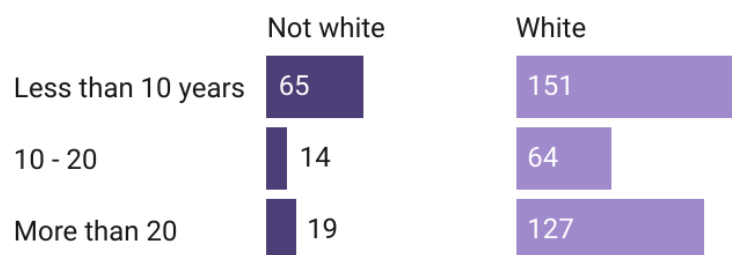


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Gannett workers by years of service and race



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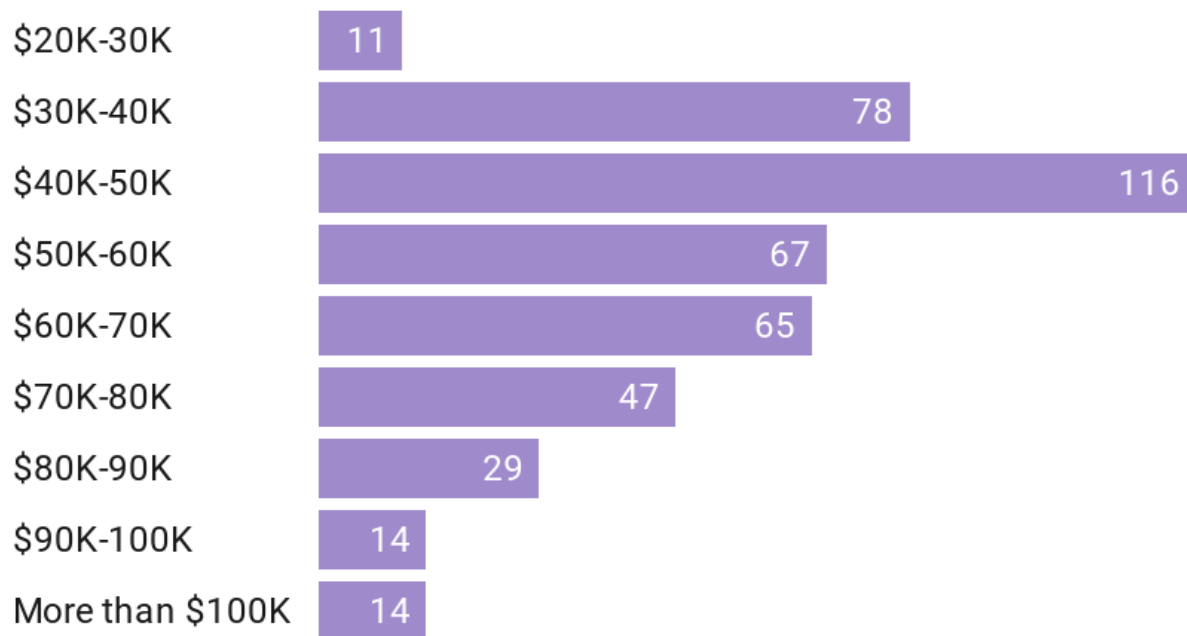
• Source: Gannett • Created with Datawrapper

Gannett median salary is \$13,000 below national rate for college-educated workers

Gannett journalists are typically required to be college-educated. The U.S. median salary for workers with a bachelor's degree in 2019 was \$64,896, according to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#). The median salary at Gannett newspapers in the study was \$52,000, or nearly \$13,000 lower than the national median for degreed workers.

70% of journalists in the report earned below the U.S. median for college-educated workers. 1 in 5 earned below \$40,000.

Gannett workers' annual pay



Based on annual pay data for 441 full-time workers in 14 NewsGuild newsrooms as of fall 2020.

Chart: Andrew Mollica and Chris Persaud / NewsGuild Gannett caucus pay subcommittee

• Source: Gannett • Created with Datawrapper

Women earn \$9,845 less than men

Women's median full-time salary was \$9,845 lower, or 83% what men earned, in the newsrooms studied.

Once part-timers were added, women made a median of \$8,327 less than men.

Part of the reason for the gap is likely that Gannett employs a large number of younger women, who typically earn lower salaries than the large number of experienced men employed by the company.

However, even when controlling for age and experience, older and more experienced women still faced large pay disparities compared to men (see graphics on following pages).

Gannett workers' median pay by gender



Based on annual pay data for 441 full-time workers in 14 NewsGuild newsrooms as of fall 2020.

Chart: Andrew Mollica and Chris Persaud / NewsGuild Gannett caucus pay subcommittee

• Source: Gannett • Created with Datawrapper

Non-white employees earn \$5,246 less than white employees

Journalists' of color median full-time salary was \$5,246 lower, or 90% what whites earned, in the newsrooms studied.

Once part-timers were added, journalists of color made a median \$4,081 less than white journalists.

Part of the reason for the gap may be that Gannett employs more journalists of color who are younger and earn lower salaries than the large number of experienced white journalists.

However, even when controlling for age and experience, older and more experienced journalists of color still faced pay disparities compared to older and more experienced white journalists (see graphics on following pages).

Gannett workers' median pay by race



Based on annual pay data for 441 full-time workers in 14 NewsGuild newsrooms as of fall 2020.

