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O'Dwyer's Newsletter

The Inside News of
PR and Marketing
Communications

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APUS SEEKS U.S. PR PARTNER

APUS Group, the fast-growing Beijing-based mobile software startup, is looking for a U.S.-based PR partner to help the company build its brand worldwide.

Valued at \$1 billion, APUS in January was ranked #128 on Fortune's list of unicorn startups ranked by valuation. CEO Tao Li founded the company in 2014.



APUS is currently preparing to attend F8, Facebook's annual developer conference, which will be held April 12 and 13 at the Fort Mason Center for Arts & Culture, in San Francisco. Li is scheduled to meet with Facebook executives during F8, and the company now invites PR firms to submit proposals for the purpose of assisting APUS in arranging media coverage of the event, including interviews and appearances, as well as creating and coordinating a press conference and other special events during the conference.

All proposals should be emailed to APUS PR head Sharlene Hsia at xiajialing@apusapps.com.

APUS will arrange interviews upon review of submissions.

H+K PITCHES BRITS FOR RIO GAMES

Hill+Knowlton Strategies has won PR duties for the British Olympic Association heading into the Rio Olympics this summer.

"This is a huge year for Team GB and H+K Strategies will immediately become our partners to help galvanize the nation so our Olympians feel the whole country's support on the Road to Rio," said BOA CEO Bill Sweeney.



H+K global sports practice chief Andy Sutherland said the country has an opportunity coming of its successful hosting of the 2012 Games in London. He said: "We remember how that felt and being given the challenge to recreate some of that again has given the whole agency a huge lift."

Associate director Adam Paris leads the account. The Rio de Janeiro Games open August 5.

W20'S BRITO TO LEWIS

Michael Brito, who led social marketing for W20 Group, has moved to Lewis as senior VP of digital marketing to head its Lewis Pulse operation in San Francisco.

Brito, a ubiquitous speaker on the digital and PR circuit, was formerly senior VP of social strategy for Edelman in the Bay Area, guiding many of the firm's blue chip clients through the digital and social media boom in the late 2000s and early 2010s. Previous stints include social and marketing posts at Intel, Yahoo!, HP and Sony Electronics. Lewis Pulse is the firm's digital marketing services unit.



Brito

Lewis has also brought in Cohn & Wolfe alum Mark Burr as senior VP of its Pison unit in San Diego. He was global digital director for Uniworld Boutique River Cruises and earlier was a top exec at GSW Worldwide.

Lewis acquired digital marketing shop (SEO, social) Piston last year.

FH'S YANEZ HEADS HP CORPORATE COMMS

Vanessa Yanez, who led FleishmanHillard's Americas tech practice, has moved to HP to head corporate communications for the tech giant.

Yanez was a senior VP and senior partner at FH in San Francisco, leading its technology sector business in the Americas. She worked on Fitbit's IPO, as well as major campaigns for Visa and Avaya.

Her move is a return to HP, where she was a corporate PR manager and media relations chief in the mid-2000s. She also worked in-house at Sun Microsystems and did agency stints at Axicom (senior VP) Ketchum.



Yanez

Her FH credits include co-founding the Dell Women's Entrepreneur Network and leading its Dell consumer SMB business.

SHERRY TAKES EVP ROLE WITH KELLEN

Greg Sherry, a Levick and G&S alum who built and sold The Sherry Group to Publicis, has moved to Kellen in New York as executive VP of communications for the association manager and PR advisory firm.

Sherry will oversee Kellen's North American comms. staff in the New York-based role. He departs Levick, where he was senior VP of consumer marketing, for the new post.

KOBZEV EXITS JWT TO LEAD COMMS FOR TBWA

Anaka Kobzev, who directed communications for WPP's JWT, is moving to Omnicom as global head of communications for its global ad unit TBWA Worldwide.

Kobzev starts the post April 18 in New York reporting to CEO Troy Ruhanen, who said the agency looked at several candidates within and outside of the ad realm.

She was previously communications director for Interpublic's McCann Erickson and started out at IPG's Initiative.

Kobzev exits JWT amid the turmoil surrounding disgraced former CEO Gustavo Martinez, who was bounced last month amid a sexual harassment suit by the ad agency's communications chief, Erin Johnson.



Kobzev

SCOTT WALKER COMMS DIRECTOR TO WE

Joceyln Webster, communications director for Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker, is leaving the statehouse for a VP slot at WE Communications in Bellevue, Wash., the former Waggener Edstrom.

Walker has deputy Jack Jablonski, a deputy in the state's Dept. of Revenue, as deputy chief of staff for communications.

