

2020 Guild pay equity report

Data from July 2020, analysis performed August 2020
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The Star Tribune Guild, which represents about 240 employees at the Star Tribune and City Pages, has analyzed employee pay data for the last several years. Previously, the data has been provided by the Star Tribune during [contract negotiations](#) as part of collective bargaining.

The company has voluntarily provided data to the Guild this year outside of contract negotiations.

In 2020, there remains a pay gap among Star Tribune Guild members across gender and race. Women, on the whole, are paid 96 cents for every dollar men make (see change in methodology note), though there are some categories where that is more pronounced, or where women are earning more than their male peers. Still, this is the largest median pay gap between men and women we've seen in recent years.

Marked disparities in both pay and representation also persist across racial groups. For every dollar a white staffer makes, Hispanic staff make 99 cents, Asian staff make 97 cents, and Black staff make 95 cents. American Indian staff make 96 cents, and those who identify as two or more races make 94 cents, though the small number of staff reporting two or more races or American Indian makes drawing a statistical conclusion difficult.

Those disparities are even more pronounced in overscale pay.

Pay for union members at the Star Tribune is composed of contract rate pay, which is the same for each staffer at a given scale (A1 through A6 or H, for example), and overscale pay, often called merit pay. Merit pay is additional pay that management negotiates with individual employees due to factors like previous experience, high performance or in response to a competitive job offer.

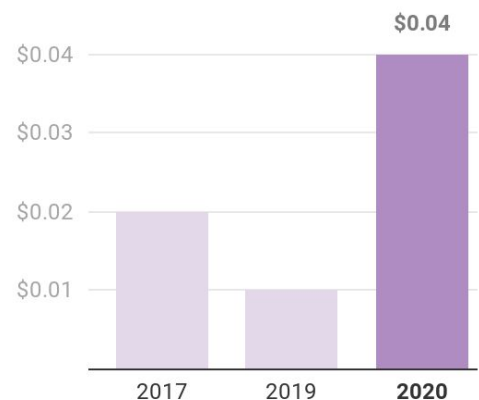
For every dollar white staffers make in overscale pay, Asian staff make 95 cents and American Indian staff make 90 cents. Black staff make 60 cents on the dollar. Those identifying as two or more races make a mere 46 cents of overscale pay to the white dollar (But again, statistical conclusions for that group and American Indian staff are murky at best).

For Black staff, the largest group of people of color at the Star Tribune, that median overscale pay gap amounts to a loss of more than \$1,600 a year.

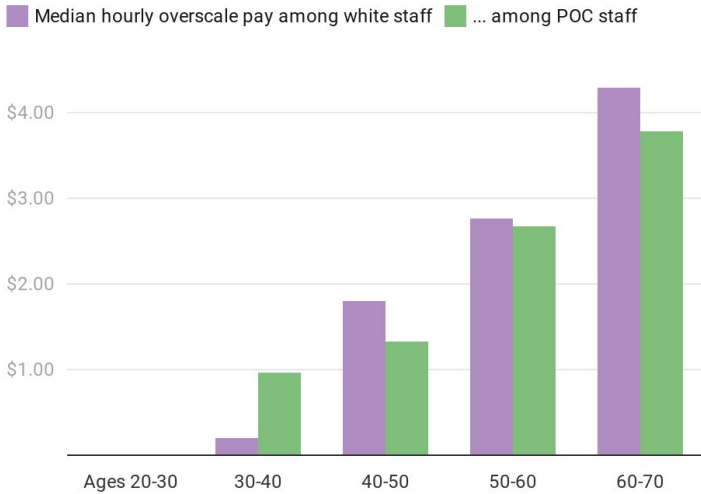
Although overscale pay tends to increase with age and tenure -- younger and newer employees are less likely to get merit pay -- POC staff are, on average, given less merit pay than their white counterparts, in older age brackets and among those with many years of service. (An employee's age is our best proxy for career experience, since someone may be a new hire at the Strib but with 15 years of experience elsewhere.)