Chart: Andrew Mollica and Chris Persaud / NewsGuild Gannett caucus pay subcommittee

• Source: Gannett • Created with Datawrapper

Non-white women earn \$15,727 less than white men

Women of all races earned less than men of all races, but non-white women were worst off.

Women of color earned a median salary \$15,727 lower, or 73% what white men made.

Gannett workers' median pay by race and gender

Female Male

Not white



White



Based on annual pay data for 441 full-time workers in 14 NewsGuild newsrooms as of fall 2020.

Chart: Andrew Mollica and Chris Persaud / NewsGuild Gannett caucus pay subcommittee

• Source: Gannett • Created with Datawrapper

Older women earn \$6,642 less than older men

Women between ages 50-60 were most affected by the pay gap. They made a median full-time salary \$6,642 lower, or 90% of men of similar age. When adding part-time workers, the gap worsened to \$10,677.

Countering the trend, women in their 20s and 30s exceeded the median pay of men, though by smaller amounts. For those in their 20s, women made \$2,669 more. For women in their 30s, women made \$761. (See page 28 for more explanation.)

Gannett workers' median pay by age and gender

Female Male

Younger than 30



30 - 40



40 - 50



50 - 60



Older than 60



Based on annual pay data from 432 full-time workers in 14 NewsGuild newsrooms as of fall 2020

Chart: Andrew Mollica and Chris Persaud / NewsGuild Gannett caucus pay subcommittee

• Source: Gannett • Created with Datawrapper

Women who work at company the longest earn \$27,026 less than men

The gender pay gap was largest among those with the longest tenure at Gannett, including newspapers acquired in the 2019 merger.

Women who had worked 30+ years at the company earned \$27,026 less, or 63% the median salary of men with similar years of service. (*Years of service indicates how long an employee has worked at Gannett and predecessor companies, not total journalism experience.*)

Gannett workers' pay by years of service and gender

Median annual pay

Women Men

Less than 10 years of service



10 - 20



20 - 30



More than 30



Based on annual pay data for 440 full-time workers in 14 NewsGuild newsrooms as of fall 2020.

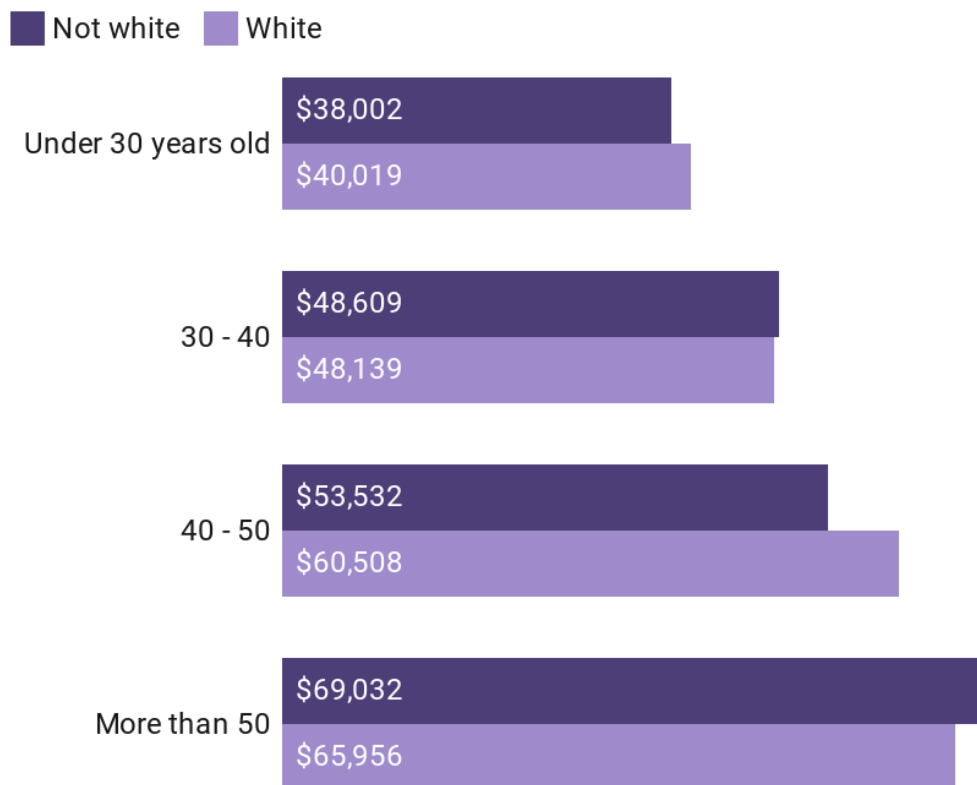
Chart: Andrew Mollica and Chris Persaud / NewsGuild Gannett caucus pay subcommittee •
Source: Gannett • Created with Datawrapper

Some middle-age journalists of color earn \$6,976 less than white peers

Journalists of color between ages 40-50 were most affected by the pay gap. They made a median salary \$6,976 lower, or 88% of white employees in the age group. For those in their 20s, the median wage was \$2,017 higher for white journalists.

Countering the trend, employees of color over age 50 exceeded the median pay of white employees by \$3,076.

