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O'Dwyer's Newsletter

The Inside News of
PR and Marketing
Communications

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November 11, 2013 Vol. 46 No. 44

GAP SHOPS FOR PR

Gap Inc. is circulating an RFP for a corporate communications PR partner to "serve as a thought partner to deliver out-of-the-box and innovative ideas" to the San Francisco-based \$16 billion retailer.

It wants a firm with strong ties to the business press covering the retail category and the ability to monitor the global print/broadcast media. The selected partner also will build "confidence internally and externally in Gap's Inc.'s global growth strategy."

The annual budget range is \$200K to \$300K. RFP responses are due to Jaelyn Watling of Gap's strategic sourcing unit by Nov. 21. The work will begin in March.

Gap, which currently works with New York-based Shadow PR for fashion PR, runs more than 3,100 stores under the Gap, Banana Republic, Old Navy, Piperlime, Athleta and Intermix banners.



FP BOLSTERS HOLLYWOOD SAVVY

Finn Partners has added entertainment pro Hope Boonshaft as senior partner at its Rogers/Finn Partners unit in Los Angeles.

Most recently at Carmen Group West, she was GM of Hill & Knowlton's LA and Irvine outposts, counseling Sony Pictures Imageworks, Lionsgate, Mazda, and LinkedIn.

Prior to H&K, Boonshaft was executive VP/group external affairs at Sony Pictures.

Boonshaft will work closely with Ron Rogers, who has known her for more than 20 years.



Boonshaft

RLM FINSBURY DIALS UP THONIS

Peter Thonis, one-time chief communications officer for Verizon Communications, has joined RLM Finsbury as senior advisor focusing on corporate reputation, crisis and brand building.

Walter Montgomery, CEO of RLM Finsbury, said the phone company vet, expertly guided it through a "myriad of delicate situations including multiple mergers and spinoffs, while building the strong brand and corporate reputation the company enjoys today."

Thonis had handled Verizon's global PR since its start-up in 2000. WPP owns RLM Finsbury.

ALASKA SEAFOOD CASTS PR NET FOR \$500K

The Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute is looking for a communications firm to handle a \$500K first-quarter 2014 effort to build support for its own eco-labeling sustainability certification program.

The Alaskan group maintains the global benchmark blue seal certification of the London-based Marine Stewardship Council is too costly and erodes the Alaska salmon brand.



Wild, Natural & Sustainable®

In 2012, it developed an alternative label in conjunction with Ireland's Global Trust geared to guidelines of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. Walmart and food service giant Sodexo in June threatened to drop Alaska's seafood in favor of fish with the MSC logo. Both have since backed away from the switch.

ASMI is looking for an ad/PR effort that is targeted at Alaska, Seattle, New York and Washington (Alaskan Senator Mark Begich convened a hearing in September at which he blasted the effort by outsiders to dictate sustainability rules to Alaskans.).

The RFP says the PR firm's mission is to "convince seafood buyers, trade and consumers that Alaska salmon and all Alaska seafood regardless of eco-labels," and to devise a "strategy to maintain unrestricted market access for all Alaska producers" without the MSC label.

Deadline is Nov. 15. ASMI intends to choose the winning bidder on Nov. 20.

The Alaska seafood market is a \$6.4B business that supports 165K jobs, including 34K in Washington State. RFP: <http://bit.ly/19gKrFs>.

OBAMA'S COUNTER-TERROR PRO JOINS MWW

Jarrod Bernstein, former counter terrorism/community outreach staffer at the Dept. of Homeland Security, has joined MWW in New York as SVP/corporate affairs.

Earlier, he was acting assistant secretary for inter-governmental affairs in charge of communicating with governors and mayors.

Bernstein also worked for Mike Bloomberg in New York as deputy commissioner of community affairs in charge of community crisis management.

While in the Obama White House, Bernstein pulled duty as associate director of public engagement and director of Jewish outreach. He reports to MWW CEO Michael Kempner, who lauded his "deep network of relationships with influencers" on Capitol Hill and in N.Y.

SOURCE CINCINNATI LOOKS FOR PR

Source Cincinnati, a non-profit funded by regional business and civic groups, is looking for a “stellar public relations partner” to elevate the Queen City’s message and to “drive positive editorial coverage about the varied success stories percolating across our market,” according to its RFP dated Nov. 6.

It wants a three-year national media relations and social media program to enhance the perception of the 300K-population city’ as “world-class magnet midwestern region by amplifying efforts to share our vibrant stories.” Source Cincinnati sees its audience as outlets such as the *Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, *Huffington Post* and other top consumer/business outlets.

Cincinnati is home to nine *Fortune* 500 companies. Procter & Gamble, American Financial Corp., Kroger and Duke Energy are headquartered in the city.

Julie Calvert, who is on loan from the Cincinnati USA Convention and Visitors Bureau where she is VP-communications & strategic development, is handling the PR search at jcalvert [at] sourcecincinnati [dot] com.