Gender pay gap increase

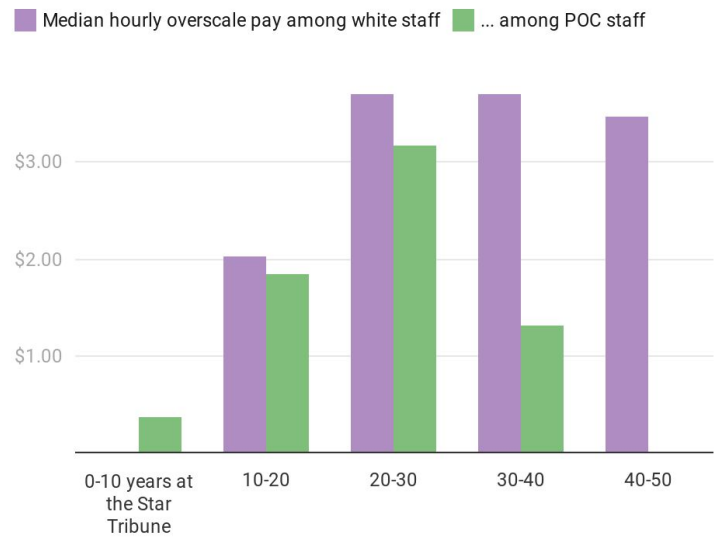
The hourly median pay gap in 2020 for women was 4 cents on the male dollar, the highest in recent years.



