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SVC'S GILLESPIE HEADS FOR AT&T

Ed Gillespie, chairman of Sard Verbinnen & Co.'s public affairs group, will join AT&T as executive VP-external & legislative affairs on April 22. He will report to Randall Stephenson, CEO.



Ed Gillespie

The one-time chairman of the Republican National Committee and aide to George Bush II takes over for Jim Cicconi, who held the lobbying post on an interim basis.

Cicconi emerged from retirement last fall to take the chief lobbyist post. He assumed the duties of Bob Quinn, who exited in 2018 following revelations that AT&T paid \$600K to Michael Co-

hen, president Trump's personal lawyer.

Gillespie has had a twenty-year relationship with AT&T, while at Quinn Gillespie & Associates and Ed Gillespie Strategies. He also counseled AT&T at SV&C.

"Ed will be a tremendous addition to our team with his wealth of public affairs experience and deep understanding of the public policy issues important to our customers, our economy and our company," said Stephenson in a statement.

With the departure of Gillespie, Bruce Haynes, vice chairman of SVC Public Affairs, moves into the chairman seat, and Trent Duffy, co-founder of HDMK Public Affairs, joins as vice chairman and co-head of the DC office.

GRISHAM OUT AS WH PRESS SECRETARY

Stephanie Grisham is leaving the White House press secretary post after eight months. She'll be remembered for not holding regularly scheduled press briefings.

Kayleigh McEnany, a 31-year-old spokesperson for the Trump campaign, will take over for Grisham.



Stephanie Grisham

Donald Trump has been holding his own daily press briefings, boasting about his high ratings during the COVID-19 crisis that has killed more than 10,000 Americans.

Grisham will return to the staff of first lady Melania Trump as spokesperson and chief of staff. She replaces Lindsay Reynolds.

In her statement, Trump called Grisham "a mainstay and true leader in the administration from even before day one."

Grisham promises to stick around the White House to help facilitate "a smooth transition for as long as needed."

She took over the White House press secretary job from Sarah Huckabee Sanders.

INDEPENDENT PR FIRMS GREW 7.7% IN '19

The top 130 independent PR firms posted an average 7.7 percent growth rate in 2019 to \$2.89B and a 6 percent jump in employment to 16,201, according to *O'Dwyer's* 2020 annual rankings released today.

The 25 biggest firms showed 7.2 percent growth to \$2B in fee income and a 5.6 percent uptick in staff to 12,420.

Ninety-seven firms posted gains, while 27 reported declines in fee income.

Remaining firms were either flat or 2019 reported numbers not comparable with last year's, largely due to restructurings.

Edelman remains the top dog as net fees inched ahead 0.4 percent to \$892M and employment rose 1.5 percent to 5,703.

That marks somewhat of a turnaround for Richard Edelman's firm following its 0.6 percent slip in fees to \$888.4M in the 2019 rankings.

Finn Sets Pace

Finn Partners showed the biggest percentage gain among the Top Ten firms, up 35 percent to \$119.3M.

It outpaced ICR (+27.6 percent to \$88.3M), Prosek Partners (+16.5 percent to \$54.8M) and W2O Group (+15 percent to \$203.8M).

Peter Finn said 2019 growth was driven by new business wins, expansion of existing clients, key senior hires and strategic acquisitions that bolstered capabilities in health, digital/creative, consumer, and financial services.

He noted that the healthcare group led by Gil Bashe expanded from less than 10 employees and clients in 2015 to a group that now has more 120 staffers and 100-plus clients.

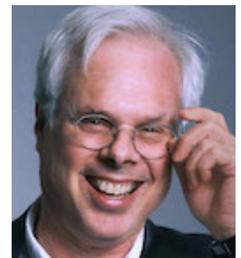
"Our values-based culture, cross-practice collaboration and commitment to working hard and playing nice, continued to attract top talent at all levels," noted Finn.

He's confident Finn Partners' senior leadership in health, sustainability, technology, integrated marketing, consumer and financial services will power future growth.

"Our 800 staff across 19 offices in the US, Europe and Asia, continue to deliver breakthrough campaigns rooted in analytics and insights and powered by strategy and creativity," said Finn.

A highlight in 2019: Finn Partners became the first general market PR firm to be honored with the New York Urban League's Champions of Diversity award for its "Actions Speak Louder Diversity and Inclusion" initiative.

(Continued on page 3)



Peter Finn

O'DWYER'S RANKINGS OF U.S INDEPENDENT PR FIRMS (ranked by worldwide fees)

