

Doug Mitchell
Consultant/Project Manager at NPR and Co-Project Director
with the "New U" Entrepreneur Fellowship Program

Michael O'Connell, producer, It's All Journalism

Welcome to It's All Journalism, my name is Michael O'Connell. I'm here today with producer Anna Miars. We're going to be talking to Doug Mitchell. He's been associated with NPR since 1987, in various roles, as a producer, as a director. Currently, he's the co-director of a startup funded by the Ford Foundation to develop journalists of color as media CEOs. Welcome, thanks for joining us.

Doug Mitchell, consultant/project manager at NPR

Thanks, Michael.

Michael O'Connell

So, let's talk about the last thing I mentioned first. Tell about this project that you're doing with the Ford Foundation.

Doug Mitchell

Ok, so the project's in its fourth year now. And like anything it starts with ideas. So I'll have to go back to the Unity Journalists of Color Conference in Chicago in 2008. I'm sitting in the middle of the student project, I've done student training for many, many years at a variety of different journalism associations. A tall, dapper man walks in wearing a suit and asks 'Who's in charge here?' And everybody points at me, cause they thought there was something going wrong. He comes over to me and asks what's going on, and I lay out, just generally since I don't know who he is, so just generally lay out what's going on. He hands me his card, program officer with the Ford Foundation. I thought 'Oh that's cool,' so I'll fast forward to a couple of years, where I began teaching a course at the City University of New York Graduate School for Journalism. I'm in New York and I just thought, 'Hey, I have Calvin's name, let me call him up and see if he wants to have coffee.' So I call him up, and he says 'You know what I've got an idea, can you come to my office?' So, I think when the program officer with the Ford Foundation calls and says he has an idea can you come to his office, the first thing you do is show up.

Michael O'Connell

You clear your schedule. I'll be right over.

Doug Mitchell

So we ended up talking for about two hours to what became this news

entrepreneurs working through Unity New U Entrepreneurship project. The fundamental thing that we're trying to do is get journalists of color, media professionals of color to think about being the employer not the employee. I think for many, many years and justifiably so, there's been and continues to be a need for professional development, training, like-minded camaraderie among journalists and media professionals. We go to conferences, you know, we learn how to do this new technologies, we learn all of those things, but nobody ever really talks about ... suppose you want to own the company?

Michael O'Connell

Right.

Doug Mitchell

Suppose you want to start your own company? Not become a senior manager within an established company, like a big traditional company, but be the company, then create the jobs. With all the jobs going away it just seemed like perfect timing to teach people on how to do that.

Michael O'Connell

That's an interesting idea because that's one of things on the podcast we've talked about many times. Is the concept of entrepreneurship. That rather than waiting around for somebody to fix things, maybe it's your responsibility to pick up a hammer and start doing something.

Doug Mitchell

Right, and I think it's, part of having been in media now for ... I started in high school as the co-editor of my high school paper my senior year. I wonder if I'm the only person left who decided at 16 to be a journalist and just never got off that path. I meet so many people who fell into it.

Michael O'Connell

No, no, I think I started when I was 14.

Anna Miars, producer, It's All Journalism

I did too, in high school.

Michael O'Connell

The press nerds, the newspaper nerds.

Doug Mitchell

Exactly, and that's because my parents were NPR listeners. It was on all the time. I was one of those people.

Michael O'Connell

Oh, well that's even a whole different feathered animal, I think. So, was that your goal, to go into broadcast, to go into NPR?

Doug Mitchell

Yeah, I think as I look over my career, I as I said haven't really deviated from the path, but I've added other things to it. The goal is, of course, I started out I was going to go into newspaper. Because, I call them the silo days. Back when the newspaper and the TV and the radio, and there was no Web, so nobody ever talked to each other.

I've been involved in the process, mostly through student training, we were using the word convergence for a long time. When I was in college at Oklahoma State, where I'm from, the town where I'm from, I was working at the radio station, anchoring, reporting, etc., on the third floor. In the basement was the newspaper, so we'd finish whatever we were doing that day for the radio and if we had talked to the governor or a senator or something agriculture-related or whatever, I would go downstairs, type it up and put it in the paper. This was in 1982. So I tell everyone else 'Welcome to the party.'

