



# Study of Pay Equity in Six Unionized Gannett Units in the Atlantic Region by the NewsGuild of New York

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The Record Guild  
Hudson Valley NewsGuild  
Newspaper Guild of Rochester

Utica Guild  
APP-MCJ Guild  
Atlantic DOT Guild

## Introduction

The newspaper is often called “a daily miracle,” a puzzle that, somehow, despite all the odds, comes together and lands on doorsteps or on newspaper websites without fail. But a pay study conducted by the Gannett Regional Union finds no miracle at six northeastern newspapers owned by Gannett, the nation’s largest newspaper chain.

Instead, there’s an ongoing disaster when it comes to what Gannett pays its female and non-white journalists who face a de facto pay ceiling and stagnant wages not seen by their white, male counterparts.

Despite Gannett’s stated commitment to diversity, the analysis finds:

- Gannett pays its non-white journalists an average of \$11,500 less than their white counterparts at these papers.
- Senior female journalists make median full-time salaries that are \$9,500 less than men the same age.
- The median salary for white male journalists is more than \$12,200 greater than that of minority women journalists.

If journalists of color stay at these Gannett papers, their pay plateaus. If female journalists stay, they can expect to be paid less than their male counterparts.

In 2020, Gannett pledged to hire and promote more women and employees of color to reflect national demographics and the communities they serve.

In 2021, Gannett reported its newsrooms were 58% male and 79% white. Our study of six newsrooms found 64% of employees were male and 77% were white.

The company announced “inclusion, diversity and equity are core to our business,” and all employees should have “equal opportunities to thrive.”

“(W)e are committed to ... driving positive change. While this will, at times, mean addressing and combating systemic barriers and having uncomfortable conversations,

we believe silence is not an option. We want to ... become a leader not just in what we do, but who we are as a company,” CEO Mike Reed said.

Gannett claims it is a beacon for diversity in the workplace. Our numbers prove otherwise. The inequity is baked into how editors look at their workforce. At a bargaining session this summer, when the Guild set its demand – equal pay for equal work – a Gannett editor rolled her eyes and laughed out loud. That is the Gannett management culture.

Pay equity matters. It matters because it sets a culture of fairness across the company, a reasonable expectation that -- no matter whose byline or photo credit is attached – a job done will be paid at a fair and equal rate.

## **Purpose of Study**

This study was undertaken by the Gannett Regional Union, a coalition of six NewsGuild bargaining units representing journalists across New York and New Jersey. This includes four units that certified in 2021 – The Record Guild, the Atlantic DOT Guild, the Hudson Valley News Guild and the APP-MCJ Guild<sup>1</sup> – as well as two legacy union shops, the Rochester Newspaper Guild and the Utica Newspaper Guild. Our nearly 200 members unionized, in part, due to low and inequitable pay across our newsrooms. This study is based on union and non-union employee data from the collective NewsGuild shops requested from Gannett in August 2022.

## **Key Findings**

Gannett Regional Union’s findings were consistent with those of other NewsGuild-CWA shops that undertook similar reviews of union membership and corresponding salary information. On average, staffers who are women and minorities

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<sup>1</sup> The Record Guild represents: The (Bergen) Record, MORRISTOWN, The New Jersey Herald; the Atlantic DOT Guild represents: digital producers across THIS AREA who formerly worked in newsrooms but were regionalized in late 2020; the Hudson Valley News Guild represents: LOHUD, POUGHKEEPSIE, MIDDLETOWN; the APP-MCJ Guild represents the Asbury Park Press (app.com), the Courier News and the Home News Tribune (mycentraljersey.com).

earn significantly less than their white, male counterparts. The problem becomes starkly worse among more senior journalists, where we see a significant drop off of both female journalists and journalists of color. The data points to the fact that while Gannett may be hiring a diverse workforce among its lowest paid employees – often college graduates or early career journalists – it is not meeting very basic needs to advance their careers within Gannett.

In essence, Gannett's policies are creating a "churn and burn" situation, where managers treat talented and diverse but early career journalists as a disposable commodity rather than fostering a workplace where they see our newsrooms as a place to spend an extended portion of their career. Likewise, Gannett is either not invested in recruiting diverse, veteran journalists or has let its newsrooms falter to a point that veteran journalists no longer view them as a place to advance their careers.