Gannett workers' median pay by age and race



Based on annual pay data from 432 full-time workers in 14 NewsGuild newsrooms as of fall 2020

Chart: Andrew Mollica and Chris Persaud / NewsGuild Gannett caucus pay subcommittee

• Source: Gannett • Created with Datawrapper

Some experienced people of color earn \$4,685 less than white peers

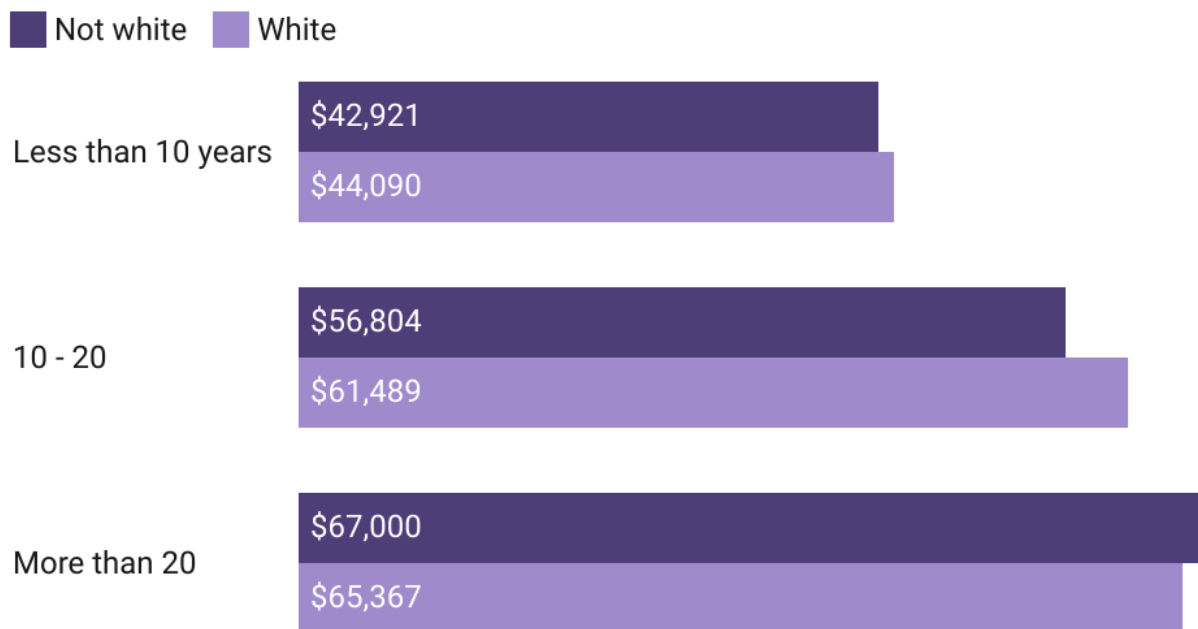
The racial pay gap was largest among those with 10-20 years of service at Gannett, including newspapers acquired in the 2019 merger.

Journalists of color with that tenure earned a median salary \$4,685 less, or 92% what white journalists with similar years of service made.

Countering the trend, employees of color who had served more than 20 years at Gannett exceeded the median pay of white employees by \$1,634.

(Years of service indicates how long an employee has worked at Gannett and predecessor companies, not total journalism experience.)

Gannett workers' median pay by years of service and race



Based on annual pay data from 440 full-time workers in 14 NewsGuild newsrooms as of fall 2020

Chart: Andrew Mollica and Chris Persaud / NewsGuild Gannett caucus pay subcommittee •

Source: Gannett • Created with Datawrapper

The Arizona Republic has the largest gender pay gap

All but two newsrooms had pay inequities for women.

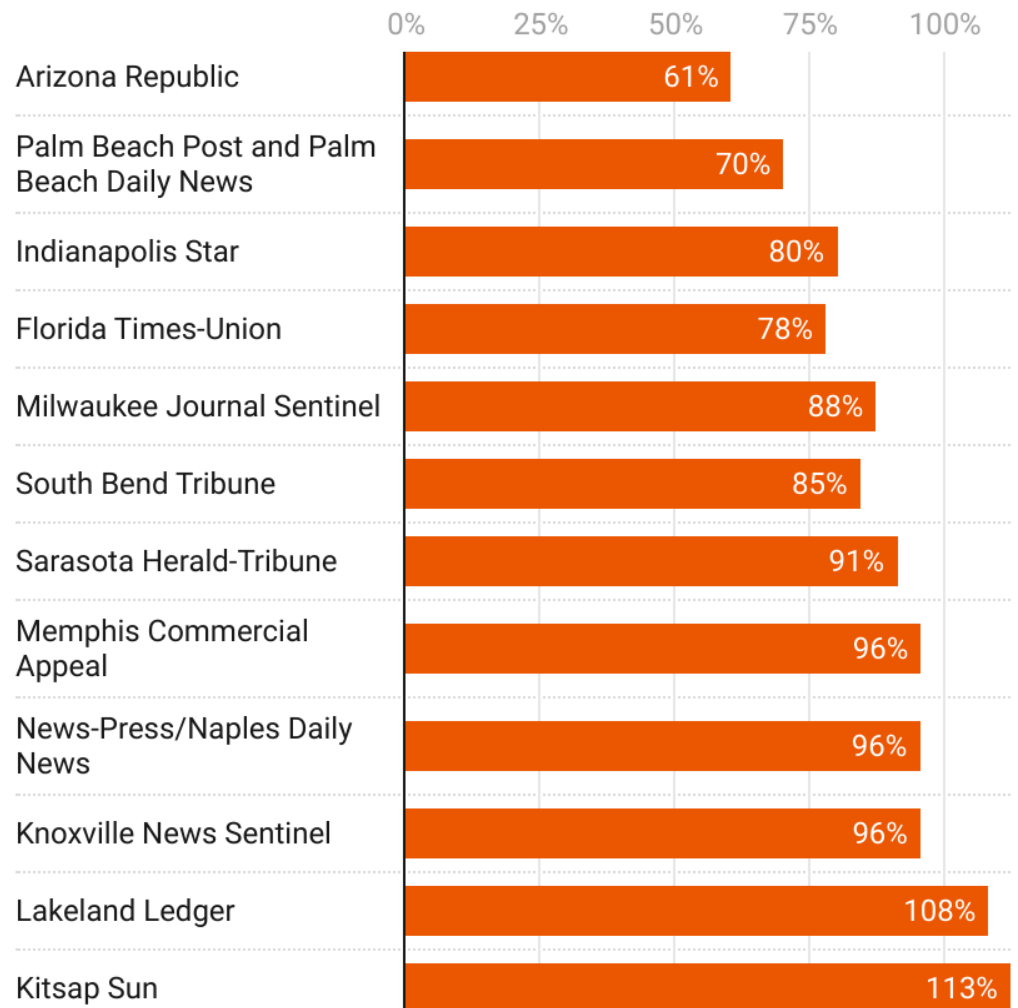
The largest gender pay gap was at The Arizona Republic, where women's median salary was 61% of men's median salary.