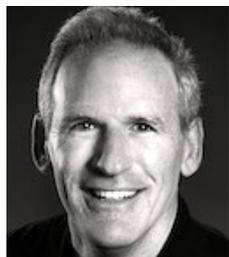
Firm	2019 Net Fees	FT Employees	% chg. vs.2018	Firm	2019 Net Fees	FT Employees	% chg. vs.2018
1. Edelman, New York, NY	\$892,000,000	5,703	0.4	69. Trevelino/Keller, Atlanta, GA	\$4,730,468	28	15
2. W2O Group, San Francisco, CA	222,865,000	923	26	70. L.C. Williams & Associates, Chicago, IL	4,728,220	25	1
3. APCO Worldwide, Washington, DC	142,262,200	786	6	71. March Communications, Boston, MA	4,693,059	33	12
4. Finn Partners, New York, NY	119,322,000	777	35	72. Lumina Communications, San Jose, CA	4,505,079	22	8
5. ICR, New York, NY	88,280,795	228	27.6	73. MCS Healthcare Public Relations, Bedminster, NJ	4,372,952	23	4.3
6. Zeno Group, New York, NY	79,269,860	489	8	74. Berk Communications, New York, NY	4,306,145	21	24.6
7. Ruder Finn Inc., New York, NY	78,000,000	702	12.9	75. Public Communications Inc., Chicago, IL	4,226,126	38	-17.3
8. Prosek Partners, New York, NY	54,738,707	181	16.5	76. Fish Consulting, Fort Lauderdale, FL	3,740,011	23	13.3
9. MWWPR, New York, NY	42,741,686	178	0	77. BackBay Communications, Boston, MA	3,674,919	17	23
10. Hotwire, New York, NY	42,161,713	285	14.3	78. Cerrell Associates, Los Angeles, CA	3,637,398	15	-3.6
11. Padilla, Minneapolis, MN	37,327,206	194	-9	79. Standing Partnership, St. Louis, MO	3,626,587	17	24
12. Spectrum, Washington, DC	33,900,000	116	3	80. Champion Management Group, Dallas, TX	3,577,408	21	26.6
13. 5W Public Relations, New York, NY	33,830,327	158	4.4	81. Beehive Strategic Communication, St. Paul, MN	3,436,169	13	15.5
14. IMRE, LLC, Baltimore, MD	33,334,000	158	52	82. RB Milestone Group, Stamford, CT	3,433,225	4	41.2
15. Kivvit, Chicago, IL	33,087,699	105	36.7	83. Zapwater Communications, Chicago, IL	3,421,775	028	18
16. Citizen Relations, Los Angeles, CA	32,577,578	206	NA	84. Brownstein Group, Philadelphia, PA	3,418,589	18	35
17. French I West I Vaughan, Raleigh, NC	32,509,302	121	11	85. SourceCode Communications, New York, NY	3,342,813	22	112
18. Coyne PR, Parsippany, NJ	32,000,000	150	7	86. Idea Grove, Dallas, TX	3,288,889	26	22
19. G&S Business Communications, New York, NY	30,733,412	179	1	87. LaVoie Health Science, Boston, MA	3,270,282	15	31
20. Fahlgren Mortine, Columbus, OH	29,504,385	193	0	88. Raffetto Herman Strategic Comms, Seattle, WA	3,225,950	19	-5
21. Havas Formula, New York, NY	25,630,379	135	15	89. CashmanKatz, Glastonbury, CT	3,175,000	26	11
22. Evoke KYNE, New York, NY	25,149,453	107	24	90. TruePoint Communications, Dallas, TX	3,094,469	20	18.8
23. Jackson Spalding, Atlanta, GA	24,844,375	140	-1.8	91. Crenshaw Communications, New York, NY	3,047,435	14	35.9
24. Crosby, Annapolis, MD	24,534,990	85	18.6	92. BoardroomPR, Ft. Lauderdale, FL	3,000,000	17	3.5
25. Hunter, New York, NY	24,300,000	121	1	93. IW Group, Inc., West Hollywood, CA	2,993,000	11	38
26. Matter Communications, Newburyport, MA	23,174,274	166	17.4	94. Approach Marketing, Worthington, OH	2,961,685	14	57
27. PAN Communications, Boston, MA	22,493,586	148	13.1	95. Lovell Communications, Nashville, TN	2,952,973	19	0
28. Taylor, New York, NY	20,200,000	85	-3	96. Caliber Corporate Advisers, New York, NY	2,922,102	16	10.8
29. Inkhouse, Waltham, MA	20,167,063	116	14	97. Lion & Lamb Communications, New York, NY	2,868,000	21	38.8
30. Highwire PR, San Francisco, CA	19,595,186	82	9.5	98. Brandware, Atlanta, GA	2,795,237	16	2.1
31. Regan Communications Group, Boston, MA	18,913,994	106	2	99. Hewes Communications, New York, NY	2,761,129	8	13.6
32. Walker Sands Communications, Chicago, IL	18,832,290	135	32.9	100. ARPR, Atlanta, GA	2,631,389	27	16.3
33. LaunchSquad, San Francisco, CA	18,602,385	117	-3.5	101. Gatesman, Pittsburgh, PA	2,622,440	67	0
34. Racepoint Global, Boston, MA	18,337,000	81	-12	102. Serendipit, Phoenix, AZ	2,552,461	23	22
35. M Booth Health, New York, NY	16,582,440	50	NA	103. BLAZE, Santa Monica, CA	2,540,300	12	20
36. Shift Communications, Boston, MA	15,884,974	91	-9	104. Ripp Media/Public Relations, Inc., New York, NY	2,499,532	8	13.3
37. rbb Communications, Miami, FL	15,447,216	80	14	105. Perry Comms Group, Inc., Sacramento, CA	2,423,198	10	-10.3
38. Zimmerman Agency, Tallahassee, FL	15,400,000	48	1	106. Karbo Communications, San Francisco, CA	2,395,720	21	19
39. Hoffman Agency, The, San Jose, CA	15,005,000	33	10	107. SPM Communications, Dallas, TX	2,312,203	14	10
40. Bravo Group, Inc., Harrisburg, PA	14,548,629	74	-11.6	108. O'Malley Hansen Communications, Chicago, IL	2,183,000	11	-9.5
41. Bliss Integrated Communication, New York, NY	13,275,000	57	20.3	109. Landis Communications, San Francisco, CA	2,077,286	10	19.5
42. JeffreyGroup, Miami, FL	12,864,916	232	29	110. Stanton Communications, Washington, DC	1,993,272	14	1
43. Jarrard Phillips Cate & Hancock, Brentwood, TN	12,416,807	42	7.1	111. Hemsworth Communications, Ft. Lauderdale, FL	1,787,338	22	0
44. J Public Relations, New York, NY	11,440,000	71	7.6	112. FrazierHeiby, Columbus, OH	1,733,479	10	15
45. Gregory FCA, Ardmore, PA	11,400,000	77	16.3	113. Buchanan Public Relations, Bryn Mawr, PA	1,559,003	8	-1.7
46. Davies, Santa Barbara, CA	11,220,000	35	0	114. WordWrite Communications LLC, Pittsburgh, PA	1,553,497	9	13.5
47. Development Counsellors Int'l, New York, NY	11,136,484	58	10.8	115. Butler Associates, LLC, New York, NY	1,547,713	8	23
48. MMGY NJF, New York, NY	10,710,041	63	14	116. Akrete, Evanston, IL	1,530,091	22	8
49. Lambert, Grand Rapids, MI	10,570,000	56	5	117. Pineapple Public Relations, Chamblee, GA	1,336,144	10	38.6
50. 360PR+, Boston, MA	10,326,547	56	6	118. Bradford Group, The, Nashville, TN	1,286,045	11	4.4
51. JPA Health Communications, Washington, DC	10,305,362	45	11	119. Buttonwood Comms Group, New York, NY	1,212,200	9	-7.5
52. MP&F Strategic Communications, Nashville, TN	9,480,016	68	0	120. Marketing Maven Public Relations, Camarillo, CA	1,201,671	9	-10.3
53. Vested, New York, NY	9,236,000	30	26	121. AMP3 Public Relations, New York, NY	1,140,465	7	71.4
54. Peppercomm, New York, NY	8,971,064	34	NA	122. Hoyt Organization Inc., The, Torrance, CA	1,100,000	11	-8.3
55. Moore, Inc., Tallahassee, FL	8,817,078	39	31	123. Bob Gold & Associates, Redondo Beach, CA	1,028,570	12	31.5
56. Greentarget Global LLC, Chicago, IL	8,765,091	42	3.5	124. KCD Public Relations, Inc., San Diego, CA	989,089	7	-5.5
57. Lou Hammond Group, New York, NY	8,112,253	40	4	125. Rosica Communications, Fair Lawn, NJ	937,926	5	-27
58. Pierpont Communications, Houston, TX	7,011,832	33	3	126. Lawlor Media Group, New York, NY	812,541	6	-11
59. Konnect Agency, Los Angeles, CA	6,481,237	38	13	127. Agency Ten22, Cumming, GA	803,475	4	-2.3
60. Sam Brown Inc., Wayne, PA	6,341,947	40	12.8	128. Bianchi Public Relations, Troy, MI	781,509	4	-13
61. Dukas Linden Public Relations, New York, NY	6,318,683	24	17	129. BizCom Associates, Plano, TX	763,299	8	7.7
62. Hawkins Int'l Public Relations, New York, NY	6,154,855	38	15.8	130. Violet PR, Montclair, NJ	704,241	3	13
63. Infinite Global, New York, NY	5,959,532	23	9.4	131. Stuntman PR, New York, NY	639,561	2	26
64. McCabe Message Partners, Washington, DC	5,789,127	32	-6	132. Novitas Communications, Denver, CO	550,578	3	32.7
65. Singer Associates, Inc., San Francisco, CA	5,483,657	18	-30	133. Judge Public Relations, LLC, Tampa, FL	542,409	7	-11.4
66. Tunheim, Minneapolis, MN	4,959,635	24	-11	134. Feintuch Communications, New York, NY	488,180	3	-45
67. Touchdown PR, Austin, TX	4,884,345	16	19.1	135. Bospar, San Francisco, CA	466,817	29	NA
68. SPI Group LLC, The, Fairfield, NJ	4,800,000	26	-6				

