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O'Dwyer's Newsletter

The Inside News of
PR and Marketing
Communications

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FOREST SERVICE ISSUES RFP

The US Forest Service, which fended off a federal government bid to put all Department of Agriculture agencies under "One Brand" last year, has released an RFP for a firm to advise it on outreach, brand identity and engagement across the \$5B administrator of 193M acres.

The Forest Service, with a strong grassroots push from retirees, last year fought off inclusion in the "One Brand" plan to re-brand the 20 Dept. of Agriculture units under the USDA logo. The USDA's push to drop the Forest Service's iconic pine tree logo was widely condemned before Uncle Sam exempted the service from its plan last April.

The RFP released Nov. 25 calls for a firm to support the Forest Service's "organizational transformation, identity clarification and social purpose branding.

Metropolitan Group, a Portland, Ore.-based communications and social change firm with a Washington, D.C., office, has worked with the Forest Service on a localized effort that started in the Pacific Northwest, which the agency plans to move nationally. It currently holds a \$527K pact through Feb. 2, 2015.

Proposals are due Dec. 26. Details:
<http://1.usa.gov/1G7hUVv>.



BINGOL DRIVES TO DUKE PR POST

Selim Bingol, who rolled out of General Motors earlier this year amid the ongoing recall crisis, has landed at \$50B electric power giant Duke Energy, where he will take the chief communications officer slot early next year. He takes the Duke post following last year's exit of Ginny Mackin for Ingersoll Rand.

Bingol, a corporate and agency PR pro, was ousted as senior VP of global communications and public policy for GM in April amid a series of changes at the automaker. He led communications through GM's \$20B IPO in 2010 after following his former AT&T boss Ed Whitacre to the bankrupt automaker.

The 54-year-old Bingol was SVP of corporate communications at AT&T before GM and did stints at FleishmanHillard/DC and on the Hill.

He joins Charlotte-based Duke Energy on Jan. 5 in the top PR slot.



Bingol

BGR CHECKS INTO SULTAN'S DORCHESTER

Barbour Griffith & Rogers is representing Dorchester Group Ltd., the luxury hotel chain owned by Sultan of Brunei that is under a boycott for his old-rich country's Sharia law.

The company runs the Beverly Hills Hotel, Bel-Air Hotel (Los Angeles), The Dorchester/45 Park Lane (London), Hotel Eden (Rome) and Hotel Plaza Athenee (Paris), among others. It is rumored to be interested in acquiring New York's Plaza Hotel.



BGR handles Washington for Dorchester for "international issues impacting the hotel, commercial and services sectors," according to its federal filing.

Walker Roberts, managing director of BGR's London office, leads the effort. He joined BGR as serving four chairmen of the House Committee of International Relations. He also worked in the Reagan White House in the office of legislative affairs.

Dorchester claims opponents of Sharia law unfairly target it. CEO Christopher Cowdray told CNBC in May that many "iconic American brands" in categories such as real estate, luxury goods, technology and consumer products are "backed by countries governed by Sharia and not aligned with our civil liberties."

The Queen of Brunei made a bit of news Nov. 12 when she gave Michelle Obama jewelry worth more than \$70K in 2013. Human Rights Campaign spokesperson Fred Sainz noted while gifts are part of diplomacy, over-the-top presents from "authoritarian potentates" should be unacceptable.

NEVADA REVIEWS INT'L PR PACTS

Nevada has kicked off a review of its international PR pacts covering Germany and South Korea.

The competitive RFP comes as the Silver State finalizes a review of its \$3M US PR and integrated marketing account handled by Burson-Marsteller and its Proof unit.

The international work targets media, tour operators and travel agents, as well as consumers.

The Germany account includes German-speaking markets of Austria and Switzerland, as well.

Two-year contracts are expected to result from the search.

Proposals are due Jan. 12 and 13 for Germany and South Korea, respectively.

RFPs: <http://bit.ly/1G7hdvA>.

GLASS JAW

A Manifesto for Defending Fragile Reputations in an Age of Instant Scandal

By *Eric Dezenhall*

GLASS JAW is about how once-powerful people, organizations and brands are easily brought down by the seemingly powerless through a media and internet that feed almost exclusively on destructive information.



From Twelve Books



New Book
From Eric
Dezenhall

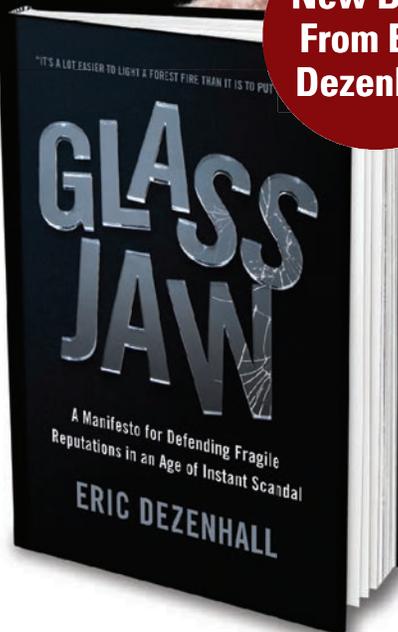
Praise for Glass Jaw

Dezenhall takes readers through the “fiasco vortex” of new media, detailing several controversies from recent headlines, many of which ran amok with bogus information.