The second largest was at the Palm Beach Post/Daily News, where women made 70% what men earned.

Countering the trend, the median woman earned 8-11% more than the median man at two small units, the Lakeland Ledger and Kitsap Sun.

Gender pay gap by unit

Gannett women's median pay as a percent of men's median pay



Based on annual pay data from 441 full-time workers in 14 NewsGuild newsrooms as of fall 2020

Chart: Andrew Mollica and Chris Persaud / NewsGuild Gannett caucus pay subcommittee

• Source: Gannett • Created with Datawrapper

The gender pay gap at The Arizona Republic is nearly \$30,000

The gender pay gap in all but two newsrooms totalled \$1,700 to \$29,700 more in earnings for the median man than the median woman.

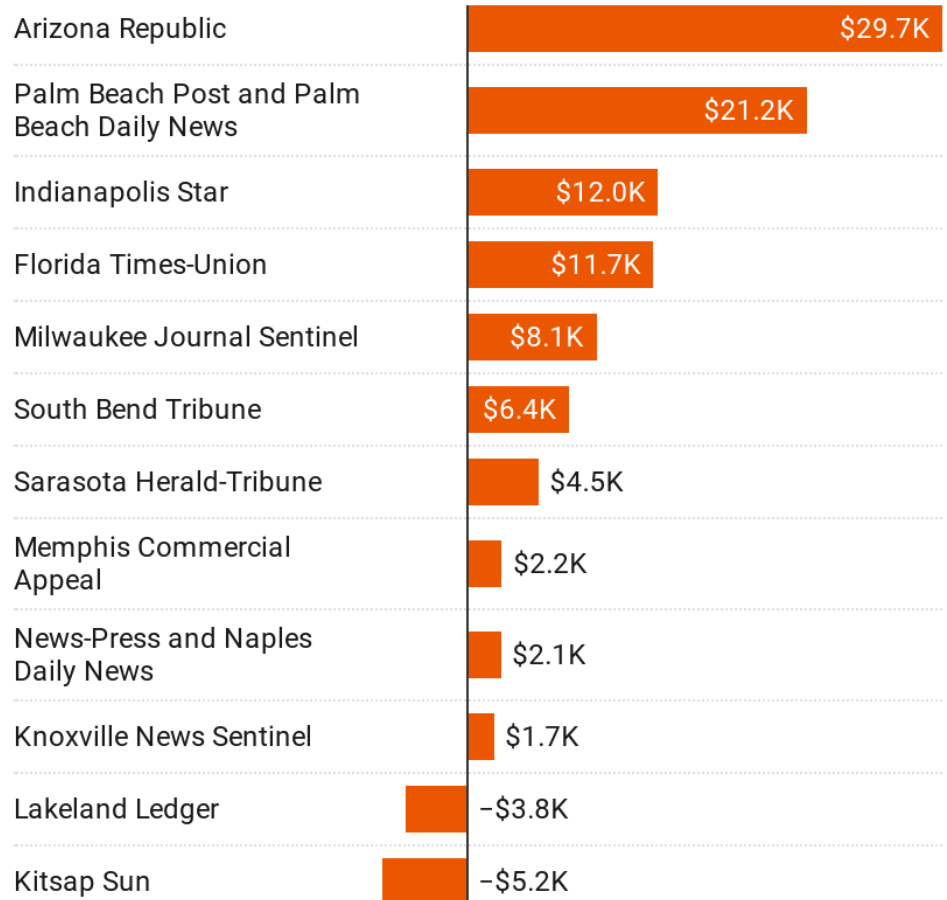
The largest gap, at The Arizona Republic, cost women nearly \$30,000 in median yearly earnings.

The second largest gap, at the Palm Beach Post/Daily News, cost women more than \$21,000 in median yearly earnings.

Countering the trend, the median woman earned \$3,800 to \$5,200 more than the median man at two small units, the Lakeland Ledger and Kitsap Sun.

Gender pay gap by unit

How much higher men's median pay is than women's



Based on annual pay data for 441 full-time workers in 14 NewsGuild newsrooms as of fall 2020. Negative numbers mean women's median pay is higher by that amount.