INDEPENDENT PR FIRMS GREW 7.7% IN '19

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W2O Hones Analytics Edge

W2O, which is the No. 2 ranked firm, furthered its goal of being the leading analytics-driven, digital-first health-care marketing and communications company, according to founder/CEO Jim Weiss.



Jim Weiss

The San Francisco-based firm, which has more than 100 analysts and data scientists, put its data savvy to work as the COVID-19 crisis unfolded.

Weiss noted that collaboration with the California Life Sciences Association enables W2O to track COVID-19-specific conversations and trends across the health ecosystem, and an adapted relevance framework is helping clients understand how to build a new play-

book to navigate these challenging times.

Following an investment by private equity firm New Mountain Capital, W2O made three acquisitions in 2019 to boost its science communications, medical education and scientific visualization capabilities.

APCO Makes Social Impact

APCO Worldwide, which reported a six percent growth in fees to \$142.3M, enjoyed double-digit growth in about a third of its global office network.

Margery Kraus, founder/executive chairman, singled out expansion in Manama (Bahrain) and strong results in New York, Raleigh, Brussels, Rome, Milan, Riyadh and Tokyo.

Kraus said APCO, which ranks No. 3 on *O'Dwyer's* rankings, is "seeing immense pressure and expectations from clients in all sectors to go beyond their business objectives and make a positive impact on society, which has been an area of focus since our inception."

In early 2020, APCO acquired Tembo Group, a leading social impact advisory firm, to strengthen its approach to advising clients on social and environmental opportunities and risks.

