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# O'Dwyer's Newsletter

The Inside News of  
PR and Marketing  
Communications

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## DC DRUNK DRIVING PUSH SEEKS AGENCY

The multistate, public-private drunk driving and underage drinking campaign known as Checkpoint Strikeforce has kicked off an agency review for PR and creative.

The 33-year-old Washington Regional Alcohol Program, known for its free cab service, SoberRide, encompasses Washington, D.C., Maryland and Virginia, is dangling a \$1.6M account for the 2015 calendar year with about three-quarters geared toward PSA and media placement. The resulting pact will carry four option years.



Washington-based transportation PR firm Stratacomm has worked with WRAP for the past decade.

The Strikeforce campaign mainly targets the high-risk 21-to-35-year-old male driver demographic through social media, PR, and creative/ad buys aimed to curb drunk driving and raise awareness of sobriety checkpoints. WRAP is based in Falls Church, Va., outside of DC. Proposals are due Nov. 21.

RFP: <http://bit.ly/1xCx1Br>.

## GALLAGHER TENDS BACARDI'S PR

Corporate PR vet Jim Gallagher has moved to Bacardi Limited as global chief communications officer for the Bermuda-based spirits purveyor.

He takes the reins after the departure of Eric Kraus, the first Bacardi CCO who left the company after a little more than a year following the surprising retirement of Bacardi CEO Ed Shirley this year.



Gallagher

Gallagher was recently senior VP of corporate communications for sports agency titan IMG Worldwide through its \$2.3B acquisition by William Morris earlier this year. At Bacardi, he reports directly to CEO Mike Dolan, who praised Gallagher's "breadth of business communications and public relations experience at some of the world's largest companies."

Gallagher spent six years at MLB Advanced Media in New York, departing as SVP of PR in 2007. Earlier corporate stints included Starwood Hotels & Resorts (SVP, PR) and 20 years at ITT Corp. (VP/PR).

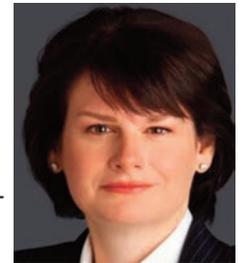
Privately held Bacardi is based in Hamilton, Bermuda, and markets more than 200 brands, including Bacardi rum, Grey Goose vodka and Dewar's Scotch.

## FANNIE MAE PR CHIEF TO NY LIFE

Kelli Parsons, senior VP and chief communications officer for Fannie Mae, is moving to New York Life in its top communications post later this month.

Parsons spent the past four years at Fannie Mae, the \$3 trillion government mortgage giant that was battered in the financial crisis.

At New York Life, the largest mutual life insurance company in the US, she will take the title chief corporate communications and marketing officer, starting Nov. 17. She reports directly to CEO/chairman Ted Mathas.



Parsons

Elizabeth McCarthy, previously head of corporate communications, is now in charge of insurance and agency group comms. for New York Life.

Parsons previously led global comms. and marketing for private equity firm Warburg Pincus and was EVP and GM for Hill+Knowlton in New York.

Maureen Davenport is VP of corporate comms. at Fannie Mae.

## HAVAS Q3 GROWTH HITS 6%

Paris-based marketing conglomerate Havas reported third quarter organic growth of 6% to top \$554M, including 4.7% growth in North America, where revenues approached \$180M.

Key global wins for the period included digital assignments for Garuda Indonesia and Amnesty International France as net new business topped \$514M for Q3.

A key PR win was Havas PR Warsaw's pickup of HSBC, covering PR and corporate communications, and Havas Sports and Entertainment PR's win of the International Association of Athletic Federations, IAAF.

Havas CEO Yannick Bollere said the company saw robust growth across all markets. Through the first nine months, Havas organic growth is 5.8% to \$1.6B.

## LEVICK'S EX-CRISIS POINT MAN EXITS

Gene Grabowski, who handled crisis, litigation communications and issues management at DC's Levick, has moved to Washington-based kglobal as partner.

A Levick staffer said Grabowski had been working on an "of counsel" basis for the last year or so. Lanny Davis, former special counsel to President Bill Clinton and Levick EVP, is handling the firm's crisis unit.

Grabowski has handled food issues and recalls of meat, toys, pet food, drugs and medical devices.

Kglobal is the strategic comms., policy, marketing arm of Zenetex, IT/program mgmt. operation in Herndon, Va.

## **UNION SQ. PARTNERSHIP WANTS EVENT HELP**

Manhattan's Union Square Partnership is looking for a firm to plan, manage and run its "Summer in the Square" series staged a day a week for nine weeks beginning in June.

According to an RFP, the purpose of the events is to "enliven Union Square Park and provide free entertainment and events for residents and visitors" and to increase exposure to the neighboring community.

The Partnership wants a program that is "iconic, artistic, eye-catching of both the historic nature of the area and the modern day significance and composition of the district and its constituents."

