



Who We Are: *Democracy Now!* (www.democracynow.org) a national, daily, independent, award-winning news program hosted by journalists Amy Goodman and Juan Gonzalez, and airing on over 1,400 public TV and radio stations worldwide, pioneers the largest public media collaboration in the U.S.. *Democracy Now!* is broadcast on Pacifica, NPR, community, and college radio stations; on public access, PBS, satellite television (DISH network: Free Speech TV ch. 9415 and Link TV ch. 9410; DIRECTV: Free Speech TV ch. 348 and Link TV ch. 375); and on the internet. DN!'s podcast is one of the most popular on the web. *Time Magazine* named *Democracy Now!* its "Pick of the Podcasts," along with NBC's Meet the Press.

Democracy Now!'s War and Peace Report provides our audience with access to people and perspectives rarely heard on the U.S. corporate-sponsored news media, including independent and international journalists, ordinary people from around the world who are directly affected by U.S. foreign policy, grassroots leaders, peace activists, artists, academics and independent analysts. In addition, *Democracy Now!* hosts real debates—debates between people who substantially disagree, such as between the White House or the Pentagon spokespeople on the one hand, and grassroots activists on the other.

Democracy Now! is an *independent* media outlet. It does not accept funding from corporations or government, allowing it to report on topics that viewers, rather than corporations, want to hear about. DN!'s main source of revenue, comes from viewers and listeners. The remaining revenue comes from licensing fees and foundation grants. There is absolutely no funding from commercials or government.

DN! started in 1996 as a radio broadcast on WBAI, 99.5 FM in NYC. WBAI is one of five stations operated by the Pacifica Network, a network that was started shortly after World War II by Lewis Hill. Hill identified as a *pacifist* and believed that news should be free from government and *corporate* interests and sponsorship. In 1996 DN! was broadcast on just 8 radio stations. Today, we are broadcast on over 1400 radio and TV stations and on the web worldwide. *DN!* is one of the most popular shows aired on the Pacifica network.

DN! first operated out of a small room at WBAI and shortly after out of the attic of a firehouse downtown, the Downtown Community TV Center, on Lafayette Street in Chinatown. In 2001, cameras started rolling. DN! acquired its newest space in 2010. However, the operation still remains very true to its grassroots origins. Amy, Juan, and their team of producers work tirelessly. There are only about 45 full-time and part-time employees, interns and volunteers.

WHY INDEPENDENT MEDIA? For true democracy to work, people need easy access to independent, diverse sources of news and information. The last two decades have seen unprecedented corporate media consolidation. The U.S. media was already fairly homogeneous in the early 1980s: some fifty media conglomerates dominated media outlets, including TV, radio, newspapers, magazines, music, publishing and film. In 2000, just six corporations dominated the U.S. media landscape. Corporate media outlets in the U.S. are legally responsible to their shareholders to maximize profits. *Democracy Now!* is funded entirely through contributions from listeners/viewers, and foundations. We do not accept advertisers, corporate underwriting, or government funding insuring our independence and integrity.

Teach *Democracy Now!* initiative was launched in fall 2011, and includes hosting college level, high and middle school and class visits to its green studio in New York. If you can't make it to our New York studio, a virtual visit is the next best option. Classes have the opportunity to enter our control room minutes before going on air, watch the live broadcast, and go on a behind-the-scenes tour where they will be introduced to the daily process of producing a news program. Students also participate in a conversation about show content. Currently we boast over 80 class visits to our studio each year.

Staff Bios:

Amy Goodman - is the host and executive producer of *Democracy Now!*, She is the first journalist to receive the Right Livelihood Award, widely known as the 'Alternative Nobel Prize' for "developing an innovative model of truly independent grassroots political journalism that brings to millions of people the alternative voices that are often excluded by the mainstream media." She is the first co-recipient of the Park Center for Independent Media's Izzy Award, named for the great muckraking journalist I.F. Stone. *The Independent of London* called Amy Goodman and *Democracy Now!* "an inspiration." *PULSE* named her one of the 20 Top Global Media Figures of 2009.