- Non-white journalists make \$11,500 less than their white counterparts.
- The median salary for white male journalists is more than \$12,200 greater than that of minority women journalists.
- White men make up 53% of Gannett's workforce across the New York/New Jersey newsrooms that are the focus of this study.
- Non-white, veteran journalists make more than \$12,700 per year less than their white counterparts and are outnumbered by nearly 9 to 1.
- Median annual salaries for minority journalists at Gannett stagnate in the low \$40,000 range through their 40s while their white counterparts continue to see pay increases.
- Experienced female journalists make median, full-time salaries that are more than \$9,500 less than men of the same age. The gender pay gap coincides with sharp declines in women participating in Gannett's workforce.
- Gannett's female workforce starts experiencing gender pay gaps as early as Year 6. Women entering their mid-career years with Gannett are paid median, full-time salaries that are more than \$8,300 less than their male counterparts with similar years of service.

## Methodology

This study was based on salary and demographic data acquired through a request for information to Gannett Co. Inc that was fulfilled on Aug. 16, 2022. The data included newsroom employees' pay, age, gender, race, job title and years of service at Gannett. The Gannett Regional Union sought to analyze data of the newsroom staff it represents. The data provided by Gannett, however, included several employees who are not members of the Gannett Regional Union and were removed from analysis.<sup>2</sup>

The study included employees who work at unionized Gannett news sites largely across New York and New Jersey. The one exception is the Atlantic DOT Guild, which has staff members who work alongside newsrooms in those two states along with Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia.

The study focused on full-time employees. In most cases, part-time staff was excluded because the data included too few of them to maintain their anonymity. The data also included six employees who did not self-identify a race. They were also excluded for the same reason.

We used median pay instead of average to more accurately reflect the range of salaries in a workplace. The median is the midpoint between the higher paid half of employees and the lower paid half. Average, on the other hand, can obscure the middle range of salaries when an extreme high or extreme low salary swings the calculation.

We used annual pay without factoring overtime for both hourly and salaried employees.

The number of employees represented by the Gannett Regional Union in each newsroom ranged from 77 to 9. The size of each newsroom should be taken into account. One employee's pay and demographics can impact the analysis more in a smaller newsroom than in a larger one.

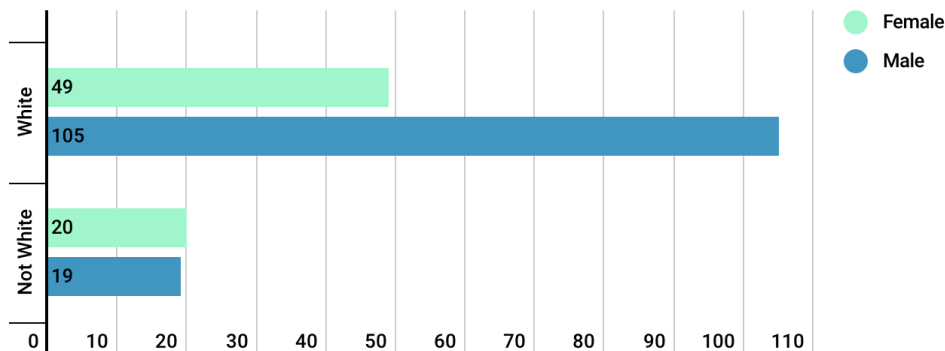
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<sup>2</sup> Of note: Those non-union, non-managerial employees removed from the analysis only show further anecdotal evidence of the gender- and race-based pay discrepancies cited throughout this study that the Gannett Regional Union hopes to eliminate.

# White men make up more than half of Gannett workforce, which is far less diverse than our communities

Employees in the study were overwhelmingly white and male. About 77% of employees were white, while 64% were men. Nearly 53% were white men. White men outnumber minority women by 5 to 1.

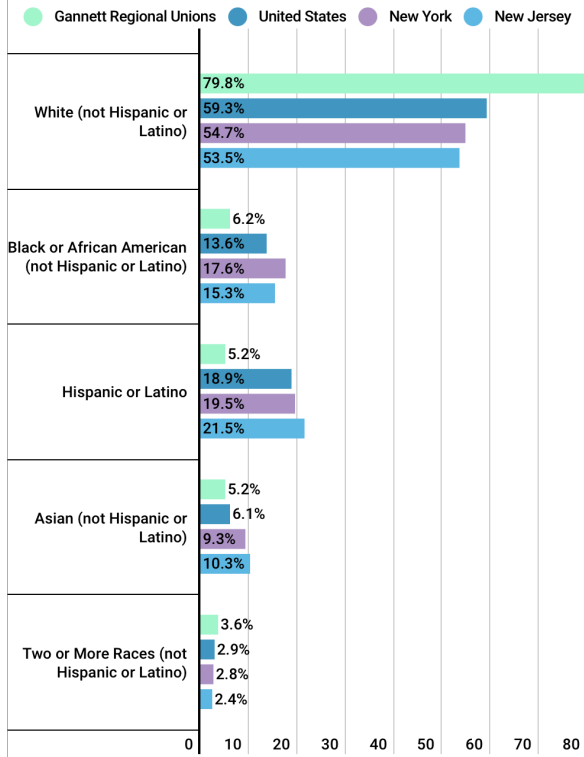
## Employees by race and gender



Meanwhile, Gannett’s workforce of the six units that make up the Gannett Regional Union is far less diverse not only of the New York and New Jersey regions, but of the United States overall, according to the most recent [U.S. Census Bureau data](#).