A typical day for past Summer in the Squares featured yoga, crossfit training, salsa, ballet, jazz with the first activity beginning at 7 a.m. and ending at 8 p.m.

Respondents to the RFP are asked to provide two budget parameters: one up to \$50K and the other from \$50K to \$200K.

Proposal submissions go to Scott Hobbs, deputy director; Union Square Partnership; 4 Irving Pl., Rm. 751; NYC 10003 by Dec. 8.



## **HAWAII USES PR TO HEAD OFF HOMELESS**

Hawaii's Institute for Human Services slates a PR push to dissuade homeless people on the mainland from moving to the Aloha State.

"The goal is to clear the homeless out of Waikiki, where businesses have complained that they are hurting tourism," reports *Civil Beat*, the investigative news source covering public affairs in the 50th state.

Kimo Carvalho, development & community relations manager at IHM, said the organization receives about 100 phone calls and emails a year from non-Hawaiians asking about shelter space or homeless services. The PR effort will focus on blogs and online forums that encourage homeless people to move to Hawaii.

It will pitch media outlets to publicize new laws like the one that bans sitting or lying on sidewalks of Waikiki.

Carvalho said PR would try "to water down misinformation, basically not making Hawaii be an attractive destination to come and be homeless."

Hawaii last year approved a \$100K "Return to Home" program to buy the homeless one-way tickets out of Hawaii.

Governor Neil Abercrombie is against the plan and has refused to release funding for it.

## **EX-EDELMAN CHICAGO CHIEF HEADS NORTH**

Rick Murray, who once led Edelman's 625-member strong Chicago office and served as president of its digital group, has joined National PR as managing partner of its Toronto office.

He'll also serve as digital strategist for Canada's No.

1 shop and manage its Sonic Boom marketing unit.

Jean-Pierre Vasseur, CEO of RES PUBLICA Consulting Group, National's parent, said Murray "has successfully grown every business he has founded or led, and we are convinced he will do so at our Toronto office and with our digital practice."

He praised Murray's "passion for the interconnection between communications and technology."

Montreal-born Murray once was VP-marketing for Pepsi International's Canada operation. Prior to Edelman, he was executive VP at Interpublic's then-Golin Harris arm.

Murray, who launched Edelman's social media practice a decade ago, exited this year as Midwest president. He begins at National on Dec. 3.

## **UNIV. OF MINNESOTA REVIEWS IMAGE**

The 68,000-student University of Minnesota is reviewing its "Driven to Discover" campaign with an RFP process through early December.

UM's University Relations unit, which leads marketing and communications to promote the school, wants to hear from agencies to guide its successful, nine-year-old marketing push.

Its current incarnation is themed "Made in Minnesota."

Minneapolis-based Olson is the incumbent.

The five-campus public research university counts 30K undergrads and 16,600 graduate and professional students. It claims an \$8.6B impact on the Minnesota economy each year.

Overall goals of the campaign are to boost positive perceptions of the university among the public and state opinion leaders, explain the value of a public research university, and align its marketing and communications efforts, according to the RFP released Nov. 7.

Proposals are due Dec. 5.

RFP: <http://bit.ly/1srBhj1>.

## **H+K HIRES EX-GINGRICH AIDE**

Hill+Knowlton Strategies has added RC Hammond, a top aide to former Republican House Speaker Newt Gingrich to its Washington office.

Since 2012, Hammond was running his own PA, crisis and media relations consulting outfit.

Hammond was press secretary for the Newt 2012 bid for the Republican presidential nomination.

Earlier, he was with the former Georgia Congressman's American Solutions for Winning the Future 527 organization.

That group is remembered for its "Drill Here. Drill Now" 2008 initiative for offshore energy development and the "No More Obamacare" effort launched in January 2011.

ASWF folded in March 2011 upon Gingrich's decision to establish an exploratory committee to run for president.

Prior to Gingrich, Hammond worked for ex-Oregon Senator Gordon Smith and West Virginia Congresswoman Shelley Moore Capito, who was elected Senator of the Mountain State on Nov. 4.

**NEWS CORP. GAINS DESPITE NEWS SLIP**

News Corp. on Nov. 5 reported a four percent increase in revenues to \$2.15B for the fiscal first quarter ended Sept. 30.

The newspaper and publishing parent to outlets like Dow Jones and the *New York Post* said book publishing (+24% to \$406M), digital real estate services (+24% to \$112M) and digital education (+56% to \$42M) bolstered the quarter, offsetting lower ad revenues in its News and Information Services segment, which declined 3% to \$1.5B.

Net income jumped to \$65M.

News and info services saw an overall 7% decline, dragged down by print ads and the sale of Dow Jones Local Media Group. Circulation and subscription revenues fell 1% as the DJ revenue loss was partially offset by price increases at the *Wall Street Journal* and at UK and Australian papers.

