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Editor-in-Chief

# O'Dwyer's

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February 6, 2023 Vol. 56 No. 6



Show your firm's expertise in such specialities as healthcare, tech and finances (as well as 17 others) by taking in part in O'Dwyer's 2023 Rankings of PR Firms. **The deadline to submit is Fri., Mar. 13.** [View Rankings Instructions \(PDF\)](#).

## CA DMV DRIVES OUT PR RFP

The California Department of Motor Vehicles plans to hire a firm to handle a \$500M communications and outreach campaign to inform the public about new renewal requirements for participation in the disabled placard program.



About 3M Californians have DPs, which are free and allow holders special parking benefits. They are valid for two years and expire on June 30 of every odd year.

The DPs had renewed automatically but holders this year must re-apply for the placards.

DMV wants a firm to run a statewide campaign to ensure the DP community is aware of the new renewal requirement.

The English-language campaign must be translated into Spanish, Chinese, Armenian, Hindi, Punjabi and Vietnamese.

Responses are due Feb. 14. They go to: Department of Motor Vehicles; Contract Services Section; Attn: Valerie Roybal; 2415 First Avenue, MS: E112; Sacramento, CA 95818-2606

[Read the RFP \(PDF\)](#).

## APCO HIRES TRANSPORTATION PRO SAULL

[APCO Worldwide](#) hires Christina Saull as a senior director in its Washington, DC office.

Prior to joining APCO, Saull was director of corporate communications at the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, which operates Reagan National and Dulles International airports and the Dulles Toll Road. In this role, she drove internal and external communications, leading crisis communication planning and response, media relations and serving as lead public information officer and spokesperson for the organization.



**Christina Saull**

"Christina brings a fresh perspective on key challenges for companies in transportation, critical infrastructure, travel and tourism and global supply chain," said Licy M. Do Canto managing director of APCO's DC office.

"Christina brings a fresh perspective on key challenges for companies in transportation, critical infrastructure, travel and

## MIKEWORLDWIDE ACQUIRES MRB

Independent agency [MikeWorldWide Public Relations](#) has acquired boutique technology specialist firm MRB Public Relations. Financial terms of the deal weren't publicly disclosed.

Freehold, NJ-based MRB focuses on information technology and cybersecurity. It was founded in 1992 by CEO Michael Becce as a media research firm.

MRB will still operate under its current name and branding and will be integrated into MikeWorldWide's global technology practice. Becce, along with the agency's account staff, will join MikeWorldWide's tech practice. MRB will also retain its current physical office, providing a Jersey shore option for MikeWorldWide employees.

New York-based MikeWorldWide, which was founded in 1986 by CEO Michael Kempner, counts a staff of 230 and accounted for more than \$45 million in 2021, according to [O'Dwyer's rankings of PR firms](#).



## HOPE HICKS RIDES TO DOLAN'S RESCUE

Embattled Madison Square Garden Entertainment Group chief James Dolan is using former Trump PR guru Hope Hicks to deflect criticism for his use of facial recognition technology to ban legal foes from attending events at the "world's most famous arena."

New York State Senator Brad Hoylman-Sigal wrote a Jan. 27 letter to National Basketball Assn. commissioner Adam Silver and National Hockey League head Gary Bettman asking them to sanction Dolan.

Hicks, who was spokesperson for the Trump Organization and then for Donald Trump's presidential campaign, moved into the White House communications director slot.

She exited Team Trump to lead comms at Fox Corp. but returned to the White House in 2020 to advise it on COVID-19 messaging strategy.

Her father, Paul Hicks, was the executive VP of communications and government affairs at the National Football League until 2015. He now is a partner at [FGS Global](#).



**Jack Leslie**

## GA'S DEKALB CO. NEEDS FLU/COVID-19 COMMS

The DeKalb County Board of Health plans to hire a firm to support an influenza and COVID-19 vaccination campaign to motivate racial and ethnic populations experiencing disparities to get their shots.



The priority targeted population is non-Hispanic Blacks who account for 53 percent of the Georgia's county's 585K population.