Michael O'Connell

It's so funny, because for decades and decades, large newspapers have owned TV outlets and radio outlets and stuff. But they were really compartmentalized, they were never sort of this ... but now we're in a reality where the Web team breaks something and they feed it to the on-air news staff and gets to the newspaper or whatever other platform that they have. It's sort of a convergence, it's all these elements coming together. You going into NPR in '87, you were probably in a good place to see a lot of that happening there.

Doug Mitchell

It sort of snuck up on everybody. From my philosophies going into being a media professional, I was always interested in everything. I was just one of those people. I wasn't going to lock myself into one thing. Even at NPR, my career there, I worked ... I started out at [Morning Edition](#) and then I went to [Weekend Saturday](#), then went to [Weekend All Things Considered](#) and then I produced a show called Weekly Edition.

On the side, because in not-for-profit you always have an on the side, I started doing student training and created a project called [Next Generation Radio](#). In addition to doing and helping to develop an internal program called Intern Edition, where interns produced their own program. I did that for several years. That became my job. I started working with the interns because they had at the time in '99 no one helping them and I just raised my hand. In not-for-profit be

careful, don't raise your hand very often.

Michael O'Connell

No, people love to hand out work.

Doug Mitchell

No extra money, just extra work.

Michael O'Connell

They have plenty of opportunities to give you things to do.

Doug Mitchell

I would say maybe at for-profit too.

Anna Miars

In this day and age, yes.

Michael O'Connell

It sounds like you had a recognition of, as part of your job, the importance of fostering interns, people who are still in school and to bring them into this media. What kind of woke you up to that?

Doug Mitchell

It was as simple as sitting in an office, or I should say half of an office because I think it was a converted closet, producing a show and looking the across the hall and seeing in the summer of '99, seeing people running in and out of edit booths trying to figure out how to do something. I was right there and I'd walk across the hall and say 'No, no, you do it this way.' I thought, nobody's helping them, so maybe I should help them. So, I helped them finish their show that summer of '99 and I thought, you know what, this is a really good idea. Let me see if I can carry it forward.

The year after that, the interns came in for the summer and I thought let's do a show. Let's organize a way and do a show. We'll have to have staffing. I need an executive producer. There was a young lady who was a, just finished her junior year at the University of Massachusetts – Amherst, who I thought had a really directed personality. She was very direct, but pleasantly so. She commanded, when she spoke people listened. I thought, let me make her the executive producer and then we both will pick an editor. Many years later, this young lady's name is Audie Cornish, who is co-host of All Things Considered. The editor at that time her name was Ambar Espinoza, ended up working as a reporter for Minnesota Public Radio and is now in the Pacific Northwest doing freelance for KPLU while she works on her master's degree. That was not that I

had this magic wand and suddenly said you are the anointed one.

Michael O'Connell

You laid your hands on them and healed them and made them journalists. It was something like that.

Doug Mitchell

It was more just that I would go in with a certain consciousness. Let me see who the next people are going to be. Who is the next me? Who is the next Susan Stamberg, who's the next Linda Wertheimer, Scott Simon, Alex Chadwick? Who are those people that are coming up through the system because they're already right here in front of us? They applied to get in, they got chosen, they got in. They got through that hurdle. My job was to make sure that, let's find out who the next people are going to be and groom them. It took Audie 12 years, that's not very long to go from wet-behind-the-ears student to co-host of a national, highly respected newsmagazine.

There are others throughout the entire system, and that's what I spend my time doing, is shepherding. Whether, and social networking helps a lot, so I don't actually have to pick up the phone. I save the phone calls for special times when I can block a half an hour. And a lot of it is just 'How ya doin?' Anything I can do? I know with the current Gen X, Y, Millennials, etc., there's a lot less patience with 'I don't like it, I'm not going to stay.' That's totally fine. You shouldn't, you're not going to stay 30 years in once place anymore anyway, that's just not going to happen.

Michael O'Connell

So, did you have somebody in your life that helped you along?

Doug Mitchell

My dad. I'm very, very fortunate that my father has been the kind of person where I can say 'Dad, can I talk to you?' and he said sure. He would put down whatever he was doing and we would talk. My dad is also, my Dad, my uncles, I've been around educators. My dad is a Ph.D., my father-in-law is a Ph.D., my wife is a Ph.D., we've got a lot of overeducated people in my family. They all are interested in education. Through the years, this is all extrapolating after many, many years of watching, I won't say how many ...