"Jocelyn has been a tremendous and effective communicator for not only my office, but also the administration as a whole," Walker said in a statement. "She will be missed here in Wisconsin, but we know her commitment to moving this state forward and her love of cheese will make her a Wisconsinite for life."

Webster departs on April 15 after four years with the high-profile, conservative governor of the Badger State. She was previously comms. director for the state's Dept. of Administration and managed public affairs for 7-Eleven. She was also a comms. deputy for New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie's campaign.



Webster

KEKST DEFENDS BRAZILIAN BILLIONAIRE

Kekst and Company is guiding crisis PR for billionaire banker Joseph Safra as he faces corruption charges in Brazil.

The *Financial Times* noted the 77-year-old Safra is "deeply publicity-shy" and carries a net worth of around \$18.6B.

Brazilian prosecutors allege Safra was involved in a criminal scheme to bribe state tax auditors in the country.

Kekst managing director Mark Semer in New York said in a statement that the "allegations being promoted by a Brazilian prosecutor are unfounded." He said there have not been "any improprieties by any of the businesses of The Safra Group" and denied any representative of the company was involved in the scheme alleged.

Kekst worked Safra's acquisition of Chiquita Brands in 2014 with The Cutrale Group.

AL GOV IN HOT WATER OVER COMMS AIDE

Alabama Governor Robert Bentley has become a national story as he copes with scrutiny of his relationship with PR and media advisor Rebekah Caldwell Mason, who has resigned.

Mason heads RCM Communications and served as Bentley's communications director for his 2014 re-election and was a senior advisor since.

Bentley has denied the two had a "physical affair," but acknowledged sexually-charged conversations with the aide. The governor, whose wife of 50 years divorced him last year, said he has no intentions of resigning.

Mason's work was mostly funded through Bentley's re-election campaign to her firm RCM. Al.com reported she has been paid just over \$328,000 for her work with Bentley.

In a statement, Mason said, "My only plans are to focus my full attention on my precious children and my husband who I love dearly."



Bentley

WYNN LEANS ON KEKST IN 'FAMILY FEUD' SUIT

Elaine Wynn is working with Kekst and Company as the co-founder of Wynn Resorts sues to regain shares of the company amid a family struggle over the publicly traded casino giant.

Wynn said March 28 that she has sued in Nevada state court to regain "her own" stock controlled by her ex-husband, Stephen Wynn, chairman and CEO of the company.

Wynn alleges her ex-husband orchestrated her ouster from the company's board in retaliation for her "asking questions about the 'tone at the top,' internal controls, and "reckless activity of the CEO and others," among other charges.

Steve Wynn, who works with Joele Frank, fired back this week that his ex-wife's claim is "filled with lies and distortions and is an embarrassment to Ms. Wynn and her counsel."

The company itself said Wynn's claims are "consistent with the falsehoods and distortions she previously made against the company and its CEO."

Wynn Resorts' board in 2015 bounced Ms. Wynn by not re-nominating her.

She responded with an unsuccessful proxy contest. Abernathy MacGregor Group worked that event for Ms. Wynn.

Thefool.com in 2015 called the familial board struggle "the family feud that could tear apart Las Vegas' most successful casino." Steve Wynn, speaking to the *Wall Street Journal*, called it Sin City's version of the divorce battle film "War of the Roses." "There will be comeuppance for that as you will see shortly," Wynn told the Journal of Ms. Wynn's statements and legal action. "I've tried everything under the sun to help out, and nothing has worked. That's not unusual in the world of divorces."

RUIZ HEADS COMMS FOR BUSINESS INSIDER

Mario Ruiz, former top PR strategist for The Huffington Post, has moved to Business Insider as senior VP of communications.

Ruiz has been running his own New York-based shop since leaving the HuffPost in 2012. He was previously a VP for media relations at DKC.

BI CEO Henry Blodget said Ruiz advised the company "during a pivotal period when we were growing especially rapidly" and called Ruiz "an exceptional corporate communications and media professional."



Ruiz

New York-based BI was founded in 2008 by ex-DoubleClick CEO Kevin Ryan. Germany's Axel Springer bought an 88% stake in September 2015.

TIME INC SELLS 'THIS OLD HOUSE'

Time Inc. publishing alum Eric Thorkilsen, backed by private equity fund TZIP Growth Partners, has acquired "This Old House" and its related properties from Time Inc.

The home improvement standard, running on TV since 1979, along with digital properties, a magazine, and other associated media properties, will operate under This Old House Ventures LLC.

Financial terms of the deal were not released.