The selected firm will partner with community groups to increase vaccine awareness, access and confidence, according to the RFP. It must "embody cultural and contextual competency (e.g., gender, cultural balance, sensitivity, and language skills) and sensitivity to the project's principles of empowerment, participatory-action and capacity-building."

Interested firms must register at [Georgia's portal](#).

Proposals are due Feb. 13. They go to [dph-dcbohpurchasing@dph.ga.gov](mailto:dph-dcbohpurchasing@dph.ga.gov).

[Read the RFP \(PDF\)](#).

## FINN BOOSTS 'CANCER MOONSHOT' COALITION

[Finn Partners](#) and OffScrip Health will handle a storytelling campaign for a new coalition to address the obstacles that rural patient communities face accessing healthcare, the White House announced Feb. 2.

The coalition is part of President Biden's "Cancer Moonshot" effort to reduce cancer deaths by at least 50 percent over the next 25 years and improve the care for people and families surviving cancer.



In October, Finn and OffScrip Health, digital media platform, launched a multimedia campaign, "Heartbreak in America's Heartland—Crisis in Rural America" to raise awareness of the challenges that people in rural areas face in getting healthcare.

For the Cancer Moonshot's coalition, Finn and OffScrip Health will highlight the critical issues impacting rural areas' health, such as access to care, broadband infrastructure, consumer goods, clean water and telehealth.

Coalition members include American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, Stupid Cancer, Triage Cancer, Prevent Cancer Foundation, National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship and Tigerlily Foundation.

## FORMER HARRIS AIDE JOINS GIFFORDS

Giffords, the gun violence prevention organization founded by former Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, hires Chris Harris as VP of communications.



**Chris Harris**

Harris served as communications director on Kamala Harris's Senate team during her runs for president and vice president. Before that, he was communications director for Sen. Chris Murphy (D-CT) and led communications for Sen. Mark Udall's (D-CO) 2014 campaign.

He was most recently a VP at Weber Shandwick and its public affairs unit, Powell Tate.

In his new role, Harris will serve as a key member of the organization's executive management team and oversee its media, content, digital and events teams.

## NEWS OF FIRMS

[FTI Consulting](#)'s cybersecurity & data privacy communications team launches the [Secure Your Seat program](#), an initiative directed at C-suite leaders in information security who find themselves in the spotlight both internally and externally. The program provides training, counsel and guidance aimed at helping chief information security officers communicate effectively and with authority to the board, senior leaders and external stakeholders. In addition to individual counseling, Secure Your Seat offers hands-on presentation and interviewing coaching, KPI communications workshops, and individual Board CV review and advisory.

[Peppercomm](#) is expanding its Laughing Matters Council, which helps businesses harness the power of humor to support cultural changes and business growth through research and thought leadership. Joining the council are Luvelt Anderson, associate professor of philosophy and affiliate faculty in African American Studies and Women's and Gender Studies at Syracuse University, and Malcolm Frierson, visiting assistant professor of African American Studies at Loyola Marymount University.



**Luvelt Anderson, Malcolm Frierson**

[Glen Echo Group](#), forms a partnership with Bowie State University, Maryland's oldest HBCU, that will foster professional connections and career development for students in the university's Public Relations Student Society of America Chapter, which sits within its communications department. Two major initiatives of the partnership's first year are a scholarship fund for student participation in the international PR-SA ICON conference, and an on-campus networking event to provide individualized resume and career guidance to students.

[The Change Agencies](#), a national network of independent multicultural and LGBTQ public relations and marketing firms that launched in June 2019, brings on five new member agencies: Siarza in Albuquerque and San Diego; Avila Creative in Chicago; Bernadette Davis Communications in Plano, TX and Orlando; Athena Communications in Milwaukee; and Zaid Communications in Miami. They join existing members RENEWPR in Washington, DC; Mahogany Xan Communications in Phoenix; and MuchPR in New York.



[Netpresenter](#), an employee communication platform developer, has integrated OpenAI GPT artificial intelligence technology (a variant of ChatGPT) into the newest "beta" version of its platform, a move intended to streamline the internal communications process for clients. Netpresenter, with U.S. headquarters in Princeton, NJ, says it is the first employee communications platform to offer the technology.