Michael O'Connell

You didn't know this was going on until later on, you figure you've decided to look back.

Doug Mitchell

Yeah, exactly. So my daughter wants to be a public school teacher. I teach at Georgetown as an adjunct. There is a lot of this in my family. This teaching thing is a family thing. It's no unusual as I lay it for me to be doing that.

Michael O'Connell

A lot has changed between 1999 and today in journalism, particular with digital journalism, newspapers folding, etc. All things we've talked about and are aware of going on. Have the students changed since 1999? Do they still have the same concerns? Do they still have the same goals?

Doug Mitchell

Well, I'd say yes. I'd say the same goals are 'I want to be a first-class media professional.' I think the thing that is different between them and me is that they're much more mission driven. That is, they are interested in their community, they want to contribute in a valuable and valued way. Tell stories of what's happening around them. Anytime I see any stories that have 'Oh, the Millennials are selfish and they're lazy and they're blah, blah, blah,' I just think that's crap. That's just crap. My parents didn't like my music, I don't like my daughter's music, my daughter won't like her children's music.

Anna Miars

That's the way it is.

Doug Mitchell

Exactly, that's how it goes. What I see is that, I want to help them become the next, the next leadership. I want them to think about being leaders, not just contributors. I think it's going to be important as the traditional media shrinks, whatever comes out of that, that leaders of the next generation are people who concerned with community, are involved in communities, who are doing things that are a public service, and then look at leadership through the eyes of public service.

Michael O'Connell

And, I'm not sure where all that came from, but I've noticed that as well. That there's a lot more direction and interest in serving the community. That the tools we now have as far as being able to tell stories and being able to reach out and communicate with people ... quite often in inexpensive ways. You don't have to spend months and months creating some great product, you can go out and report something and turn something around fairly quickly that services, the need that you want to address.

Doug Mitchell

I think the biggest challenge going forward, I think that's where you were going,

is that we still have to, technology is great, we still have to talk to people. I and you were fortunate to meet at a meetup, introduced to each other and then we just started talking. Having, what I'll call the gift of gab, is very important. There are those who are very interesting to read because of Twitter and Facebook and all of that, but when you meet them it's sort of interesting that they're sort of closed. They're not used to engaging people face to face. I think that's, I hope that doesn't become an art form. Where you have to train people ...

Anna Miars

But, I think sometimes younger people, like you said 'I don't have to pick up the phone unless there are special occasions.' Younger people don't use the telephone like they used to. So, I feel like in some ways that may be the case. We just talk through Twitter or through Facebook or through texting or email. We don't get that face to face, and sometimes that art form is going a little bit away.

Doug Mitchell

And that's a challenge, I think, because there are people like me who will make decisions based on sitting here and talking to you. Not what I engage with you over social networking. I still think it's, I think you have to find a middle ground. You have to find a balance.

Michael O'Connell

Yeah, but social networking also opens up opportunities for like meetups.

Doug Mitchell

Correct.

Michael O'Connell

I think there are people who recognize, certainly from a professional standpoint, that maybe I need to get involved in this or that so I can meet somebody so that I can make a connection to get a job or whatever. I think people, at that level, can recognize that. There are Craigslist, whatever, where you can actually go out and meet people and communicate. There are those opportunities. Let's go back to what we originally talked about, the program that you're doing with the Ford Foundation. The focus on that. What, in a nutshell, is the mission of that?

Doug Mitchell

Well, there are numbers that are out there, studies that have been done, from Pew to various companies that have crunched some data, and have ... the numbers aren't good when it comes to people of color leading companies. Not

just companies that already exist, those aren't great numbers either.

You know when you think back all the millions that have been spent on professional development and diversity programs and then you look at the numbers in terms of who's there, it's just really sad. I think there are foundations that have started to look at why are we spending money on all this, when it doesn't seem to be working. That's a whole other thing.

I think for this program, the New U program, we started with the notion that 'Who's there? Who's not there? What do we need to do to get people there?' A lot of it is basically skill building and connections. We are all, I'll say within our communities, black, Hispanic, Native American, Asian, we all know each other, but there's no cross pollination.

