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Public Television's Affinity Group Coalition Announces New Plans

Following its August meeting in Chicago, the Affinity Group Coalition (AGC) announced its newly elected chair and plans for the year ahead in four critical areas.

Rob Shuman, president and CEO of Maryland Public Television, was elected chair of AGC, the coalition of public television membership organizations responsible for serving local station interests around systemwide issues.

Shuman stated that he was honored to be selected by his public television peers to chair the AGC. He further stated that this upcoming year's agenda and work scope is one of AGC's most ambitious and critical given industry challenges.

At its Chicago meeting, the AGC prioritized and agreed to address four topics of critical importance to the future of public broadcasting:

- *Sustainability*: An examination of the mission, services, and structure appropriate to maintaining and expanding the vital services of public television licenses is the focus of this group. Brett, director of Wisconsin Public Television, will serve as chair.
- *Editorial Integrity*: The AGC established a committee last year to assist public television licensees and their service organizations in developing and assuring appropriate policies and practices related to editorial decision-making in a digital environment. Ted Krichels, general manager of Penn State Public Broadcasting, has agreed to continue as chair of this committee.
- *Education*: This AGC committee will continue on its productive track, with Rob Shuman remaining as chair. Mac Wall, executive director of KET, is co-chair.
- *New Media*: The AGC created a committee to address the emerging influence of new media as a means of expanding public broadcasting's service. Rod Bates, general manager of Nebraska Educational Telecommunications, is the committee chair.

During the meeting, the AGC formally expressed its appreciation to Elizabeth Christopherson, executive director of the New Jersey Network, for her service as the AGC chair. The coalition welcomed Shuman as the incoming chair. Mac Wall, the executive director of KET, was named the vice chair/chair elect.

The AGC also thanked Ted Krichels, general manager of Penn State Public Broadcasting general manager, and Dan Schmidt, president of WTTW/Chicago, for their service as representatives of the University Licensee Association and Major Market Group respectively. Their terms of service expired this summer.

The Affinity Group Coalition (www.ptv-agc.org) was created in 2004 to serve as a forum for addressing system-wide issues of interest to public television stations. It is a station-led coalition of two representatives from public television's six major affinity groups – member organizations that represent public television stations based on licensee type, community size, and service profile. The participating groups are the BETA Group, the Major Market Group (MMG), the National Educational Telecommunications Association (NETA), the Organization of State Broadcasting Executives (OSBE), the Small Station Association (SSA) and the University Licensee Association, ULA).

The AGC Representatives are

BETA

Elizabeth Christopherson, executive director, New Jersey Networks/Trenton, NJ
Mel Rogers, president and general manager, KOCE/Huntington Beach, CA

MMG

James Pagliarini, president and CEO, Twin Cities Public Television/St. Paul, MN
Rob Shuman, president and CEO, Maryland Public Television/Owings Mills, MD

NETA

Peter Frid, general manager, New Hampshire Public Television/Durham, NH
Allen Weatherly, executive director, Arkansas Educational Television Network/Conway, AR

OSBE

Rod Bates, general manager, Nebraska Educational Telecommunications/Lincoln, NE
Mac Wall, executive director, Kentucky Educational Television/Lexington, KY

SSA

David Dial, president and general manager, WNIN/Evansville, IN
Wick Rowland, president and CEO, KBDI/Denver, CO

ULA

Malcolm Brett, director of broadcasting and media innovations, Wisconsin Public Broadcasting/Madison, WI
Ellis Bromberg, general manager, Milwaukee Public Television/Milwaukee, WI

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