The firm also launched a strategic partnership with Erie Street—a Chicago-based independent advisory firm—and appointed Erie Street CEO and Chairman Terry Graunke as lead director of APCO's board.

Kraus anticipates that strategic partnership will help position her firm to deliver more high-end consulting services that clients need the most, and help it identify opportunities for acquisitions and continued growth in the advisory and communications market.

Noting that the war for talent is increasingly a hot topic in PR, Kraus said APCO has invested time and resources in hosting groups of students from leading universities.

It also held a career development event in partnership with ColorComm for 70 diverse industry professionals and participated in events centered on women's empowerment, such as the World Woman Summit, Women President's Organization Conference and the WBENC National Conference & Business Fair.

"We also invested heavily in expanding our training and development inside of APCO," said Kraus.



Margery Kraus

APCO's D&I Council launched unconscious bias training for senior leaders, partnered with ColorComm, and held engagements with select universities.

Coyne PR Grows into Documentary Films

Tom Coyne's firm posted a seven percent gain in fee income to \$32M, earning the 18th notch on *O'Dwyer's* roster.

"Our team members continue to grow as professionals and lead the way with fully integrated ideas and breakthrough programs," said Coyne. "We have also grown our offices by more than 40 percent and expanded our service offerings, including documentary films."



Tom Coyne

Coyne PR produced its first documentary, GATEWAY, in a partnership with Pacira BioScience. It brought awareness of how opioids used post-surgery are often a gateway to life-long addiction, according to Coyne.

Coyne noted that GATEWAY received more than a dozen awards from film festivals around the US.

The Jersey-based firm added clients such as Hilton, Otsuka, ASPCA, Yahoo Sports, Stevens Institute of Technology, Crook & Marker, Fairleigh Dickinson University, Lundbeck and Fox Factory.

"We modernized and streamlined our media monitoring efforts with intuitive dashboards, automated reporting and access to actionable, contextualized metrics beyond impressions," said Coyne.

The firm's state-of-the-art digital platform empowers clients to monitor, measure and maximize their communications efforts through custom-built dashboards.

"The new end-to-end measurement system collects and organizes key data points across a robust stream of print, online, broadcast and social content to set benchmarks, attribute value and demonstrate earned media ROI in real-time," said Coyne.

Transformation at Citizen Relations

Citizen Relations president Nick Dowling said the firm underwent a transformation during 2019.

"Our new vision is to create consequential changes to attitudes, behaviours, perceptions and actions by designing the conversations our clients need with the people they care most about," said Dowling.

He said the No. 16 firm with fees of \$32.6M "combined its best research, platform and data partners into one solution to allow it to select the highest quality and best performing influencers and seamlessly measure the impact of every action, quality of content and imagery, and the most detailed conversion tracking available."

Dowling said 2019 was a "relatively stable year" because Citizen was selective in new business efforts, focused on clients that fit its vision while parting with clients that didn't.

"We continue to put our people first, with an emphasis on culture and training for existing employees and finding new ones that strengthen our group," he said.

ICR Makes Big Move in Health, Tech

ICR, No. 5 on *O'Dwyer's* list, enjoyed a "breakout year in 2019," said CEO Tom Ryan.

He said the acquisition of Westwicke Partners, a healthcare



Nick Dowling

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INDEPENDENT PR FIRMS GREW 7.7% IN '19

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strategy firm based in Baltimore, bolstered financial-oriented ICR's depth and scale in healthcare and technology.

Ryan said ICR saw significant growth in traditional corporate communications, including business and financial media strategy, digital/social, crisis management and shareholder activist defense.



Tom Ryan

"We also launched ICR governance solutions, focused on advising boards and senior management teams on best-practice governance processes and structures, including environmental, social and governance reporting," he noted.

Ryan said Zoom, Peloton, Colgate-Palmolive, Heidrick & Struggles, IBM Watson Marketing, Northern Oil and Gas, Welltower, Adamas Pharmaceuticals and BioNTech AG were major account wins in 2019.

MWWPR Invests for Future

MWWPR, which recorded flat fees of \$42.7M, accelerated investment in people and client services initiatives during the past year, said CEO Michael Kempner.

The firm launched new tools and offerings in search marketing, paid marketing and influencer marketing and a panel of Generation Z consumers.

He credited those initiatives combined with MWWPR's "core approach to PR rooted in earned-worthy content was instrumental in adding and growing client relationships with blue-chip brands from the food and beverage, retail, and sports and entertainment sectors."



Michael Kempner

Zeno Exceeds Boundaries

Zeno Group CEO Barby Siegel said 2019 showed that "a mid-sized firm can exceed boundaries and be truly global."

The No. 6 firm posted an eight percent spurt to \$79.3M in 2019 fee income.

She said forty percent of Zeno's business stems from clients served in more than one region.

Key 2019 wins were Ancestry, Tinder, Virgin Voyages, Carhartt, Abbott Vascular, IBM Health, Electrify America and others.

Siegel, who said culture has always been a big part of Zeno's game plan, said the firm launched "Zeno Gives Back" during 2019.

That program resulted in staffers logging more than 3,800 hours of service at more than 25 charities.

The firm also expanded its focus on mental health.

Siegel said the "Be Kind to Your

Mind" program launched by Zeno London acknowledges that PR is a high-stress profession and that topics such as depression and anxiety should not be taboo in the workplace.

The program includes free Headspace membership, an all-employee online forum for sharing comments and posts about mental health, as well as group activities, such as agency-wide meditation sessions.