Thorkilsen, a circulation and publishing chief at Time Inc over 30 years, will serve as CEO of the new venture. He said he's been a "champion" of This Old House "for the better part of three decades and it is an honor to be able to rejoin this extraordinary franchise and bring it to a new generation of fans."

Thisoldhouse.com draws about 5.5M monthly unique visitors, while its magazine claims nearly one million subscribers. Along with the flagship TV show on PBS, the group also includes a companion show, "Ask This Old House."

The TV shows are readying their 37th and 15th seasons, respectively. Susan Wyland, a former Hearst editor and managing editor for Real Simple, has been named editor-in-chief of This Old House magazine.

GA GOV WIELDS VETO AFTER CORP RANCOR

Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal vetoed last week a measure derided by corporations as discriminatory toward the LGBT community in the Peachtree State.

A chorus of major businesses, sparked by Salesforce CEO Marc Benioff, have come out against the bill, which was pitched by its legislative proponents as a bid to protect religious freedom. Disney, Unilever and Netflix were among companies that threatened to pull the plug on Georgia business. The NFL said the law could threaten Atlanta's chances of winning an upcoming Super Bowl.

The outcry is reminiscent of a battle in Indiana last year, where Gov. Mike Pence signed a similar bill and opened the state to fierce criticism. Indiana eventually hired Porter Novelli to help undo the damage to its economic development and tourism prospects.

Deal said March 28 he was not responding to campaigns from either side of the bill, but wanted to keep Georgia a "welcoming state ... full of loving, kind and generous people." He said versions of the bill "contained language that could give rise to state-sanctioned discrimination."

Netflix, which has filmed projects in the state over the past year and slated two more, said it would move production to another state if the law was passed.

"We strongly oppose the discriminatory language and intent of Georgia's pending religious liberty bill, which clearly violates the values and principles of inclusion and the ability of all people to live and work free from discrimination," Time Warner said in a statement.

"We would be disappointed to see our pipeline of production end at the Georgia border because of this legislation," said the film producer Amblin Partners.

At least one legislator who supported the bill said he would work to override the governor's veto.

TRUMP PR AIDE CEGIELSKI DENOUNCES HIM

Stephanie Cegielski, ex-VP-PR/PRSA, who headed a super PAC supporting Donald Trump, has stunned the political world by denouncing him at great length—recalling what Scott McClellan did to President Bush in 2008.

McClellan, who was Bush's press secretary, wrote, according to *Politico*, a "scathing" and "harsh" description of his former boss's administration in a 341-page book called *What Happened: Inside the Bush*



Cegielski

White House and Washington's Culture of Deception.

Cegielski, a 2006 graduate of the University of Denver Law School, worked in PR at PRSA for three years until she was fired upon arriving for work on Monday, July 27, 2015 by recently appointed CEO Joe Truncale.

She had risen to VP-PR after the sudden death of Arthur Yann on June 13, 2013.

Trump Called "Monster"

"I am now taking full responsibility for helping to create this monster—and reaching out directly to those voters who, like me, wanted Trump to be the real deal," she said in a release. At least a dozen media picked it up, giving it major play.

She charges that Trump was not a serious candidate at the beginning and surprised himself when he found so much support by the public.

"He certainly was never prepared nor equipped to go all the way to the White House but his ego has now taken over the driver's seat and nothing else matters," she wrote.

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PR & SOCIAL MEDIA NEWS & VIEWS

TRUMP AIDE DENOUNCES HIM (Cont'd from pg. 3)

A Trump spokeswoman denounced Cegielski, saying “She knows nothing about Mr. Trump or the campaign and her disingenuous and factually inaccurate statements in no way resemble any shred of truth.

This is yet another desperate person looking for their 15 minutes.”

The full Cegielski “Open Letter to Trump,” running to nearly 2,000 words, was placed on XOJane.com.

She expresses her belief that “Trump is simply a television ‘character’ whose 2016 bid is merely an extension of his TV and real estate-fueled celebrity.”

Laura Kane was named chief communications officer of the Society earlier this month. She spent most of her career, from 2003-2014, with Aflac insurance in Atlanta, rising to VP-corporate communications. She was at Marsh (insurance) in New York from October 2014 to March 2016 (18 months) as global head of media relations and external affairs.

Couric Sees 'Hypocritical' Behavior by Cegielski

Yahoo News Live’s Katie Couric, who interviewed Cegielski for 20 minutes March 29, saw “hypocritical” behavior in Cegielski suddenly switching sides after initially supporting Trump.

Couric asked Cegielski whether she agreed with the “hypocritical” charge. Cegielski disagreed with Couric, saying she would have remained with Trump if he had “taken the high road” and concentrated on “policy” rather



Couric interviews Cegielski for Yahoo News.

than saying “nasty things” about people on Twitter.