— Publishers Weekly

“This is not a book of morality but of pragmatism.”

— Kirkus Reviews



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HILTZIK COUNSELS JANAY RICE

Hiltzik Strategies is advising Janay Rice, who is leading the reputation rehabilitation effort of her husband and National Football League running back Ray Rice.

The New York-based firm orchestrated the Janay Rice's media tour, where she defended her husband who punched her during a elevator ride in Atlantic City.



ESPN and NBC's "Today" show were selected as the media platforms for Janay Rice to profile her spouse as a good person who made a one-time mistake.

The interviews were conducted weeks before a judge overturned Ray Rice's suspension from the NFL on Nov. 28. Cut from the Baltimore Ravens' roster, he is free to sign on with another team.

ESPN agreed to give Janay Rice final approval of its piece before it ran. She did not suggest any changes.

NBC did not have any restrictions on its story.

Mathew Hiltzik launched his firm in 2008 and handled the 2013 high-profile case of Notre Dame linebacker Manti Te'o, who was victim of a pregnancy hoax. ESPN served as the rehab vehicle.

MALAYSIAN BANKING ENTITY SEEKS PR

The quality assurance and accreditation body set up to boost Malaysia's financial sector is looking for a PR agency to position the sector globally and burnish its image.

The Financial Accreditation Agency, supported by Bank Negara Malaysia and Securities Commission Malaysia, has released an RFP for a six-month retainer pact that could be extended to a full year. Profiling, brand development, thought leadership and proactive PR are covered in the scope of work.

Dinesh Ranawaka, manager of strategic corporate relations for FAA, is handling the search.

Proposals are due Jan. 5. [View the RFP \(PDF\)](#).

VION-LANCTUIT ROLLS TO BOMBARDIER

Cecile Vion-Lanctuit, VP of corporate communications for Airbus Helicopters, has moved to train maker Bombardier Transportation as VP-communications.

Based in Berlin, Vion-Lanctuit heads external and internal communications for the rail industry titan, a unit of \$18.2B Montreal-based Bombardier.

Sharon Christians stepped down as VP comms., PR and group marketing at BT in July after an eight-year run.

The French and Canadian citizen spent the past eight years at Airbus, joining from EADS, where she was a senior manager for media monitoring and impact control and started out with the company in Paris.

Yves Barillé, group comms. director for missile systems developer MBDA, will join Airbus Helicopters as VP of corporate comms. in May 2015.

NEXT FIFTEEN GRABS BRAND CONSULTANT

Next Fifteen Communications Group has acquired London-based brand market research firm Morar.

The nine-year-old company uses technology to "map" and measure brands and their values. Founders Roger Perowne and Alistair Cunningham will remain on board under Next Fifteen.

"Morar's approach of combining high level consulting and technology fits with our digital strategy and extends our commitment to the insight and analytics area of marketing," said NF CEO Tim Dyson.

Morar clients include Land Securities, Dell, Sky and Pearson.

NF has taken a 75% stake in Morar with an initial \$2.1M in cash and additional payment expected to be around \$750K in February depending on Morar's performance through the end of January. NF will acquire the remaining 25% in 2020 if Morar meets targets.

COOPERKATZ PRESIBES PR FOR SLOAN

CooperKatz & Company has won a competitive review to guide strategic communications for New York's Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, the world's largest private cancer institution.

Christine Hickey, VP of strategic communications and PA at MSK, said CK will aid the 13,000-staff institution in helping people "see, discuss and understand cancer in new ways."

There was not an incumbent AOR for PR.

CK joins an agency roster ironed out earlier this year that includes Pereira & O'Dell (creative), Media Storm (media), Phase2 and DigitasLBI (digital).

Joanne Davis Consulting handled the PR agency search.

CK has repped The Physicians Foundation, Oxford Molecular and PLC Medical Systems on the healthcare front.

PEPSI ALUM ADDS FIZZ TO APCO

Derek Yach, who was senior VP-global health and agriculture at PepsiCo, has joined APCO Worldwide's health advisory board.

The more than 30-year communications veteran handled the Purchase, NY-based soft drinks/snacks company's international health initiatives related to nutrition and agriculture.

Earlier, he was global health director at the Rockefeller Foundation, Yale University professor and executive director for communicable diseases & mental health at the World Health Organization.

Yach, a South Africa native, is executive director at the Vitality Institute, a global research group

Stig Albinus, global practice leader of APCO's health-care practice, said Yach has first-hand experience in navigating the world's top health issues from both the public and private sectors. His work on challenging health issues surrounding medical/food quality and safety perspectives will benefit APCO's clients, according to Albinus.



