

Milwaukee Black Media  
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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Milwaukee Courier and 101.7 The Truth Become Community-Owned Under New Milwaukee Black Media Trust**

*Wisconsin's oldest Black newspaper and Milwaukee radio station placed in employee benefit trust, ensuring independent Black media ownership in perpetuity*

**MILWAUKEE, WI** — [The Milwaukee Courier](#) and 101.7 The Truth are now united under the [Milwaukee Black Media Trust](#), a new community ownership structure that ensures these historic Black media institutions will remain independent, community-accountable, and in service of Milwaukee's Black community.

The Trust was established by [Civic Media](#), Inc., which acquired the Milwaukee Courier in late 2025 and is awaiting FCC approval to finalize the purchase of WNOV 860 The Voice. Rather than retain ownership of these historically Black-owned media properties, Civic Media has created the Milwaukee Black Media Trust, a structure in which no individual or corporation can sell, consolidate, or redirect these institutions away from the community they serve.

Under the Trust, employees of Milwaukee Black Media share in the company's financial success through a profit-sharing program that vests over five years. The Trust is governed by three Trustees, all of whom have deep roots in Milwaukee's Black community. Those Trustees, in turn, appoint board members for Milwaukee Black Media LLC, the company that will own and operate The Milwaukee Courier, 101.7 The Truth, and, eventually, WNOV.

"We are very excited about Milwaukee Black Media because it puts these important community media assets under the control of the community that they serve, with a financial structure that benefits the employees doing the work," said **Sage Weil**, CEO of Civic Media. "We look forward to working closely with Milwaukee Black Media to support the new organization's growth and success in the years to come."

The Trust is led by three Founding Trustees: **Milele A. Coggs**, Milwaukee alderwoman and longtime community leader; **Tiffany Wynn**, Senior Marketing Leader at Ascension Health; and

**Roemel Brown**, editor of The Milwaukee Courier, who serves as the employee representative trustee.

“These institutions have served as the voice and reflection of Milwaukee’s Black community for decades—creating space for sharing ideas, challenging perspectives, and fostering dialogue,” said Coggs. “The Trust ensures that these institutions remain community-controlled and Black-centered at a time in our nation’s history when the Black experience is too often diminished. I am honored to serve as a founding trustee, helping to amplify the voice of Milwaukee’s Black community. I am excited for what lies ahead and the future we are building together.”

“This Trust honors the legacy of Milwaukee's Black media while ensuring the voices of our community are not only preserved, but elevated for generations to come,” said Wynn. “It marks a powerful, forward-looking win for our city, where ownership, storytelling and opportunity are rooted in the people who live and lead here.”

**Robert “Biko” Baker** has been named General Manager of Milwaukee Black Media LLC, the Trust's operating company. Baker will lead operations across the Courier and WGKB, working with Program Director Darren Deboe, Editor Roemel Brown, and Sales Director Doug Kelley.

“Milwaukee’s Black community stands at an important crossroads, and the role of media in shaping our path forward has never been more critical,” said Baker. “This is a pivotal moment: one that calls for tearing down silos, elevating authentic voices, and building media institutions that serve our community across generations. The Milwaukee Courier has anchored Black Milwaukee for over sixty years, and WGKB extends our ability to reach and engage audiences in new ways. What we are building is not simply a media company—it is a platform designed to inform, connect, and uplift a community that deserves nothing less.”

Milwaukee Black Media has also entered into a local marketing agreement with **Good Karma Brands** to program [WGKB 101.7 The Truth](#), with an option to purchase the station. The Truth was launched in 2021 by Good Karma Brands with a focus on creating authentic conversations about news and current events, a celebration of Black culture and information created by and for the Black community. Since then, The Truth has been an award winning media platform creating compelling news and talk content for Milwaukee's Black Community while making a significant impact for Milwaukee residents.

“Good Karma Brands is proud to support a model that keeps these important media institutions rooted in the community they serve and expands the opportunity for our teammates. From the start, our focus has been on building a strong platform and positioning it for continued growth and impact,” said Good Karma Brands CEO **Craig Karmazin**. “We’re proud of what’s been built with The Truth, and we’re excited to partner with Milwaukee Black Media who is best positioned to serve our advertising partners, teammates and Truth Nation.”

Civic Media will continue to support Milwaukee Black Media's operations through a services agreement, providing administrative, technology, and sales support services. Milwaukee Black

Media operates with full editorial and programming independence. All content and programming decisions are made by MBM's staff and leadership, not by any outside party.

[WNOV 860 AM / 106.5 FM](#), Wisconsin's first Black-owned radio station, is expected to join the Milwaukee Black Media group in the future, pending FCC approval of Civic Media's original acquisition and a subsequent license transfer to the Trust.

[The Milwaukee Courier](#) was founded in 1964 and is Wisconsin's oldest Black newspaper. WNOV was purchased by Courier Communications Corporation in 1972 with Dr. Jerrel Jones as majority stakeholder, making it the first Black-owned radio station in Wisconsin. Dr. Jones was also the first Black owner of a newspaper and radio station simultaneously in the United States.

"This is a significant and positive move that will deeply impact our communities," said Brown, Trustee and editor of the Courier. "Under this Trust structure, the benefits will support our journalists and staff while ensuring Dr. Jones's enduring legacy."

The Milwaukee Black Media Trust is the sole owner of Milwaukee Black Media LLC, the operating company for the combined media properties. The board members are **Mark Wade**, Board President and Milwaukee business owner and community advocate; **John Torres**, former owner of El Sol Broadcasting and WJTI in Milwaukee; and **Chris Moreau**, South Region President for Civic Media.

"This is a proud moment for Milwaukee," said Wade. "Milwaukee Black Media is about preserving institutions that have long served our community while creating a stronger future built on ownership, voice, and accountability. We are committed to ensuring these platforms continue to inform, uplift, and represent our people for generations to come."

"I am deeply humbled to serve as a board member for Milwaukee Black Media," said Torres. "I owe much of my personal success to the mentorship of Dr. Jerral Jones, and I am honored to help steward and build upon the incredible legacy he created."

The Milwaukee Black Media Trust's mission commits the organization to community accountability, equity and justice, political engagement, cultural identity, economic empowerment, and democratic life.

### **About Milwaukee Black Media**

Milwaukee Black Media LLC is the operating company of the Milwaukee Black Media Trust, a community ownership trust established to preserve and strengthen independent Black media in Milwaukee. MBM currently operates the Milwaukee Courier and WGKB 101.7 The Truth.

### **About Civic Media**

Civic Media, a [public benefit corporation](#), is a local media company focused on strengthening communities through trusted journalism, local storytelling, and civic information. Rooted in radio, Civic Media operates a growing network of broadcast, digital, streaming, and community

platforms that connect people to the issues, events, and voices shaping their daily lives. With a strong emphasis on local, regional, and state reporting, Civic Media believes informed communities are essential to a healthy democracy and is committed to providing accessible, accurate information that encourages civic understanding and engagement.

### **About Good Karma Brands**

Good Karma Brands is a media and marketing company with expertise in leveraging the power of national and local sports, and local news to build brands and connect with fans through audio, video, digital and events. With its home office in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and offices in 15 states, GKB's team includes over 550 teammates and was recognized as a "Best Place to Work" by Front Office Sports, Sports Business Journal, and USA TODAY. For more information, visit [goodkarmabrands.com](http://goodkarmabrands.com).

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