**PRINT AD DECLINE HURTS TIME INC**

Time Inc., the publishing spinoff of Time Warner, posted third quarter revenues of \$821M, up \$3M over the same period of 2013, although the company said it would have seen a 6% decline excluding corporate transactions.

Net income was \$48M, down 29% from the comparable quarter a year earlier.



Time Inc. sold its Mexican publishing subsidiary GEx during the period and acquired Cozi during Q2, among deals that curbed losses.

Ad revenues were flat at \$428M and also would have fallen 5% without the effects of M&A. Print and other ad revenues declined 1% to \$363M, a fall that would have registered 9%. Digital ads climbed 5% to \$65M and would have posted a robust 19% gain on M&A effects.

Time Inc. said circulation fell 2% to \$279M, while subscription revenue was off 1% to \$174M. Newsstand revenues fell 7% to \$98M.

Chairman and CEO Joe Ripp said operating income was better than expected on the strength of digital ad revenues and "efficiency initiatives." He added: "However, as a result of the weakening of print advertising trends late in the quarter, we are taking steps to counter the revenue headwinds."

**TW GROWS 3% IN Q3 AMID CUTBACKS**

Time Warner posted a 3% rise in third quarter revenue to \$6.2B on the strength of gains across all segments, including subscription revenues at Turner and HBO.

Turner revenues ticked up 5% to \$2.4B, while HBO grew 10% to hit \$1.3B and Warner Bros. rose 3% to approach \$2.8B.

TW has implemented large layoffs across the company, including 10% across the board cuts at Turner that have hit CNN and HLN. Restructuring and severance costs for the quarter topped \$300M, including \$199M at Turner.

"We've refocused the company over the past few years to aggressively pursue the huge global opportunities we see in video content," said chairman and CEO Jeff Bewkes. "And once again, we are seeing the benefits of our increased investments in great content and storytelling."

The company spent \$4.9B since January repurchasing 69M shares of stock and plans another \$5.1B in buybacks.

**FOX ALUM TROTS TO TURNER**

Kevin Reilly, who led the entertainment unit of Fox network, has moved to Turner Broadcasting.

He becomes president of TNT and TBS cable networks, as well as creative chief of Turner Entertainment.

David Levy, president of Turner Broadcasting, called Reilly "one of the most respected, innovative and influential executives in the television industry."



Reilly

He credited Reilly for development of programming hits and successful forays into the new media space.

Though a money-generator for parent Time Warner, Turner is known largely for sports and re-runs.

Levy said he's committed to beefing up outlays for original programming and expects Reilly to play a key development role.

**SNIDER SHIFTS TO 20TH CENTURY FOX**

DreamWorks' Stacey Snider has joined 20th Century Fox as co-chairman of the art label and animation studio.

She'll be in charge of production and development in a partnership with CEO Jim Gianopulos.

He called Snider a "proven and brilliant executive" who "will fit in perfectly with our culture and talented leaders."

At DreamWorks for eight years, she was partner to Steven Spielberg and in charge of creative, financial and development matters.

Snider has handled titles such as "War Horse," "Lincoln," "Letters from Iwo Jima," "Sweeney Todd," "Tropic Thunder," "Dreamgirls" and "Transformers."

Earlier, Snider was chairman at Universal Pictures.

**RAVEN FLIES FROM A+E**

Abbe Raven, the architect of the growth of the A+E Networks cable operations, is retiring in February after a 33-year stint.

She will hand the reins to Nancy Dubuc, 45, who assumed the CEO slot last year.

Raven, 62, launched a "Daytime," four daily hours of women's programming in 1982, which was the building block for A&E.

A&E will haul in more than \$3B in revenues this year from its 10 channels, including "Lifetime," "History Channel" and "A+E."

Hearst Corp. and Walt Disney Corp. own A&E Networks.

**MEDIA NEWS****ATAVIST'S HOMANS JOINS NYT MAG**

Charlie Homas, who was executive editor of The Atavist, is joining the *New York Times Magazine* as digital deputy.

Jake Silverstein, editor-in-chief of the weekly, said Homans has the type of "immersive multimedia storytelling experience" that is at the core of the NYT's growth strategy.

Homans, who held the executive editor slot at the Atavist since 2012, was features editor at Foreign Policy. He starts at the Times on Nov. 24.

**FORMER HUFF POST PR EXEC RETURNS TO DKC**

Mario Ruiz, former VP of media relations for the Huffington Post, has returned to DKC in New York.

Ruiz led communications for the Huff Post and served as spokesman for Arianna Huffington during a five-year tenure through its acquisition by AOL.

He previously did a five-year stint at DKC, exiting for the Huff Post as a VP in 2007.

Ruiz left the Huff Post in 2012 and has run his own shop, MRPR, handling several media sector clients like Bloomberg, OMGPOP/Zynga and *Business Insider*.