Older POC staff get less overscale pay



Long-tenured POC staff get less overscale



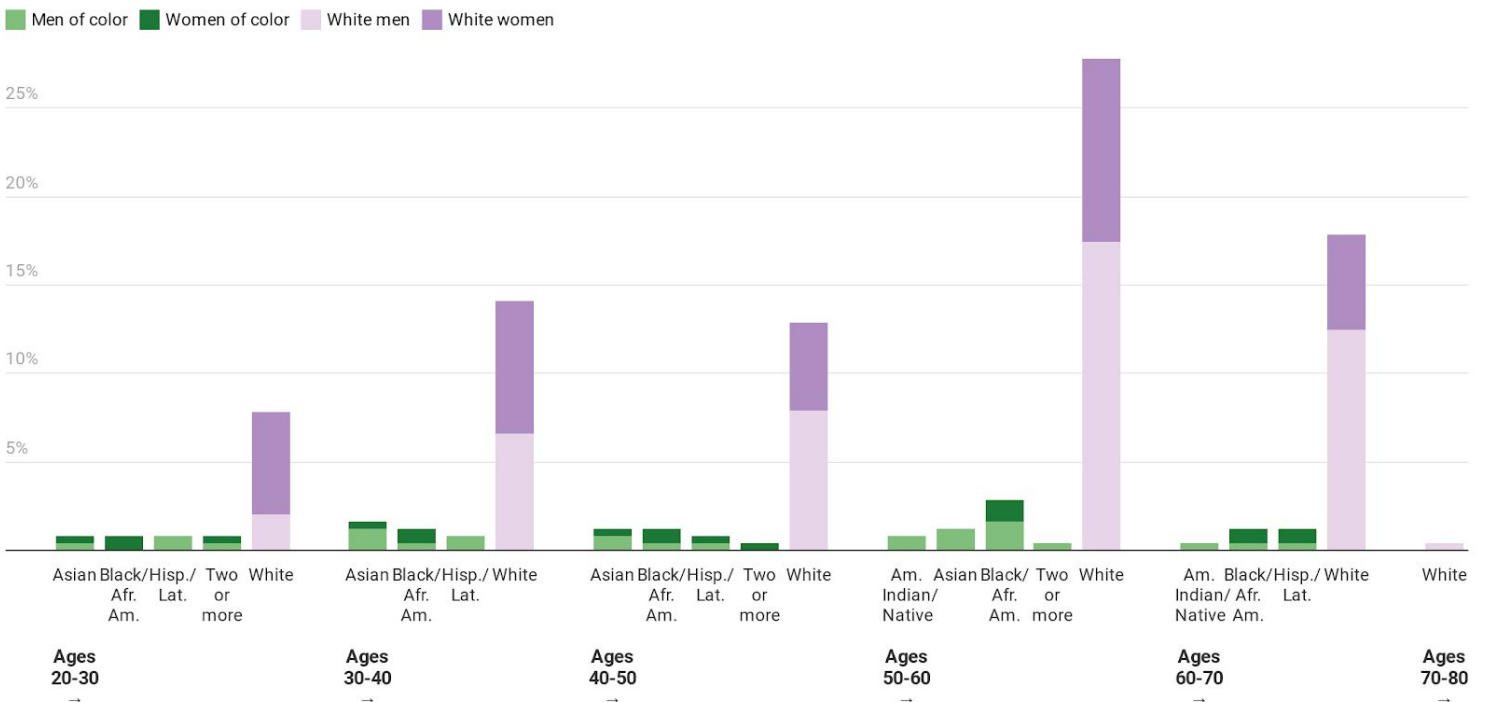
POC representation remains too low

Sussing out pay disparities across racial groups (and attempting to see change over time) proved difficult in our analysis because people of color are still employed at low numbers here. As a result, any one hire or departure can result in big swings in averages.

This highlights the crux of the problem for the Star Tribune: It is overwhelmingly white. At every age group, in every job, in nearly every department, there is an overabundance of white people.

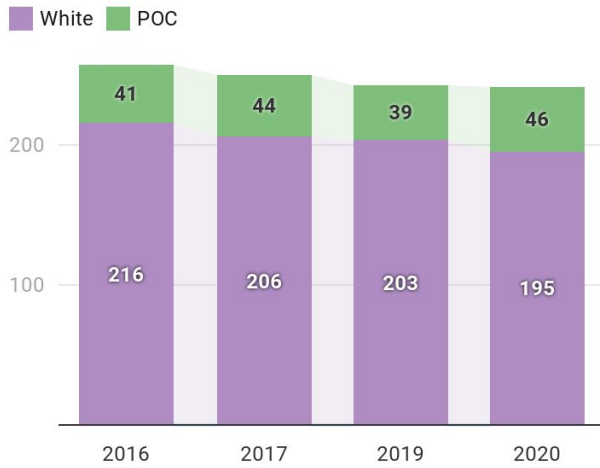
White men over age 50 make up the largest share of the Star Tribune Guild

Percent of total Guild



POC staff has grown recently

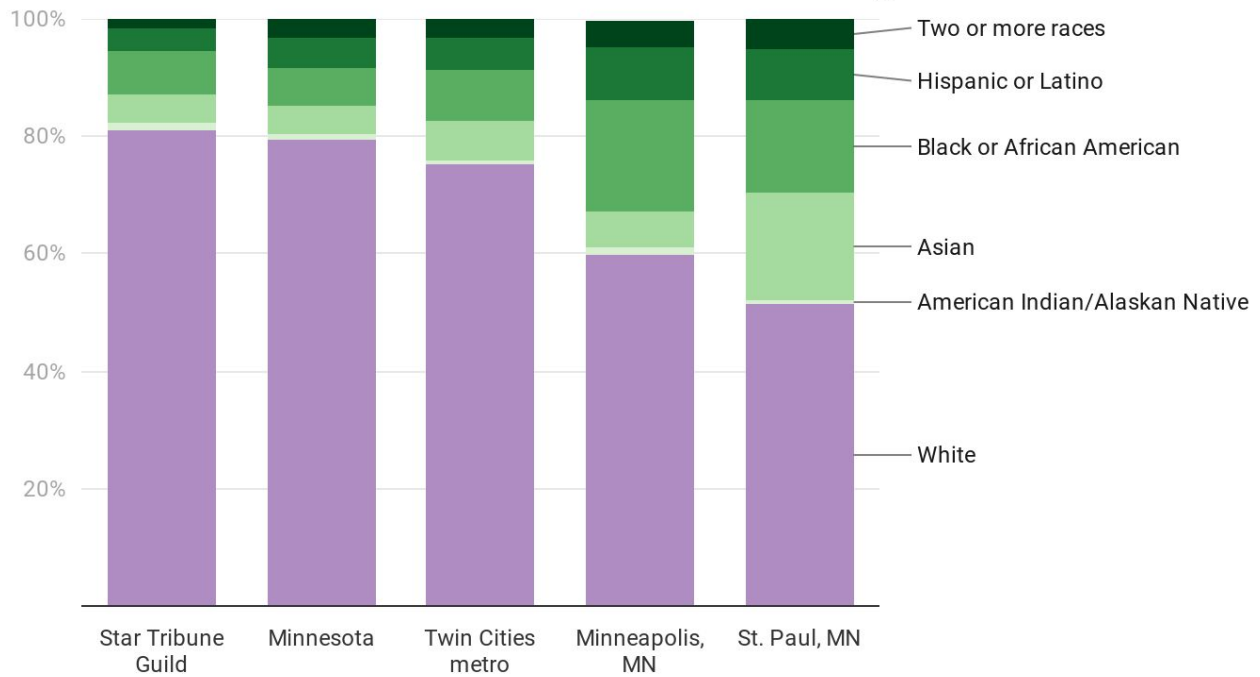
POC ranks in the Guild grew in 2020 after a low the previous year.