Those who are in leadership, I'll use the example of [TechCrunch](#). They do a series of startup camps in various locations. It's a big deal. One of our New U members has pitched in front of TechCrunch judges before. Most of them are white and male. She goes and that helped her, she's south Asian and female. She's cracked that ceiling simply because she had a great idea and decided, 'OK, I'm just going to show up at these places.' And then eventually she got invited. So, that's something you have ... it's a thought or at least a drive you to place inside individuals who are interested in again not being the employee, but the employer, being the CEO, being the founder.

We also have to talk to, if we have founders, people who have started their own companies, how do I get connected? How do I get in these other circles? How do I get in funding circles? How do I get in front investors, angel investors, even if you want to go the venture capital route? Who are those people? How do I get in front of them?

A lot of the technologies that we use today started out as some crazy idea somewhere. The person with the crazy idea got front of the right people, pitched their crazy idea, and somebody who said 'That sounds interesting, I'll give you some money to get started in exchange for some percentages, I'll take 10 percent or 15 percent or whatever.' But you've got to be in a room where you have these conversations going on.

For New U, we are trying to create an atmosphere where future founders, CEOs, etc., can get in a room with those people of color who are in those business conversations, the investors, VCs [venture capitalists], etc., and bring them together. Everybody get to know one another and then those who have access to capital can then identify those who we have identified as being worth investing in. We're not talking about millions of dollars, we're talk about time in

the beginning. And then helping them develop to where they can get in front of people who may be interested in buying their company.

Michael O'Connell

You're trying to foster a mindset of entrepreneurial journalists? People who are business leaders as opposed to workers?

Doug Mitchell

Yes, exactly. The people are there. I think because of the downturn of the economy, which then became the, people pushed out the door, job losses, etc., there are lots of people who say I don't want to go work for anybody else anymore. I've done my time, I've learned my skills, I've contributed to that cause. Let me have my own cause to contribute to.

So invariably what we're finding is, in fact we did a camp in Las Vegas at the Unity Conference last year in 2012, we did a camp in 2011 in Las Vegas and we had 14 fellows and 11 were women, all people of color. It surprised me. There's something going on here. These were people I would have otherwise never have known had I continued to work in student newsrooms and helping develop the young people. These are anywhere from working moms, to single moms, to single women who have decided to start a company. I thought, well that's really interesting, so let's create an atmosphere in which they could meet each other and help each other. That's something, that's the great thing about this project, is that I get to learn too. I came out of journalism. I need to go learn some business language.

Fortunately, I always read INC. I always read Fast Company. I've been reading those magazines for years, so I understand the language and where it all comes from, which is one reason why my business partner and I are able to work together. My business partner, her name is Ali Joseph, she has her own company based in New York. She's Native American. I met her at the Native American Journalists Association Conference in Denver several years ago. I was talking to the program officer at Ford about starting this project, I said 'OK, that's a lot of work, I need to go get somebody.' Ali and I had, I had a feeling I was going to be working with her one day on something journalism related, but because she has her own company, started her own company called Seventh Generation Stories, I said 'You know what, you and I should work together.' She's in New York, I'm here, we talk almost everyday. It's been great. There are things she pays attention to that I don't and things I pay attention to that she doesn't. I have the network, I'm connected to almost all the "everybodies" and she pays attention to things like budgets, proposals, branding, personal branding, marketing, all those things. She came out of the commercial side, she was in commercial TV for a while.

Michael O'Connell

Can you give us an example of a type of business that somebody in this program would put together?

Doug Mitchell

Sure. Last year, we did a what we called a, and we had to call it a cool name, so we called it the New U Start Up Loft. So if you can imagine we're in some, one of the new buildings downtown here. The whole new building, probably down around, what is it, one of the circles in D.C. They've redone the whole building and we're up in the loft. Big, wide open space and we've got ... anyway that's what we called it.

We had a competition, so we did two things. One is they had to pitch in front of judges, and the second, was a crowd sourced vote. We selected companies, we brought them to Las Vegas, we did two days of a startup camp, and then at the end, we videotaped them doing a one minute pitch. We put all those online and then we just basically said you can vote as many times as you want. This is a popularity contest. Vote. So we had judges, selected judges, whose vote weighted two-thirds and the crowd sourced vote was one-third.