Time Inc vet Amanda Schumacher heads communications at the Huffington Post.

**Ruiz****WSJ TURNS UP HEAT ON IPG**

The *Wall Street Journal* has published an un-sourced story that activist investor Elliott Management is pushing for the sale of Interpublic.

Elliott took a 6.7 percent stake in IPG during the summer and reportedly is lining up potential board candidates in anticipation of a proxy fight in May.

IPG and Elliott representatives have met several times, according to the WSJ, and could possibly reach an accommodation.

IPG CEO Michael Roth reported a robust 8.3 percent advance in 3Q revenues to \$1.8B as net income soared to \$92.8M from \$49.2M.

Analysts had considered Publicis Groupe, which had a \$35B merger deal with Omnicom fall apart, a likely IPG suitor but its \$3.7B bid for Sapient this week makes a bid less likely, the WSJ speculated.

Japan's Dentsu has said it's not interested in launching a bid for the No. 4 ad/PR holding company at this time.

**ROMNEY'S EX-SPOX TO HAMILTON PLACE**

Kevin Madden, who served as Mitt Romney's spokesperson during his 2012 presidential run, has moved to Hamilton Place Strategies.

HPS is the firm of Tony Fratto, who served the Bush Administration as deputy assistant/press secretary and assistant secretary at the Treasury Dept.

Madden also was spokesperson for then-Majority Leader and now Speaker John Boehner.

At HPS, Madden will help lead its PA practice and

its portfolio of business, association and non-profit advocacy clients.

In a statement, Fratto said Madden's "talent and experience in government, campaigns, and media are perfect fits for what we're trying to achieve at HPS."

Madden, who will continue to contribute to CNN, joins HPS from JDA Frontline, Washington.0

**Madden****MORE CUTS AT CINCY ENQUIRER**

*Cincinnati Enquirer* newsroom staffers led by managing editor Laura Trujillo are leaving the Gannett paper amid orders that several will have to reapply for jobs with new titles, according to the *Cincinnati Business Courier*.

One in six newsroom staffers are exiting – more than a dozen – the paper reported, as veteran employees said they'd rather take a buyout than another "upheaval and the indignity of reapplying for jobs at a company they've worked at for decades."

**THREE CHEERS FOR BERKELEY**

Three cheers for the administration of University of California, Berkeley, for overturning the decision of its tone-deaf to history students who rescinded an invitation to comedian/talk show host Bill Maher to speak at December's commencement. What an irony!

The Californians student group extended the invitation to the "Real Time with Bill Maher" program host in August and yanked it last week. They cited Maher's alleged anti-Islamic views.

The Administration overruled the Californians, saying it was based on Maher's "opinions and beliefs, which he conveyed through constitutionally protected speech."

Cal officials made it clear that their decision is not an endorsement of Maher's opinions or political beliefs. It is an endorsement of Maher's right to express them. To them, Maher's views are irrelevant. "More broadly, this university has not in the past and will not in the future shy away from hosting speakers who some deem provocative," said the administration.

Berkeley, of course, was the home of the free speech movement, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. In their cowardly decision to ax Maher, the overly sensitive students disrespected both UCB's glorious heritage and the First Amendment. A university should stand for all types of expression and exchange of ideas. It shouldn't be a protective cocoon for coddled students. Challenge Maher, if you wish. Don't muzzle him.

Maher discussed the Berkeley situation tonight during his HBO program, pointing to support from religious scholar (and Maher critic) Reza Aslan. "If even my most respectable critic who's a Muslim says this, what leg does this protest have to stand on?" Maher asked.

Kudos to Berkeley chancellor Nicolas Dirks and vice chancellor John Wilton for standing tall for free speech.

– **Kevin McCauley**

**NEWS OF PR FIRMS****MSL CLOSES IN ON INDIA'S PERFECT**

MSLGroup is poised to acquire India's Perfect Relations in a deal expected to be announced in December, following months of speculation.

Delhi-based Perfect Relations works with Coca-Cola, Diageo, tara jewelers and General Mills, among several multinationals and South Asia-based clients. MSLGroup is looking at a purchase price from 1.5-2B rupees (around \$25M-\$30M), according to India's *Economic Times*, which pegs a mid-December closing date. The firm has annual revenue of about \$8M, the Times reported.

Dilip Cherian and Bobby Kewalramani founded Perfect 20 years ago. CEO Valerie Pinto stepped down in September.

MSL in 2007 acquired Hanmer Communications of Mumbai, giving it the Hanmer MSL name in 2012. The firm followed up that deal with the acquisition of 140-staffer tech and social media PR shop 20:20 Media in 2010, giving it a bolstered presence in several cities, including Delhi, Bangalore, Chennai and Pune, among others.

An MSL executive said the firm won't comment on potential deals. MSLGroup is part of Publicis, which is plucking down \$3.7B to buy digital ad and tech services provider Sapient.