Yach

NORRIS, ELLIOTT LEAD EXITS AT NY TIMES

Floyd Norris, business columnist and 26-year veteran of the *New York Times*, and ad columnist Stuart Elliott are among the most prominent staffers to accept the Gray Lady's buyout package designed to trim 100 from the ranks of the revamping paper.

Elliott, who wrote the New York Times ad column for 23 years, is taking a buyout as the troubled paper restructures.

In his Facebook posting, Elliott said he has joined the "leaving to pursue other interests" or deciding to "spend more time with his/her family" crowd that the longest-running ad columnist at the paper has written about over the past years.

He's exiting while thanking all the people that have helped him over the years.

Elliott will call it quits on Dec. 19. He's part of the 100 newsroom jobs that the NYT wants to cut.

Packages for members of the Newspaper Guild, a union that represents about 1,100 Times employees, range from 15 weeks of pay and four months' health coverage for employees with between five and six years of service, to double one year's pay, an additional 35 percent of that total and eight months' health coverage for employees with at least 35 years under their belts, according to the Guild.

Norris is leaving Dec. 19 to pursue opportunities at perhaps a university or foundation after taking a break from his twice-a-week column schedule.

David Firestone, a member of the paper's editorial board since 2010, joins Norris in leaving the NYT. The 21-year veteran announced his departure via Twitter.

About 80 staffers have accepted the buyout package.

Publisher Pinch Sulzberger expects to unveil layoffs to achieve the 100 job cut goal.

The current layoffs are the fourth reduction since 2008.

Non-Guild employees are generally eligible for two weeks of salary per year of service, with the total capped at one year's salary, according to the Times. Those with 20 years or more also are eligible for an additional cash payout of 35 percent of their total severance.

FOER QUILTS NEW REPUBLIC

Franklin Foer, editor of *The New Republic*, resigned his post last week due to differences about the direction of the magazine with owner Chris Hughes, co-founder of Facebook.

Foer's exit sparked the resignations of as many as 50 contributors to the magazine.

Hughes wants to position TNR as a digital enterprise under CEO Guy Vidra, who was hired in October.

He hired Gabriel Snyder, former editor of *The Atlantic Wire* to replace Foer.

In a staff memo, Vidra wrote the 100-year-old publication will make "significant investments in creating a



Elliott

more effective and efficient newsroom as well as improved products across all platforms."

TNR will make staff cuts as it scales back its printing schedule in half to 10 issues per-year and shift the bulk of its operations from Washington to New York.

Leon Wieseltier, literary editor and 31-year veteran of TNR, also quit with Foer.

TNR has pulled the plug on its December issue in the wake of the departures. February 2 will be the next issue.

DREAMWORKS CASTS MADATIAN

Movie industry PR exec Jasmine Madatian has been cast to lead communications for Hollywood institution Dreamworks Studios.

Madatian was the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' first managing director of communications, handling PR for the Oscars and the movie industry as a whole until stepping down last year.

She takes the executive VP, communications, title at Los Angeles-based Dreamworks, filling a similar role held by Chip Sullivan, who was promoted to head of global brand integration in September.

Kristin Stark is VP of publicity at Dreamworks and reports to Madatian.

DW in September said Turner Broadcasting exec Michael Wright will join the studio as CEO in January 2015 to replace Stacey Snider, whose contract was not renewed after eight years and is now with 20th Century Fox.

Madatian, whose purview includes all communications strategies and media relations for the company, reports to president and COO Jeff Small and production chief Holly Bario.

She was previously VP of publicity, promotions and field marketing at Disney and held a similar role at Paramount Pictures. Her film PR credits include "Alice in Wonderland," "The Hours," "Titanic" and "Jackass: The Movie."

Dreamworks split with Viacom's Paramount in 2008 and became independent with the backing of Indian conglomerate Reliance. It spun off its struggling animated film unit, Dreamworks Animation, in 2004.

Dreamworks' 2014 releases included "The Hundred-Foot Journey" and "Need for Speed."

LIBBY JOINS CPJ IN PR POST

Samantha Libby, previously with the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, has joined the Committee to Protect Journalists, New York, as communications associate.

PR vets Gypsy Kaiser and Magnus Ag have left CPJ.

Previously at the Brady Campaign in 2012-13, Libby was a field researcher for USAID and lead content editor, Europe and the Middle East, World Hotel Link.

CPJ had its most successful fund-raising dinner ever on Nov. 25, raising \$2.7 million.



PR & SOCIAL MEDIA VIEWS

CALCULATING RISKS OF ATHLETE SPONSORS

By Hayes Grooms IV

According to Plunkett Research Ltd., the sports industry's current value in the United States stands at an estimated \$485 billion. And that industry is guaranteed to grow, as media conglomerates continue driving content across an array of existing and new platforms.