Although people of color now make up 19% of the Guild (up from 16% last year), the Star Tribune remains whiter than even the State of Minnesota, and 8% whiter than the Twin Cities metro.

By comparison, about 40% of Minneapolis residents and half of St. Paulites count themselves as people of color -- a representation benchmark we are far from reaching.

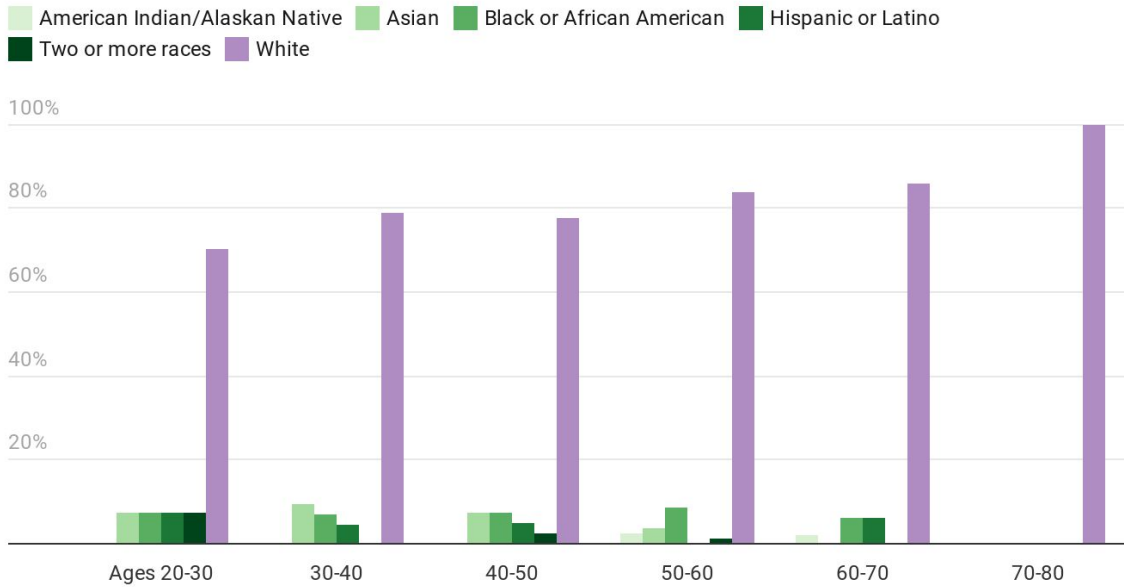
Star Tribune remained less diverse than coverage areas



And that disparity isn't just among older staff. Even the youngest employees at the Star Tribune are 70% white, despite being from a highly diverse generation.

