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Kathy Y. Times, President
Bob Butler, Vice President, Broadcast
National Association of Black Journalists
8701-A Adelphi Road
Adelphi, Maryland 20783

Dear Ms. Times and Mr. Butler,

Thank you very much for your letter of concern, and especially for your offer to collaborate with us on recruiting great candidates of color to NPR. I couldn't agree more that NPR must increase the diversity of its staff – particularly in management and editorial. I am on the record with the media and our employees, stations, and board in acknowledging that NPR must take a leadership position in diversity, just as we do in high-quality journalism and digital innovation. We have a 40-year history of telling truthful stories and shining a light on issues, people, and controversies that other media neglect or avoid, as your organization has acknowledged. This is part of the fabric of who we are.

You asked for more information about NPR's staff. I believe our diversity efforts are best served through transparency, so we're going to lay out our numbers for you. Having said that, numbers don't tell the whole story. The definition of diversity includes not only race and ethnicity, but also socioeconomic background, political perspective, gender and sexual identity, age, geography, point of view, and a multitude of other factors that may not be obvious or measured.

Before I go into the details, please note that our website, which it appears you may have used as your reference point, includes a selection of staff and management bios and photos for publicity and informational purposes. It is not an authoritative source for NPR staff statistics. Current bios are not reflective of all key positions, and that is not their purpose. I have attached a chart detailing our numbers for your review, and would like to note the following:

- NPR has 506 management, editorial, production, and on-air positions. Of these, 22.5% – or 114 positions – are filled by staff that self-identify as people of color.
- Nearly 24% of our management pool of 199 is staffed by people of color; however, our upper management group is not very diverse (11.8%).
- Over 22% of our 58 news and programming managers are people of color, and 14% of the total news/programming managers are African American. Of our total news/programming staff of 313, nearly 24% are people of color, and 13% are African American. Yet our on-air staff, which includes hosts, reporters, and correspondents, is not on par with the rest of news and programming (16.9%).
- People of color comprise 27.3% of NPR's total staff of 754.

Am I satisfied with these numbers? No, I'd like to see them rise in the coming years, and I am working to make that happen. We are examining our overall diversity status critically. Establishing NPR's leadership as an organization that is reflective of and reflective about our country is one of my top management priorities.

For NPR, diversity is about more than just who works here – it's also about our programming, and our audience. To that end, we've broadened our focus towards making ALL NPR programs and web content relevant and interesting to diverse audiences. Our push to bring public radio content to mobile devices, such as our recent NPR News iPhone app, is taking public radio to audiences of all ages, including younger audiences that tend to be more diverse.

Lastly, I'd like to address your comments on Greg Peppers and Doug Mitchell. With regard to the recent departure of Mr. Peppers from the role of Executive Producer, Newscasts, this is a personnel matter. As such, neither I nor any member of the NPR staff is able to comment. The Project Manager, News Career Development position held by Doug Mitchell was eliminated earlier this year as part of the 100+ staff positions we were forced to cut due to a dramatic drop in our revenues in FY09. The responsibilities of that position were assumed by the supervisor in that area.

Your letter offered NPR assistance in our diversity efforts, which I very much appreciate. You can help us by making your membership aware of every job opening at NPR today and in the future. Our open positions are posted on our website, and we are eager to see applications from candidates who have the experiences and perspectives that we are seeking.

Please know that diversity – in terms of personnel, programming, and audience – is integral to our mission, to which I hold myself and NPR accountable. I very much appreciate the collaborative tone of your letter. I and all of us at NPR continue to support and applaud NABJ's efforts to extend diversity throughout media.

I am eager to get this response into the hands of the many journalists and others that received your letter and hope that your staff will work with mine to assure its distribution.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Vivian Schiller". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Vivian Schiller
President and CEO