Chart: Andrew Mollica and Chris Persaud / NewsGuild Gannett caucus pay subcommittee

• Source: Gannett • Created with Datawrapper

The Arizona Republic has the largest racial pay gap

Most newsrooms paid journalists of color 3% to 37% less than white employees.

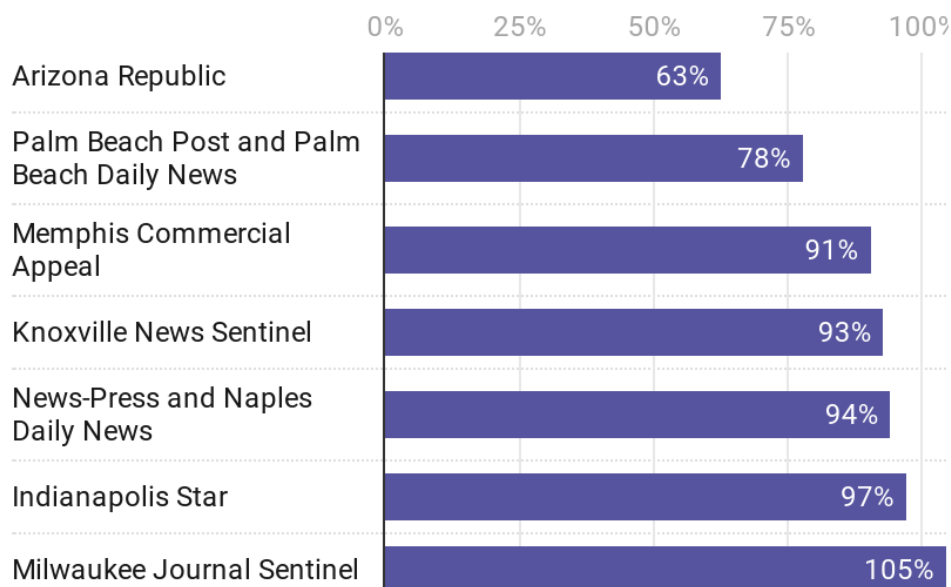
The largest racial pay gap was at The Arizona Republic, where median pay for employees of color was 63% of white workers'. The next largest gap was at the Palm Beach Post/Daily News, where median pay for employees of color was 78% of white workers'.

Countering the trend, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel's median salary was lower for white journalists. They made 95% what employees of color earned.

(Five newsrooms were excluded from the racial pay gap analysis to preserve anonymity because they had fewer than 5 journalists of color.)

Racial pay gap by unit

Not white workers' median pay as a percent of white workers' median pay



Based on annual pay data from 361 full-time workers in 7 NewsGuild newsrooms as of fall 2020. Units with fewer than five workers of color are excluded.

Chart: Andrew Mollica and Chris Persaud / NewsGuild Gannett caucus pay subcommittee

• Source: Gannett • Created with Datawrapper

The racial pay gap at The Arizona Republic is more than \$25,000

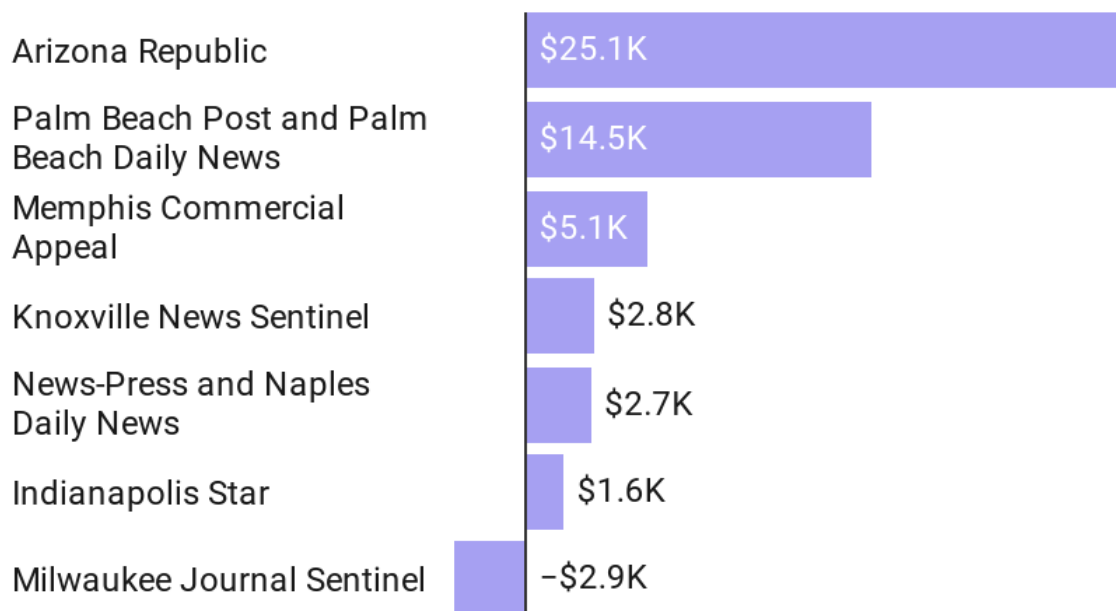
The racial pay gap totalled \$1,600 to \$25,100 more in earnings for white journalists than journalists of color.

The largest gap, at The Arizona Republic, cost journalists of color \$25,100 in median yearly earnings. The second largest gap, at the Palm Beach Post/Daily News, cost journalists of color \$14,500.

Countering the trend, the median employee of color made \$2,900 more than the median white employee at the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel.