The bond between sports and its fans is both inseparable and constantly evolving. Brands have always sought to partner with potential superstars, but with that decision comes risk.

Recent history indicates that signing young athletes sometimes pays off incredibly, or fails horribly. In 2004, Adidas failed when it signed 18-year-old basketball phenomenon Sebastian Telfair, who ultimately bounced around the NBA and even had a brief stint in China. Adidas took a risk on Telfair because a year earlier its main competitor, Nike, signed another 18-year-old wunderkind named LeBron James.

Following are a few key factors when considering athlete alliances.

Performance

The average career of an NFL player is 3.2 years. Moreover, society shuffles through athletes and trends quickly, so success can be even more short-lived. Brands must strike when the iron is hot in order to maximize marketing reach and effectiveness.

Seattle Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson led his team to a Super Bowl championship in his second NFL season, success that has transformed this mid-round draft pick into a national icon, facilitating his partnerships with American Family Insurance, Bose, Braun, Duracell, Microsoft, Alaska Airlines and others. The Harrow Sports Ventures/MVPindex Power 100 ranks him as the second most influential athlete in sports, behind only LeBron James.

Influence and social media presence

Social media provides fans a chance to connect with athletes on a direct, personable level, and grants companies access to their customers. According to Navigate Research marketing and PR manager Julie Frank, "sports fans that see a brand message on social media are 78% more likely to have a positive perception of it."

When selecting an athlete to serve as an endorser, it's imperative to select someone who's influential and actively engages his or her followers on social media. Athletes have massive followings; some athletes' Twitter followings are twice the size of *Fortune* 500 companies. By partnering with athletes, brands have the opportunity to reach a new target market to promote and spread awareness of their campaigns and programs.

Character

Does the athlete fit the brand? Does the athlete use the products? Does the athlete connect with the target market? These questions are essential. When athletes or other celebrities represent brands that they stand behind, it underscores an organic message for the target market. One example is the partnership between Derek Jeter and Movado. Aside from complementing the qualities of the timepiece, Jeter appeals to a market that Movado seeks.

Hayes Grooms IV is Vice President of the Sports & Entertainment Practice at French/West/Vaughan.

TELL STORIES WITH A STRATEGIC NARRATIVE

By Guy Murrel

The challenge with traditional positioning and messaging approaches for tech companies is simple: it's often too inward and self-centered. It's like looking in a mirror, creating an image and then trying to convince an audience that what they are looking at is "special."

Winning companies, those that are leading markets and not just claiming to be a leader, are defining current market trends, shedding light on the future of the industry and asserting their role in advancing the adoption and maturity of the market segment. They often define new categories, processes and frameworks. And, they share them freely. Instead of creating a traditional mission statement that sounds similar to every other company in their space, they're creating a strategic narrative.

PR teams and professionals, both internal and external, are positioned to lead the development of strategic narrative messaging. Here are some guiding tenets for crafting a strategic narrative within the context of the high-tech industry:

Add context to mega-trends. The strategic narrative provides an opportunity for companies — from startups to *Fortune* 500 — to provide insight and context into the trends that affect your company, customers and the industry at-large. Providing a viewpoint and opinion on what's happening outside of your own company is a great start to get an organization to think big.

Define and honor the category. Along with mega-trends, make it a priority to champion the overall good of your category or market space. How can your company play an active role in advancing the adoption and shaping the evolution of the category? Take the opportunity to step outside of your company to define the category as you see it.

Shape a Better World. Most companies have a vision statement. However, many that we see are much too focused on their capabilities, as opposed to what their clients care about. Where would you like to see your industry in five or 10 years? What contributions can your industry — not just your company — make?

Define your role. Now that the industry and category work is compete, move toward defining your company's goals, course of action and the overall role you will play in the world you've defined. What is the company vision for innovation? How will it benefit customers that are grappling with the disruptive mega-trends you've defined?

Be industry inclusive. Don't fall into the trap of defining a strategic narrative that "only applies to us." If you're defining or have a goal to re-shape an industry — welcome visitors, including competitors.

Include everyone. The strategic narrative needs to touch each and every employee, partner, customer and influencer in the market.

Creating a singular, clear and compelling story for an organization is a challenge. We recommend, and often facilitate, a workshop-style strategy session where stakeholders can open up, share ideas and vision, and help shape the strategic direction of the company.

Guy Murrel is Co-Founder and Principal in charge of strategic messaging at Catapult PR-IR.

NEWS OF PR FIRMS**KENYA LOOKS FOR TOURISM BOOST**

Kenya plans to hire a PR firm to bolster its position as a top African tourism destination, according to reports in the country's press.

Kaplich Barsito, director of communications at the Ministry of Eastern African Affairs, Commerce and Tourism, said a firm would be hired for at least a year.