“I would probably have stuck with him,” said Cegielski.

Couric found that Cegielski’s open letter was “incredibly harsh.” Cegielski called Trump “simply a television ‘character’ whose 2016 bid is merely an extension of his TV and real estate-fueled celebrity.”

Couric notes that Cegielski, who was communications director of the Trump-backing “Make America Great Again” super PAC, never met or spoke to Trump and asked Cegielski how she could make such harsh comments about him? Cegielski replied that she relied on the statements and actions of Trump as reported in the media.

Slate noted she “paints a picture of a campaign and candidate that began with modest aspirations of hitting double digits in support, but later caught fire and began to believe its own hype.”

DE NIRO LEARNS NOT ALL PRESS IS GOOD

By Ronn Torossian

In show business, the old adage that all publicity is good publicity is believed by some and followed by many. But is it really true? Or do public figures and their projects stand to benefit more from striving for only good publicity and running for the hills whenever controversy strikes?

Over the weekend, legendary actor Robert De Niro found himself faced with this decision. But rather than face the music, he chose to avoid the conspiracy and tread lightly.

The anti-vaccine conspiracy

The controversy started with De Niro’s announcement that he had given the green light for *Vaxxed* at the Tribeca film festival, which he helped co-found. The film in question is an anti-vaccine motion picture directed by Andrew Wakefield, most well known for his discredited research linking autism, measles, mumps and rubella to vaccines. The scandal which followed led to the loss of his medical license and injured his reputation.

Wakefield then spun the situation to his benefit by playing an underdog speaking truth in a wake of government lies. In spite of proof, despite the fact that his study was flawed, his movement gained enough traction to persuade many parents from getting their children vaccinated. Owing partially to this movement, diseases like measles have made a comeback in the United States.

De Niro’s downfall

De Niro originally defended his decision by stating, “Grace [De Niro’s wife] and I have a child with autism ... and we believe it is critical that all of the issues surrounding the causes of autism be openly discussed and examined.”

But when things went south and scientists’ clamor won, he back-stepped and issued a statement showing a change of heart.

It said: “My intent in screening this film was to provide an opportunity for conversation around an issue that is deeply personal to me and my family. But after reviewing it over the past few days with the Tribeca Film Festival team and others from the scientific community, we do not believe it contributes to or furthers the discussion I had hoped for.”

Where he went wrong...

De Niro made the right decision in choosing to pull his support from the film. However, had he gone about things differently from the beginning, he could have withstood the talk and ridden the waves of controversy. This, in turn, would have boosted awareness of the Tribeca Festival, and brought greater exposure.

Sometimes in the industry it is not what a person does but why he does it, which creates a problem. This is the heart and soul of public relations, and why experts can often turn even the worst scenarios into a ray of hope for a company. They do this not by changing the situation, but by changing how people perceive it. For instance, budget cuts due to overspending become “restructuring,” and promotions overshadow who got fired.

(Continued on page 6)

NEWS OF PR FIRMS**GATESMAN+DAVE JOINS IPREX**

Global communications network IPREX has picked up its newest agency partner, Pittsburgh-based marketing communications firm Gatesman+Dave.

Gatesman+Dave, which specializes in technology, food/beverage, retail, healthcare, energy and B2B communications, was founded in 2006. The agency accounted for more than \$2.13 million in 2015 net fees, according to O'Dwyer's rankings of PR firms, representing nearly 19 percent growth from 2014. Clients include Shop 'n Save, Del Monte Foods, Starkist, S&T Bank, Fedex, PPG and Consol Energy Inc.

The agency signals IPREX's first partner in the Pittsburgh region.

IPREX, which maintains administrative offices in Milwaukee, now holds nearly 80 agency partners in nearly 20 countries across the globe. Other U.S. agency partners include French/West/Vaughan, Fineman PR, Fahlgren Mortine, Makovsky and Pierson Grant Public Relations.

GROUND FLOOR MEDIA JOINS PROI

Global communications partnership PROI Worldwide has bolstered its presence in the U.S. Rocky Mountain region with the signing of its newest partner agency, Denver-based GroundFloor Media.

GroundFloor Media, which specializes in social media strategy, digital marketing, creative services and crisis, was founded in 2001. The agency holds additional offices in Oklahoma City; Grand Junction, CO.; Oahu, HA; Milwaukee; Pueblo, CO.; and Portland, OR, and was previously a partner in the Public Relations Global Network.