Racial pay gap by unit

How much higher white workers' pay is than not white workers'



Based on annual pay data from 361 full-time workers in 7 NewsGuild newsrooms as of fall 2020. Units with fewer than five workers of color are excluded. Negative numbers mean not white workers' median pay is higher by that amount.

Chart: Andrew Mollica and Chris Persaud / NewsGuild Gannett caucus pay subcommittee

• Source: Gannett • Created with Datawrapper

Unionizing lessens gender and racial pay gaps

The data shows that unionizing lessens gender and racial salary inequities.

We compared seven Gannett newsrooms with longstanding union contracts to seven recently unionized newsrooms negotiating first union contracts.

The gender pay gap was \$7,676 in newsrooms with longstanding union contracts compared to \$14,522 in newsrooms currently negotiating first contracts.

The racial pay gap was \$837 in newsrooms with longstanding union contracts compared to \$6,280 in newsrooms currently negotiating first contracts.

The effect is likely due in part to union contracts that have transparent pay scales that ensure employees receive minimum salaries according to level of experience rather than management whims, in addition to cost-of-living increases that all employees receive rather than a favored few.

Gannett gender pay gap smaller with union contracts

Median pay for newsroom workers in unions with or without a union contract.

No union contract

Female \$43,928

Male \$58,450

Union contract

Female \$48,006

Male \$55,682

Based on annual pay data for 441 full-time workers in 14 NewsGuild newsrooms as of fall 2020.

Chart: Andrew Mollica and Chris Persaud / NewsGuild Gannett caucus pay subcommittee

• Source: Gannett • Created with Datawrapper

Gannett racial pay gap smaller with union contracts

Median pay for Gannett workers in unions with or without a union contract

No union contract

Not white \$44,990

White \$53,334

Union contract

Not white \$52,000

White \$53,128

Based on annual pay data from 441 full-time workers in 14 NewsGuild newsrooms as of fall 2020

Chart: Andrew Mollica and Chris Persaud / NewsGuild Gannett caucus pay subcommittee

• Source: Gannett • Created with Datawrapper

Pay gaps for men in Milwaukee highlight need for pay scales

The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel newsroom, which has been unionized for more than three decades, includes pay minimums based on experience for most workers in its contract. However, one department newly added to the bargaining unit remains without a pay scale.

Our analysis shows journalists left out of the union pay scale were paid significantly less compared to journalists covered by the union pay scale. And the disparities for these journalists have worsened over time, as shown in the graphic below, as they missed out on the union contract's guaranteed increases.

Because of the significant disparities within the department, this group of largely male journalists' pay brings down the median salary for all men across Gannett newsrooms in the study, but particularly those under 40 years old.

The data demonstrates that union pay scales typically increase worker wages and reveals the need for Gannett to raise this department to a fair scale.

Milwaukee journalists without guaranteed pay floors face growing gap

How much less non-pay scale workers make than pay scale workers, comparing median salaries



Based on annual pay data from 85 full-time workers in the Milwaukee newsroom as of fall 2020

Chart: Andrew Mollica / NewsGuild Gannett Caucus pay subcommittee •
Source: Gannett • Created with Datawrapper

Testimonials:

Employees in their own words

Gannett employees explain the personal impact of pay inequity and lack of diversity at their newspapers and their support for change.

Want to add your testimonial to this report? Email Rebekah.L.Sanders@gmail.com.

"I remember the punched-in-the-gut feeling I had the moment I learned that a young male reporter with just a few years of experience had nearly the exact same salary that I had, despite my two decades as a working journalist. I'm extremely proud of the work I've done, from breaking news to projects and investigations, but it's discouraging knowing that I make less money than many men in the newsroom with the same or fewer years of experience. While I hope to have a long career in journalism, and a long career at my paper, I worry that continuing pay inequity will lead me to leave in search of higher-paying journalism jobs elsewhere — or drive me to simply change careers altogether."

— Milwaukee Journal Sentinel journalist

"I viscerally remember the feeling of learning I was the lowest-paid reporter in my newsroom, even after three years of working there, covering one of the busiest beats and still carving out time for high-impact special projects. At that time, I learned I even was paid a lower hourly rate than a fellowship filled by a white man with roughly the same level of experience I had. The Guild supported me in my fight for more equitable pay with my peers and showed me how our contract could strengthen my case with management for a raise, which I ultimately achieved. Taking a stand then has put me in a much better position in the years since. Now, as I look to the future and this new data analyzed by the Guild's Gannett Caucus, I am alarmed by the lack of mid-career female representation in our newsrooms and the dismal retention of female reporting talent. I can't help but worry that I will become one of those vanishing statistics."

— Milwaukee Journal Sentinel journalist

"For more than eight years, I've edited a section of the newspaper without an editor title or commensurate pay — and for the record, I've asked for both. In addition to editing that section, plus other special sections throughout the year, I report and write for my section and others, edit colleague's work for other sections, and help with other digital projects and events.

In one of those years, not only was I paid less than an editor, I was paid less than our contract-negotiated rate for my position, based on my years of experience — a situation only rectified after the Guild brought it to management's attention.

I'm thankful the Guild had my back and got me the back pay and raise that I deserved, but I'm still frustrated that I'm paid less than other editors in my newsroom. That includes a white male colleague who was promoted into an editor role in my department despite not applying for or being qualified for that position. It was a position I had asked for and essentially was already doing, but had never been given the chance to apply for.