*Note: Six employees represented by Gannett Regional Union did not self-identify an ethnicity. This analysis includes both full and part-time employees.*

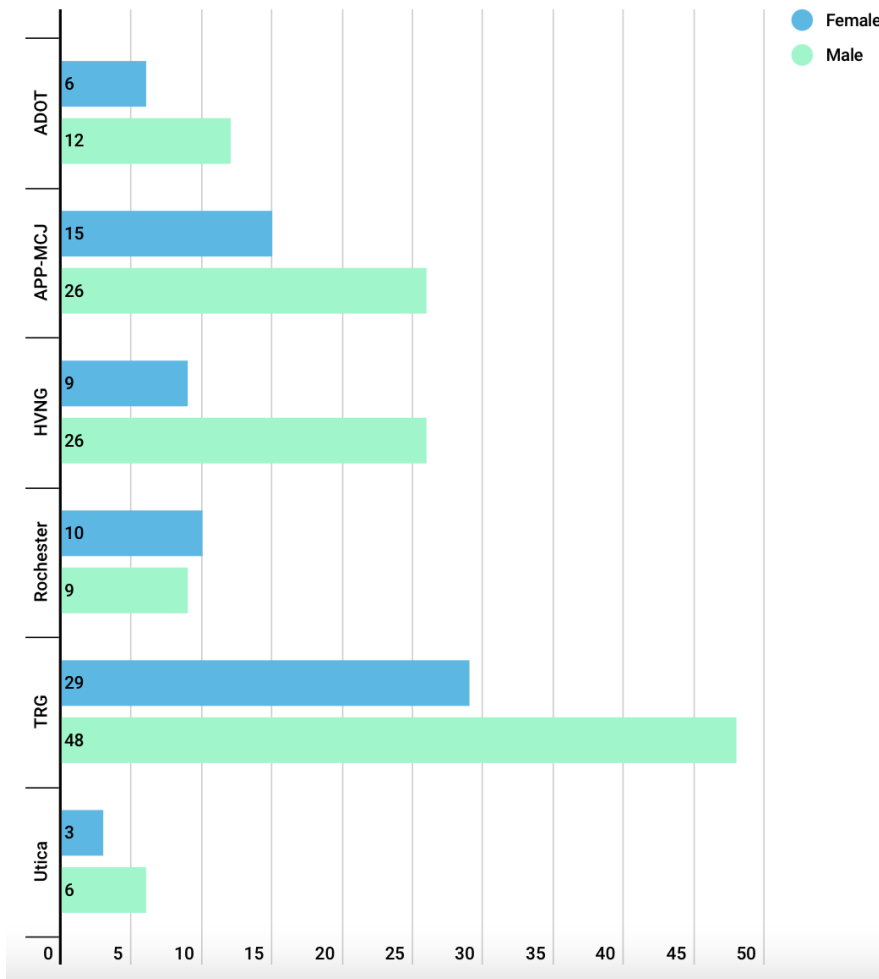
## Diversity of newsrooms compared to communities



# Men outnumber women by about 2 to 1 in most newsroom units

Male employees outnumber women 127 to 72 across the six units that make up the Gannett Regional Union, a trend that carries largely across each individual unit. The only exception is Rochester where gender representation in the newsroom is equal. The gender gap within the Hudson Valley News Guild is nearly 3 to 1.