Kenya has been battling the fallout from Ebola in western African nations and terrorist attacks by the Al-Shabaab Muslim extremist group.

The country, which is Ebola-free, has been running an informational campaign in the UK to reassure potential travelers who fear contracting the disease.

Kenyan national police chief resigned last week following the discovery of the bodies of 36 mine workers killed by the Al-Qaeda affiliate group near the Somali border. That attack followed the ambush of a bus that resulted in the death of 28 people.

President Uhuru Kenyatta said the attacks constitute a "war and a war that we must win."

The Kenya Tourism Board is currently running a promotional campaign carrying the "Magical Kenya" theme.

MUZI TELLS ALL IN BIASED PR MEMOIRS

Toni Muzi Falconi, founder of Methodos, a major Italian PR firm he sold in 1990 to Weber Shandwick, has described 50 years in international PR in "Glow Worms: Biased Memoirs of a Public Relator."

A review in lulu.com says that Muzi has written "an unusually candid bio" that covers numerous subjects such as politics, journalism and transcontinental business deals.

"The personal voice of Muzi never fades against a background of ideologies, history, individuals' ambitions, exotic cultures and the rise and fall of business empires at home and abroad," says Lulu.

He continued on the board of Methodos until 1994.

Muzi was an adjunct professor at the New York University M.S. in PR and Corporate Communication from 2006-2014. He has also taught at LUMSA University in the Vatican, Rome, and in universities in Milan, Bologna and the Luiss School of Government in Rome.

Muzi in 2002 was the founding chair of the Global Alliance for PR and Communication Management. Members are 70 national PR groups. He became the first non-American to present the Grunig Lecture at the PR Society of America, which he gave Oct. 12, 2014 at its conference in Washington, D.C. Text of the lecture is at odwyerpr.com.

NEW MEX FIRM DONATES PRO BONO WORK

JLH Media PR, Santa Fe, said it will provide one month of complimentary PR counsel to four selected non-profits in New Mexico.

One non-profit will be chosen for each quarter of 2015.

The firm said it receive applications from December 15, 2014-January 1, 2015 and three more times during the course of 2015.

Info: <http://www.jlhmedia.com/contact>.

NEW ACCOUNTS**New York**

KCSA Strategic Communications, New York/Pala Interactive, online, real-money gaming, for PR and social media for the launch of

PalaCasino.com and

PalaPoker.com in the New Jersey market this year. Additional

markets in the US are slated for 2015. The work includes out-

reach to business, trade and local media outlets, as well as digital brand building via key social media channels.

Havas PR North America, New York/The Economist, for launch of The Economist Espresso, an app that is the 171-year-old magazine's first daily iteration. Executive VP Ravi Sunnak in the firm's corporate practice is leading the charge, which includes a global media relations push with The Economist Group CEO Chris Stibbs, editor-in-chief John Micklethwaite, digital editor Tom Standage, The Economist Group Global Media Businesses president Paul Rossi and Michael Brunt, EVP, global circulation.

Child's Play Communications, New York/iDeaUSA, for media relations and blogger management for the launch of THE Q, a tablet for kids, and Q Who, a safe messaging app for kids.

Tiberend Strategic Advisors, New York/InMed Pharmaceuticals, clinical stage biopharma, for investor and corporate comms. programs

Southeast

Axia PR, Orlando/Rebounderz Franchise and Development, as AOR for PR, following a competitive search. Rebounderz is an expanding franchise of indoor trampoline arenas for kids. Axia, which has worked with Dave & Buster's and Brightway Insurance, among others, is touting its client's engineering and safety, in addition to the business opportunities available with franchise locations.

Fish Consulting, Hollywood, Fla./International Franchise Association, to develop and launch the IFA Educational Foundation's national Franchising Gives Back program via PR and website development. The program through the IFA's philanthropic arm will show how franchise businesses give back to their communities through charitable and community support programs. Launch date is February 16 at the Association's annual convention in Las Vegas.

The Publicity Agency, Tampa, Fla./GD Biosciences, clinical testing and developer of diagnostic tools, for PR.

Southwest

Vox Solid Communications, Las Vegas/Coral Academy of Science Las Vegas, as AOR for PR and social media for the K-12 state sponsored, tuition-free public charter school.

West

VR PR, San Francisco/Innovation Tri-Valley, networking collaboration aiming to connect regional businesses, research labs, educational institutions and civic leaders, as AOR for integrated branding and communications solutions, marketing campaigns and digital strategy.



NEWS OF SERVICES**TOGORUN TRACKS NEW CONGRESS ON H-CARE**

TogoRun, the healthcare and PA sister firm of FleishmanHillard, has published a second edition of its "Freshman Healthbook" a free online research tool gauging the healthcare priorities of newly elected members of the 114th Congress.

The firm notes that the new congressional majority will likely pen a budget to include a repeal of the Affordable Care Act and reforms to federal healthcare programs, among other major health policy changes.