Barby Siegel

LOTTERY MARKETS TO AFRICAN AMERICANS

The California State Lottery is looking for a shop to provide advertising and marketing communications services aimed at the African American consumer market. Muse Communications is the incumbent shop.

The RFP, which covers five years with options for two one-year extensions, is open to full-service agencies and joint partnerships. The desired team will have a minimum of \$3M in annual billings and at least 25 percent of its work product in AA marketing efforts.

The goal is to "effectively motivate AA consumers in an innovative and authentic way" to purchase lottery tickets. The RFP calls for a partner who "can combine rigorous and insightful account planning and strategic development with impactful creative solutions."



The Lottery "needs a data-driven, strategically-based, highly creative AA marketing agency with best-in-class capabilities across all channels, including traditional, digital, social, and mobile."

The firm will develop "breakthrough work and highly-integrated omnichannel strategies that deliver contextually-relevant communications and consumer experiences across all relevant touchpoints that elevate the Lottery's brand, drive sales, and position the Lottery for the future."

The Lottery will announce the successful agency on Oct. 2 for work that starts Nov. 1. Submissions are due May 8. They go to: California State Lottery; Contract Development Services; 700 North 10th Street; Sacramento, California 95811-0393; Attention: Sergio Alfaro; Response to RFP #50135

Click [here](#) for the RFP.

INTERPUBLIC CEO ROTH TAKES PAY CUT

Interpublic CEO Michael Roth took a 2.2 percent cut in total compensation to \$16.6M during 2019, according to the firm's proxy statement released April 9. Executive VP & COO Philippe Krakowsky enjoyed a 6.2 percent boost to \$8.5M.

Frank Mergenthaler, CFO and chairman of the constituency management group, saw a 5.3 percent hike in comp to \$5.9M. He stepped down as CFO on Dec. 31, 2019, and retired as executive VP on March 31, 2020.

Ellen Johnson succeeded Mergenthaler as CFO. Her compensation was flat at \$1.9M.



Michael Roth

Former Weber Shandwick CEO Andy Polansky took over the CMG duties from Mergenthaler. His compensation is not listed in the proxy statement.

Interpublic has penciled in its annual meeting for the Paley Center in New York on May 21, but warns shareholders the event could become a virtual session due to the COVID pandemic.

"We are sensitive to the public health and travel concerns our stockholders may have and the protocols that federal, state, and local governments may impose in connection with the coronavirus or COVID-19 and, as such, we might hold a Virtual Annual Meeting instead of holding the meeting in New York," said IPG in its proxy.

IPG promises a decision will be made "as soon as practicable" on whether the annual shareholder session is live or virtual.

RF BINDER TO REP QATAR FOUNDATION

RF Binder Partners has picked up a \$360K pact to handle US media relations for the Qatar Foundation. The one-year effort runs through April 2021.



مؤسسة قطر
Qatar Foundation

The independent firm will focus on QF's goals of furthering education, research and community development. It will promote newsworthy events and develop themes for op-ed and bylined articles by QF's leadership.

Founded in 1995, QF is currently pushing a "Qatar Reads" program to highlight the benefits of reading while in isolation during the coronavirus pandemic.

CEO Amy Binder and executive managing director Bill McBride lead RF Binder's 10-member QF team.

RF Binder is working as a subcontractor for Mamac Ogilvy & Mather, which is part of WPP. Previously, Ogilvy New York handled QF's US PR.

Since 2017, Qatar has been under a political and economic blockade erected by Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Egypt for its alleged support of terrorism and cozy ties with Iran.

COYNE PR ENROLLS AT FAIRLEIGH DICKINSON

Coyne Public Relations has picked up Fairleigh Dickinson University as the largest private college in New Jersey seeks to bolster its brand awareness.

FDU has just wrapped up a record-breaking capital campaign. Building on that momentum, Luke Schultheis, VP for enrollment, planning and effectiveness, said the school wants to promote its advancements and distinguish itself from its peers.

He expects the partnership with Coyne to result in prospective students, parents, teachers and guidance counselors "becoming even more familiar with FDU's ability to provide the personal educational experience of a small university with all the benefits of a large university."

Coyne's higher education practice has served Columbia Business School, Stevens Institute of Technology, University of Virginia's Darden School of Business and Cornell University's SC Johnson College of Business.

BRADFORD GROUP, DALTON AGENCY MERGE

The Bradford Group has merged with the Dalton Agency to create what it says is Nashville's fourth largest public relations and advertising agency as measured by revenue.



Jim Dalton^o

Dalton, which also has offices in Jacksonville and Atlanta, will maintain the Dalton Agency brand, while the Nashville office will operate under the Bradford Group name.

Jim Dalton, based in Jacksonville, is CEO of the entire company, with Bradford president and CEO Jeff Bradford leading the Nashville office as

president, alongside executive vice president and COO Gina Gallup, who will be senior vice president.

Dalton already represents such Nashville companies as Opryland Hotel and Soundwaves Water Experience, Change Healthcare and the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum.

NEWS OF FIRMS

FleishmanHillard has launched a cross-functional global practice to counsel clients during the post-COVID-19 era.

FleishmanHillard's Recovery and Resurgence Practice will provide brand and reputation counsel, and share scenario planning and best practices across disciplines, industry sectors and geographies. The practice team will partner with client service teams that have deep knowledge of individual client situations, geographies and opportunities. "Recovery is going to be a process, not an event, and not a linear process in most places," said FleishmanHillard senior partner Peter Verrengia, who will lead the firm's efforts.



