



NCAB Presents Its Annual Broadcast Industry Awards

NEWS RELEASE

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RALEIGH (October 9, 2026) – The North Carolina Association of Broadcasters held its Annual Meeting and Award Lunch on October 6, 2026, to honor its Annual Broadcast Industry Award inductees and recognize its Station Award winners.

2026 NCAB INDUSTRY AWARDS

Hall of Fame Award Recipient: Rick Jackson

Rick Jackson is the former Vice President/General Manager of WBT and WLNK Radio in Charlotte. After spending most of his on-air career with North Carolina-based Jefferson Pilot Communications, Rick was tapped to lead one of North Carolina's most respected brands, WBT. Rick took over an operation that was in transition.

Although widely respected, WBT was not profitable. Rick quickly transformed the station into Charlotte's leading radio station for nearly two decades. He also helped the station move from a full-service format to news talk. He led WLNK-FM into a new format and was instrumental in pairing Bob Lacey and Sheri Lynch as morning show hosts, who were inducted into the *National Radio Hall of Fame* in 2025. In addition, Rick increased the station's visibility and participation in representing Charlotte.

Hall of Fame Award Recipient: Bernie Mann

Bernie Mann has spent a lifetime building businesses, creating opportunities, leading an industry, and celebrating North Carolina, and it all started with radio. Bernie was born in Brooklyn, New York, graduated from Adelphi University, and began his career in 1957 as a reporter and on-air personality. Bernie quickly moved into sales, then management, and eventually ownership. In 1965, Bernie invested \$5,000 for a one-third interest in a struggling radio operation in Winston-Salem. Over the years, he built a portfolio of stations in North Carolina and beyond, including WGLD in High Point, WKIX and WYYD in Raleigh, and WCOG in Greensboro.

At nearly 60 years of age, Bernie decided to start over and bought a small publication called *The State* magazine. It had been around since 1933 and had a relatively small staff and a fiercely loyal group of readers. He moved the magazine to Greensboro. He changed its name from *The State* to *Our State* - because he believed “Our” was warmer, friendlier, and more inclusive. He expanded the use of beautiful color photography. He sought out exceptional North Carolina writers and photographers. When Mann Media purchased the magazine in 1996, it had roughly 24,000 subscribers. Under Bernie's leadership, that number eventually grew to well over 160,000.

In many ways, Bernie's two careers weren't that different. Whether he was running a radio station or publishing a magazine, Bernie understood the same fundamental principle: **Know your audience. Respect your audience. And give them something worth coming back for.**

2026 STATION AWARD WINNERS

Beginning in 2013, the North Carolina Association of Broadcasters began an Association Station Awards Program. The NCAB Station Awards are conducted annually to recognize outstanding achievement by North Carolina radio and television broadcasters.

Television Awards

Outstanding Newscast:

WECT-TV, Wilmington, NC

Outstanding Hard News or Breaking Story:

WRAL-TV, Raleigh, NC

Outstanding Sports Story or Series:

WITN-TV, Greenville, NC

Best News Anchor:

Alicia Barnes, WJZY-TV, Charlotte

TV Community Involvement:

WXII-TV, Winston-Salem, NC

Radio Awards

Radio Personality or Team of the Year

Non-Metro Market:

The Morning Rush with Marc & Laura, WNCT-FM, Greenville, NC

Metro Market:

The Maney & LauRen Morning Show (With Big Al), WNKS-FM, Charlotte, NC

Radio Station of Year

Non-Metro Market:

WATA-AM, Boone, NC

Metro Market:

WOSF-FM, Charlotte, NC

Radio Community Involvement:

WPEG-FM, Charlotte, NC

About NCAB

The North Carolina Association of Broadcasters is a statewide organization of public and commercial radio and television broadcast stations. The purpose of the Association is to promote closer cooperation and understanding among members; to make possible unified effort when unity is beneficial; to protect its members in every lawful and proper manner from injustices and unjust exactions; to encourage and promote customs and practices which will be for the best interests of the public and the broadcasting industry; and to help educate the public and business generally concerning the uses and values of broadcasting advertising. Additional information is available on the NCAB website (www.ncbroadcast.com).

Contact:

Lisa Reynolds, Executive Director
919-821-7300
lreynolds@ncbroadcast.com