Did the math and then we chose three companies, one is a nonprofit and two are for-profit. The nonprofit is run by Dr. Cynthia Liu, she runs the [K-12 News Network](#) out of Southern California. She pays eagle-eye attention to public education. She started in California and now if you go to her K1-2 News Network, she's got a map of the United States and all the issues around public education around the United States. She won a grant.

We also funded [Ashley Cisneros dot.com](#), a public relations and marketing firm. She has a master's in multimedia journalism from the University of Florida, but she wanted to start her own PR firm, and she did. And now she's got lots of clients and she's doing very well.

The third is the Wealth Empowerment Network, run by a fellow who is currently an on-camera TV reporter in Columbus, Ohio, named [Jason Frazer](#). He wants to create a company that helps African Americans create wealth. Not balance the budget necessarily, but learn how to create your own sustainable financial future.

Each of them won a \$10,000 seed grant. Two of the three are now being coached by the [National Minority Angel Network](#), by a fellow who co-founded it named Tim Reiss, who's based out of Philadelphia. I met him at a conference. He and I just sat had a beer and talked and we partnered. We have created an

ecosystem, and there are other partners that we have joining us, but we've created an ecosystem for people of color to come into those who want to start a company and actually decide whether they should do it or not. We've had people say this is not for me. I thought I wanted to start a company, but it's just too much.

Michael O'Connell

It's just hard.

Doug Mitchell

It is. It's very difficult.

Michael O'Connell

It's hard to come with an idea, an idea that even if it's a nonprofit is going to function in some way. Do you have a question?

Anna Miars

I do. So, at what stage these ideas when they come to you? Do they have a full on proposal and all the details are worked out?

Doug Mitchell

We have learned over the years that half baked doesn't help. Like any idea, right ...

Michael O'Connell

It should be full baked.

Doug Mitchell

No, I would say 90 percent baked.

Michael O'Connell

Ten minutes before pulling out of the oven ...

Doug Mitchell

So what we're going to do this year, we're going to do three camps. We're going to do one at the [National Association of Black Journalists](#) annual conference just outside of Orlando. We're going to do one at the [National Association of Hispanic Journalists](#), who have combined with, lots of acronyms here, but it's D.C., with SPJ, [Society of Professional Journalists](#) and the [Radio Television Digital News Association](#). They've combined them to do a joint conference in Anaheim. We're going to do a startup camp there. Then in October with the [Online News Association](#) annual conference in Atlanta. We've divided up the day, so we're going to do two days. The mornings of those camps is for the

unbaked.

Michael O'Connell

So you think you might want to have a business

Anna Miars

Brainstorming, kind of fleshing out ...

Doug Mitchell

We're not really sure what we're doing, but I think we want to do this. So we have speakers for the morning that are going to speak in a general way. We have a fellow named Harry Lynn who has done a lot of startups. He's a former executive in residence at [IdeaLab](#). He used to be in public radio 10–12 years ago, he's a long time friend of mine. I have him give the opening sermon, as I call it. Basically he scares them. Part of it is to decide whether you're in or not.

Anna Miars

Yeah, can you hack it?

Doug Mitchell

We're also going to talk about team building. Then in the afternoon we're going to have selected companies, so they're companies that are going to apply. We have online a long application. They need to upload a video as well, where we can see and hear them pitch. We have judges who are going to select probably five companies. They're going to come to one of those three places and they're going to get exclusive access to our trainers. That'll be every afternoon. We'll end with them pitching to our judges onsite. We're going to video record that and post it online, then we'll have the crowd source vote.

Michael O'Connell

What would you say to somebody, a journalist who has an idea, a grain of an idea? Who thinks this maybe something I should think about doing it myself? Should that person start out by trying to talk to other people, trying to come up with a proposal?

Doug Mitchell

Yes, all of that. I think you have to find the community that will enable you to help make that decision. That's why we're creating what I call the ecosystem. There are certainly people who are now writing me emails saying 'I'm thinking about this, I have this thing,' I call it the side hustle, 'I have a job, but I have this side thing that I'm doing.'

Michael O'Connell

A scam.

Anna Miars

Our podcast.

Michael O'Connell

Our podcast.

Doug Mitchell

And they're devoting a lot of their extra time and effort to something they think is going to go somewhere, but they're not quite sure. So we needed to create a database or if not a connection to experts who will say I don't know if that's a good enough idea. They'll ask them very blunt, very direct questions. Almost to scare them out of it to make sure they're committed. If they're committed, yes, let's go. But we want to make sure you understand how difficult this is going to be.