GFM clients have included Bellco, Children's Hospital Colorado, the City and County of Denver, Door to Door Organics, Earth Balance, Rally, SCL Health and ViaWest.

The world's largest partnership of independent global PR agencies, PROI Worldwide now holds 75 partner agencies with offices in more than 50 countries, accounting for total worldwide staff of more than 5,000. Combined partner revenues was more than \$702 million in 2015, a sharp upswing from 2014's \$615 million. Partner agencies include Finn Partners, G&S Business Communications and RF | Binder Partners. The partnership was founded in 1970.

RUDER FINN ROLLS OUT BLOOM TECH

New York-based independent PR giant Ruder Finn has unveiled Bloom Tech, a new specialist integrated communications offering that will focus on the Internet of Things market segment.

Billed as one of the industry's first "transmedia" agencies, Bloom Tech will specialize in using digital technologies to tell personalized stories in a fragmented media landscape. The agency will exist as part of its new incubator unit Bloom, which focuses on the technology and health sectors.

The agency said the unit would set new approaches to the practice of transmedia storytelling, using new technologies and analytical tools across a variety of media formats.

NEW ACCOUNTS**West**

Landis Communications, San Francisco/Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Stanford, as AOR for the Palo-Alto based medical center staffed by nearly 700 physicians. The prominent children's hospital is part of the Stanford University system and is currently in the midst of a major expansion project that will nearly double its size. Landis is handling PR, marketing and social media services.

Murphy O'Brien PR, Los Angeles/La Quinta, A Waldorf Astoria Resort, Palm Springs, Calif.; Nekupe Sporting Resort and Retreat, Nicaragua, luxury property on a 1,300-acre nature reserve in Nicaragua's Pacific countryside; Thompson Seattle, luxury hotel slated to open summer 2016, in downtown Seattle, all for PR.

JMPR Public Relations, Woodland Hills, Calif./The Quail, A Motorsports Gathering, classic car show during Monterey Car Week, slated for Aug. 19 at the Quail Lodge & Golf Club in Carmel Valley, Calif., for PR, sponsor relations and credentialing for the event, as well as a series of Peninsula Signature events.

New York Area

Cognito, New York/ReliaMax, financial, tech-based private student lending solutions provider, as AOR for integrated comms. The company provides origination, servicing, insurance and capital markets services for private student lenders and insured \$2.5B in loans last year.

5W PR, New York/Wunder2, beauty brand of makeup products, as AOR for PR in the US. The line includes Wunderlift, Wunderbrow and Coverproof.

Rubenstein PR, New York/New York Residence, residential and commercial real estate company, for a targeted PR campaign to raise awareness of NYR and its expertise in providing properties for international clients looking to enhance their real estate holdings in the city.

Missy Farren & Associates, New York/Megpies, Brooklyn-based wholesale bakeshop, as AOR. The two-year-old brand is increasing distribution on a regional and national scale.

The O'Hara Project, Morristown, N.J./Hoboken Farms, specialty food brand of pasta sauces that started at local farmers markets in the Garden State, as AOR for PR.

Resound Marketing, Princeton, N.J./New Jersey Chapter of the American Marketing Association, as AOR to promote events and raise the profile of the organization through contributed articles.

Southeast

Trevelino/Keller, Atlanta/The College Football Hall of Fame & Chick-fil-A Fan Experience, for integrated PR and social media marketing for the HoF and the 94,000-square-foot attraction in downtown Atlanta, and Duda|Paine Architects, international design firm, as PR and digital AOR.

Canada

Erin Richards PR, Toronto/RGK Entertainment Group and Open Road Recordings, as AOR for media relations.

NEWS OF SERVICES**RODALE'S SCHULMAN HEADS UBM AMERICAS**

UBM, the London-based events giant that unloaded PR Newswire earlier this year, has tapped Scott Schulman from Rodale as CEO for the Americas.

UBM claims to be the largest B2B exhibition company in the US and is eyeing a larger presence in Mexico and Brazil.

Schulman was president of Rodale, the active interest publisher of titles like *Men's Health* and *Bicycling*. He was previously president of Dow Jones Corporate Markets Group.

Simon Foster, who held the Americas role, moves back to CEO of EMEA at UBM. Tim Cobbold, CEO of UBM, said Schulman's leadership, operational experience and "appreciation of the value of content" made him the right person to head UBM's Americas business.

TRUMP HIRES MANAFORT FOR DELEGATE PUSH

Presidential hopeful Donald Trump has enlisted veteran lobbyist and political PR consultant Paul Manafort in an effort to lock up his delegate lead in the Republican primaries.