## Gender breakdown by unit

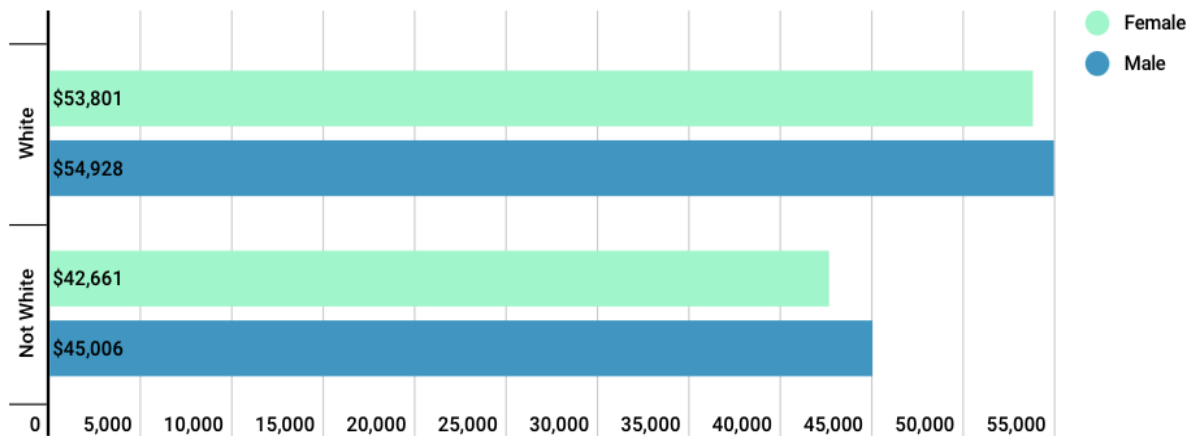


Note: Analysis includes all 199 staffers represented by Gannett Regional Union.

# Gannett pays its journalists of color more than \$11,500 less than its white journalists

The median salary for minority journalists is \$43,426 compared to \$54,928 for white journalists. That's a gap of \$11,502 per year. The divide between white men and minority women is \$12,267 per year. The gap ranges from \$10,793 at The Record Guild to \$1,004 at Utica Guild.