Michael O'Connell

It's like those old, national cartoonist things where it's 'Can you draw this picture,' if you can't you're out. I know, I know. It's a very poor analogy. That's a tough thing sometimes, to imagine yourself as a business owner, as somebody who's doing a startup. Especially if you're just trained as a journalist. That's one of the things I think people have, maybe for a while they've recognized the fact that maybe we're not teaching journalists enough about the business side of what we're doing.

Doug Mitchell

I would agree. But I think that there are schools that are starting to do that. I know that, I'm trying to name some ... Berkeley, Missouri, I call them the usual suspect schools. CUNY at New York has a whole entrepreneurial journalism program run by Jeremy Kaplan. There are schools that are starting to recognize and get funding to run programs, foundation funding, to teach journalists how to start a company from their own idea. I think that's excellent. I don't think that's in lieu of journalism, it's in addition to.

Anna Miars

You didn't have to, there was the business people and there were the journalists. They didn't interface. Now, you have to, you've got to have one foot in both doors. That's a very recent recognition, I think, as things have started ... not very recent. I think it's been coming for a long time, but I think in terms of actually teaching and bringing that into the classroom and saying yeah, OK, you can write and you can do this and you can do that, but where are you going to get the money to do that? Who's going to back you?

Doug Mitchell

Ohio University is another one that just hired a Dr. Michelle Farrier ...

Michael O'Connell

There are a lot. American University where we went to grad school has a

Anna Miars

Media entrepreneurship program.

Michael O'Connell

A media entrepreneurship program. That's a word that I wasn't, when I went into that program, the AU program for interactive journalism, that was a word that I didn't necessarily think about, entrepreneurship.

Doug Mitchell

I didn't either. It was something somebody else. I wanted to be reporter or a journalist, you know, but now I think having that conversation as I mentioned earlier I had with Calvin Simms at Ford about, and also this also gets into the diversity area as well. In that is, why is it that there are no people of color as CEOs of major corporations? Why is it that all these technologies that we use today are not led by people of color? Why is that? Is it because we don't have any ideas? I don't think so. I think it's that we're not the ecosystem. On one hand we need to create our own support group and have it come through us.

We started in journalism, but I'll say media-related, we need to create support group, but we also need to have cross pollination. You have to go, for many years and since starting in '98, I became members of the Hispanic, Asian, Native American associations, not just the National Association of Black Journalists. I started doing cross pollination going to other people's cultures and listening to other people's conversations and find out that a lot of it is that same, but no one was talking to one another.

Michael O'Connell

Do you think there's enough of a dialogue about diversity in journalism in general?

Doug Mitchell

There is a dialogue, but solutions aren't often part of it.

Anna Miars

We just talk about it.

Doug Mitchell

Yeah, there's a lot of discussion. In fact, last week I was in a conversation with the office here in D.C. of the USC–Annenberg, a regular public media conversation that they have. We've talked about and around diversity, because I think there's ... everybody says we need to do something, but nothing ever gets developed and implemented. Or, programs have been started and haven't really gone anywhere. I think part of the equation is that, I refer to New U, is that we have to develop leaders, employers, not always work on skill building and how to use Final Cut Pro. I mean that's important too, keeping your skills sharp so you can continue to do the job and to keep the job. But, where are the people who want to lead? And that's the thing that has always been, I think the crux of, not to say that if you put someone black in charge you'll automatically have a lot of black people there.

Michael O'Connell

Or that somehow or your content or philosophy will become more diverse.

Doug Mitchell

I think you have to have a community of people within your organization who understand that it's vital that whether it's national or local, that there are people that are not being heard. People whose ideas are lost in the ozone. Why is that? So, what do we need to do to fix that? How do we need to think about cross pollination? Who are the ambassadors inside the company who can serve as, and not just black folks going to black things. But who are the people inside the company who can represent the goals and the vision and the ideals of building community inside the company and then externally from the company as well?

Michael O'Connell

Certainly with the disruption that our industry has faced within the last 10 years, you talked about skills, etc., that people were rushing to try to pick up Final Cut Pro, to learn how to do this and that. How to create a Web page and all these things and it's just a constant, trying to climb up that mountain to just get a point where you can actually think. We do have to be aware that there are topics like diversity that we have to take into consideration in this whole mix. Where do you feel journalism is headed at this point? The change that we've had? Let's talk from a diversity standpoint first since we're kind of touching on that.

