

Bill Tompkins named president and CEO of NNPA

Written by George E. Curry Editor-in-Chief NNPA News Service
Monday, 02 July 2012 15:07



WASHINGTON (NNPA) – Highly-respected media and entertainment executive William G. Tompkins, Jr. has been named president and chief executive officer of the National Newspaper Publishers Association, a federation of more than 200 Black-owned publications.

Pictured: William G. Tompkins, Jr., President and CEO of NNPA

NNPA Chairman Cloves Campbell, publisher of the Arizona Informant, said Tompkins was selected from an impressive field of candidates screened by Carrington & Carrington, a Chicago-based executive search firm.

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“Bill is an accomplished, nationally-known executive who will be responsible for executing the vision of the NNPA Board of Directors,” Campbell said.

“Because the Board chair is elected every two years, having a president and CEO in place will provide the organization with smoother operations and greater continuity.”

Campbell described Tompkins as “a true visionary who will make an immediate impact on the organization.”

Tompkins worked at the Washington Post for 19 years in a variety of top-level positions, including vice president of marketing, director of national advertising and manager of corporate and financial advertising sales. He left the newspaper to join Kodak as chief marketing officer of its entertainment imaging business unit. Tompkins was also vice president and general manager of the Motion Picture Film Group for the Eastman Kodak Company, managing a \$700 million global distribution operation.

In addition, he was chief marketing officer of Next Gen media Group, the firm that launched the social media news site ReportN. He also was president of William Tompkins Associates, a consulting firm specializing in providing advice on strategic planning and operations. Tompkins is eager to draw on his wealth of experience on behalf of NNPA.

“Having had corporate roles during the majority of my career, I now have the opportunity to work with people who represent the heart and soul of what our country is all about, that being entrepreneurs are making a difference,” he said.

And he will make a huge difference for NNPA, a group of publishers who own and operate their own newspapers.

“I will be able to create a firm and more solid internal foundation for the Association to ensure that we consistently provide higher quality and more useful services to our members,” Tompkins explained. “I will also be responsible for ensuring the long-term financial viability of the NNPA and for providing bigger revenue streams for our members.”

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According to a job description NNPA provided to candidates for the position, “The President and CEO exercises overall authority and responsibility for the direction of the organization’s personnel, programs and services and drives the execution of the strategy through its daily activities.”

The job description also said the president and CEO “is the lead spokesperson and advocate for the organization with the community and a diverse set of partners and stakeholders.”

Tompkins received his BA in economics magna cum laude from Tufts University and his MBA from the Harvard Business School. He is a former chairman of the National Kidney Foundation and has served on the board of the National Advertising Council.

Although many major U.S. daily newspapers are experiencing financial problems as a result of dwindling circulation, community-based publications appear to be much more viable. So much so that a company owned by Warren Buffett, the second-richest person in the United States behind Bill Gates, recently purchased 63 daily and weekly newspapers from Media General, Inc. for \$142 million.

“In spite of the transformational changes in the newspaper industry, Black media publications continue to play a critical role in our country, both in terms of their impact on society at large and especially in the role they play in local communities,” Tompkins said. “My background is in media and entertainment so the opportunity to participate in the reinvigoration and transformation of this hidden jewel of newspaper assets will be both exciting and impactful.”