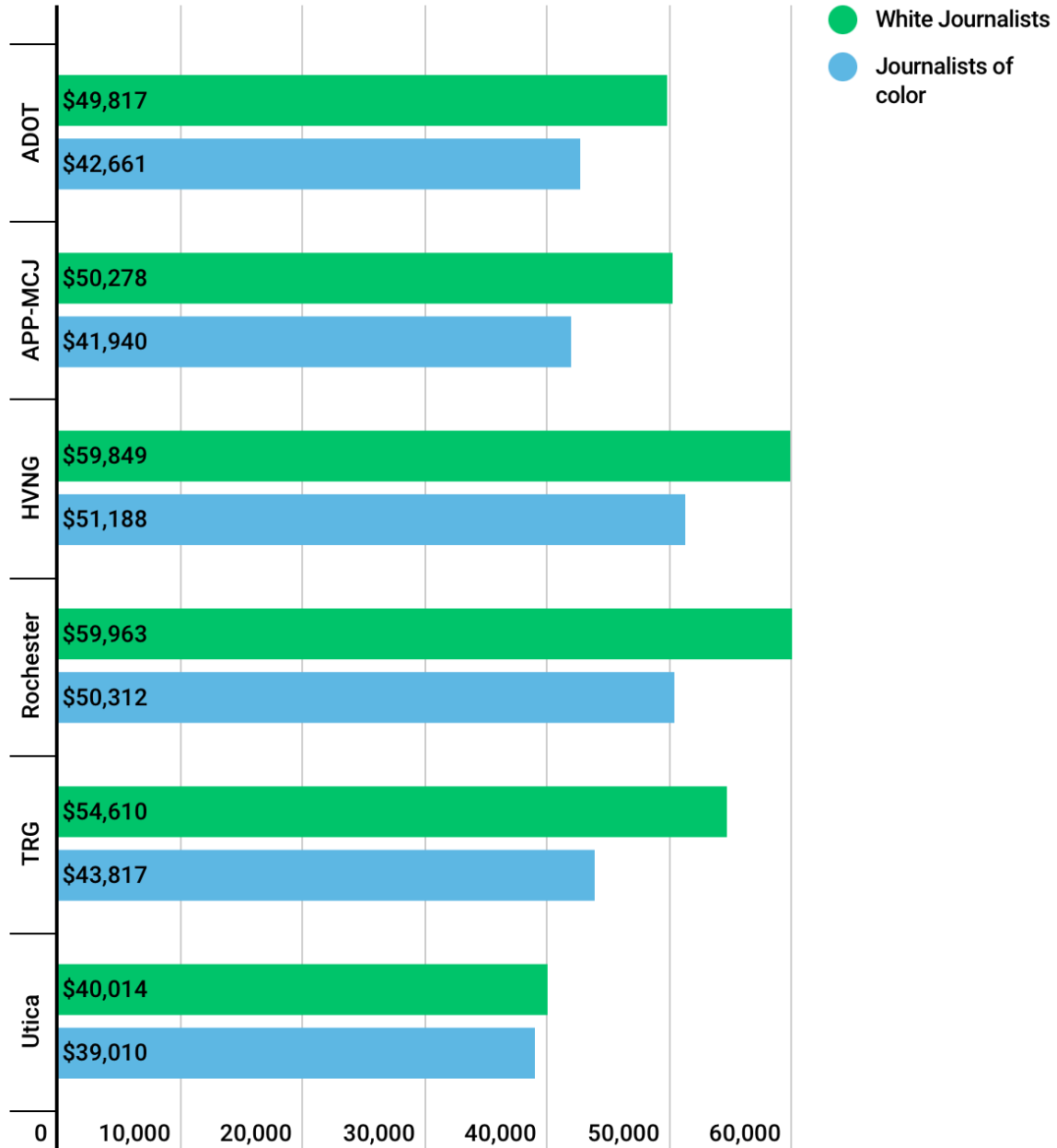
## Salaries by race and gender



*Note: Six employees represented by Gannett Regional Union did not self-identify an ethnicity. Analysis does not include part-time employees.*



# Racial pay gaps by unit

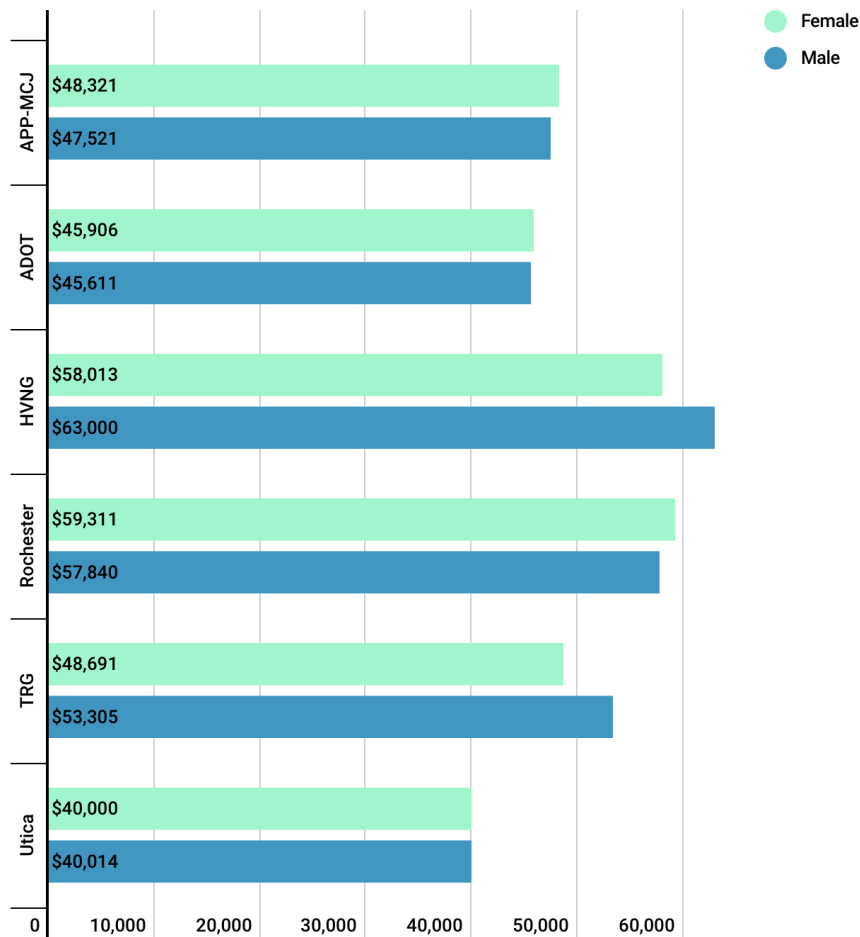


Note: Six employees represented by Gannett Regional Union did not self-identify an ethnicity.

# Gannett's gender pay gap average about \$3,000 across New York and New Jersey

The median salary for men is \$52,527 per year compared to \$49,539 per year among members of the Gannett unions in New York and New Jersey. The gender pay gap, however, varies widely across the shops. Rochester fared the best where the median salary for women is \$1,471 per year more than men. Meanwhile, women in the Hudson Valley News Guild are paid \$8,288 per year less than their male counterparts. At The Record Guild, women are paid \$4,614 per year less than men.