My experience is not unique. A nearly identical situation happened to a female colleague, and it led to her leaving our newsroom for another job. We are going to continue to lose talented employees if we continue to pay them less than they are worth while they see their white male colleagues making more. If we want to produce the best journalism, we need to have the best people from a diversity of backgrounds, and we need to retain them by paying them what they are worth."

— Milwaukee Journal Sentinel journalist

"I think it's criminal for Gannett or any other news organizations to have pay inequity based on gender or color while these same organizations expose and condemn other industries of doing the same. It's the typical do as I say, not as I do."

— Sarasota Herald-Tribune journalist

"I believe in equal pay and diversity because we need to be a workplace for everyone."

— Sarasota Herald-Tribune journalist

"Gannett has pledged to hire a more diverse workforce but it should also work just as hard to retain and promote those employed now.

Representation matters. It's important for young journalists of color and women to be able to see themselves and find mentors in leadership roles for retention efforts to work.

That's certainly not the case now as we keep seeing women and women of color leaving leadership roles because Gannett keeps eliminating their positions, or because they don't get paid as much as their white counterparts. This leads to their departure and in turn to the departure of younger journalists who are left without allies in our predominantly white newsrooms."

— Indianapolis Star journalist

"We can't tell the community we want to reflect them and then not create a place where journalists of color can thrive. Equal pay — and mentoring, continuing education, training opportunities, etc. — is critical if we want to recruit and RETAIN journalists of color. It's not enough to get them to our newsroom. We have to create a welcoming space where their voices are heard and valued and give them the tools and resources to be successful. Otherwise, it's diversity for diversity's sake, which serves no one."

— Indianapolis Star journalist

"The best way to retain POC journalists is with fair pay and benefits, inclusivity in newsroom culture and decisions and opportunities to grow and move up."

— Indianapolis Star journalist

"Humans should have the right to be paid equally for comparable work and certainly should not make less based on gender identity or race."

— Indianapolis Star journalist

"I believe, despite my nearly decade history in journalism, I am being paid at a base level. The company has done nothing to increase my salary."

— Springfield News-Leader journalist

"As a woman and as an experienced reporter, I have long felt undervalued by the various companies that owned the newspapers where I worked. So I was not surprised at the pay disparities in the study. I will be surprised if those disparities are addressed by the time I retire, but because of increasing unionization I am hopeful younger generations of reporters will see their value better reflected in their paychecks. Meanwhile, I will keep doing what I'm doing because I love the work, period."

— Florida Times-Union journalist

"Last year, I learned that a male colleague who was hired after me and has less newsroom experience than me is being paid much more than I am. It hurt to learn that, especially as everyone took on more work when COVID-19 hit. To know that he is paid several more dollars an hour than me makes me feel as if my work is less valuable and my contributions are worth less than his."

If diversity is truly important to Gannett, the company will make steps toward more equitable pay. For us to have a newsroom that reflects the community we cover, equal pay is a must."

— Knoxville News Sentinel journalist

"I was told pay is determined by experience when I asked for a raise, but I earn entry-level pay as a mid-career reporter. After over a decade in this industry I feel used. There is always an excuse when I ask to be paid equally to those with my same experience level."

Don't use my skin for your diversity. My skin made me work twice as hard to be here so I deserve to earn twice as much as you can afford. I could at least get even."

— Arizona Republic journalist

"I was told my coworkers and I were going to be hired at the same rate, and that's why I couldn't negotiate for more when accepting the position. That was awfully wrong, and a statement an editor said he did not recall making. Upon hiring, another coworker was immediately paid more than \$8,000 more, and as time went on — even with pay adjustments to reduce disparities — the discrepancy grew so large that what another peer made in four days, I had to work five to earn. Many people of color and women often get paid less, while organizations applaud their own work in diversifying their staff. I've never seen pay disparity as bad as while working at The Republic."

— **Former Arizona Republic journalist**

"The pay inequity that I experienced during my time in the newsroom was pretty much in plain sight the entire time. In 2018 and 2019, as a woman of color with a bachelor's degree, I wrote original content and was paid less than \$15 an hour. Not only were my male counterparts with similar background/experience getting paid more, there were INTERNS in the newsroom paid a higher wage than I was. The low pay continued even after a merit-based promotion in 2020. My official duties in the new position included THREE different jobs with an hourly wage that didn't even properly compensate me for one of the jobs, let alone all three. When the company had rounds of furloughs, I made less than the minimum amount required to participate. Sounds great, right? It's not. This basically meant that I was paid less than my counterparts."

I was not alone. Other women of color were routinely put in a position where they had to accept getting paid less than their male and white counterparts — often while being asked to carry a heavier workload. It was either take the low pay or leave the job. You had to choose."

— **Former Arizona Republic journalist**

"The company wanted to start me at a similar pay as new college graduates. Some of us journalists of color are in our 30s, yet we still can't catch up to some of our younger, white colleagues. And when we speak multiple languages, the company benefits from our interviews and translations, but doesn't pay us for that benefit."

— **Arizona Republic journalist**

"After many title changes and added job responsibilities, all I get are excuses from management for little to no raises in pay. Pride in who you are and what you do matters, and pay is the utmost sign of respect, or disrespect. It devalues you, it humiliates you, it makes you feel 'less than' to hear what others make at your age. I'm embarrassed but also angry, and I'm ready to do what's necessary to create change."