Nearly every age cohort is at least 3/4 white

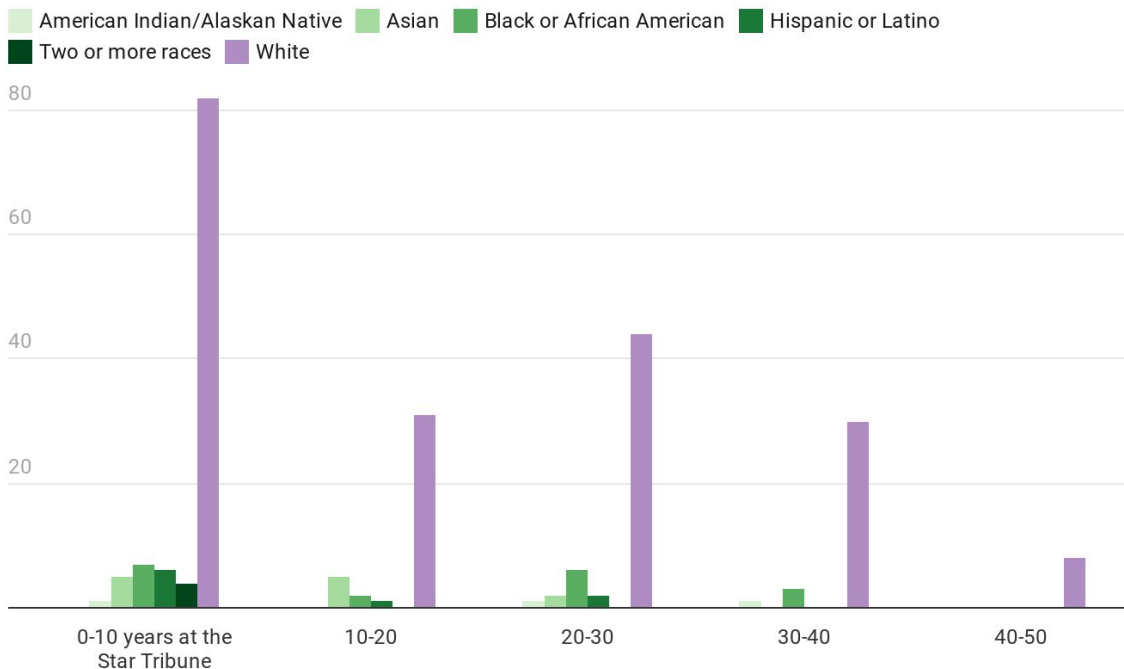
Although the youngest staff are the most diverse, they are also the smallest group of employees.



The trend also persists for recent hires. Among staff who have worked here for less than 10 years, 78% are white.

New Guild members are overwhelmingly white

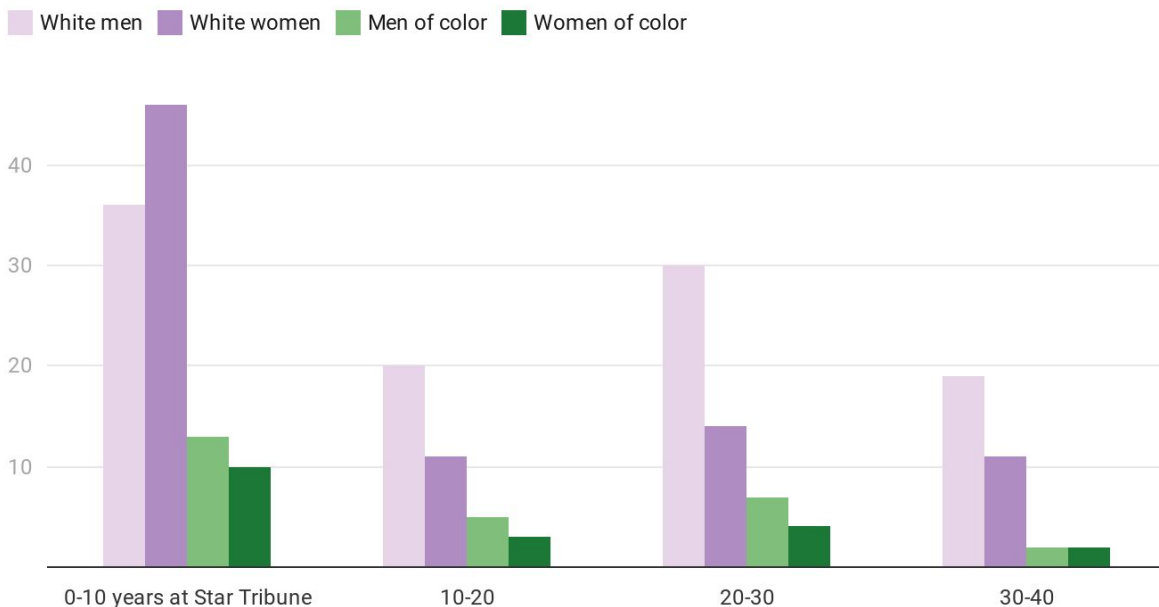
Guild membership by tenure and race. (# of employees)



In contrast to cohorts who have been at the Star Tribune longer, white women make up the largest portion of new hires.