Goodman's fifth book, *The Silenced Majority: Stories of Uprisings, Occupations, Resistance, and Hope*, written with Denis Moynihan, rose to #11 on The New York Times bestseller list. This timely follow-up to her fourth New York Times bestseller, *Breaking the Sound Barrier*, gives voice to the many ordinary people standing up to corporate and government power. She co-authored the first three bestsellers with her brother, journalist David Goodman: *Standing Up to the Madness: Ordinary Heroes in Extraordinary Times* (2008), *Static: Government Liars, Media Cheerleaders, and the People Who Fight Back* (2006) and *The Exception to the Rulers: Exposing Oily Politicians, War Profiteers, and the Media That Love Them* (2004). She writes a weekly column (also produced as an audio podcast) syndicated by King Features, for which she was recognized in 2007 with the James Aronson Award for Social Justice Reporting.

Goodman has received the American Women in Radio and Television Gracie Award; the Paley Center for Media's She's Made It Award; and the Puffin/Nation Prize for Creative Citizenship. Her reporting on East Timor and Nigeria has won numerous awards, including the George Polk Award, Robert F. Kennedy Prize for International Reporting, and the Alfred I. duPont-Columbia Award. She has also received awards from the Associated Press, United Press International, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and Project Censored. Goodman received the first ever *Communication for Peace Award* from the World Association for Christian Communication. She was also honored by the National Council of Teachers of English with the George Orwell Award for Distinguished Contribution to Honesty and Clarity in Public Language.

Juan González - Co-Host of *Democracy Now!*, has been a professional journalist for more than 30 years and a staff columnist at the New York Daily News since 1987. He is a two-time recipient of the George Polk Award for commentary (1998 and 2010), and the first reporter in New York City to consistently expose the health effects arising from the September 11, 2001 attacks and the cover-up of these hazards by government officials.

He is a founder and past president of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists, and a member of NAHJ's Hall of Fame. During his term as NAHJ president, González created the Parity Project, an innovative program that creates partnerships between local communities and media organizations to improve coverage of the Latino community and recruit and retain more Hispanic journalists. He also spearheaded a movement among U.S. journalists to join other citizen groups in opposing the Federal Communications Commission's deregulation of media ownership restrictions.

A founding member of the Young Lords Party in the 1970s and of the National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights in 1980s, González has twice been named by Hispanic Business Magazine as one of the country's most influential Hispanics and has received Lifetime Achievement Awards from the Hispanic Heritage Foundation, the National Council of La Raza, and the National Puerto Rican Coalition.

González has written four books: *Fallout: The Environmental Consequences of the World Trade Center Collapse*, documents cover-ups by Environmental Protection Agency and government officials with regard to health hazards at Ground Zero in New York; *Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America*; and *Roll Down Your Window: Stories of a Forgotten America*. His latest book, *News for All the People: The Epic Story of Race and the American Media*, co-authored with Joseph Torres, is a landmark narrative history of American media that puts race at the center of the story.



Correspondent and Nation fellow, **Sharif Abdel Kouddous** joined the Democracy Now! staff as a producer in 2003. Since then, he has covered news stories around the world, including reporting from Baghdad during the Iraq war, New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Haiti in the days after the January 2010 earthquake as well as the Democratic and Republican conventions in 2004 and 2008. Sharif grew up in Cairo, Egypt.



TV Producer, **Sam Alcoff**, has been working in independent New York media for ten years. Prior to joining Democracy Now!, Sam worked with Deep Dish TV, New York City's Independent Media Center's IndyVideo, and was the director of GRITtv with Laura Flanders. In his free time, Sam enjoys reading social movement histories, creating activist internet resources, and butchering Spanish (the language, not the people). He lives in Brooklyn with his partner Anna and their beautiful children, Arthur and Nina.