The Healthbook can be downloaded at: <http://hcpolicy matters.com/freshman-healthbook>.

"The common rally cry for three out of four of new freshmen is 'repeal and replace Obamacare,' but the power of the President's veto makes piecemeal dismantling more realistic. This means the nuances between members are critically important," said Anne Woodbury, managing director of TogoRun's Washington, D.C., office.

PLATFORM AUTOMATES FINANCIAL PR

Finsource has launched as an automated financial PR platform that includes editorial development, media contacts, collateral templates, distribution and other tools.

Co-founder and CEO Dan Simon said PR is where the travel agency model was 20 years ago. "Today, consumers use travel agents exclusively for very specific, highly technical purposes and rely on themselves for the rest, he said. "Within three years, the administrative tasks of PR like client onboarding, media list creation, event and award research and media requests will not be bundled in retainers together with high level consulting, creative work or delivery."

Cost is \$99/month. Info: finsource.com.

NIRI SEEKS INTERNSHIPS FOR 9/11 VICTIMS

The New York Chapter of the National Investor Relations Institute is seeking partners in the tri-state New York area to offer internships in IR, PR or corporate communications in the summer of 2015 to children of the victims of the 9/11 attacks.

NIRI/NY sponsors the 9/11 Logler Memorial Internship Program, coordinating with the 9/11 charity Tuesday's Children, in memory of chapter member Elizabeth Logler, VP-IR of eSpeed who lost her life in World Trade Center attacks.

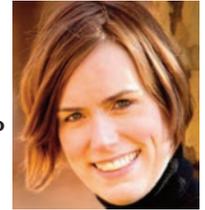
Previous participants have been placed at companies like Acorda Therapeutics, Acquire Media, Altria, BGC Partners, Burson-Marsteller, Capital Bridge, Catalyst Global, Delphi Financial, EDGAR Online, Hain Celestial, Henry Schein, theIRapp, PepsiCo, and Veeco Instruments. Firms and companies that can offer a paid summer internship are asked to contact Mark Kinarney, corporate access associate at Credit Suisse and board member of NIRI-NY, at mark.kinarney@creditsuisse.com.

BRIEF: **Dave Armon**, CEO of Brand.com and former COO/president of PR Newswire, to the board of directors of **3BL Media**, a Northampton, Mass.-based platform and distribution network built for CSR and sustainability. 3BL acquired CSR Wire in September.

PEOPLE**Joined**

Cheryl Damian, a veteran of Fenton Communications and Cone, to Ketchum, San Francisco, to help build the firm's West Coast sustainability and CSR offering. The 15-year PR pro has handled Warner Bros, Save the Children and Kate Spade Co. and shaped their CSR and change platforms.

Claire Sheahan, who led communications for the Generic Pharmaceutical Association and helmed FleishmanHillard's DC health unit, to healthcare research and consulting company Avalere Health as SVP at Avalere Communications in January 2015. She was a SVP and partner at FH before moving to the GPA in early 2013 as VP for communications. She is also a former PA manager for the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Assn. and an associate at GMMB.

**Sheahan**

Robert Doody, who led investor relations for Viro Pharma through its \$4.2B acquisition by Shire last year, to Idera Pharmaceuticals as VP of IR and corporate communications for the Waltham, Mass.-based biopharma developer. Doody is reunited with former ViroPharma CEO Vincent Milano, who now helms Idera. He spent more than seven years at ViroPharma in Exton, Pa., and served on its integration time with Shire through May of this year. Doody was previously an A/S at Dorland Sweeny Jones. Idera is a publicly traded, clinical-stage biopharmaceutical developer.

Christine Dusek, manager of global communications, IMS Health, to Ruder Finn, New York, as executive VP in the firm's corporate practice. She was previously at RF. Jon Vidar, who started the Triziano Project non-profit and Uncharted Digital boutique agency, joins as senior VP in the corporate unit and digital operation RFI Studios.

Tom Rippinger, senior manager of comms. and member services, Motor & Equipment Manufacturers Assn., to Eisbrenner PR, Royal Oak, Mich., as an A/S. He was a legislative aide for the National Automobile Dealers Assn.

Melanie Nayer, global social media lead, SapientNitro, to 360 PR, Boston, as VP of digital strategy. She is a former producer for Boston.com.

David Bashaw, who ran his own shop and is a former SVP/director of healthcare for MSLGroup, to HealthStar Communications, New York, as executive VP. He was also senior VP at Ogilvy PR and Edelman.

Promoted

Pat Courtney to chief communications officer, Major League Baseball. He joined MLB in 1992 and has been senior VP of PR and chief spokesman for the past four years. MLB is preparing for the departure of Commissioner Bud Selig with the appointment of Rob Manfred on Jan. 24, 2015.

Mary Marandi to assistant director, corporate communications, Minor League Baseball, St. Petersburg, Fla. She joined in 2006. Jeff Kantz, manager of media relations for the Baltimore Orioles, has joined as director of comms.

