



racebending.com

advocating just and equal opportunity in film and television

May 20th, 2010

Jeffery Dunn
Chief Executive Officer
Nickelodeon Global Network Ventures, Inc.
1515 Broadway
New York, NY 10036

Dear Mr. Dunn:

We are writing on behalf of thousands of media consumers from over 50 countries around the world, concerned about fair and equal casting in film and television. We wanted to alert you to the glass ceiling demonstrated by the casting breakdowns for Nickelodeon's 2011 season of "Power Rangers." The casting breakdowns shared within the industry and posted on Actor's Access announce that only actors who are white will be considered for the lead character, "Red Ranger- Reese" in the show's 18th season.

When the franchise was with Fox and later, Disney, actors of color were given the opportunity to portray the Red Ranger. Actors of color have led the "Power Rangers" ensemble in past seasons, including Selwyn Ward, Pua Magasiva, Brandon McLaren, and last season's Eka Darville. Yet, after only recently acquiring the franchise, Nickelodeon has restricted the lead role to only white actors.

We urge Nickelodeon to immediately re-release the casting breakdown for the character of *Red Ranger - Reese*, reworded to allow actors of all ethnicities the chance to submit and be considered for this role.

The casting breakdown recalls similarly worded casting calls used for Nickelodeon's *The Last Airbender* (2010) film adaptation, where Caucasian actors were requested to play characters of color. Our online grassroots movement organized shortly after the casting of *The Last Airbender* was announced; we sincerely hope that these casting practices are not indicative of a bias against actors of color at Nickelodeon.

Racebending.com surveyed the diversity of human characters in shows aired on Nicktoons from 1991 to present, and found that only 25% of lead characters were people of color, hardly reflecting the diversity of the American children in its audience, 45% of whom are people of color. Conversely, the "Power Rangers" franchise, targeting the same age group, is notable for introducing two generations of American children to a diverse cast of characters. Given the franchise's rich history of diversity, Nickelodeon should not discriminate by excluding actors of color from auditioning for the lead role.

While we applaud that Nickelodeon will audition actors and actresses of any ethnicity to play the supporting ensemble of heroes in Power Rangers, restricting submissions for the *lead* hero to white actors still signifies a glass ceiling.

Re-releasing the casting breakdown and allowing actors of all ethnicities an equal chance to audition for the Red Ranger lead role will expand the pool of talent available for "Power Rangers," and reaffirm Nickelodeon's interest in diversity and commitment to a fair casting process.

Sincerely,

Marissa Lee
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Founders
Racebending.com