[Treble](#), an Austin, TX agency that helps venture capital firms accelerate exits, launches a new round of its Funding Accelerator Program, which focuses on developing earned media campaigns around funding rounds closed by venture-backed startups and enterprise organizations. This follows the November formation of the firm's enterprise technology practice group and the introduction of its cybersecurity practice group.

## **ADVICE FOR SANTOS' COMMS DIRECTOR**

Back in 1990, singer George Michael's career was sky-high, but he was unhappy. In an interview, he detailed his disillusionment with fame. A response came from a surprising source: Frank Sinatra. In an open letter, Sinatra offered his opinion on the interview and offered Michael some stern advice. He said talent should not be wasted.



**Barry Kluger**

Now, I don't know if George Santos' communications director Naysa Woomer is suited for the job, but she has a job and this retired pr veteran has some Sinatra-like stern advice for her: Run. As far away as you can!

But seriously, in taking a high profile and likely thankless job, you are blowing your credibility with not only a lost cause but this is way beyond damage control and it does not appear on the surface you have the bona fides to do the job. No offense. As a seasoned, crisis management person, this is akin to being the person asked to rearrange the chairs on the deck of the Titanic. On-the-job training is often a good thing—this is mistrial by fire.

The S.S. Mea Culpa sailed for Santos many weeks ago and while this is a high profile job, it will haunt you wherever you go next.

Now, if there's any industry that has a short memory—or any memory—it's politics. You may still be employable but if there's ever been an opportunity to retire the word "spin," this is it. "Truth" is a better word and while it is unlikely to salvage Santos' career, you, as a fellow communications professional, must demonstrate the highest level of trust, not subterfuge or wordsmithing.

I recall a study from a few years ago where pr people ranked below members of Congress in terms of trust and believability. That's because they became mouthpieces who were afraid to tell the emperor he was not wearing any clothes.

It happens in business and politics. I, your fellow "professional," fought this perception for all the years I worked. My late mother once said to me: "Let me tell you what happened to cousin Arlene and...oh...this is off the record!"

They say even guilty people are entitled to a proper defense. When you tell a lie enough times, you become the lie. While it can often escalate to a legal level, it's not a criminal conundrum, it's a moral one.

Articles have been written about celebrities who share advice for those up and coming or to their younger selves. Reflecting, I don't think I would change too much. I think it was both a plus and minus for me to tell CEOs what I thought. Some didn't want to hear it, but most respected it and it had its rewards in my career.

Naysa: You can choose how your career goes. You can choose veracity over varnishing. The late comedian Soupy Sales said: "Be true to your teeth and they won't be false to you." It's the best advice I can give.

*Barry Kluger is a former senior communications executive at MTV Networks, Prodigy and USA. He ran his own agency for 25 years and is now retired.*

## **GOPERS THREATEN AL JAZEERA PRESS CREDS**

Three Republican Congressmen are calling for the immediate suspension of press credentials of reporters for the Al Jazeera Media News Network until it complies with the Foreign Agents Registration Act.

Michael Waltz (FL), Jack Bergman (MI) and Alex Mooney (WV) view Al Jazeera as the propaganda arm of Qatar, which funds the satellite TV network.

In their Feb. 2 letter to House leadership, the Congressmen note that credentialed members of the House and Senate galleries enjoy unparalleled access to the US Capitol.

"While this access is necessary for the media to provide accurate reporting to the American public, it is also the kind of access coveted by foreign powers seeking sensitive information from inside Congress," they wrote.

Al Jazeera's units have 136 credentialed staffers. That towers over the 82 *New York Times* staffers with credentials.

Waltz, Bergman and Mooney wrote: "A media company with a substantial presence on Capitol Hill is the perfect front for inserting just a handful of intelligence operatives among the credentialed journalists."



## **DENTONS ADDS EX-CONGRESSMAN DENHAM**

Former California Congressman Jeff Denham, who was a member of the Republican leadership team, has joined Dentons as a senior policy director.