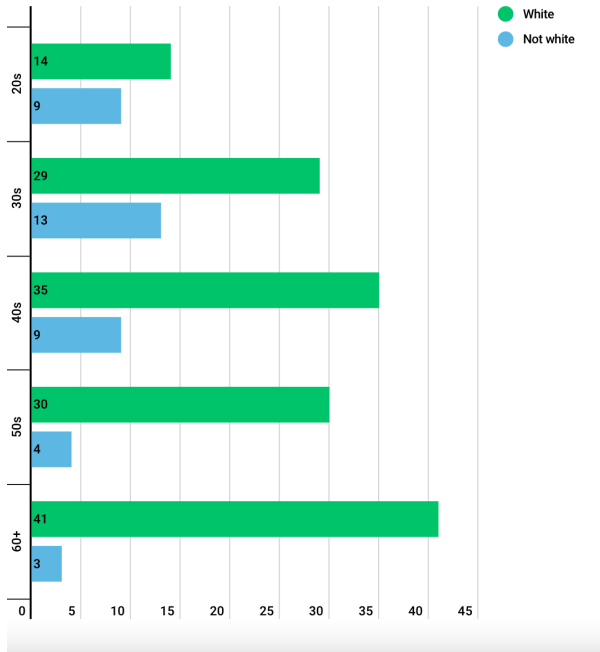
## Gender pay by unit



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# Gannett has a severe lack of non-white older journalists as wages stagnate

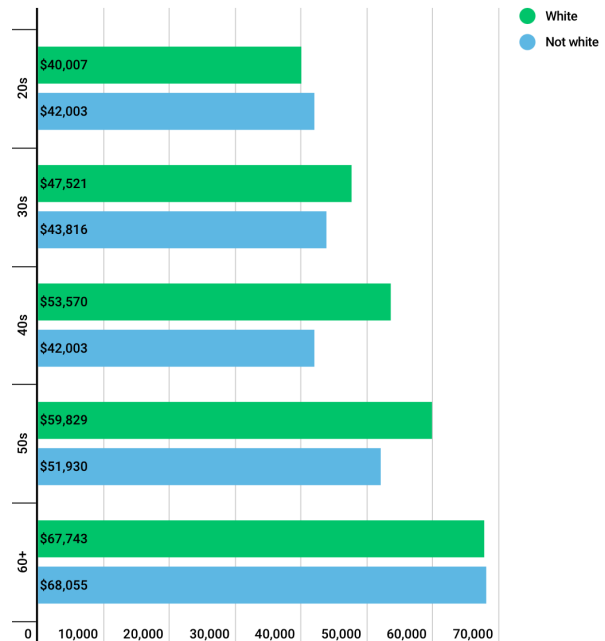
## Age vs race



Gannett does match national – but not New York or New Jersey – averages of diversity among its youngest staffers. Diversity numbers, however, begin to severely drop off as staffers age. An analysis of pay data indicates stagnant wages could be a factor as to why non-white journalists leave our newsrooms.

Median salaries are stagnant in the low \$40,000 range for non-white journalists in their 20s, 30s and 40s, while white journalists continued to see their pay increase during this timeframe. The median salary jumps up about \$10K for non-white journalists in their 50s, but by that time, these staffers face a nearly \$10K pay gap compared to white coworkers.