Doug Mitchell

The numbers are there. There was all this talk about in 2050, majority–minority. In 2043, this will happen and that will happen. It's 2013, and it's already happened. There are majority of women and people of color who are actually calling the shots. On a granular level. When trickles up to the top, I

can't predict when that will happen, but it's certainly, I'll just say things are happening faster than demographers had really predicted.

The question then becomes how do we get out in front? How do we, and I work in public media, how do we get out of front of current demographic changes that are happening?

I think one, we have to recognize that it's actually happening. Two, I think we need to talk about it. We need to be honest and open, and talk about it. I think the current leadership, which has birthed public radio, public television, public broadcasting, all of that, needs to recognize that it's time to hand it to someone else. So what I am doing for succession? Who am I handing it to? What programs do we need to create to develop leaders? And do leaders need to always come out of newsrooms? Do journalists make good managers?

We all laugh. I mean these are real questions that we have to really think about and then I'm all about implementation. What is something that we can get that is funded, maybe heavily or lightly, that develops the next generation? They're supported, there is an ecosystem created. There's mentoring, there's coaching, there's, with an idea of what media is going to be in the future. I think we have to get past this diversity is black and white. It is not. Diversity is economic, it's educational, it's geographic, it's gender, it's sexual orientation, it's all of these things. The ideal pie in the sky would be to have everyone represented at the table. That would be ideal, but even in cases where you don't, like I grew up in Oklahoma. There are far more Native American people than there are any other minority there. Are they at the table helping to make decisions? And then on the other side, I'll say who inside the communities wants to lead? Because that's also been a bit of an issue. We need to identify who the people are that want to lead and groom them into leadership positions.

Michael O'Connell

I think that diversity, certainly in news companies and in the newsroom is going to serve our mission that much better. We're going to be able to provide a product that is responsive to a diverse audience.

Doug Mitchell

Right. There was a line I saw in article the other day, that says 'You have to hire the people you're trying to reach.'

Michael O'Connell

Oh wow.

Doug Mitchell

Yeah. And I thought what a great line, I'm going to save that one and say it often. It's true.

Anna Miars

It is.

Michael O'Connell

I love like stumbling across somebody who says something, codifies something you've always thought, but never ...

Doug Mitchell

I personally know the person and wrote them, I said 'Can I borrow that?' And he said, yeah, spread the word because it's very true. If you're going to survive as a media company you have to hire the people in the communities you're trying to reach. How do you do that? You need pipelines and mechanisms. And those need to be created, and if they're there, to be maintained.

Michael O'Connell

It's work. You've got to go out and you've got to talk to people. Again, what you were talking about before the importance of interacting with people and meeting people and just reaching out and communicating is so important. Just opening up channels where you're going to find these people that are going to help you. Either from a news standpoint or a business standpoint.

We used to kid about this in the one newsroom I was in, that we're in news business but that we're terrible communicators. We like getting into conversations where we're interviewing somebody and it's one on one ... but we're not talking to each other, we're not reaching out to the community in a larger sense to foster dialogue and maybe help us to change our direction of where we want to go.

Doug Mitchell

I call it step outside your circle. We all have people that we talk to on a regular basis, but it's me and the gift of gab. I'll talk to anybody. Clearly, that's why I'm sitting here.

You have to learn how to, there's an art to approaching people, to talking to them. Going to the meetups is very helpful. There are people who say I'm very shy and I tell them take somebody with you or go with someone. Make sure that they have the opportunity to introduce you around and then go on a regular basis. Make sure you don't end up always talking to the same people. Like me, at the ONADC meetup, so I know most the people there, but I always encourage people who didn't know about it to go to meetup.com, look for the letters

ONADC and sign up, it's totally free. Each meetup is five bucks. I think I can do that. Go on a regular basis.

Michael O'Connell

Just get involved in any meetup, because there are people who are meeting up in groups who can provide you with technical information.

Doug Mitchell

There are tons of meetups in this area.

Anna Miars

This city is very small. If you know somebody, they probably know somebody who knows somebody. Meeting people in this city is not hard to do.

