

## Soledad O'Brien's New CNN Show Gets a Name

Written by Forward Times Staff  
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CNN has announced the names of its new morning shows. Beginning Jan. 2, Soledad O'Brien's 7-9 a.m. program will be titled "Starting Point." The broadcast will be, in CNN's words, a "conversational ensemble" show, with O'Brien at the center.

Former MSNBC anchor Ashleigh Banfield will host the 5-7 a.m. program titled "Early Start," along with former local Chicago newscaster, Zoraida Sambolin.

As previously reported, CNN announced in November that it had decided to dismantle its current morning show "American Morning," and divide the program into two separate shows: one from 5-7 a.m. and the other from 7-9 a.m.

Former "American Morning" anchor O'Brien (she co-hosted from 2003-2007) was recruited back to mornings for the second shift – just in time for the Jan. 3rd Iowa caucuses. According to Broadcasting & Cable, O'Brien will report live from Des Moines, Iowa on Jan. 2 and 3.

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Banfield and Sambolin will remain at the CNN Election Center.



### **T.J. Holmes to Leave CNN**

BET has given itself a facelift and is slowly recovering from its ravaged programming. With the introduction of more serious players, the network is on its way to a new level of respect in the Black community and among its media competitors.

Starting at the top of the year, the network is introducing award-winning CNN journalist, T.J. Holmes as part of the family.

It's all a part of a multi-platform deal with the network.

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His new move is quite a change for him, but he's excited about it.

"[The opportunity] came out of nowhere and I wasn't expecting it, but man the stars aligned and this is just the perfect time and the perfect opportunity for me," he shared with Multichannel.com.

Moving from a major network to another wasn't a random choice. The reporter explained that his inspiration came when he was forced to think of a network with Black faces.

In all the conversations I was having with the folks at BET, one thing they said really struck me: 'Where can black people go when they get home from work and turn on the TV to see people who look like them, talk like them and discuss things that are important to them?' I opened my mouth to respond but nothing came out because there's a void for the type of show that we get to an extent on morning radio with the Steve Harveys and Tom Joyners of the world where they're discussing things and issues relevant to the black community. There's no place to get that on TV anywhere at anytime. So for me the opportunity to speak to my community at this point in my career in this country's history was too good to pass up."

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