Democracy Now! Archivist, **Brendan Allen** manages the archives for *Democracy Now!* He attended the School of Visual Arts and received a BA in English Literature and Media Studies from the University of New Mexico. He worked as a video librarian for Black Entertainment Television in 1998 and then moved to Public Broadcasting Service in Alexandria, VA, where he worked as the library media coordinator. In 2006, Brendan earned a Master's in Library Information Science at Pratt Institute, while working as the Senior Archivist for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in New York City.



Director of Finance and Operations, **Miriam Barnard** has worked with Democracy Now! since 2009. She has over a decade of nonprofit leadership and fundraising experience and has been proud to help grow the capacity of social justice organizations across the country.



Social Media Editor, **Ariel Boone** got her start counting characters long before Twitter existed, when she placed eleventh in California's state spelling bee in 2001. Much later, she relocated to New York from Oakland, California to lead Democracy Now!'s social media efforts. Ariel has previously consulted for U.S. Senate campaigns and national nonprofits on digital strategy. She's worked on two presidential campaigns, two congressional campaigns, an assembly race and a school bond measure, and she actively participates in pun competitions. She attained her Bachelors of Arts in Music and Political Economics from the University of California, Berkeley.



Senior Producer, **Mike Burke** is the longest-standing producer at *Democracy Now!* In addition to his work on the show he helped found *The Independent* a monthly social and economic justice newspaper based in New York.



General Manager, **Julie Crosby** joined Democracy Now! in 2006. From 2003 to 2006 she worked at Free Speech TV, a national progressive television network that broadcasts Democracy Now! along with an array of social justice oriented documentaries and series. Julie's commitment to media movements emerged in 2001 when she volunteered with Access to Media Education Society, a youth oriented media justice organization based on Galiano Island, BC. In 2000 Julie spent a year as a Fulbright Scholar researching popular political culture in Cape Coast, Ghana



Correspondent, **Renée Feltz** has worked with *Democracy Now!* since 2011. She first honed her reporting skills as co-founder of the Houston Independent Media Center, and as News Director at Pacifica station KPFT-FM in Houston, Texas. While at KPFT she interviewed many men and women on death row and covered Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath. As a 2010 Soros Justice media fellow she co-produced *DeportationNation.org* and the Webby-nominated *BusinessofDetention.com*, both with with Stokely Baksh. Renée graduated from the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism with a focus on investigative reporting. She has reported with *The New York Times* investigative unit, where she worked on a Pulitzer-nominated series about the 2008 financial meltdown, and was a multimedia producer for PBS Wide Angle. Her cover story for *The Texas Observer* about how Texas used junk science to

execute mentally challenged prisoners was a 2010 IRE Award finalist. Renée also received the *Front Page Award for TV Special Reporting* from the Newswomen's Club of New York. Renée is an instructor with People's Production House, and is an adjunct lecturer at Brooklyn College.



Education Director, **Simin Farkhondeh** is an award-winning filmmaker, educator, and activist interested in media literacy, the representation of the Middle East and Cinema. As a professor of Film, Video Arts and Communications Theory, she has taught at numerous colleges and universities including Hampshire College, Fordham University and the School of Visual Arts. As a filmmaker, her work has appeared on PBS, the Whitney Museum, and the Margaret Mead Film Festival. She was co-director of the Deep Dish TV Series, Gulf Crisis TV Project, and director of the acclaimed monthly TV series Labor at the Crossroads (LABOR X). Simin's commitment to independent media began as she became an active member of the Paper Tiger TV Collective. Third World Newsreel and Arab Film Distribution distribute her films. She began working at DN! in fall 2011 to design the Education Department for Democracy Now!



News Producer, **Laura Gottesdiener** has reported from the oilfields of North Dakota, the post-industrial plains of Detroit, the coalfields of Appalachia and many other places for *Rolling Stone*, *Playboy*, *Mother Jones*, *Al Jazeera*, *Tom Dispatch* and other publications. She's the author of *A Dream Foreclosed: Black America and the Fight for a Place to Call Home*, published by Zuccotti Park Press and the co-creator of *Sandy Storyline*, a participatory multimedia documentary about Hurricane Sandy, which won the 2013 Tribeca Film Festival Award for Transmedia. Before becoming a journalist, Laura was the first girl on her high school's varsity wrestling squad. She's also an experienced cocktail waitress. Rural police in Utah once accused her of felonious rioting, but she disputes that account.