Longtime Republican strategist Manafort served as coordinator for Ronald Reagan's 1980 presidential campaign, and later advised the presidential runs for Sens. Robert Dole and John McCain, as well as the successful campaigns of George W. Bush and George H.W. Bush.

Manafort was founding partner of Republican lobbying powerhouse Black, Manafort & Stone, which he left in 1996. That firm — later renamed Black, Manafort, Stone and Kelly — is now part of Prime Policy Group, a subsidiary of WPP's Burson-Marsteller.

Manafort is currently senior partner at Davis, Manafort and Freedman, which is led by Rick Davis, who was national campaign manager for John McCain's 2008 presidential run.

DE NIRO'S PR LESSON (Cont'd from page 4)

De Niro's public issue was he took a stance on an issue without fully thinking it through. He may have not calculated the depth of opposition to Wakefield. By saying he chose to air the film to provoke conversation about "the causes of autism" implies he believes Wakefield's discredited research.

PR wise, he may have been better off discussing the importance of giving art a platform, even when it challenges our beliefs or provokes controversy. He could have even called on free speech rights, and remained neutral while stating the festival supported Wakefield, not because it believed in his research, but because it believed in Wakefield's right to share it.

By making the decision less personal, the controversy would have still stirred up protests, but they would not have been so directly focused on him. Sometimes the best way to get away with a "bad" decision is to acknowledge why it is bad while showing people the silver lining in the dark cloud. De Niro failed to do that and as a result, could only spare his reputation by doing a full 180-degree turn.

5WPR CEO Ronn Torossian is a well-regarded crisis PR expert.

PEOPLE**Joined**

Joshua Taylor, a seasoned public affairs aide, to Edwards, Davis Stover & Assocs., Washington, D.C., as a partner DS&A is the firm of ex-Rep. Chet Edwards and his ex-chief of staff Lindsey Davis Stover. Taylor was Edwards' comms. director from 2003-11, around a stint as Texas comms. director for the Obama campaign in 2008. The Texas native was press secretary and acting assistant secretary of PA for at the Department of Veterans Affairs, where Davis Stover was a special assistant and White House liaison. He spent the past year as director of comms. for Third Way, the DC think tank.

**Taylor**

Holly Beverly, senior vice president of marketing partnerships at Beverly Hills-based entertainment studio Relativity Media LLC, to Rogers & Cowan, Los Angeles, as a VP. Prior to Relativity, which she joined in 2011, she was EVP at Vanguard Entertainment Media Marketing Group and did stints in marketing and consumer products at 20th Century Fox and DreamWorks. At R&C, she focuses on new business, marketing and social media efforts for its entertainment and brand teams, and manages a team reporting to CEO Mark Owens.

**Beverly**

Colby Vogt, who led research and analytics for FleishmanHillard's eastern US region, as well as the EMEA and APAC areas, to DeVries Global, New York, as global executive VP, business intelligence, and leader of its newly created BI practice, covering analytics, insights and measurement offerings. He was previously a senior client manager for Edelman's Strategy-One operation and regional director of client services for Gallup. He reports to DeVries Global CEO, Heidi Hovland.

Bonnie Goodman to The Music Center, Los Angeles performing arts center, as senior VP of marketing and communications, starting June 1. She reports to new president and CEO Rachel Moore. Goodman has been interim head since January and has counseled the center through her firm, Goodman Communications Group. She spent 25 years with Hill+Knowlton, including GM of its Los Angeles, Irvine and Sacramento offices.

Peggy Hudson, SVP of government affairs, Direct Marketing Assn., to Venable LLP, Washington, D.C., as a senior legislative advisor. She is a former VP of federal and international affairs for BP America and VP, legislative affairs, for the Am. Portland Cement Alliance.

Ashley Simmons, director of communications, Intelligent Transportation Society of America, to the Telecommunications Industry Assn., Arlington, Va., as director of communications. She was an A/D for the David All Group and director of comms. for the Information Technology Industry Council. TIA reps manufacturers and suppliers of global comms. networks.

STARTUPBOOTCAMP SIGNS COGNITO

Financial consultancy and technology communications firm Cognito has been named U.S. agency of record for business accelerator network Startupbootcamp FinTech, and will partner with that network as it launches its newest accelerator program in New York.

Startupbootcamp gives startups access to an international network of partners, investors and mentors. Primarily based in Europe — with programs in Amsterdam, Berlin, Copenhagen, Eindhoven, Istanbul, Barcelona and London, as well as Singapore — Startupbootcamp in November launched its New York location with a focus on financial technology. It is the network's third such program to focus on this specialty (similar programs have been established in London and Singapore). The network maintains a second U.S. location in Miami, which focuses on healthcare.