Peter Verrengia

Hill+Knowlton Strategies is setting up shop in Indonesia, taking over Verve (the public relations arm of fellow WPP company Wunderman Thompson) and opening H+K Indonesia. The office will be led by former Wunderman Thompson Indonesia CEO Marianne Admardatine, who supervised the Indonesia launch of Verve in 2018. Joining Admardatine from Verve will be managing director Harry Deje and public affairs director Ahmad Zaki. H+K global chairman and CEO AnnaMaria DeSalva said that the the new office "directly supports our plan for ongrowing growth in Asia."

iMARS Communications of Moscow teams with Miami's VIBE Agency to provide PR and events support for American companies entering Russia and for companies from Russia and the CIS entering the US market. VIBE focuses on destination management and event production. It has worked for LVMH, Microsoft and L'Oreal.

Boden has put together a COVID-19 Hispanic Public Relations Resource, an online guide to help brands connect with and support the Hispanic community during the crisis. The guide includes tips and insights for communications teams based on perspectives from key Hispanic stakeholders; a downloadable stakeholder list with names of journalists, influencers, organizations and healthcare experts who are trusted sources in the Hispanic community; and interviews with Hispanic journalists and influencers. The agency notes that a new survey from the Pew Research Center says Hispanics are more likely than Americans overall to see coronavirus as a major threat to their health and finances.

LaVoieHealthScience is partnering with **JTC Team** to host the April 2020 Virtual Investor Summit on April 22 and 23. The summit will feature public and private companies from industries including life sciences/biotech, infrastructure and transportation. Management teams will present a live audio webcast accompanied by a slide presentation and be available to participate in virtual Q&A sessions following each presentation. Public companies to present at the summit include Aeterna Zentaris Inc., American Resources Corporation and TFF Pharmaceuticals Inc., while private companies will include Celavie Biosciences & Celavet, Inc., Omega Therapeutics and SIRION Biotech. Investors, media and interested parties can access the event schedule and individual company webcast details at virtualinvestor-summit.com.



HIGH MARKS FOR COVID-19 MEDIA COVERAGE

COVID-19 coverage has dominated the media cycle for the past month, at a time when TV viewership and online news traffic have surged as increasing numbers of Americans seek out regular updates on the outbreak while isolating at home.

According to the Pew Research Center, the media's response to the COVID-19 pandemic is capturing mostly high praise from the public, even while newsrooms have been hit by closures and budget cuts as companies affected by the crisis scale back their advertising budgets.



Pew's report, which assessed Americans' opinions regarding the handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, found that overall, more than half of those surveyed (54 percent) think the news media have done a "good"—if not "excellent"—job of responding to the coronavirus outbreak.

When broken out into what media platforms Americans use for political and election news content, however, much of the public rated the media's response to the crisis even more favorably.

More than two-thirds of those who get their news primarily from network TV (68 percent) said they think the news media is doing a "good" or "excellent" job covering the crisis.

Among Americans who mainly get their political and election news from print sources, two-thirds (66 percent) said the media's performance was "good" or "excellent."

Those who rely on websites or apps for their news were evenly divided, with 50 percent reporting approval and 50 percent casting disapproval.

Americans who get their political and election news across a variety of media platforms were asked to rate the news media's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Those who get their news from radio or social media were far less likely to express a positive opinion regarding how the media have covered the outbreak than those who depend on network TV or print media.

Only 47 percent of radio listeners held a favorable view of the media's handling of COVID-19, with 53 percent of radio listeners calling the media's coverage "poor" or "only fair."

Those who rely primarily on social media for their news gave the media the lowest COVID-19 response approval (41 percent), with more than half (58 percent) of these respondents claiming that the news media were doing a "poor" or "only fair" job of handling the crisis.

More than half of U.S. adults (57 percent) claimed they're following COVID-19 news coverage very closely, while an additional 35 percent said they're following news about the virus fairly closely.

Among respondents who identify as Democrat or Democratic-leaning, 68 percent believe the media are doing a good or excellent job covering the crisis, while only 37 percent of Republicans and Republican-leaning respondents are likely to believe this. The survey also discovered that older Americans are more likely than younger adults to have a positive impression of the media's coronavirus response.

Pew's analysis was based on a survey of more than 11,500 U.S. adults. Data was compiled as part of the nonpartisan think tank's Election News Pathways project, a yearlong research initiative that seeks to understand how Americans are getting their news in the run-up to the 2020 election. Surveys were conducted between March 19 and March 24.

WELLS FARGO BANKS ON HARBINGER

The committee of independent directors of Wells Fargo has hired Harbinger Strategies to deal with ongoing Congressional oversight of the scandal-tainted bank.

The group issued a report April 2017 that blamed cultural, structural and leadership deficiencies for the phony accounts scandal. It decided Wells' new management is committed to taking decisive action to restore consumer trust in the bank.



Harbinger has former aides to House Majority leader Eric Cantor representing the directors. They are Steve Stombres, Cantor's chief of staff, and Kyle Nevins, deputy CoS.

The Federal Reserve, which punished Wells after the fake accounts crisis, last week allowed Wells to expand its participation in the COVID-19 Paycheck Protection Program.

The move enables Wells to accept loan applications from small companies in the Small Business Administration's emergency lending program. The bank had been limited to making loans to nonprofits and businesses with fewer than 50 employees.

SECURE DEMOCRACY VOTES FOR BALLARD

Secure Democracy, a D.C. group committed to safeguarding every citizen's right to vote, has hired Trump-connected Ballard Partners to educate policymakers on the need to create a voting system that works for all Americans.