She wants interested firms to contact her by Nov. 15. RFP responses are due Dec. 4.

DIGITAL GURU KANE EXITS MAKOVSKY

Tim Kane, founder of Makovsky Integrated Communications' digital branding practice, has exited the independent firm.

Ken Makovsky told O’Dwyer’s he has a replacement for Kane lined-up, but would not divulge the person’s name.

Kane joined Makovsky in 2007 following top creative stints at advertising agencies McCann Erickson (senior/group creative director), Ammirati Puris Lintas (executive VP/managing director-creative), J. Walter Thompson (senior/group creative director) and Young & Rubicam (copywriter/creative director).

He’s credited for Makovsky’s win in September of the first-ever Grand Stevie Award for Interactive Services of the Year for work on the MediScripts marketing campaign.

At that time, Kane said he specifically joined Makovsky to build its digital practice and viewed the Stevie as a “wonderful acknowledgement that we are accomplishing our goal.” He has not yet been reached for comment about his future plans.

CLS LANDS BROOKLYN PARK’S PR

Brooklyn Park, a northern suburb of Minneapolis, has served up a \$150K image campaign to Interpublic’s Carmichael Lynch Spong following a competitive pitch.

The *Minneapolis Star Tribune* says the city of 100K, which is 50 percent minority, is “dogged by a bad reputation, inside and out.”

Despite a 20-year low, residents and outsiders believe crime is on the rise, which is a blow to property values and the ability to attract new businesses.

The city’s Economic Development Authority parceled out the PR cash from its \$1.5M budget.

Mayor Jeff Lunde said the hiring of CLS is “an opportunity to move the needle and create value.”

FTI Q3 REVENUE FALLS, CHARGE SPARKS LOSS

FTI Consulting reported third quarter revenues from its strategic communications operation declined 5.4% to \$43.3M as lower retainer fees in North America and weak M&A activity in the Asia-Pacific region affected growth.

While FTI across its five business units saw revenues climb 7.4% to \$414.6M, it swung to a net loss of \$50.6M – compared with net income of \$22.7M in Q3 of 2012 -- on an \$83.8M goodwill charge in strategic communications and a "special charge" for restructuring of \$10.4M in other units.

CEO Jack Dunn said in a conference call that pricing pressure for discretionary services in communications led the company to lower its near-term outlook for the segment, which led to the charge.

CFO Roger Carlile said PR offerings like IPO support services are showing volume but increased competition, which drives down prices, and in a requisite review of the book value of the segment the company determined "it was not likely the conditions would improve in the near term."

Carlile said FTI is maintaining market share in communications and investing to expand its work outside of its core financial or crisis communications.

Through the first three quarters, FTI provided PR counsel for 142 deals worth \$102.4B, according to mergersmarket, as it fell to No. 8 among global deal PR advisors by value from No. 4 in 2012.

FTI's March acquisition of PA shop C2 Group contributed \$1.6M to the quarter and Dunn said public and governmental affairs – along with digital and social media – will be a key area of growth for the communications operation going forward, both in the U.S. and abroad.

GOODMAN ENROLLS AT PRATT

Pratt Institute, the 126 year-old art, design, fashion and architectural college in Brooklyn, has hired Goodman Media International after a search to bolster its media footprint in New York City.

The Clinton Hill school on Oct. 28 announced creation of the Brooklyn Fashion and Design Accelerator in the former Pfizer building in Williamsburg to offer low-cost studio space to fashion designers.

The *Wall Street Journal* noted the move coincides with the shrinkage of Manhattan’s Garment District and the move of “thousands of burgeoning fashion designers” eager to cash in on the entrepreneurial energy and cache of Brooklyn.

Tom Goodman, veteran of CBS, is known for his local political/cultural/entertainment contacts and media connections.

Pratt’s PR department has not yet been reached for comment about the PR firm selection process.



SUAREZ SIGNS ON AT AL JAZEERA AMERICA

Ray Suarez who worked at Public Broadcasting Service's "NewsHour" from 1999 to 2013 most recently as national correspondent, joined Al Jazeera America on Nov. 11. He will host a new daily program called "Inside Story."



Suarez

Suarez hosted National Public Radio's "Talk of the Nation" for six years before moving to NewsHour.

Earlier he reported for NBC's WMAQ-TV in Chicago, CNN in Los Angeles and CBS Radio in Rome.

AJA president Katie O'Brian said Suarez has repeatedly delivered "compelling coverage of the most challenging news stories and

events with objectivity and depth."

Inside Story will feature a panel of guests who will examine stories that are receiving major play in the U.S. and overseas.

CBS RETRACTS BENGHAZI REPORT

CBS News has retracted a "60 Minutes" report on Benghazi after initially standing behind the story amid questions about the veracity of a key source.

Correspondent Lara Logan appeared on "CBS This Morning" on Nov. 9 to issue a mea culpa on the botched report about the Sept. 11, 2012 attack on the U.S. embassy in Libya, which was critical of the Obama administration's response.