Startupbootcamp's New York program will pair startups with mentors and offer an accelerator class comprised of ten companies that will work out of Startupbootcamp's Midtown office for three months, receiving mentorship, funding and investor access as teams work to build successful financial technology products.

The New York effort is backed by financial brands Rabobank, MasterCard, Thomson Reuters, Route 66 Ventures and Santander.

As part of the partnership, Cognito will help raise awareness of Startupbootcamp FinTech's brand and media profile in New York, providing marketing and communications support for the financial technology accelerator in a bid to spread its message and attract top talent.

Cognito Americas managing director Gregory Papajohn will serve on the Startupbootcamp advisory board, and will mentor companies on marketing and communications strategy.

Papajohn has previously worked with startups such as Adyen, Marqeta, OpenFin, TickerTags, Viewpost, Wunder Capital and Xignite. He also co-founded Cognito Ventures, which was created to meet the communications needs of private, venture-backed firms.

New York-based Cognito, which was founded in 2000, currently partners with Startupbootcamp's Fintech Singapore and London programs. The firm holds additional offices in London, Los Angeles and Singapore.

GOP HIRES LOVELACE TO WOO BLACK MEDIA

Telly Lovelace, a Capitol Hill and PhRMA PR alum, has joined the Republican National Committee to help the party reach African-American audiences.

Lovelace, a longtime GOP communications operative, takes the title of national director of African-American Initiatives and Media, charged with outreach to black voters and media.

GOP black media director Orlando Wilson stepped down in early March, while its director of African-American outreach, Kristal Quarker-Hartsfield, is also exiting.

The party is looking to reverse a paltry performance among black voters in 2012, when



Lovelace

Mitt Romney won only six percent of the African-American vote, compared with a still sparse 11% by George W. Bush in 2004.

Lovelace has run his own firm for the past six years since serving as director of communications for Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan. He was comms. director for Rep. Mike Turner (R-Ohio) and Rep. Jerry Weller (R-Ill.) around a stint as senior manager of communications and PA for the Pharmaceutical Research & Manufacturers of America.

COOPER TAKES SENIOR PA ROLE WITH WEBER

Patricia Cooper, executive director of the California Biotechnology Foundation, has moved to Weber Shandwick in Sacramento as a senior VP focused on public affairs.

Cooper will play a role in PA work in Weber's Washington, D.C., Bay Area and Los Angeles offices.

Prior to nearly a decade with the CBF, she directed Californians Allied for Patient Protection after 10 years with EIP Associates. She started out with Keane & Associates and Hiestand Assocs. in the mid-1990s.

Weber PA chief Ranny Cooper said clients are looking for "multi-sector, multi-stakeholder" approaches on a state and national scale, and praised Patricia Cooper's experience with both.



Cooper

W2O, LAGRANT IN FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

San Francisco-based marketing and communications network W2O Group has teamed up with nonprofit the Lagrant Foundation to establish a fellowship program that will focus on minorities pursuing careers in healthcare communications.

Los Angeles-based Lagrant provides scholarships, career and professional development workshops and internships to minority undergraduate and graduate students in the fields of advertising, marketing and PR. The foundation, which has provided \$1.83 million and 331 scholarships, was founded in 1998.

W2O has pledged a three-year, \$50,000 commitment to fund the Future Leaders in Healthcare Fellowship Program, which will place two students each year in a 10-week paid fellowship in one of the W2O's offices.

The program, which was spearheaded by W2O Group founder and CEO Jim Weiss and TLF CEO and chairman Kim Hunter, was established to provide fellows and prospective healthcare communications pros careers in the workforce and the opportunity to work with top healthcare client partners.

The program ultimately serves to diversify the industry and increase the number of minorities in these fields.

W2O, the network parent of WCG, Twist Marketing and Brewlife, accounted for more than \$95 million in net fees in 2015, according to O'Dwyer's rankings of PR firms.

The agency holds additional offices in San Diego, New York, Chicago, Austin, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, Boston, Basel and London.

MWW's CEO Mike Kempner, long a supporter of Hillary Clinton and other Democrats, has become a liability for her and the party because of MWW's hiring of sex-stained Anthony Weiner last year.

With so much of the attack on Donald Trump focusing on his alleged bad attitude towards women and his opposition to abortions, the Clinton campaign cannot afford to have a tie to a person or firm linked to sexual misconduct with women. It would open Clinton to similar attacks.

Weiner is married to Huma Abedin, who has been befriended by Clinton since Abedin was a 19-year-old college student. Sometimes referred to as Clinton's "step-daughter," she was deputy chief of staff for Clinton when she was Secretary of State.