**CHR MAKES MOVE ON IDEA WORKSHOP**

New York's CHR Group, integrated marketing outfit, has acquired PR firm Idea Workshop of Toronto.

IW, which focuses on retail and design accounts, has clients in the US, UK and Canada including Weight Watchers, Hain Celestial and Running Room.

IW has worked with developers/architects/designers such as Ivanhoe Cambridge, Gardiner Museum, Saalex Lighting and Sedley Place.

Jonathan Zaback, chief strategy officer of CHR, said the deal is just the latest move in its PR firm acquisition strategy.

CHR acquired New York PR firm TrylonSMR in September.

Jon Packer, founder of IW, will continue to lead the firm under the CHR banner.

**DCI DISCLOSES \$400K IN CHILE FEES**

Development Counsellors has disclosed \$400K in professional fees/expenses for its two-year Chile tourism campaign that kicked off May 1.

The agreement promises DCI "will increase the Chilean presence in the tourism industry and "among the North American final consumer."

The campaign will "have an impact on holiday arrivals and expenditures IN relation to tourism in their country."

DCI says its programs "are based on factual data and analyze tourist information against other country reports to predict market movements."

The New York-based firm anticipates \$306K in fees, which breaks down to \$25,500 per-month.

It has allocated \$15K per-month for the trade component of the campaign.

DCI worked for Tourism Chile from 2006 to 2008.

**NEW ACCOUNTS****New York Area**

**Magrino**, New York/Bedell Cellars, Long Island winery founded in 1980, for PR. Bedell's 2009 Merlot was the first New York wine served at a Presidential Inauguration when it was served at the 2013 Inaugural Luncheon for President Barack Obama.

**Liberty Communications**, New York/InReality, retail and service innovation firm, for North American PR. InReality provides strategy, design, execution, digital and analytics services to retailers like Tempur-Pedic, Simmons, The Home Depot, and Bridgestone Americas Tire Operations, among others.

**Horn Group**, New York/ORC International, global business intelligence firm, to streamline its corporate positioning statement and make it more cohesive across all company departments through a new identity, including an updated logo and a redesigned website.

**Southeast**

**Fish Consulting**, Hollywood, Fla. /Dunkin' Donuts, an expansion of its ongoing franchise promotions efforts to build consumer awareness for Dunkin' across South Florida, including local consumer PR, event marketing and social media management in Palm Beach, Miami-Dade and Broward counties. DD has more than 250 locations in the region.

**Midwest**

**Lola Red**, Minneapolis/Lakewinds Food Co-op, cooperative grocer serving the West metro Twin Cities suburbs, and Seward Community Co-op, 42-year-old grocery co-op. Also, Kaskaid Hospitality, for media relations, event support and social media for its six brands – CRAVE, Union – Workshop, CRAVE catering, BLVD, BoneYard and Muse Event Center, and Orthology, treatment solution for rapid recovery from physical injuries and chronic pain, for a media relations and influencer campaign.

**Latin America**

**JeffreyGroup**, Miami/Cengage Learning, global education content, technology and services provider, to manage a pan-regional communications program in the Latin America region. CL, which owns National Geographic Learning, has offices in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru and Puerto Rico and counts as clients research universities, English-language teaching franchises and *Fortune* 500 companies. Last year, CL formed a joint venture with The Autonomous University of Chihuahua, a public educational institution in Mexico, to create the Latin American Learning Innovation Laboratory, a think tank focused on researching and developing creative learning solutions to benefit Latin America's teachers and students.

**Europe**

**Publicis Consultants**, Paris/French Development Agency, for a 16-month media relations pact, following an RFP process, that included Havas WW Paris, Burston Marsteller i&e and incumbent Hopscotch. The work focuses on 2015 activities, a year in which the UN Millennium Development Goals will be reviewed, a redefinition of key sustainable development objectives is set and Paris hosts the COP1 meeting.

**NEWS OF SERVICES****CRITICAL MENTION'S ARMON TO BRAND.COM**

PR services veteran Dave Armon has left the president slot at monitoring services provider Critical Mention to head content marketing and online reputation company Brand.com, the former Reputation Changer.

Armon, who takes a CEO title, replaces president Michael Zammuto, who has left the company.

The five-year-old, Philadelphia-based Brand.com changed its name in 2013 as it looked to grow market share and serve larger clients in the field of online reputation services, from scrubbing negative entries to polishing SEO results. Its business model has expanded to include more proactive content production, rather than simply damage control.

Armon said Brand.com is unveiling a service allowing brands and PR firms to commission reporter-written articles. "This has the precision of advertising -- you can choose the outlet and the timing -- and the authority of earned media," he said.

Armon is a former president/COO of PR Newswire and vice chairman of dna13. He started out in journalism in the late 1970s and '80s.

