



The National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences' Ohio Valley Chapter has selected this year's Silver Circle Honorees. Each has devoted many years to broadcasting, education and community service and are highly deserving of this prestigious award.

Silver Circle is one of NATAS' highest honors, which recognizes television professionals who have performed distinguished service for 25 years or more. Gold Circle inductees have served for 50 years or more.

In the words of NATAS Ohio Valley Chapter Silver/Gold Circle Committee Chair, Jim Timmerman, "Silver and Gold Circle members are honored for more than their longevity -- they are honored for making an enduring contribution to the vitality of the television industry and for setting standards of achievement we can all hope to emulate. These honorees also give back to the community as mentors, educators and volunteers."

The 2021 Silver Circle honorees were formally recognized during the 57th annual NATAS Ohio Valley Chapter Emmy Awards, held online in August.

This year's Silver Circle honorees are . . .

Susan Dinkel

News Director/
Anchor
WTHI (CBS)
Terre Haute, IN



Western Indiana's Wabash Valley is the top of the world for Susan Dinkel. Here her roots run deep, the pride of the people is in her heart and since 1995, her local WTHI TV 10 has been her career. Oh sure, Susie had the talent and charisma to handpick any career path she wanted, so she did; she stayed in hometown Terre Haute. The earlier years saw her shine as an intern, general assignment reporter and one of the youngest weekend and morning show anchors in station history. In 2003, she rose to Assistant News Director, progressing to News Director three years later garnering her team a Special Achievement Regional Emmy Award. But to Susan, her voice is not just one of news but one of empowerment. She leads the next generation by example giving opportunity to students and promising employees who hold the keys to journalism's future just as her beloved community had done for her.

Scott Eckhardt

Special Projects
Photographer/
Producer
WLKY (CBS)
Louisville, KY



A 1994 product of Indiana University, video producer Scott Eckhardt has raised standards at every stop along a stellar career. This has included dozens of humbled walks to the Emmy Awards podium with some of the most decorated reporters in the business. Eckhardt is also as a 5-time Edward R. Murrow Regional Award recipient, an Eclipse Award winner as well as being named videographer and photographer of the year by prestigious organizations. While Scott has enjoyed positions with WTVW Evansville, WCNC Charlotte and KDVR Denver, he has chosen to give his heart and soul to the people and stories of WLKY 32 in Louisville. There, he has been absorbed by the Kentucky Derby, the thoroughbred industry and the station's vast community engagements. His special projects include the March of Dimes, Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and the annual WLKY Bell Awards honoring the unsung heroes of outstanding community service. Colleagues perhaps say it best, "Through his work, he is the man that defines the moments."



Curtis Fuller

Reporter/Anchor
WLWT (NBC)
Cincinnati, OH

Often, there is a second side to a person, but not in the case of anchor/reporter Curtis Fuller. He is Cincinnati - its news, its issues, its events, its people. While his roots are in Pittsburgh, he has been one with the Queen City and WLWT 5 since 1988. The three-time Emmy-winning weekend news anchor lives to bring the trust of the anchor chair into his community. If there is a story to tell, you want Curtis to tell it. His connection with both news and neighborhoods is reflected in the community affairs program he hosts, "Let's Talk Cincy." Other examples include decades of emceeding the annual Martin Luther King, Jr celebration, serving the Greater Cincinnati Tall Stacks Commission, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra Board of Trustees, the Cincinnati Scholarship Foundation among many others. He became further involved with a mayoral run in 2001 and an official proclamation of "Curtis Fuller Day" on February 12, 2021. He is the one who always wishes you a good night and a better tomorrow. While there is no second side to this honoree, it would be hard to imagine one the tri-state could like better.



Arnie Harrah

Newscast Director
WDRB (Fox)
Louisville, KY

Ten watts don't sound like much, but they were all Arnie Harrah needed to launch a lifetime. In 1969, during a time when FM was largely unknown, Marshall University's WMUL FM whet his appetite for live broadcasts. This continued by running camera, floor directing and sports anchoring at nearby WOWK TV 13. Behind the scenes was his true calling. He followed this cue to Lexington's WTVQ 36 from 1975 to 1982 where he served as newscast director mixed with duties in master control and technical production. The challenge of larger markets lured him to WHAS 11 in Louisville, Media General Cable near Washington, DC before returning to the Derby City in 1990 for an 18-year journey with WDRB 41. There, Arnie solidified a carefully crafted team to transform the once-independent station into a prominent news leader, beginning with "The News at 10." Harrah was among the first to establish the *late news an hour earlier* concept which is now a fixture among Fox programming affiliates nationwide. With more than 15,000 newscasts to his credit, none were possible without his consistently calm demeanor ready to face surprises that news, events and producers could hurl his way. From 10 watts to 10pm and beyond, Arnie is forever remembered for his 100%.

Al Smith

30-year Host/Producer
Comment on Kentucky
Kentucky Educational
Television (PBS)



While controversy is a constant in media, it began in Kentucky to debate the state's issues and include something often overlooked – rural voices. The program was *Comment on Kentucky* airing live Friday nights on Kentucky Educational Television. Veteran newspaper journalist Albert P. Smith was the original host and producer of record 1974 - 2007. Each episode was renowned for lively discussion from both sides of the political spectrum and is the longest-running public affairs show in the commonwealth. Born in Sarasota, FL in 1927, Smith served stateside in the US Army during World War II, afterwards attending Vanderbilt University. His career veered from metropolitan newspaper reporting in New Orleans to Russellville, Ky where he bought the News-Democrat, one of seven local papers he would own. From there, he caught the eye of KET and its statewide network. Co-founder of the Institute for Rural Journalism and Community Issues, Smith was a master at interviews and analysis making concerns relevant to cities and smaller towns alike. Every major political reporter in the state wanted to be on *Comment* and was. His feisty spirit inspired legends in the business and was considered essential weekly viewing. In March of 2021, at age 94, he passed away remembered by his gold standard legacy. Divisiveness aside, colleagues and fans eagerly agree – thanks to Al Smith, *Comment on Kentucky* has made a lasting statement.