In the House, Denham focused on transportation, infrastructure, agricultural, natural resources and energy issues. He was also deputy whip for the House Republican Conference.

Eric Tanenblatt, Dentons global chair of public policy and regulation, said the addition of Denham "will further our firm's ability to assist our clients on any legislative, regulatory or investigative matters, regardless of which party controls the House, Senate or White House."

Denham will work alongside ex-NYC Congressman Joe Crowley, who on the Democratic leadership team.



**Jeff Denham**

## **INVARIANT SHOPS WITH KLARNA**

Invariant has picked up Klarna, a leader in the "buy now, pay later" space that has been [squeezed by rising interest rates](#).

Founded in Sweden in 2005, Klarna had ranked as Europe's biggest start-up with a market valuation of \$45.6B. That valuation is now in the \$6.5B range, according to the *Wall Street Journal*. The company has partnerships with 450K retailers across the globe, including Macys, Saks and Nike. Invariant is advising Klarna on banking, short-term credit and payments issues.

The Klarna team includes Carolyn Coda, who handled federal affairs at Swiss Re; Noah Marine, a veteran of Travelers Insurance; Matt Russell, House Ways and Means Committee staffer; Quincy Enoch, National Assn. of Mutual Insurance Cos alum; and Joseph Vaughan, an advisor on the House Financial Services subcommittee on diversity and inclusion matters.

**Klarna.**

## DC INFRASTRUCTURE ACADEMY SEEKS PR

The District of Columbia Department of Employment Services seeks a firm to develop a comprehensive communications and outreach program for its Infrastructure Academy and its move to both its Ward 5 and Ward 8 locations.



The Academy empowers DC residents by providing specialized skills training and certifications that lead to sustainable careers in the infrastructure industry.

The selected firm will handle PR, media relations, digital/social content, public information, research, events, marketing and film/videotape production.

The Academy plans to issue a one-year contract with options for four additional one-year periods.

Proposals are due Feb. 10. They go to: Aaron Sisko; Program Analyst; DC Infrastructure Academy; Department of Employment Services; 2330 Pomeroy Road, SE; Washington, D.C. 20020

[Read the RFP \(PDF\)](#).

## HMA ACQUIRES LOVELL COMMUNICATIONS

Lovell Communications is acquired by Health Management Associates, a research and consulting firm specializing in publicly funded healthcare and human services policy, programs, financing and evaluation.



Lovell CEO Rosemary Plorin will continue to lead the firm, which will operate as Lovell Communications, an HMA Company.



Founded in 1988 and based in Nashville, Tenn., Lovell provides communication solutions and strategies for healthcare organizations.

“Lovell’s strategists have an impressive track record of helping healthcare clients overcome challenges and seize opportunities,” said HMA founder, president and co-chairman Jay Rosen said. “They are a natural addition to our company as we open a Nashville office and continue to expand the depth and breadth of services we offer our clients and partners.”

## EX 9/11 MUSEUM SPOKESPERSON TO SKDK

Michael Frazier, who spent more than 11 years as a communicator at the National September 11 Memorial & Museum, has joined SKDK’s PA practice in New York as an executive VP. He will support corporate, crisis and advocacy clients.



**Michael Frazier**

Newsday and the Associated Press.

SKDK CEO Doug Thornell said Frazier ranks “among the most accomplished communications professionals in the state of New York.”

Frazier, who exited the 9/11 Museum as executive VP and deputy director of external affairs, also served as an executive vice president at the Food Allergy Research and Education group, a spokesperson for Mike Bloomberg’s presidential campaign and a reporter for

## ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT

**Barbara Wagner Communications**, which has just entered its third year of business, is named **M&T Bank’s** agency of record for New York Metro, Long Island, Tarrytown and most of New Jersey. In addition to promoting PR efforts and announcements for the bank in those markets, BWC will also support key executives in New York Metro with interviews, speaking engagements, podcasts and awards. The agency will also work with M&T on event coordination, enhancing relationships with reporters and amplifying sponsor relationships.