He acknowledged a press release "is always viewed as a one-sided account of story," adding that corporate blogs suffer a similar fate. "We're bringing out a new paid-earned model to provide visibility and authority that many brands just cannot get on their own," he said.

Armon joined Critical Media in 2011. Sean Morgan is founder and CEO.

**IPR HONORS KOTCHER, HEARS DOBBS**

Ray Kotcher, chairman of Ketchum, will receive the Alexander Hamilton Medal of the Institute for PR Nov. 13 at the Yale Club, New York. Richard Dobbs of McKinsey will give the 53rd Distinguished Lecture.

The Institute will recognize the Ketchum chairman and senior partner for lifetime contribution to PR. During his 30 years at the firm, he has guided its global expansion including its combination with Pleon, major European consultancy.

He also increased the firm's presence via major investments in the Middle East, Russia, China and India. He is a past trustee of the Institute and former chair of the PR Council.

He now serves on its executive committee and on the board of the Arthur W. Page Foundation. He is also a trustee of the PRSA Foundation.

Dobbs, director of the McKinsey Global Institute, its business and economics research arm, will talk on "Prevailing Business Drivers: Digitization, Urbanization, Easternization." He led McKinsey's Corporate Finance Practice from 2004-09 and was also responsible for research and development. Also a director of McKinsey, he now leads research on global economic trends with a focus on Asia.

Keith Burton, formerly of Golin and Brunswick, who started his own firm, Grayson Emmett Partners this summer, is chair of the 2014 Trustees Research Symposium that will run from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Nov. 13.

He is also chair of the IPR Commission on Organizational Communication.

**PEOPLE****Joined**

**Tyler Gronbach**, senior VP, corporate comms., at for-profit education giant Education Management Corp., to pharmaceutical services provider DPx Holdings, as VP-communications. DPx was formed in March by private equity firm JLL Partners and European pharma Royal DSM, and based in Durham, N.C. Chris Hardman remains VP of strategic communications at EMC. Gronbach was previously SVP of marketing and comms. for Dex One Corp. in Cary, N.C., and VP of corporate comms. for Qwest Communications in Denver.

**Gronbach**

**Bob Cavosi**, senior VP in Ogilvy PR's corporate practice, to IMRE, Baltimore, as senior VP of its financial services practice, based in New York. He previously held posts with Broadgate Consultants, Champion Mortgage and FleishmanHillard, among others. Also, Liz Carley, VP and A/S at gkv Comms., to A/D in its home and building practice. Ryan Jordan, who joined in 2012, was promoted to VP, creative director.

**Nichelle Pace**, founder of StyleMom.com, to Slice Communications, Philadelphia, Pa., as a social media A/S.

**Scott Sebastian**, senior director of PR, Darnell Comms., to Motorsports.com as VP-PR and marketing for the digital distribution/interactive media operation. Motorsports.com's database has more than 450K articles and boasts the No. 1 photo library in motor racing.

**Sebastian**

**Arthur Schwartz**, a GOP consultant most recently serving as strategic advisor to business magnate Maurice Greenberg and his C.V. Starr & Co., to MWW as senior VP and managing director of the firm's corporate communications practice.

**Steve Schonberg**, VP for MSLGroup, to Krupp Communications, New York, as a managing director overseeing clients like Ann Taylor, Gaia, The Melt Method and Edelman Financial Services. He was previously director and team leader at LaForce + Stevens and worked in cause marketing at Cone.

**Jesse Dienstag**, senior VP of strategic planning at FCB Chicago, to sister Interpublic unit Golin, Chicago, as executive director, head of planning to help lead the firm's Strategist unit.

**Promoted**

**Paul Tyahla** to VP, The Marcus Group, Little Falls, N.J. He joined in 2012 from the Commerce and Industry Assn. of New Jersey.

**Katelyn Crain** to assistant A/E, Eisbrenner PR, Royal Oak, Mich., handling clients like Dana Holding Corp., Global Emergent, MSX Int'l and Square One Education.

**Matt Neale** and **Bibi Hilton** to managing directors, Golin. Neale has held responsibility for the EMEA region while Hilton was deputy GM for London. Neale, who joined the firm in 2005 from sister IPG agency Weber Shandwick, is headed to New York to work with Americas president Gary Rudnick.

## **MOSCOW-LEANING HUNGARY HIRES MACK**

Hungary, which is reverting back into Moscow's orbit under its authoritarian leader, has hired the firm of former conservative Republican Congressman Connie Mack IV to a \$60K a-month PR, strategic consulting/communications contract.

His Liberty International Group will inform American leaders about the diplomatic efforts and policies of Hungary's prime minister Viktor Orbán.

Earlier this year, the PM raised eyebrows while outlining a plan to develop an "illiberal" state that puts national values over western-style liberal ideology.