— Arizona Republic journalist

"When I first learned about some of my colleagues' salaries at the paper, I was shocked. I was shocked because reporters who have many more years of experience than me were making less than I was, and they were pulling extra hours at odd jobs to try and stay afloat. I know of reporters who have the same job functions as me yet make thousands of dollars less.

The only difference between these reporters and myself has nothing to do with our ability level, experience or skill set. If anything, some of these reporters have greater skills than me. So far, the only big difference I can see is that the underpaid reporters I know are people of color, especially women of color, whereas I am white. This is a glaring racial inequity issue that the company needs to address immediately. Everyone deserves to have a fair salary, and nobody at this company should feel the need to work an extra job just to pay the bills.

Working extra jobs to pay the bills takes a toll. I know this from my past experiences working at a low salary, when at one point I held three jobs just to keep myself afloat. When I had three jobs, it made it impossible for me to excel at any one of those jobs, and I damn near lost my sanity. I'm thankful to have a livable wage now, but I'm outraged that the company wouldn't guarantee a livable wage for everyone, especially since everyone else works just as hard as I do.

This company is not supporting journalists of color in the newsroom, it is exploiting journalists of color in the newsroom. That's not caring about diversity, that's abuse."

— Arizona Republic journalist

"As a member of the category that has the biggest pay gap, I am dismayed but not terribly surprised that women with long-term service were considerably underpaid compared to their male counterparts.

I've stayed with Gannett not out of loyalty, but because the work is rewarding and worthwhile. But if this is considered loyalty, then the reward for it should not be an assumption that "less is OK" but, rather, pay that rewards good work.

I contribute to the newsroom in ways beyond covering my assignment: I provide institutional memory of our coverage area and the newsroom, I serve as a mentor to younger staffers, I provide contacts and tips that might not be available to staffers with less time in service. This behavior should be rewarded, regardless of gender."

— Arizona Republic journalist

"This pay study of multiple newsrooms confirms what many have long known: Women and journalists of color are often paid less than their white, male peers. Now, we also know that The Arizona Republic had the largest gender and racial pay gaps among 14 newsrooms surveyed.

Last year, after 6 years at The Republic, I learned that I was making within the bottom 20% of pay among the newsroom's employees. I was being paid the same as employees with less experience, many of whom were just starting their careers at the paper.

For too long, women and journalists of color have had to carry the burden of feeling embarrassed or ashamed when they find out they are not viewed as equals in the eyes of their employer. We've seen pay disparities breed resentment and drive talented female journalists and journalists of color out of the industry.

Journalists can no longer be expected to keep their heads down and their mouths shut about these inequities. It's time for companies and institutions who have made public commitments about the retention of diverse talent to put their money where their mouth is."

— Former Arizona Republic journalist

"When women leave, their work gets added to the rest of our plates. When the newspaper fails to pay our colleagues fairly, all of us suffer."

— Palm Beach Post journalist

"I was a reporter for roughly 17 years and absolutely loved every minute of it. I made the difficult decision to leave journalism after not receiving a real raise for many years. I was a young mother with two small children. I was offered a job with a local government agency, where I earn a salary that is 30-40 percent higher than what I earned at the newspaper. My overall benefits package is also significantly better. I receive retirement benefits and have excellent health insurance coverage for my entire family."

— Former Palm Beach Post journalist

"Honestly, what the paper pays some people is insulting. Some reporters with advanced degrees earn less than \$20 per hour. How are people supposed to live on that? And what does that say to them about their value to the company?"

Most reporters love their jobs, and they take their responsibility to serve the community very seriously. But the community loses out on that passion, expertise and knowledge when reporters don't stick around because they cannot afford to survive.

The problem is you work hard, learn, move up and take on added responsibilities, but your pay does not change. It is very de-motivating.

You have managers who refuse to pay overtime to hourly wage-earners. They tell you to take time off instead. It is against the law, but they do it. And if you call them out on it, watch out, because the retaliation rains down fast and hard."

— Palm Beach Post journalist

"Our staff, like those in many newsrooms, is badly underpaid, even as staff reductions force growing responsibilities. Disparities in pay hurt employee morale and add to a sense of frustration with the newspaper industry. While we want to see pay increases for all newsroom employees, it is especially important for Gannett to address disparities in pay."

— Lakeland Ledger journalist

“Memphis, a majority Black city, does not have a majority Black newsroom. This pay study unfortunately shows that Black reporters that do work in our newsroom make less than our newsroom’s white reporters. How can we hire and retain reporters of color if they are not paid equitably? Wages should also be sufficient enough to allow reporters to be active members of the communities they cover.”
— **Memphis Commercial Appeal journalist**

*“Any newspaper worth the paper it's printed on needs to have a diverse staff with institutional knowledge. Yet when I learned how little our experienced journalists had been rewarded for their loyalty to the South Bend Tribune, I started to wonder if a newsroom held to that standard would even be possible at our paper a decade from now. How can we attract young women and young people of color who want to sustain a career here if the ceiling for their wages is so low?
The truth is they probably wouldn't even be aware of the low ceiling that preceded them if not for our Guild. It wasn't until we requested our pay data for bargaining that we learned of the pay disparities that have developed over the years at The Tribune. Now it's incumbent upon Gannett to help build a path to eliminating them and set standards in preventing them.
A journalist shouldn't have to work an extra job to make ends meet, because leaving the industry they love would be too painful. A journalist shouldn't have to seek a job offer elsewhere to coax a raise out of the company. If you want to sustain a loyal subscriber base, shouldn't you reward the loyalty of your employees?”*
— **South Bend Tribune journalist**