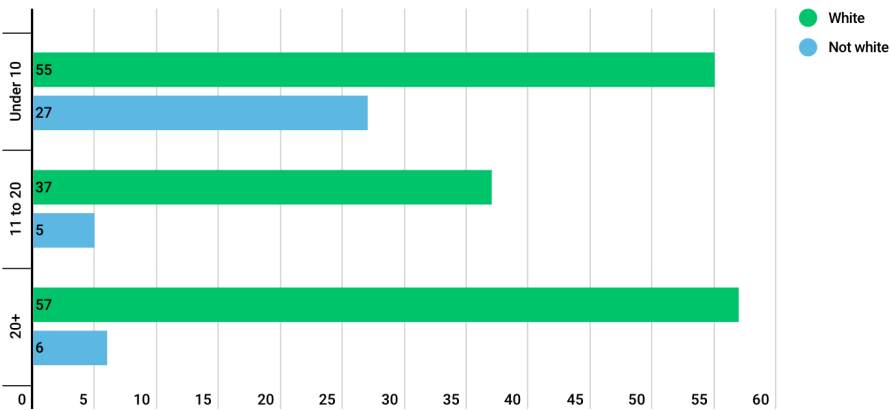
## Racial pay gaps by age



# Impact of racial pay gaps: Few non-white journalists make it past a decade of service

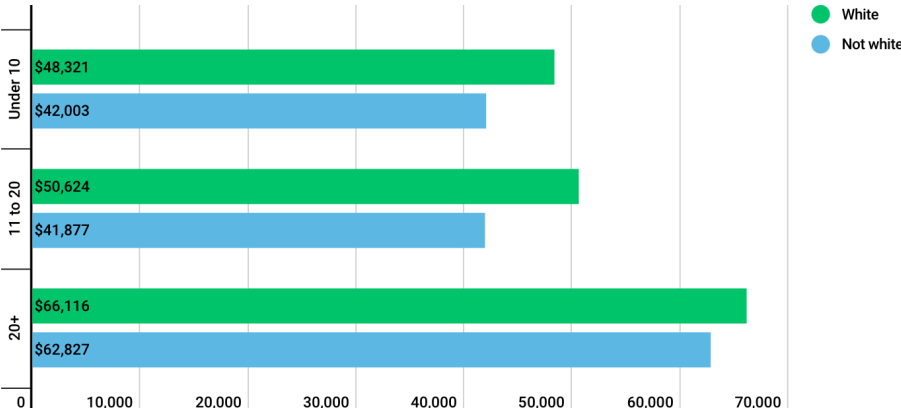
Gannett’s six unionized newsrooms in New York and New Jersey have only 11 non-white journalists who have more than a decade of service with the company. That compares to 94 white journalists who have made it past the 10-year mark.

### Race compared to years of service



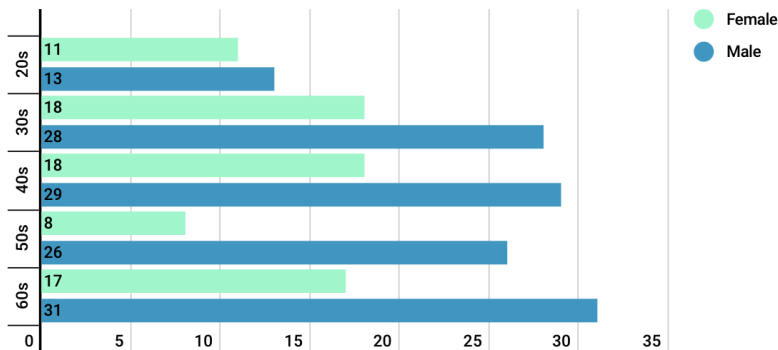
The median full-time salary for non-white journalists with more than a decade of experience at Gannett is \$46,469 per year compared to \$59,236 per year. It’s an annual pay gap of \$12,767.

### Racial pay inequities compared to years of service



# Experienced female journalists make \$9,581 less than their male counterparts

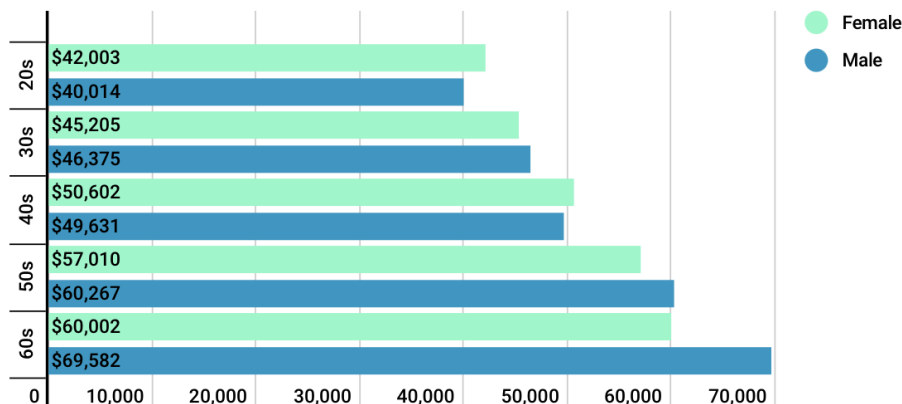
## Age vs gender



U.S. Census data shows that 50.5% of the country are women. For New York, women make up 51.1% of the state's population while women make up 50.8% of New Jersey's population. Gannett only comes

close to this standard among its youngest staffers. Only Rochester's staff is evenly divided between these two genders. (Gannett did not provide data on employees who identify as nonbinary.) The staffing divide between men and women become more severe as female staffers get older and drop out of Gannett's workforce.