His "eastern opening" policy aims to forge closer ties with Russia and Asia. In approving a natural gas pipeline pushed by Moscow, Hungary's parliament defied EU/US sanctions against Russia for its invasion of Ukraine.

The US, according to Reuters, has mounted a diplomatic offensive designed to stop Hungary from cozying up with Vladimir Putin, whom Orbán considers a role model.

Kati Marton, former chairwoman of Committee to Protect Journalists, published an op-ed in the *New York Times* on Nov. 3, arguing that NATO member Hungary is "rapidly sliding toward xenophobia and authoritarianism" as Orbán "claims ever-greater powers as the population sees its freedoms curtailed." She noted that under a new law, Hungary's government virtually controls the media, which are now cheerleaders for Orbán.

## **AIRFOIL CO-CEO RETIRES AFTER 14 YEARS**

Janet Tyler, co-CEO and co-founder of Detroit-area tech firm Airfoil, has resigned after a 14-year career.

"I've resigned from Airfoil to explore other career opportunities but I still have that Monday morning, take the world by storm mentality," she wrote on Twitter Nov. 3.

Lisa Vallee-Smith, who co-founded the agency with Tyler in 2000 after their days at Franco PR, takes the reins as CEO, president and owner. She said Tyler stepped down effective Oct. 26.

"After more than 14 years of starting up and running a successful agency, she has made the personal decision to move on and explore new opportunities," Vallee-Smith said of Tyler. "She leaves the firm with much to be proud of: starting up our Silicon Valley operation; leading and growing our business over many years; and establishing our global partner network. We wish her all the best in the next phase of her brilliant career."

Tyler co-founded Airfoil with Franco PR colleague Lisa Vallee-Smith in 2000 and oversaw the opening of its Silicon Valley outpost in 2008. They became co-CEOs in 2012 with Tyler focused on global partner development and digital. Airfoil, which had \$8.6M in revenue in 2013, opened a New York office in June. It has worked for FordDirect, Thomson Reuters, Microsoft, eBay and LinkedIn, among others.

Vallee-Smith added that Airfoil will continue to serve its clients and staff with the "same bright thinking and strategy as we have come to be known for over nearly 15 years."

## **FINN PARTNERS DOES ECUADOR TOURISM**

Finn Partners has joined Ketchum in supporting tourism to Ecuador via EKOS Corp., a top business information, development and consulting company in that South American nation.

The seven-month contract, which expires Dec. 31, calls for a \$10K monthly retainer. The pact carries a renewal option.

The PR counsel and media liaison work covers the US, Canada, UK and Germany (the so-called major markets), and France, Spain and Italy (minor markets) according to the agreement inked by FP founding partner Peter Finn.

Gail Moaney heads the independent firm's travel practice.

Ecuador's Ministry of Tourism in Quito retained EKOS to develop trade promotions and travel PR.

Ketchum started a \$35M monthly tourism effort in March under the watchful eye of Ecuador's DC embassy and ambassador Nathalie Cely.

That effort encompasses economic development, trade and tourism for the country of 14.5M.

The Omnicom unit's work runs through the end of the year with components such as influencer outreach to think tanks/foundations, crisis PR, strategic counsel and social media outreach.

Porter Novelli, Ketchum's sister company, unveiled the "All You Need is Ecuador" advertising/marketing campaign launched in February.

## **CU BIZ SCHOOL TAPS ED MARKETING PRO**

The University of Colorado's Leeds School of Business has handed a \$100K marketing and communications pact to Eduvantis, the Chicago-based education sector marketing firm of PR vet Tim Westerbeck.

The Leeds School released an RFP in late August for a communications, marketing and PR shop to refine its message in an overall bid to boost enrollment.

There was no incumbent firm.

The digitally savvy Eduvantis was formed in 2010 by former Lipman Hearne partner Westerbeck with a specialty in the education sector.

The former journalist has counseled Rutgers Univ., Stanford Law School and the Univ. of Chicago Booth School of Business, among others.

## **J&J PR ALUM JOINS B-M'S CREATIVE COUNCIL**

Jay Kosminsky, who did a seven-year stint at Johnson & Johnson as VP-communications/PA in its consumer group, is now a strategic advisor at Burson-Marsteller and the first member of its Creative Council.

At J&J, he handled media relations, brand PR/PA and organizational communications for brands such as Listerine, Neutrogena, Aveeno and Johnson's Baby.

Kosminsky, a more than 30-year communications veteran, also worked at Pfizer as VP communications consumer healthcare and in corporate posts.

He served on Capitol Hill press secretary and was deputy director-foreign policy and defense studies at The Heritage Foundation.

## PR OPINION

**The belief in the efficacy of “spin” and “spin doctors”** is so embedded in the U.S. culture that it cannot easily be dislodged, says *Glass Jaw* by D.C. counselor Eric Dezenhall.

Dezenhall says PR, which involves the “deification” of “spin doctors” or “fixers,” has become the “American Merlin, an occult action figure that can control the uncontrollable, the common attribute of our superheroes.”