The organization contends that voting should not be needlessly difficult for working families, military families, home-bound seniors, students, and families that live in rural areas.

It has been running ads on Fox News, CNN and MSNBC against Republican "reform bills" that seek to tighten voting eligibility requirements in the name of countering fraud.

President Trump last month attacked Democratic proposals such as vote-by-mail, same-day registration and early voting as "crazy" measures that if enacted "you'd never have a Republican elected in this country again."

Brian Ballard, who ran the Trump Victory fundraising organization in Florida, handles the Secure Democracy account with Rebecca Benn, aide to the late Republican Senator Thad Cochran of Mississippi.

SAN DIEGO U SEEKS PR SOFTWARE

The University of San Diego is in the market for PR software, according to the school's RFQ. The document's "statement of work" asks questions in such categories as:

- Media database—How often is contact info for journalists updated?
- Distribution platform—How many emails can I send in one distribution?
- Analytics platform—How many clients/topics/folders/keywords can I track?
- User experience—How attractive would you say your customers say your interface is on a scale of 1-10?
- Customer support—Do you have a dedicated account manager to help with on-boarding, lead strategy sessions, best practices, etc?



The University also wants interested parties to run a search report on journalists.

Click here for the [RFQ](#).

DUPAGE COLLEGE SEEKS ARTS PR

The College of DuPage, which is located in the Chicago suburbs, is looking for a PR firm skilled in promoting performing arts & live events.

The firm will promote events at the McAninch Arts Center, which offers more than 200 public performances of plays, concerts, lectures and art exhibits per season.

The MAC houses the Belushi Performance Hall (800-plus seats), Playhouse Theatre (200 seats), Studio Theatre (60 seats) and Lakeside Pavilion (2000 seats).

The RFP calls for “pitching interviews to critics, media and broadcast including handling talent for morning show press days; all print, radio and television media relations; writing and distribution of press releases and event copy; submission to event calendar listings; coordination of media events.”

Proposals are due April 29.

Send the proposal in a package marked “Marketing and Public Relations Services for the McAninch Arts Center (MAC), 2020-R0015 to: Purchasing Manager; Attn: 2020-R0015; College of DuPage; 425 Fawell Blvd.; IRC Building - Room 1001; Glen Ellyn, Illinois 60137

Click [here](#) for the RFP.

ROONEY RUNS PR FOR RECYCLING TECH CO.

Rooney Partners handles US PR for Carbios, a French “green chemistry company” that has developed a proprietary technology to convert plastic waste into bottles within hours, a process it calls “a breakthrough towards a circular economy.”

The mutant enzyme developed by Carbios, which is shooting for industrial scale in five years, holds the potential to recycle the billions of tons of plastic waste that are polluting the world’s oceans.



More than 360M tons of plastic are produced each year, of which 150M to 200M tons wind up in landfills or the natural environment.

The scientific journal *Nature* published news of the Carbios process on March 8. Alain Marty, Carbios’ chief scientific officer and co-author of the *Nature* article, is very proud that “one of the most highly respected scientific journals in the world, has validated the quality of the research led by Carbios and TBI laboratory scientists in developing a PET recycling enzyme and a revolutionary process.”

Carbios, which is publicly traded, has strategic partnerships with PepsiCo, Suntory, Nestle Waters and L’Oreal.

Rooney Partners’ Kate Barrette represents Carbios.

EX-CANTOR AIDE MOVES TO CRAFT MEDIA

Doug Heye, who was deputy chief of staff for communications for House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-VA), has joined CRAFT Media/Digital as senior VP of media.

A political commentator at CNN since 2016, Heye has been communications director for the Republican National Committee, press secretary at the Small Business Administration and resident fellow at Harvard Kennedy School’s Institute of Politics.

At CRAFT, he’ll handle crisis communications, media relations and executive positioning.

The firm has worked for United Technologies, Pillsbury, Accenture, Dow, JPMorgan Chase, Walmart, Hilton and International Paper.

ON THE MOVE

Sard Verbinnen & Co. has brought on **Michele Davis** as a senior counselor. Davis joins SVC from Morgan Stanley, where she was global head of corporate relations and served on the company’s management committee. She was previously at The Brunswick Group, where she was a partner and co-head of the agency’s Washington, DC office. Davis also served as assistant secretary for public affairs and policy planning for the U.S. Department of the Treasury during the George W. Bush administration. At SVC, she will advise the agency and its clients across such practice areas as public affairs, financial communications.



Michele Davis

AMO Group, part of Havas Worldwide, has appointed **Grace Zheng** as managing director for Asia. Zheng comes to AMO from Newgate Communications, where she was a founding partner in Greater China. Her expertise covers financial PR, corporate reputation, media relations and crisis management. She will lead the AMO network’s expansion across Asia, working from its Shanghai and Hong Kong offices.

Kellen has named **Michael Taylor** senior director of public affairs. Taylor’s previous experience includes serving as vice president, international affairs and trade at the Plastics Industry Association, and director for Europe and multilateral programs at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce’s global intellectual property center. At Kellen, he will lead a team that oversees government and regulatory affairs initiatives on behalf of agency clients while exploring opportunities for trade associations and professional societies to elevate their presence among relevant governing bodies.

Allison+Partners has promoted **Lisa Rosenberg** to president, consumer brands, a newly created position. Rosenberg was previously chief creative officer and co-chair consumer marketing. Before coming to Allison+Partners in 2013 she was president of North America for Havas PR. In her new post, Rosenberg will focus on unifying the practice, nurturing and adding depth to agency talent and driving business growth across regions.



