



**HOLD FOR RELEASE**  
March 14, 2001 8:45am

**CONTACT:** Lorie Slass  
202-879-6701

## **Many Communication Companies Lacking Women In Leadership Roles**

Women account for only nine percent of the board members of the major media, telecom and e-companies according to a new report released by the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania. Women are also underrepresented at the executive level, accounting for only 13 percent of the top executives in the companies. This report is the first in a planned annual release of the study.

“Even the newest media conglomerates and high tech companies reflect old attitudes in their executive suites,” said Kathleen Hall Jamieson, Director of the Annenberg Public Policy Center and Dean of the Annenberg School for Communication. “Women are rarely represented among top executives and boards of directors of media, telecommunications and e-companies, even as these same companies compete fiercely for female viewers and users at home and at work.”

Only four percent of the board members of the largest e-companies are women and twelve of the e-companies analyzed had no women on their boards. Media and telecom companies have slightly higher female representation on their boards at 12 and 11 percent respectively. Among the top executives only 10 percent of the media and telecommunication leaders are women; the number is higher for e-companies, where 20 percent of the top executives are women.

These numbers may in fact over-represent the influence of women executives. The figures drop dramatically when reviewed for ‘Clout Titles’— titles that signify real power within an organization. ‘Clout Titles’ include Chairman, Chief Executive Officer, Vice Chairman, President, Chief Operating Officer, Senior Executive Vice President and Executive Vice-President, according to Catalyst, a non profit research and advisory organization working to advance women in business. Only three percent of the 757 executives (20 executives) from media, telecom and e-companies were women with ‘Clout Titles.’

“As we enter the 21st century, it is astounding how few women are at the helm of top communications and media firms,” said Susan Ness, Commissioner, Federal Communications Commission. “These somber statistics present an invaluable opportunity for companies and trade associations to reflect and reward practices designed to attract and retain talented female executives.”

-- MORE --

The Annenberg report offers concrete steps to advance more women to the top levels of these industries:

- Companies and trade associations should do a thorough internal examination to determine whether they encourage or discourage women from advancing within their institutions and whether their corporate culture encourages retention of such executives.
- Mentoring opportunities with senior executive women and men as well as board members should be encouraged.
- Executive recruiters should be encouraged to identify qualified women for senior and top level jobs when searches are undertaken.
- Trade associations and companies should identify successful training programs, both within and outside the industry, that could be used to train more women for top level positions, or to develop such programs where none now exist.
- Trade associations should examine their convention and conference programming to ensure that executive women are featured on super-panels and as keynoters. Such recognition will help companies to identify talented women for other positions.
- Companies filling board positions should work with executive recruiters with a demonstrated record of success in identifying qualified women for such placements.

“Women represent a larger and larger share of the target users and audience these companies are trying so hard to reach, but women’s talents and life experiences are still undervalued among their top decision makers,” added Jamieson. “Future-oriented companies need to bring the same new ideas, innovations, and energy they bring to their product-line and services to recognizing new sources of talent and leadership.”

The report was compiled using data from company websites, annual reports, the Directory of Corporate Affiliations, and Hoover’s Profiles of Companies. While these sources include a thorough listing of key officers for companies, they may not be exhaustive and some key executives could be excluded. Companies selected for inclusion in the report are telecom and media companies included in the *Fortune* 1000 and the *Fortune* list of top e-companies and the major network news organizations.

###

*The Annenberg Public Policy Center was established by publisher and philanthropist Walter Annenberg in 1994 to create a community of scholars within the University of Pennsylvania that would examine the role of communications in public policy issues at the local, state and federal levels. The Center has four ongoing research foci: Information and Society; Media and the Developing Mind; Media and the Dialogue of Democracy; Health Communications. The Annenberg Public Policy Center supports research and sponsors lectures and conferences in these areas.*