Michael O'Connell

No. People I talk to all the time, you've just got to get up off your butt and do stuff. It's the bottom line of entrepreneurship, it's the bottom line ... where journalism is at this point. Stop waiting for someone to come in and fix it.

Doug Mitchell

Or take care of it for you.

Michael O'Connell

You've got to be part of the solution, here. You've got to be able to go out and generate a solution to this, because clearly nobody else is doing it at this point.

Doug Mitchell

Or at least identify the people who are, because most of us are just ... as I said I'll talk to anybody, I'll appear on a podcast, I'll let people quote me in various articles. Mostly it's about talking about our program, but I consider myself an ambassador as well. One other thing I'll add is that the people I've been mentoring for 10 years, I now say it's your turn to mentor. Don't send me people that you have met, you do it yourself.

Anna Miars

Pay it forward.

Doug Mitchell

Yes, exactly.

Michael O'Connell

My own experiences in working in newsrooms with interns is one of the most rewarding things, to be able to talk to people and explain and offer your

experience. They bring you such a fresh perspective and get you thinking about what you're doing, your mundane job in a different way. It's not like a one way thing. It's very much a collaborative, very much invigorating to your process as well. Before we sort of wrap up here, I wanted to ask you how can people find out about your program and get involved?

Doug Mitchell

The application is currently on the Unity Journalists website, if you go to unityjournalists.org, you'll see New U. There's a drop down menu, if you move your mouse over it'll pop up. It'll say New U 13 Application. Click on that. It explains, I should say we're giving away money.

Michael O'Connell

Money?

Anna Miars

Come running.

Doug Mitchell

Funny I forgot to mention that. It's two \$20,000 seed grants. The companies that get selected will bring themselves to whatever startup camp, they don't have to sign up for a particular one. You only sign up for one. You either go to Anaheim, Orlando or Atlanta. You will be there with some other companies. You will get mentoring, coaching, connections, and then you'll compete for one of those \$20,000.

Michael O'Connell

It's like America's Got Talent.

Anna Miars

There's no singing.

Doug Mitchell

Well let's hope not anyway.

Michael O'Connell

Unless that's what your startup is.

Doug Mitchell

So, unityjournalists.org. You'll find the application there. If there are any questions, I can be reached at dmitchell@unityjournalists.org. Allison Joseph is allijoseph@unityjournalists.org.

Michael O'Connell

One other thing before we go that I wanted to mention. We had a brief conversation before we started here when I was looking at your LinkedIn profile and you said that you're constantly updating your LinkedIn. Why is that so important?

Doug Mitchell

I call it my ad. It's my static ad. I have a premium account. I took a webinar with the group LinkedIn for Journalists and if you do that, you sit through a 35-minute webinar, they upgrade you for free. I have a premium account. I know who's looking at profile, because it says. Unless of course they've decided to be anonymous. It's really interesting to see who's looking at my profile. I'm assuming, like I'm walking down the street, people are looking at me. Not from an egotistical standpoint. So I always want to make sure that I have some kind of introductory graph, which is there. I have linked in, literally so to speak, videos of me talking. Articles that I've written. Articles that have me in them. I have done a variety of different things. I think it's important to know that I'm not just a journalist. I've also done three fellowships to Chile, Fulbright, Knight International Press and U.S. State Department. I also, and I only go back to my work at NPR.

My profile goes back 12 years even though I've been in the business forever. So don't back too far, I dropped all the college. For all the younger people, not the high school. You don't need to put that there. But it's really important. Also, I join groups. I belong to like 25 different groups. I go through and I say I only want a digest of what's going on. I don't want an email everyday. But, I see what people are talking about. It's really important, particularly with social networking, to spend some time looking at what people are sharing and talking about. That way you stay up on what's going on. You don't have to contribute if you don't want to, but it's important. It's like reading. You have to read.

Michael O'Connell

Do you use Facebook or Twitter at all?

Doug Mitchell

Oh yeah. I'm there all the time.

Anna Miars

He was checking in on Facebook when he got here.

Doug Mitchell

I did a check in before we started.

Michael O'Connell

Just touching on social media, wanted to get that out there. Doug, thanks for coming in, this has been great.

Doug Mitchell

Thanks for having me. I'm glad we met at the meetup.

Michael O'Connell

So, go out and meet people. Join something and good things happen.