## Gender pay inequities by age



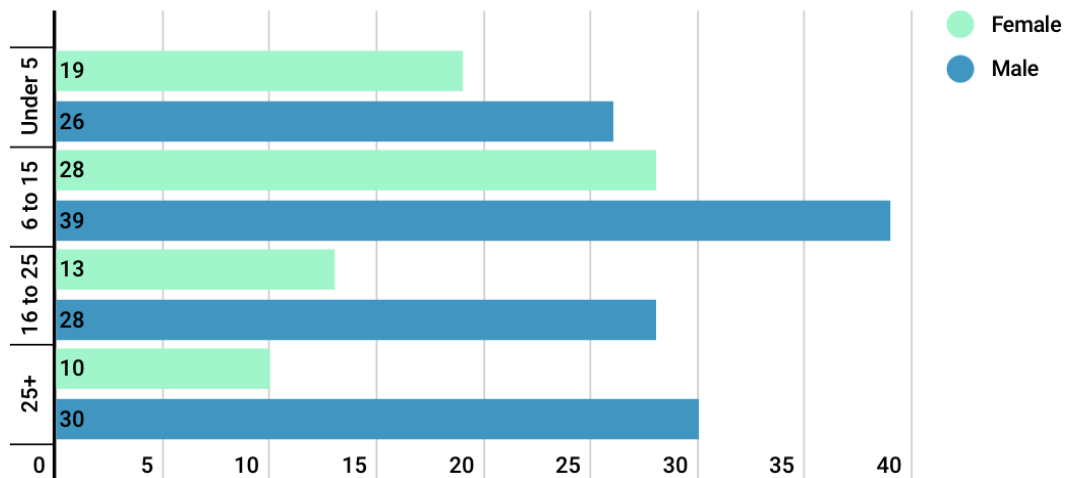
This is also when Gannett's female employees begin to see gender pay gaps that only get worse as they age. By the last years of veteran

female journalists' careers, their median salary is \$9,581 less than the median for their male counterparts.

## Gender pay gaps start occurring after women reach 5 years of service with Gannett

Women drop out of Gannett's workforce as they start to approach mid-career. It's not clear based on available data where they go.

## Gender compared to years of service



It is clear, however, that female journalists earn a median salary that is \$8,323 per year less than their male counterparts with similar years of service at Gannett.

# No rhyme or reason to Gannett salaries

Gannett Regional Union wants to bring to its members a clear and consistent standard to compensation – something that is woefully lacking in Gannett’s pay policy.

## Race and gender vs salary and years of service



Note: Chart includes 187 full-time members who self-identified their ethnicity.

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## Who is included in this study?

The Gannett Regional Union is a collective of six different shops in the Atlantic region under the [NewsGuild of New York Local 31003](#):

- [Atlantic Digital Optimization Team \(DOT\) Guild](#)
- [APP-MCJ Guild](#) — Asbury Park Press (app.com), the Courier News, and the Home News Tribune (mycentraljersey.com)
- [Hudson Valley News Guild](#) — The Journal News, Poughkeepsie Journal, and Times Herald-Record
- [The Record Guild](#) — The Bergen Record, the Daily Record, and the New Jersey Herald
- [Newspaper Guild of Rochester](#) — Democrat and Chronicle (Rochester, NY)
- [Utica News Guild](#) — Utica Observer-Dispatch and Herkimer Times Telegram

Together we represent over 200 reporters, photographers, news producers and other staff at nearly a dozen local newspapers. Many of our shops are fighting for a first contract. All of us are united in our goal to better our newsrooms.

## What We're Fighting For

This report stems from Gannett reporters' desire to establish equity in our newsrooms. That's why we're bringing proposals to the bargaining table to do just that.

Proposals such as tiered wage minimums and other benefits will ensure employees from diverse backgrounds stay at a newspaper, rather than move on to jobs with higher, more sustainable wages when their hard work and longevity is not rewarded by Gannett.

The company can claim diversity as one of its so-called pillars, but until measures to end this pay gap among women and people of color are in place, those claims are just empty words.



## What We're Demanding from Gannett

**Adequate Hiring:** Gannett has cut thousands of jobs across the country and allowed vacancies to remain unfilled, forcing employees to produce top-tier coverage with smaller and smaller staffs. Gannett must immediately increase hiring and commit to providing the resources that good local journalism requires.

**Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:** In-depth, accurate and balanced news coverage requires employees that have a diversity of views, cultures and backgrounds who can navigate the communities they serve. As Gannett hires, trains and promotes employees, it must seek to improve diversity, equity and inclusion throughout the company.

**Ability to Advance in the Craft:** Gannett must offer fair pay so that local journalists can live and thrive in the communities they serve. To retain talent, they must have job security, access to training and career development, healthful and safe working conditions and advancement opportunities. Workers must be afforded the benefits and paid-time off that support healthy work-life balance.

## How You Can Support Us

You can help us! Gannett journalists have been asking their employer for better pay and fully-staffed newsrooms. [Sign this petition here to show your support.](#)

## Contact

If you have questions about this study, please reach out to Gannett Regional Union ([gannettregionalunion@nyguild.org](mailto:gannettregionalunion@nyguild.org)) or The NewsGuild of New York ([communications@nyguild.org](mailto:communications@nyguild.org))