Lisa Rosenberg

ARPR has hired **Melissa Baratta** to serve as VP of its HealthIT practice group, a newly created position. Baratta comes to ARPR from Affect, where she most recently served as senior VP, healthcare lead. Before joining Affect in 2012, she was managing director at Ricochet Public Relations. Baratta has represented such clients as Quest Diagnostics, GlaxoSmith-Kline and Curable. At ARPR, Baratta will oversee the firm’s HealthIT business.

Furia Rubel Communications has hired **Danielle Gower Adamski** as a public relations director. Gower Adamski was previously director, marketing and institutional advancement at Good Shepherd Penn Partners, a hospital and healthcare company. In her new role, Gower Adamski collaborates with clients to develop and implement integrated communications and marketing strategies, including public relations, media relations, crisis communications, content marketing and social media.

COMMENTARY

Donald Trump, who has shifted from self-proclaimed “wartime president” to “cheerleader-in-chief” wants to open up the US economy in May.

The president promises that once the economy booms, Americans will soon forget the “horror of the invisible enemy.”

They will forget the hardship of losing 16.7M jobs over 21 days and the hunger suffered by many.

Graciously, Trump does make an accommodation for “those that sadly lost a family member or friend,” according to his April 8 tweet.

In Trump’s self-absorbed view of the world, people who mourn the 22K Americans who lost their lives to COVID-19 will soon thank their lucky stars that he recklessly re-started the economy.

The *New York Times* reported that the Depts. of Homeland Security and Health and Human Services warn that coronavirus infections will dramatically spike this summer, if the government lets up on social distancing and stay-at-home orders.

If Trump opens the economy prematurely, the death toll from the virus is projected to reach 200K this summer, according to the federal researchers.

America’s two COVID-19 crisis superstars have warned Trump that this is no time for a cheerleader at the national helm.

Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases said US deaths could balloon well above 60,000, if social distancing policies are upended before the end of May.

New York Governor Andrew Cuomo warns of a resurgence in COVID-19 cases if restrictions are lifted. “If we’re not expecting a second wave or a mutation of this virus, then we have learned nothing,” Cuomo told MSNBC on April 10.

The president, though, is desperate. He realizes reigniting the economy is his only chance at re-election. Damn the healthcare disaster, full speed ahead.

As May approaches, you can bet that Trump will depict federal researchers and Fauci as charter members of the “deep state” out to torpedo his re-election bid.

The cheerleader-in-chief will revert to his true form as victim-in-chief.

Here’s a modest proposal for Trump: Postpone the grand opening of the economy until June 14. It would be the perfect 74th birthday gift for you.

The president should proclaim June 14 a national day of celebration.

He could preside over a proper parade down Pennsylvania Ave. with Ivanka, Jared, Don Jr and Eric in the lead float, and ring the opening bell on the New York Stock Exchange.

As for the rest of America, we are on our own.

We amount to nothing more than lemmings jumping off the cliff and into the COVID-19 abyss, so the president can bask in the accolades tossed at him by his most rabid supporters.

The National Rifle Association disarms. The once-powerful group has declared a Pyrrhic victory as the vast majority of state governments have declared gun shops “essential busi-

nesses” under stay-at-home orders.

The NRA views the COVID-19 pandemic as a threat to the Second Amendment because anti-gun zealots are hell-bent on denying Americans the right to defend their families and property against the antici-pated hordes of sick, hungry and broke Americans ready to riot in the streets and towns all across the USA.

The NRA can take a bow.

Gun shops have been closed only in New York, Massachusetts and New Mexico.

California, Washington, Michigan and Vermont have inconsistent policies, according to the NRA.

It’s business as usual for gun shops in the rest of the country.

COVID-19, though, may trigger the beginning of the end for the NRA. The group has laid off 60 staffers over the past few weeks, according to Politico.

Those cutbacks are in part because the NRA had to cut its annual meeting gala, which generates millions of dollars, due to COVID-19.

The pandemic also forced the NRA to cancel fundraising events and a slew of programming.

A spokesperson said the NRA is making cuts just like any other non-profit due to the impact of the COVID-19 crisis.

The NRA, though, was more than just any other non-profit. The group once struck fear into the hearts of political opponents and set a large portion of the Republican agenda.

COVID-19 has cut the NRA down to size.

The DC press corps has long griped about the lack of regular press briefings, which were killed off by Sarah Huckabee Sanders.

Her replacement, Stephanie Grisham, pitched a perfect game, holding zero briefings during her eight-month stint.

We don’t expect the press corps to push new press secretary 31-year-old Kayleigh McEnany, who was Trump’s campaign spokesperson, for regular briefings.

Why bother? She’s an ardent Trump toady, who burst onto the national scene in 2012 after tweeting about Barack Obama’s brother never emerging from his hut in Kenya, which was part of Trump’s racist “birtherism” conspiracy.

She then defended her guy in the aftermath of the release of the “Access Hollywood” tape.

She said Trump’s Access Hollywood comments were despicable, but he apologized for them.

Her take: Let’s just let bygones be bygones and forge ahead to Make America Great Again. That’s just despicable.

More recently, McEnany defended Trump’s lackluster handling of the coronavirus outbreak, saying on Fox News on Feb. 25, “We will not see diseases like the coronavirus come here.”

She’ll fit right in with Trump’s band of sycophants.

—Kevin McCauley

