



Melody Spann Cooper

Chair and CEO
Midway Broadcasting



Melody Spann Cooper is an innovative entrepreneur and Communications leader with over 30 years of experience in media management, marketing and community engagement. She is recognized for her expertise in developing and gaining consensus around bold initiatives, including public/private partnerships; melding companies' strategies with the socio-economic impact of emerging communities and constituencies; obtaining buy-in from stakeholders, and breaking down silos to build better strategies that create solutions and increase corporate value.

Midway Broadcasting Corporation (MBC), is a best-in-class independently-owned media boutique whose properties include broadcast and digital platforms. As Chairman of Midway Broadcasting Corporation, Spann Cooper joined an elite list of America's female broadcast owners after purchasing the company's controlling interest in 1999. Midway Broadcasting properties include WVON, one of the nation's legacy radio stations. In 2006, Spann Cooper orchestrated a deal with Clear Channel Communications, expanding the coverage of the company's flagship station, which led to increased revenues of 60% within two years. In 2012, she led the creation of WRLL, a local Latinx-based Spanish talk/news radio station doubling the value of the company's assets. In 2020, the corporation launched VON-tv, an OTT Digital Streaming Network reaching more than 100 million households and bringing MBC's combined asset valuation to \$18mm.

Spann Cooper is experienced in governance in government, civic and non-profit organizations. She currently serves as Commissioner of the Illinois Liquor Control Commission; Co-Chair of the Diversity and Inclusion Council for the Obama Library Foundation; Past Chairman of the Illinois Broadcasting Association; Board member of the Gift of Hope; Trustee of Loyola University Chicago; Trustee of the Museum of Science & Industry; Executive Committee Member of the Business Leadership Council, and Co-Founder of the Color Us Women Organization, formed to unite women of color around a common purpose of professional advancement civically and economically.

Spann Cooper's accomplishments have been recognized by numerous organizations that have highlighted her achievements in leadership and business. She has received over 100 awards in business, broadcast and civic engagement. She is a noted speaker and has published articles on issues involving business, media and inclusion. In addition, she has been cited in publications including The New York Times, The Chicago Tribune and Crain's Chicago Business. In 2019, Spann Cooper added 'author' to her list of accomplishments with the release of her first book, *The Girlfriend's Guide To Closing the Deal*. The semi-biographical work for entrepreneurs and female executives shares best practices on driving change and equity at the highest level.

Melody Spann Cooper holds a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Criminal Justice from Loyola University of Chicago. She is married and the daughter of legendary radio personality Pervis Spann, "The Blues Man," co-founder of Midway Broadcasting Corporation.