He cites such pop culture figures as Kerry Washington on ABC-TV’s “Scandal,” who combines trysts with the President with counsel to the powerful; Robert De Niro tricking Iran leaders in “Wag the Dog”; fixer Harvey Keitel in “Pulp Fiction”; crisis manager Alan Cummings in “The Good Wife”; George Clooney’s “cleaner/lawyer” in “Michael Clayton,” and Nick Naylor in “Thank You for Smoking,” which portrayed D.C. PR people working for tobacco, liquor and gun interests.

The spin doctor, says Dezenhall, is “part criminal, part magician.”

He feels that what they actually do for their clients is “not that impressive.”

One case where spin has been successful, and which is mentioned several times in the book, is Johnson & Johnson’s portrayal of itself as innocent in the 1982 murders of seven Chicago-area citizens by poisoned pills.

J&J’s view of itself is so ingrained in the media and in the culture that nothing thus far has been able to dislodge it, Dezenhall notes. Major media, led by three stories in the *New York Times*, have never wavered in their belief that the handling of the Tylenol deaths is the “gold standard” of crisis control.

### Many Helped J&J Spin

While referring to J&J’s handling of the tragedy as “celebrated for decades as the gold standard of crisis management,” and saying that the film, “The Insider” memorialized its alleged “instant” withdrawal of Tylenols from the market (although it took a week), Dezenhall also notes that from 2009-12 the company was hit with billions of dollars worth of recalls that tarnished its “impeccable” image.

J&J deserves no praise whatever for its handling of the 1982 Tylenol murders because it rushed back onto the market in less than six weeks with the same flawed product in alleged “tamper-resistant” packaging that resulted in the death of 23-year-old Diane Elsroth four years later.

J&J fought the families of the seven 1982 victims in court for nine years, settling for what the families have said was a pittance. They were threatened with another nine years of legal wrangling if they didn’t cave.

Dezenhall says J&J “apologized” in 1982 which it never did and paid “hundreds of millions of dollars in settlements to the victims” which is not what we hear from one of the families. Some of the surviving relatives are continuing to press for the truth of this incident to get wide publicity.

The Tylenol case “ended well for J&J,” Dezenhall writes. Yes, it was a triumph of spin that many institutions took to heart.

### PR Council, PRSA “Double Down” on “PR”

Although Robert Phillips of the U.K., author of a book called, *Trust Me, PR Is Dead*, the Centre for Corporate PA, Australia is proclaiming “PR Is Dead,” and PR is receding as a title used in corporate and agency PR, both the Council of PR Firms and PR Society of America have “doubled down” on the use of the term.

CPRF has just renamed itself as the “PR Council” although only eight of its 103 members use “PR” in their titles. Only six of the 50 largest firms in the O’Dwyer rankings use “PR” and none in the top 15. The PR Society has re-affirmed its commitment to its 50-year-old APR program. The Seminar, formerly “PR Seminar,” this year inducted 35 new corporate members, none of them using “PR.” None of the 76 corporations in the CCPA use the term PR. “Corporate affairs” and “public affairs” are used.

### Let’s Adopt “Swagger,” Says Senay

David Senay, outgoing PRC chair, told its annual dinner Oct. 22 that PR people should develop some “swagger” about their calling, and stop being defensive.

PR no doubt brings lots of useful news to people and raises funds and support for many good causes. But it also has a darker side involving manipulation of opinion and withholding of facts that make many in the business world shrink from using it.

PRW/U.S., taking note of calls for the “death of PR,” is running a poll asking PR people “Is PR all about Spin?” The results of the ongoing poll as of Nov. 9 were that 34% believe, “No, the profession has moved way beyond that,” while 31% say, “Yes, but spin is not necessarily a negative thing.” Another 19% agree that PR is “all about spin.”

The finding that a third of respondents believe that spin, meaning lying, can be good, show the weak moral underpinnings of the occupation. Another 19% agree PR is “all about spin.”

How is it possible to show “swagger” about such a calling? First order of business should be removing any instances of unethical policies or practices.

The Ethics Resource Center, which polled 2,099 members of the PR Society in 2000 on ethical issues (10% of the members), found that half of the respondents “feel an extraordinary amount of pressure to compromise their ethical standards.” One Society member said, “In some ways, lying permeates everything we do.”

Member Kathy Fitzpatrick, then at Quinnipiac University but now at Florida International University, was describing the removal of enforcement provisions from the Code of the Society.

That was done even though 90% of the respondents “agreed that the Society should revoke membership for failure to meet Code standards” and the ERC itself advised that.

No PR group is doing “PR for PR.” None of their leaders are facing the press in a press conference. Can there be such a thing as pressless PR?

How about a national “Pick up the Phone When a Reporter Calls” Day?  
— Jack O’Dwyer