Evening News Producer, **Deena Guzder** has reported on human rights across the globe. Her work has appeared in *Time*, *Mother Jones*, *Common Dreams*, *National Geographic*, *Washington Post*, *Ms. Magazine*, and elsewhere. She holds a BA in Peace & Conflict Studies from Oberlin College as well as advanced degrees in journalism and international affairs from Columbia University. She is the author of the book *Divine Rebels*, which profiles the Religious Left in the United States. In 2010, she traveled with the Tibetan Buddhist spiritual leader, His Eminence Shyampa Rinpoche, across Nepal and Bhutan while editing his collection of oral teachings, *Living Fully*. And, she previously assisted Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Chris Hedges with research for his book, *Death of the Liberal Class*.



Democracy Now! en Español Coordinator, **Clara Ibarra** earned her degrees in Political Science and Economics in her hometown, Bogotá, Colombia where she worked as research assistant in projects that use images as sources of investigation for the writing of social history. She came to NYC in 2006 to pursue a MA in Media Studies, since then she has been working in the production of multimedia endeavors that involve education and the telling of stories. Currently she is coordinating the Spanish programming at *Democracy Now!*, working with the media outlets that broadcast or publish *Democracy Now!* en Español around the world. Clara is interested in story telling projects to connect and empower people through a more social use of media.



Station Relations, **Angie Karran** is a former DN! producer and award-winning radio and documentary video producer. Her radio programs have been aired on the Pacifica Network and on community radio stations around the country. She studied sociology and has worked in media education, research and activism. Angie is from Guyana, South America and has three children.



TV Producer, **Robby Karran** is part of *Democracy Now!*'s TV Production unit, editing long form pieces and clips for broadcast. He also works with the archive, where he helps to watch, listen, record and catalog the contents of our video and audio collection. Karan is certified in the IT field as a PC Technician and a Network Administrator.



Volunteer Coordinator, **Neil Shabata** read some words in French and wrote about them and received a degree in French Literature from UC Berkeley, with a detour at Université Lumière Lyon II, Institut d'Études Politiques. He recently relocated to New York from Oakland, California, where he spent the preceding eight years as a litigation paralegal, working for victims of corporations that place(d) profit before the safety and health of its workers and the public. Neil is an associate editor of Tokyo-based music magazine *Beikoku-Ongaku*.



Prior to joining *Democracy Now!*, Producer, **Nermeen Shaikh** worked in various non-profit organizations including the Sustainable Development Policy Institute in Islamabad, the International Institute for Environment and Development in London, and the Asia Society in New York. She also worked briefly at Al Jazeera English in Washington, DC. She has an M.Phil. in politics from Cambridge University, and is the author of *The Present as History: Critical Perspectives on Global Power* published by Columbia University Press. She currently serves on the editorial board of the Rome-based journal *Development*.



News Producer, **Carla Wills** joined Democracy Now! in August 2015 after serving as director of news and public affairs at NPR-member station WEAA-FM in Baltimore. At WEAA, she led coverage of the police-involved killing of Freddie Gray and the subsequent uprising, which resulted in WEAA's selection for the Association of Independents in Radio's "Localore: Finding America" project to invent new storytelling models with and for communities not typically reached by public media. Carla also has worked as an independent producer on nationally syndicated projects including *Moments of the Moment: Civil Rights and Change in America*, in partnership with the Smithsonian's National Museum of African-American History and Culture. From 2010-2012, she was senior supervising producer of *The Michael Eric Dyson Show*, which won awards from the National Association of Black Journalists for hour-long specials with Maya Angelou and Bernice Johnson Reagon. Carla spent more than a decade in print journalism at magazines including *Essence*, *Uptown* and *Savoy*. She began her media career in her native Baltimore as the founding editor of *The Baltimore Sun's Jubilee Magazine*.



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