AK-47 MAKER RE-BRANDS

Moscow PR firm Apostol is guiding the corporate re-branding of Kalashnikov, the Russian firearms maker that is burnishing its image and expanding into consumer markets.

The \$380K campaign is introducing the legendary maker of the AK-47 as Kalashnikov Concern, or CK, with a tagline that translates to English as "Protecting Peace," and in Russian can mean "Weapons of Peace" or "Weapons of the World," according to the government-backed RT news.



CK is part of the state-owned Rostec corporation. The firearms maker, which supplies 27 countries but has been hampered by US and Canadian sanctions, said in September that it plans to double its annual output over the next three years.

Earlier this year, it was reportedly mulling a pact with actor Steven Seagal to serve as global brand ambassador.

Apostol is the firm of media figure Tina Kandelaki, who co-founded the PR firm with Vasily Brovko, now head of communications for Rostec.

CK is the former Izhmash arms maker, which took on the Kalashnikov name last year and has made Ak-47s since their creation in 1949.

Newsweek reported last week that there are an estimated 100M AK-47s in circulation around the world in virtually every conflict zone. The assault rifles are the standard infantry rifle in about 80 countries.

The company is reportedly preparing to release an update of the AK-47, a new high-tech assault rifle, the AK-12.

HINTON LANDS AT AIRLINES TRADE GROUP

Melanie Hinton, senior PR manager at the Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International trade group, is joining Airlines for America on Jan. 5 as managing director for airline industry PR & communications.

She'll report to Jean Medina, senior VP-communications.

The more than 20-year PA and journalism veteran, will oversee operational communications and forge alliances with third-party supporters.

Earlier, Hinton was PA and campaign/events manager at the UK Embassy in Washington, communications manager at the National Assn. of Home Builders-Remodelers Council and industry relations chief at the American Nursery & Landscape Assn.

She has written for the Evening Sun (Hanover, PA), North Hills News Record (Pittsburgh) and Pennsylvania Law Weekly.

American Airlines, Delta, United, US Air, FedEx and UPS are members of the A4A, which represents \$1.5T in economic activity and employs more than 11M people.

AVOLON FILES WITH FTI ON IPO FLIGHT

Avolon Holdings, the Dublin-based airliner lessor slating a New York Stock Exchange IPO, is working with FTI Consulting for communications support in the US and abroad.

Avolon, launched by private equity funding in 2010, operates a \$5.3B, 227-aircraft fleet across 27 countries with offices in Shanghai, Dubai, Singapore and Stamford, Conn. Revenue for 2013 was \$450M with \$112.8M in net income.

The company filed Dec. 1 for a 13.6M-share IPO worth up to \$314M, which would value the company at around \$1.8B.

FTI managing director Hugh Barker reps Avolon stateside, while MD Jonathan Neilan in Dublin handles the international press.

The *Wall Street Journal* called the offering a "test of investor appetite for stocks with exposure to declining oil prices" as the falling global price of oil has sent airline stocks soaring and raised concerns of a bubble in aircraft orders.

China's sovereign wealth fund CIC, along with state-owned defense company AVIC, scuttled talks to acquire Avolon in October.

AMG AIDS C&J AMID 'INVERSION' COURT FIGHT

C&J Energy Services, the Houston oil field services company that saw its \$2.8B merger with Nabors Industries blocked by a Delaware court last week, is relying on Abernathy MacGregor Group for PR counsel.

C&J is eyeing tax savings in the deal with Bermuda-based Nabors, announced in June.

Delaware chancery judge John Noble on Nov. 24 ruled that C&J's board did not adequately shop the company after shareholders sued to block the deal. The court ordered C&J directors who would not serve on the board post-merger to solicit potential buyers over the next 30 days for a deal rivaling the Nabors transaction.

C&J has engaged Morgan Stanley to handle the solicitation of potential buyers.

C&J is appealing the chancery court ruling to the Delaware Supreme Court.

Abernathy M&A chief Tom Johnson and SVP Luke Barrett in New York are advising C&J and speaking for the company. Executive VP Glen Orr, based in Houston for Abernathy, is also engaged.

ASGK GETS DEVINE

Maura Devine has sold DevinePR to Chicago-based ASGK Public Strategies, which was co-founded by former White House advisor David Axelrod.

She launched her shop in 2008 to handle *Fortune* 500 companies, law firms, museums and universities.

Prior to DevinePR, Devine was communications director at McNabola Law Group, VP at Hill & Knowlton and assignment editor at WBBM-TV.

During a four-year stint at H&K, Devine she crisis management and media training.

Eric Sedler, co-founder of ASGK, heads the 12-year-old firm. Devine has the managing director title.

PR jobs rank near the top in producing stress, says CareerCast.com. Its list of the “Ten Worst Jobs of 2014” puts “newspaper reporter” in the second position.