Weiner's sexploits, which won him cover stories in the *New York Post*, *New York News* and *New Yorker* magazine, got their most detailed description in an Aug. 9, 2013 piece in *Business Insider* under the headline, "The 10 Most Ridiculous Things to Come Out of the Anthony Weiner Sexting Scandal."

The worst, from a PR standpoint, was No. 9—Weiner admitting to sexting "a few women," then "six to ten," then "no more than three." PR people have to be truthful. The July 23, 2015 *New York Post* said Weiner "destroyed his own promising political career by botching a 2011 sext-message imbroglio with bald-faced lies." It also accused Weiner of "stonewalling," another no-no for politicians or PR people.

"PR" to the Rescue! (Kemper & McCauley)

Ignoring such baggage and no doubt doing a favor to Abedin, Kempner on July 23, 2015 named Weiner to its board of advisers, describing him as a "brilliant strategist [with] expertise on many issues" who would be "a great asset to our firm."

This astounded NYP which said WMM "has hired the last person in the world that most people would call on to dispense advice on dealing with a scandal: disgraced, penis-texting former Congressman Anthony Weiner." What astounded us was O'Dwyer senior editor Kevin McCauley posting an opinion on the O'Dwyer website the same day saying NYP had made "a gleeful right-wing media assault on his (Kempner's) decision to give the ex-Congressman a second chance." NYP ran a page one story on the appointment.

Wrote McCauley: MWW "made a shrewd and gutsy move" in hiring Weiner since he is "a straight-talking, no BS, street-smart guy, a personality type found lacking in most large PR firms. Before triggering his own downfall via the texting fiasco, he was the most powerful Democratic politician in the city. He's NYC through and through. A guy who gives street cred to MWW."

Despite such cheerleading, Weiner lasted less than two months at MWW (to Sept. 16, 2015), a victim of the media spotlight. NYP said it obtained an internal memo that described Weiner as a "victim of the media who left of his own accord to start his own company" and "he understands that his presence here has created noise and

distraction that just isn't helpful."

Weiner criticized the memo, saying he did not "express any of those sentiments" expressed by Kempner.

McCauley, ending an editorial career of at least 35 years including the last 26 with the O'Dwyer Co., joined MWW as VP for editorial services Oct 6. McCauley had given his two weeks' notice to the O'Dwyer Co. in September, probably knowing that Weiner had been dumped by MWW. Efforts by him and Kempner to rebuild Weiner's image had failed.

The Weiner sexting connection has dealt a blow to the image of MWW and its promotional efforts.

Kempner, McCauley, et al, have "gone to the mattresses," a phrase used to describe what members of a Mafia family did when besieged by enemies. Wikipedia says the besieged family would gather in one home where mattresses were placed on the floor because there were not enough beds.

Calls and emails to Kempner/McCauley are not returned. Instead, we heard from chief of staff Gina Cherwin, who was a fund-raiser for Al Gore's Alliance for Climate Protection from May 2009 to May 2011. She also worked for the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee.

MWW is now seeking the lowest possible profile, dropping out of the O'Dwyer rankings after being in them for five years as one of the "top ten" firms, and cancelling advertising in all media. It ranked No. 7 in 2014 with fees of \$51.7 million.

Kempner had bought the firm out from Interpublic in 2010 with one of the aims being freed from Interpublic's ban on releasing revenue figures and headcounts.

MWW releases often start out with the phrase, "one of the top five global independent PR firms" or use that phrase at the bottom of the release. It was used at the beginning of the release when Arthur Schwartz joined as SVP and managing director, corporate communications, on Oct. 16, 2014.

Schwartz quit in September 2015 which NYP said was caused by the "fallout from Weiner's hiring." NYP called it a "stunning resignation." Schwartz had been billed as a "respected GOP operative" who would bring expertise in PA and regulatory and government relations. He had been at AIG under CEO Maurice Greenberg and then with Greenberg's C.V. Starr & Co.

MWW has not ranked higher than No. 6 in the O'Dwyer rankings.

Dropping from Rankings Cuts Visibility

MWW has dropped not only from the main O'Dwyer rankings but the New York rankings where it was No. 4 in 2014; entertainment/cultural rankings where it was No. 3; financial PR/IR rankings where it was No. 7; environmental/PA rankings where it was No. 8; professional services, No. 6; food/beverage, No. 5, and health-care, No. 22.

Firms that make the "Top Ten" in O'Dwyer's often report a doubling of their over-the-transom, unsolicited new business leads.

— Jack O'Dwyer