**Hill+Knowlton Strategies** is named global agency for payments platform **FreedomPay**. H+K will support FreedomPay’s expansion in North America, UK, Europe, Asia and APAC. The scope of work includes launching the company’s new brand positioning, press office management, campaign support and industry events. “We chose H+K for their deep understanding of not only the latest commerce strategies, but also their international prowess and deep knowledge in fintech across retail, hospitality, and food and beverage,” said Liesl Smith, SVP of marketing & sales enablement at FreedomPay

**5W Public Relations** scoops up **Zoom Room**, an indoor dog training gym. The agency will support all national and regional media relations efforts for Zoom Room, building awareness for the brand as well for its current and upcoming locations. “We are beyond impressed with the vision and capabilities of the entire 5W PR team,” said Zoom Room CEO Mark Van Wye.

**Superjuice**, which has offices in New York, Los Angeles, Atlanta, and Seattle, signs on as PR agency of record for **KeVita**, a manufacturer of sparkling probiotic drinks. The company is part of the Tropicana Brands Group portfolio. Superjuice will oversee all PR and brand communications for KeVita.



**W Communications** is named US agency of record for hotel and lifestyle brand **citizenM**. The agency will drive exposure for the brand and its plans to expand into markets including Austin, TX. The scope of work will include creative brand-building campaigns, partnerships and media relations. CitizenM operates 30 hotels in 18 cities across the world, most recently opening a hotel in Miami Worldcenter.

**CRC**, a 360PR+ agency, wins **Zotos Professional** to promote Better Natured, its brand of vegan at-home hair care products, which are available at JCPenney Beauty, Amazon and BetterNatured.com. CRC will be responsible for elevating and driving consumer awareness of the brand’s at-home hair color, as well as the broader line of Better Natured® hair care offerings launched at JCPenney Beauty.

**Mason** launches a campaign for the **State of New Hampshire Paid Family and Medical Leave plan**. The campaign includes the development of a new brand identity, creative, advertising, strategic messaging, web content, social media and public relations for the program. The plan, which was signed into law on June 25, 2021, took effect on January 1, 2023 and is available to all New Hampshire employers and workers. Coverage started January 1, 2023.

## **BRUNSWICK STEERS LOTUS TECH SPAC DEAL**

Brunswick Group handles Lotus Technology, luxury electric vehicle maker that operates under the British Lotus brand, as it merges with a SPAC formed by L Catterton investment firm in a deal valued at \$5.4B.



Zhejiang Geely Holding Group, which is China's seventh biggest car company, is majority owner of Lotus Technology, which is based in Wuhan. Geely also owns the Swedish Volvo and Polestar car brands.

Lotus plans to launch the Eletre, its first fully electric hyper SUV, in China by the end of the first quarter. It will be introduced in the UK and European Union later in the year. There are plans to introduce the Eletre in US and rest of the world at a future date.

The Lotus brand was founded in the UK in 1948.

The automaker, which has a rich history in British racing, is committed to becoming an advanced, fully electric, intelligent and sustainable luxury mobility provider ahead of the brand's 80th anniversary in 2028.

## **FIU PLANS TO ENROLL PR HELPERS**

Florida International University, which is Miami's public research institution, plans to hire one or more firms to handle various strategic communications-related duties.

FIU is noted for its diverse student body. Hispanics account for 61 percent of its 56K students, followed by Non-Hispanic Whites at 15 percent and Blacks at 13 percent. The school offers 190 degree programs. The school is looking for support in PR, marketing, advertising, content creation, copywriting, gift development writing, editing, proofreading, art direction, multimedia production and event planning/execution.

FIU plans to issue two-year contracts with the option for up to four one-year renewals.

Responses are due Feb 10 at FIU's [electronic procurement portal](#).

Read FIU's [invitation to negotiate notice](#) (PDF).

## **TIKTOK CEO HEADS FOR THE HILL**

TikTok CEO Shou Zi Chew has agreed to appear before the House Energy and Commerce Committee on March 23 to testify on the company's consumer privacy and data security practices, according to a statement released by a Congressional panel.

He also will be asked about TikTok's impact on children and its relationship with the the government of the People's Republic of China.

Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers, who chairs the committee, said Big Tech has increasingly become a destructive force in American society. She noted that "ByteDance-owned TikTok has knowingly allowed the ability for the Chinese Communist Party to access American user data."

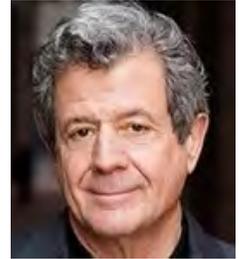
Rodgers said the committee has expressed its concerns to TikTok. "It is now time to continue the committee's efforts to hold Big Tech accountable by bringing TikTok before the committee to provide complete and honest answers for people."



## **ON THE MOVE**

**Bastion Agency** hires **Steve Chavez** as chief creative officer for its US offering. Chavez comes to Bastion from WPP-owned Garage Team Mazda, where he was also chief creative officer. He previously headed up creative efforts at Leo Burnett. Chavez will lead Bastion's US-based creative team with a focus on creative strategy, concepting and execution.

**FINN Partners** names **Alan Isacson**, who led FINN's global manufacturing sector for five years and founded ABI, an international, B2B marketing firm nearly 40 years ago, as a strategic advisor to the firm. Isacson and his team established FINN Partners' Manufacturing Practice, which specializes across packaging, food, health, chemical, industrial, and environmental sectors. "In my strategic advisor role, I will continue my relationship with FINN as well as pursue several personal interests," said Isacson.



**Alan Isacson**

**Hotwire** appoints **Heather Craft** to lead the agency's North America business as CEO. Craft previously served as co-president alongside **Laura Macdonald**, who will now head up a newly created global growth team within Hotwire as chief growth officer. Before joining Hotwire as a senior vp in 2016, Craft held several senior positions at MSLGROUP. A 12-year veteran of Hotwire, Macdonald's previous positions include head of consumer.

**The PRSA Foundation**, which is dedicated to advancing diversity and inclusion within the communications profession, appoints **Dawn Christian** as president. Christian is the CEO and founder of Belong by Dawn Christian, a leadership consultancy established on the principles of Belonging as the core foundation of Inclusion, Diversity, Accountability and Social Impact (IDEAS) practices.

**The Economist Group** brings on **Nada Arnot** as EVP of marketing, effective in March. Arnot comes to *The Economist* from Britbox, the online digital video subscription service founded by BBC Studios and ITV, where she was senior vice president of marketing and head of group marketing services. Prior to BritBox, she held leadership roles at AMC Networks, Hearst Magazines, Kaplan Test Prep, NBC Universal and RF/Binder. In her new post, Arnot will work to drive market presence and help the publisher grow its consumer and corporate subscriptions worldwide.

**Yale University** appoints **Renee Kopkowski** as VP for communications, effective April 1. Kopkowski joins Yale from Georgia Tech, where she was VP, institute communications. She will lead Yale's Office of Public Affairs & Communications, serve as the university's chief communications officer, and guide campus-wide internal and external communications strategies.



**Nada Arnot**

**Crosswind Media and Public Relations** promotes **Mac Walker** to VP of media strategy. Walker has been with the agency since 2021, previously serving as a senior account executive. Prior to joining Crosswind, he was deputy press secretary for Texas Governor Greg Abbott. In his new post, Walker is charged with directing strategy and overseeing media relations protocols for Crosswind clients and staff.

# COMMENTARY



**Tucker Carlson**

**Noted environmentalist Tucker Carlson**, taking a pause from ridiculing the M&M's "woke" spokespersons, has blamed the deaths of nine whales that have washed up on Jersey's shore since December on offshore wind turbine exploration off the coast.

The Fox commentator's "The Biden Whale Extinction" series is red meat for his viewers who are against all things related to the president.

Carlson, of course, doesn't let science stand in his way of him spouting nonsense.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has found that since 2016 there have been 174 humpback whale strandings along the Atlantic coast from Florida to Maine.

Those deaths predate any offshore wind activity. A good portion of those strandings were due to collisions with ships.