The flood of news of downsizings (*New York Times*, *New Republic*, etc.), reduced publication frequency, and outright closures helped push newspaper reporter to its dubious position, says CareerCast, whose rankings are picked up by HuffPost and numerous other media. CareerCast in 2011 rated “PR officer” as the second most stressful job, moving it up six places from No. 8. “PR executive” was No. 5 on its 2013 list of the ten most stressful jobs.

Such executives are required to do “damage control” which means they have to “think and act quickly under stress,” says CareerCast. “They live in the public eye.” They are also “on call” 24/7 because “news never stops” and they must deal with “potentially hostile” reporters.

PRSA VP-PR Yann Died at 48

There’s no doubt in our mind that the death of PRSA VP-PR Arthur Yann on Thursday, June 13, 2013 at age 48 was at least partly caused by the stress of his job. CEO Bill Murray said Yann had “one of the toughest jobs in PR—VP-PR for an organization representing more than 20,000 PR pros.”

Yann’s death was stressful for the Society in several ways. It came on the day the Society was to publicize more than 250 Silver and Bronze Anvil winners. Yann had attended the event the night before and was stricken on the 8:35 p.m. train to Fairfield, Conn.

Instead of announcing the death on Friday morning, Murray held up the news until Monday, saying, “Our community joins me in mourning the sudden and unexpected death of our friend, co-worker, colleague and PRSA member Arthur Andrew Yann.”

No further details were given for such a major development that cried out for an explanation. We tracked down what happened and ran a story Tuesday, June 18.

PRSSA President Harder Is “Stressed”

The subject of stress has come up because the O’Dwyer Co., which was barred from exhibiting its six news and informational products at the PRSA conference in D.C. Oct. 13-16, contacted PR Student Society president Heather Harder of Elon University, N.C., in a bid to have her and other PRSSA leaders give us the hearing that national Society would not.

We’re hopeful that in a college setting, where knowledge is pursued and not avoided, Heather and other PRSSA leaders will provide a way to rectify the boycott that deprives students of knowing about a major source of PR news, information, instructional materials, and job listings. We’re sure that many if not most of the 300 chapters (11,000 members) would find all or most of the O’Dwyer products useful.

Harder rejected our request. Her e-mail of Dec. 6 said Society h.q. did not “approve” of our request for an “interview/comment.” She advised us to contact VP-PR Stephanie Cegielski.”

Cegielski e-mailed that we were causing Harder

“stress” and to “cease and desist” from any attempts to contact her or anyone at Elon University.

Elon Faculty Must Be Involved

Harder’s rejection does not square with the philosophy of the school. The “Elon Commitment” is to “Engaged Minds” and “Inspired Leaders.” Other values in the statement are for “freedom of thought,” “liberty of conscience,” and “scholarly accomplishment.” The boycott also does not track with the PR Society’s own vow to “promote the free flow of information.”

She should not have to face the Society alone in this matter, which involves being shorn of her right of free speech, her right of free inquiry, which is what college is all about. The Society can offer her career opportunities but is that worth trading for her right of free speech?

She needs advice and support from Elon administration and faculty including president Leo Lambert, Ph.D., Paul Parsons, Ph.D., dean of the 1,150-student School of Communications, and Don Grady, Ph.D., associate dean. The image of the University is at stake in this matter.

Special support should come from Lucinda Austin, Ph.D., faculty adviser who assisted Harder in the project she did on how Coca-Cola confronts “health concerns related to obesity” which won a \$5,000 prize from the Arthur W. Page Society on April 4.

The Harder paper notes that attempts to position Coke as an enemy of obesity are called “disingenuous” by critics. She appears to accept Coke’s position that the artificial sweetener aspartame is safe.

A fuller report on Coke would have referenced “The Campaign to Stop Killer Coke,” a worldwide drive that accuses the company not only of selling a product that raises numerous health concerns but says it abuses employees and distributors in many countries. New York University banned Coke products from 2006-2010.

The 1.6 million-member American Federation of Teachers on Nov. 18 called on members and affiliates to urge removal of Coke products from schools, colleges, hospitals and other places.

Austin, who focuses on health and crisis communication, should be interested in the 68-page October 2014 *O’Dwyer’s* magazine that had 15 articles on healthcare PR, including how to cope with social and other media, and profiled more than 40 healthcare practices. Sixty-six healthcare PR practices are ranked by size based on income tax returns and W-3 totals.

The 6,483-student body at Elon should know about Harder’s relationship with the student and national PR Societies. What do the students make of this clash of commercial and educational interests? Elon has 5,782 undergrads and 701 graduate and professional students. Tuition is \$31,247 and room/board, \$10,667. The subject should be taken up by the weekly student publication *The Pendulum*. Seventy-five students are involved in reporting and other duties for the paper and its website.

PR and journalism are in a state of turmoil.

— Jack O’Dwyer