TEGNA Names Christopher Franklin President and General Manager at WATN and WLMT

June 25, 2024

TYSONS, Va.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Jun. 25, 2024-- TEGNA Inc. (NYSE: TGNA) today announced that Christopher Franklin has been named president and general manager at WATN and WLMT, TEGNA's ABC and CW duopoly serving Memphis, Tennessee, effective immediately. Franklin has been serving as interim GM since earlier this year. In this role, Franklin will be responsible for overseeing the stations' operations across all platforms, as well as community outreach efforts and driving results for advertisers.

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here: https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20240625064165/en/



Christopher Franklin will lead station operations at TEGNA's WATN and WLMT in Memphis, Tennessee. (Photo: Business Wire)

Franklin is an accomplished media and marketing executive with more than 25 years of industry experience. He was most recently marketing director at WATN/WLMT, which he joined in 2020, responsible for building the stations' brands in the market. During his tenure, he also served as regional marketing leader responsible for overseeing seven markets across TEGNA's portfolio of stations. He served as an officer on the ABC Network Marketing Advisory Board and is a new member of the NATAS Midsouth Board of Governors.

"Chris brings a wide range of skills and talent to his new role in Memphis," said Paul Trelstad, senior vice president, media operations, TEGNA. "With a management style that is the embodiment of the stations' 'Solution Seekers' ethos, Chris' passion for Memphis and the people of Tennessee makes him the perfect person to lead WATN and WLMT into the future."

"I'm thrilled to have the opportunity to lead and serve our TEGNA Memphis television stations," added Franklin. "My primary focus is on recruiting, training, and developing great people while also maintaining our strong connection with the Memphis community. As my pastor wisely emphasizes, 'There is no impact without contact!' It's essential to actively engage and demonstrate dedication to our entire Memphis community to foster genuine business and community relationships. I am truly looking forward to the rewarding journey that lies ahead."

Earlier in his career, Franklin worked in leadership positions at FOX television stations, Guardsmark and at Hope Church where he served for more than a decade, most recently as director of media production. During his tenure with Hope, the church saw exponential growth, becoming a recognizable market leader in media ministry as Franklin founded the Inspire Media Conference, which trains media ministry and nonprofit professionals on software, production and broadcast techniques and standards. Prior to his time at Hope, he worked for Guardsmark, the second largest security company in the world, managing video production. An award-winning marketer, Franklin is a 10-time Promax, five-time Midsouth Regional Emmy® and a PRSA VOX Award recipient.

As a proud graduate of Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee, he received his B.A. degree in English and minor in Mass Communications while playing college basketball.

Franklin finds joy in playing one-minute chess games and engaging in outdoor activities. He believes family time is precious, especially with his wife, Teresa, and his daughter, Camille, and nieces Josilyn and Miracle.

About TEGNA

TEGNA Inc. (NYSE: TGNA) is an innovative media company that serves the greater good of our communities. Across platforms, TEGNA tells empowering stories, conducts impactful investigations and delivers innovative marketing solutions. With 64 television stations in 51 U.S. markets, TEGNA is the largest owner of top 4 network affiliates in the top 25 markets among independent station groups, reaching approximately 39 percent of all television households nationwide. TEGNA also owns leading multicast networks True Crime Network and Quest. TEGNA offers innovative solutions to help businesses reach consumers across television, digital and over-the-top (OTT) platforms, including Premion, TEGNA's OTT advertising service. For more information, visit www.TEGNA.com.

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