Rutgers researchers found a big increase in the number of humpback whales visiting the shores of Jersey and New York as the water warms due to climate change.

If Carlson is serious about reducing the number of whale strandings, he would advocate for more offshore wind turbines.

Wind and solar power are the best ways to reduce the use of fossil fuels and crimp global warming.

**Finn Partners** stuck a blow for racial justice as it represents the Mississippi River Boulevard Christian Church and its Pastor J. Lawrence Turner who hosted the Feb. 1 funeral of Tyre Nichols who was murdered by Memphis police.

Since news of Nichols' death, Finn's Nashville team has been helping Turner "develop and disseminate his impassioned call for systemic change within our nation's criminal justice system," according to a memo from Katie Seigenthaler.

The recent work follows years of strategic support for Turner's messages demanding systemic justice and has resulted in positioning him as one of Memphis' most well-known proponents of equity for all oppressed people.

Finn's Kells Jackson leads the day-to-day effort for the MS BVLD. He is supported John Seigenthaler, Daniela Laudisio, Philip McGowan and Marie DeVareene.

**Joe Biden gets it wrong...** The president was grandstanding when the White House hit ExxonMobil for its "outrageous" record \$55B in 2022 profits "after Americans were forced to pay such high prices at the pump after Putin's invasion."

The White House claims Big Oil was using the outlandish earnings to "plough those profits into padding the pockets of executives and shareholders."

Sorry, Joe. That's how the free market works. ExxonMobil doesn't have a social contract with the American people.

ExxonMobil boss Darren Woods reaffirmed that point.

He told CNBC that though ExxonMobil faced pressure from investors and others to shift money into "renewables," it spent money on oil and gas projects.

"We leaned in when others leaned out," said Woods.

**BP tips its hat to the Inflation Reduction Act.** British Petroleum believes Joe Biden's program to stimulate investment in renewable energy will reduce global carbon emissions more than it had projected.

According to BP's energy outlook report released Jan. 30, the IRA "includes a significant package of supply-side measures supporting low-carbon energy sources and decarbonization technologies in the US."

BP says the IRA "has the potential to have positive spillover effects by helping to reduce global technology cost, expand internationally tradable sources of some forms of low-carbon energy, and increase the pressure on other countries and regions to offer similar types of incentives."

**Raring to go at Disney...** Nelson Peltz, CEO of Trian Fund Management, who is trying to win a board seat at Walt Disney Co., makes a good case about why companies may be better served with a board of independent directors.

His point: Disney's corporate-affiliated directors are more tied to their day jobs, rather than fixated on improving the company's performance.

In its Feb. 2 Securities and Exchange Commission filing, Trian states: "*These accomplished directors are busy and we believe they cannot possibly focus sufficiently on Disney to ensure that 2023 and 2024 are nothing like 2022.*"

In contrast, Peltz wakes up every day trying to find ways for Trian's investments to generate the best returns.

"Nelson is prepared to ask the hard questions at Disney and pursue excellence," says Trian's filing. Good luck, Nelson.

**Donald Trump will return to Meta's Facebook platform this month** and pick up right where he left off, spreading lies and disinformation ahead of 2024.

A MediaMatters for America report found that since the Facebook ban, Trump continued to spread his misinformation and QAnon conspiracy garbage on the Truth Social platform.

The former president on Feb. 1 posted a video on Truth Social highlighting his unhinged proposals to crack down on transgender rights.

Among the doozies, Trump wants to pass a federal law recognizing only male and female genders assigned at birth.

He wants to punish doctors/hospitals that provide gender affirming care and launch probes into the healthcare system.

The American Medical Association views gender-affirming care as a "medically-necessary, evidence-based care."

Unfortunately, Trump doesn't care a bit about the AMA or medical science.

He just wants to outflank Ron DeSantis when it comes to beating up on the LGBT community and winning the hearts and minds of his political base.

In reinstating Trump, Meta apparently lusted after the traffic from the lunatic fringe that he will attract to Facebook.

Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg and global affairs president Nick Clegg must be held responsible for the hurt, hate and political division caused by Trump. —Kevin McCauley