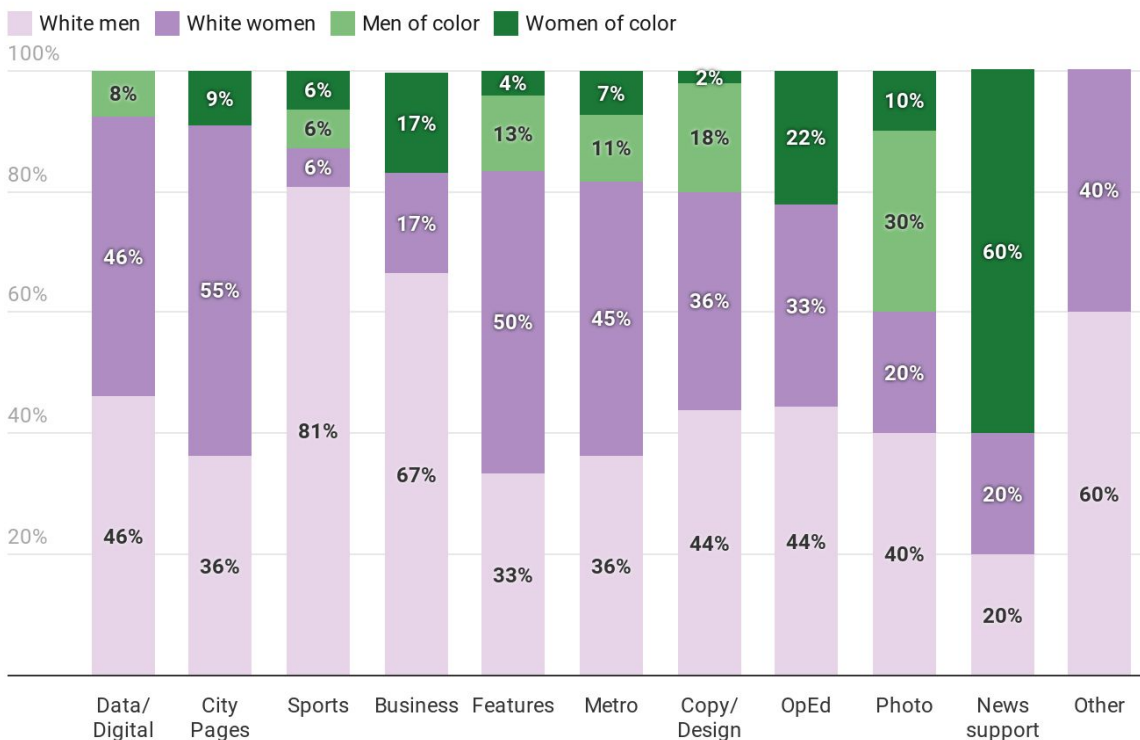
White women make up largest share of early-tenure employees

Number of employees by tenure



No department at the Star Tribune employs more than 10 people of color. Not a single man of color works in Business, Opinion/Editorial, News Support or at City Pages. Data/Digital doesn't have any women of color. Notably, the newsroom's only majority-minority department is News Support, our lowest-paid department. Meanwhile, 81% of our Sports department is white men.

By % of department



The small number of people of color in Guild newsroom leadership positions in 2020 (the data does not include top editors in management) acutely affects pay. This “leadership” category includes anyone paid at H-scale, whether they manage a team or not. Of more than 200 Guild members at A and H scales, only 6 people of color are in leadership roles.

Few POC in leadership

Six journalists of color are in 63 leadership positions.

White men White women Men of color Women of color

Newsroom staff (A scale)



Newsroom editors (H scale)



Most of the highest-paid Guild members are white men

In the top 10 highest-paid overall in the Guild overall:

- 8 are white men
- Two are white women
- None are people of color

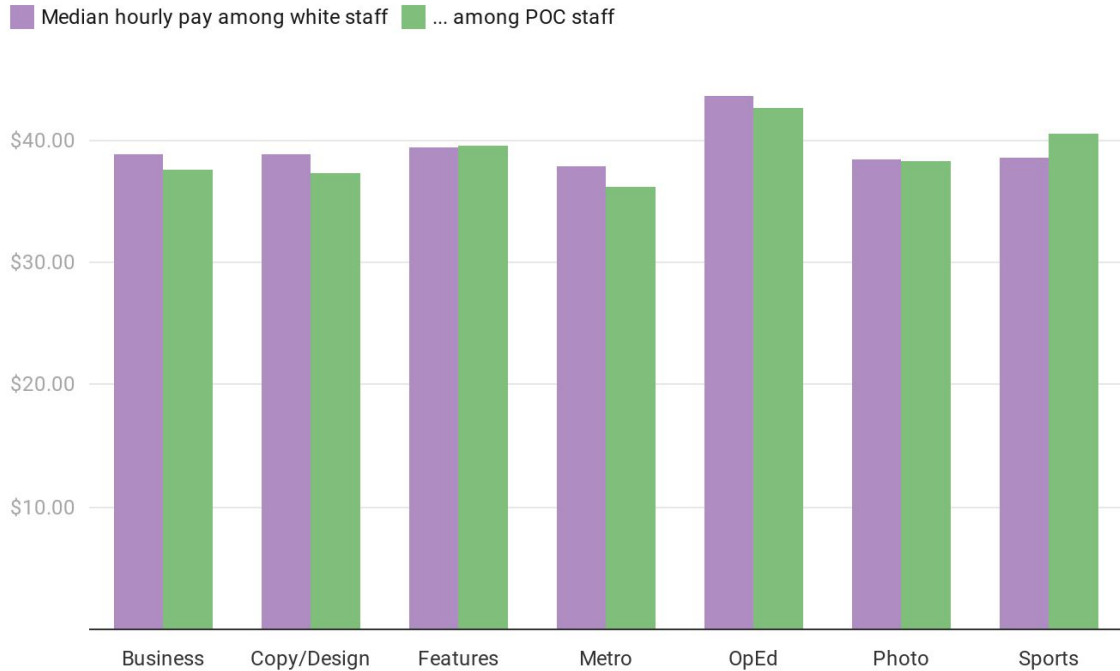
In the top 20 highest-paid:

- 17 are white
- Seven are women
- Two are men of color
- One is a woman of color

Pay disparities vary by department

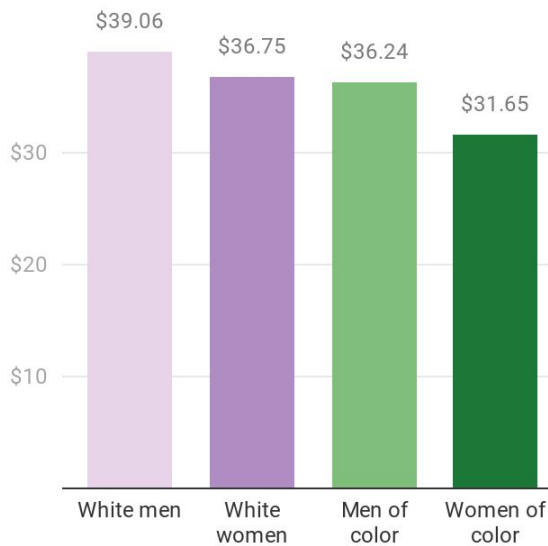
People of color are paid less, on average, than white staff in Metro, Business, Copy/Design, Op/Ed, City Pages and News Support (Because of the small numbers of employees in Data/Digital, City Pages and News Support, they are not included in the chart to avoid revealing individual salaries.)

POC staff paid less on average in most departments



Metro, our largest department, pays women of color 19% less on average than white men. Men of color make 7% less than white men, and white women make 6% less than white men. Metro also pays people of color considerably less in overscale pay than white staff, in contrast with many other departments.

Median hourly pay among Metro staff



Median hourly overscale pay among Metro staff



Methodology notes

Race and ethnicity data comes to the Guild via the Company. The Guild is given a snapshot of employee pay, gender and race during contract negotiations, which take place every three years. Data from 2017 and 2020 were voluntarily provided by the Company outside of contract negotiations. The data only contains details for Guild members and doesn't include data about anyone at the management level in the newsroom or non-union employees in other departments. The Guild signs a confidentiality agreement to receive pay data .

Population figures are from the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2018 5-year estimates.

To make this analysis more complete, consistent and sustainable for future pay studies, we used a methodology based on Washington Post's recent pay analysis, which used the programming language R, rewritten in Python. The main difference from past pay studies is that we calculate averages using medians in 2019 and 2020 instead of means, with some exceptions for a few median calculations made in 2017. For this reason, we have chosen not to compare pay or pay disparities over time except for median pay gaps in 2017. This methodology will allow us to track changes and easily update with future data.