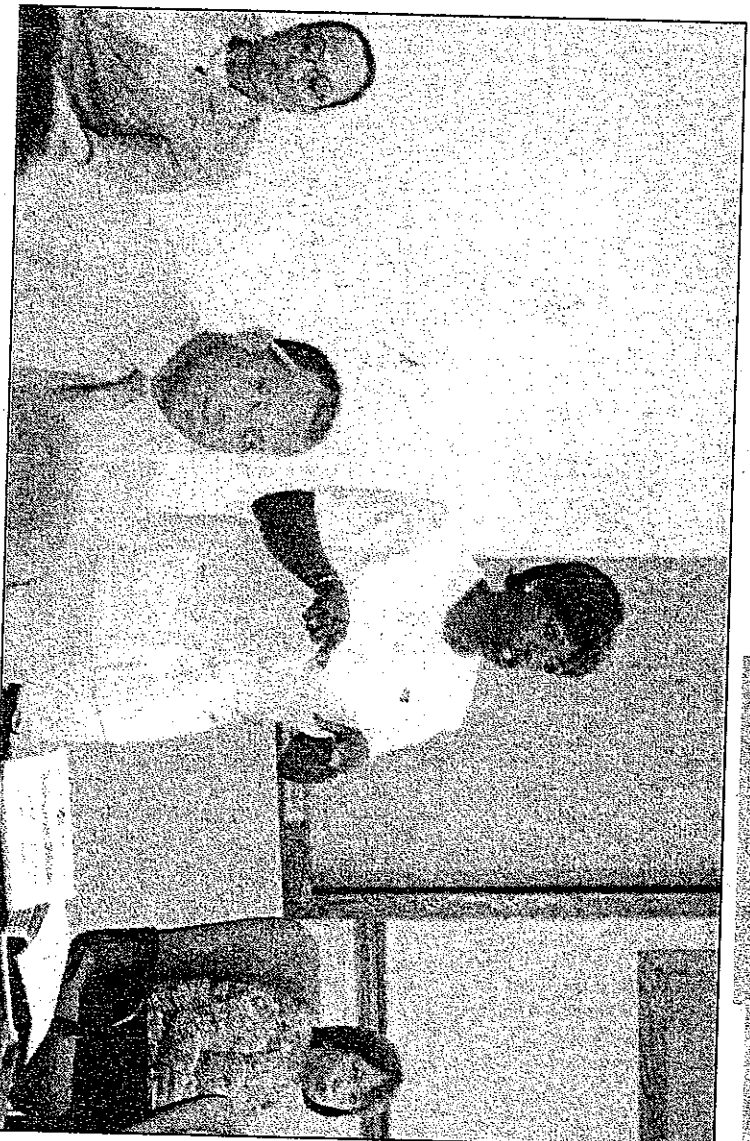




**Webb inducted**  
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Coaches Hall of Fame  
C5

# New Pittsburgh Courier BUSINESS

JULY 27-31, 2005



SEEKING ANSWERS—African-American Chamber President and CEO Doris Carson Williams directs a question to the media panel.  
PHOTO BY KENNETH NEELY

## MEDIA SAVVY

by Deborah M. Todd  
Courier Staff Writer

"If a tree falls in the forest and no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound? The answer is, it absolutely does not!" said Bob Bee, WTAE-TV general sales manager, to attendees of the African-American Chamber of Commerce of Western Pennsylvania Business Institute forum, "Using the Media Effectively," on July 21.

Bee, one of six media professionals who participated in the panel discussion, used the popular adage to explain how important the media is in informing the public of the impact an organization is making. The panel consisted of representatives from television, print and radio, including Chris Cotugno, general sales manager for KDKA-TV; Lauren Lawley-Head, editor of the Pittsburgh Business Times; David Shribman, executive editor and vice president of the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette; Duncan Jameson, general sales manager for WAMO radio and Rod Doss, editor and publisher of the New Pittsburgh Courier.

While most of the business professionals at the meeting, who represented a variety of organizations ranging from Kuntu Repertory Theater to American Home Mortgages, understood the significance of media exposure, many needed help finding ways to get it. Chamber president Doris Carson Williams says many members were looking for ways to not only increase the amount of coverage their organizations received, but also ways to gain better and more consistent coverage.

"People sometimes say they are misrepresented and they can't get their press releases in," said Williams. "I think today's session did an excellent job of answering those questions and putting in perspective how you cultivate relationships to really make the media benefit."

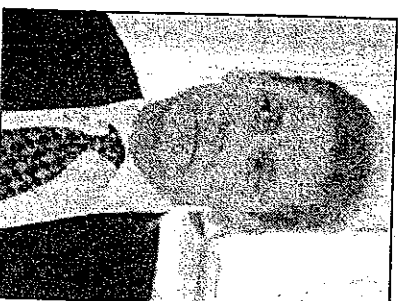
The panel made it clear that the best thing any organization could do to improve their media coverage is to establish better relationships. Almost every panelist agreed that when hundreds of press releases reach a media outlet on a daily basis, the ones sent by someone who has friends within that organization have the best chance of receiving attention. They encouraged guests to reach out to reporters, assignment desk editors, producers or anyone within a media outlet who has some access to what goes in print or on air.

"Take five minutes and call or e-mail a person who would cover your organization," said Lauren Lawley-Head. "That has a lot more immediacy and news value than a press re-

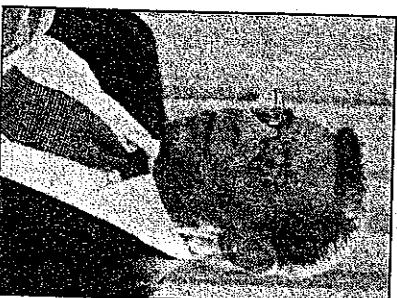
### Forum gives businesses pointers on using media effectively



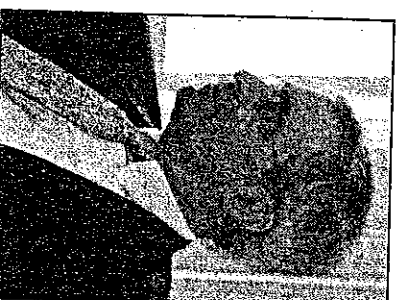
BOB BEE  
WTAE-TV General Sales Mgr.



DUNCAN JAMESON  
WAMO General Sales Mgr.



ROD DOSS  
Courier Editor and Publisher



DAVID SHRIBMAN  
Post-Gazette Exec. Editor & VP

lease.)  
"A personal relationship with a reporter is worth the \$25,000 that you may pay to somebody (for public relations)," said David Shribman.

The panel also addressed how businesses should take advantage of all the media has to offer. While most businesses that want media coverage look for it in the form of a story, there are other ways to get a message out.

"With the volume of information that comes in, unless it's truly compelling, the best way to get it done is to find out what other avenues exist," said Rod Doss.

He suggested businesses should pay attention to whether the media organization has a calendar, or some special on-air segment that would bring focused attention to the organization or event if a story is not possible.

The media sales managers on the panel helped to ease some businesses' fears about the cost of advertising. They urged businesses to investigate the cost for all media advertising and not to be intimidated by seemingly high costs for advertising in television and radio.

"For less than three figures you can buy a spot on the TV and reach 30 to 40 thousand people," said Chris Cotugno.

They pointed out that advertising dollars are more effectively used if they are spent with the right company and directed toward the proper audience. For example, Duncan Jameson said that a company is able to reach 87 percent of the African-American community in

SEE MEDIA C2