"In this case, we were wrong," she said. "We made a mistake."

The key source, a security contractor named Dylan Davies, gave conflicting reports to "60 Minutes" and the FBI, telling the news organization he was at the embassy compound in the aftermath of the attack.

The *New York Times* reported that he told the FBI he never went there and CNN cited documents of his employer, Blue Mountain, indicating he never went to the compound that day, either.

Davies has penned a book under the pseudonym Morgan Jones, "Embassy House," based on the story he told CBS.

Davies' publisher, Simon & Schuster's Threshold Editions, said it is reviewing the book in light of the revelations.

FITZGERALD TO EDIT BUZZFEED BOOKS

Isaac Fitzgerald, co-founder and former managing editor of *The Rumpus*, has been named editor of BuzzFeed.com's months-old book review section.

Fitzgerald stepped down from the ME post at *The Rumpus* in May.

He told Poynter.org that he doesn't plan on ripping

new titles. "Why waste breath talking smack about something?" he said.

MEREDITH LAUNCHES ALLRECIPES

Meredith Corp. launched *Allrecipes* magazine on Nov. 5, the print title sprung from its Allrecipes.com food site.

The bimonthly title kicks off with a rate base of 500K and a newsstand price of \$4.99 on the inaugural December issue.

Meredith National Media Group president Tom Harty said a broad base of advertisers across automotive, packaged goods, financial services and broadcast media shows a wide appeal for the new title.

Cheryl Brown, editor-in-chief, said the title will aim to leverage the mag's established online presence and "capture information about what is on the minds of everyday cooks in real time and infuse it into every issue."



CORPORATE PR NO MATCH FOR E-INVESTORS

A social media gap between investor relations and corporate communications units provides an opening for digitally savvy activist investors, shareholders and media, according to a study by FTI Consulting.

FTI found that IR units often don't have an active role in corporate social media management. That reality can force corporate communications pros overseeing SM to make instant decisions on issues related to finance without the input of IR units.

Elizabeth Saunders, Chicago-based senior managing director for FTI's strategic communications operation, said activist investors have "staked out a new battleground from which to attack corporate America" as they exploit a digital gap in corporate communications.

The investment trend toward digital is apparent in investors' increasing preference for video, infographics and other digital mediums for info, which many find more insightful and "motivating," FTI found.

Corporate Social Media Lags

While FTI found that most investors prefer content through third party financial entities like media, proxy advisors, and analysts, 40 percent said they seek content from such sources via social media, rather than from corporations directly.

Notably, 14% of investors said they seek info directly from companies via social media.

While 80% of investors in the FTI study said they expect shareholder activists will increasingly leverage social media, only 11% said they are confident companies are prepared for that assault.

Added Saunders: "This is a wake-up call to companies that IR and corporate communications teams can no longer operate as independent silos -- particularly in the case of social media, through which information and opinions are so rapidly generated."



MEDIA NEWS**W2O CEO WANTS GRADS WITH SKILLS**

Jim Weiss, CEO of W2O Group, \$62 million firm in healthcare, tech and consumer, told 200 students at San Jose State University Nov. 5 that his firm is looking for grads that have passion, computer and social skills and who “play to win vs. playing not to lose.”

He wants recruits “who are ready to step on some toes, tick some people off.”

Ability to work fast is a requisite at his firm.

Successful applicants will have developed a “positive personal brand.” A “service-oriented” personality is much desired, he said.

“Real world experience” is preferred and especially experience as an entrepreneur.

Traditional skills such as writing ability are still at the top of the list of desired qualities, he said.

Weiss, who gave the keynote address that was followed by a panel discussion conducted by four counselor executives, said rapidly developing new ways of getting and transferring information are stealing the thunder of traditional media.

Most of what we now learn comes through friends and our own expanding networks rather than mainstream media, he said.

This includes blogs, Twitter, Facebook and video.

Surveys show that 65% of people say they are visual learners, he said. “Visual trumps copy” was one of the lines in a slide show that Weiss presented.

The audience was about 75% female.

CPRF Seeks Top Students

Kathy Cripps, president of the Council of PR Firms, which is staging a series of career forums at colleges, said the purpose of the series is to encourage talented students to enter the PR counseling industry.

“I’ve enjoyed my career in PR and I want to share that enthusiasm with students,” she said.

She conceded that snaring a job right out of college can be tough but said those who are good writers and understand how to help clients solve problems will have the best chances.

Serving in internships is “incredibly important” as well as “making as many connections as you can,” she said. “Keep in touch with people. This is a shortfall of many students. They’ll meet someone but they won’t keep in touch with them.”

The career series got its start when a CPRF survey found that “young people really don’t know what PR was or what it was like to work at a PR firm.”

Next step was setting up career forums at colleges that have strong PR programs.

There are PR opportunities in big cities but students should not neglect the smaller markets where breaking in



Weiss at San Jose State

might be easier, Cripps advised.

“You have to be clever and have an entrepreneurial spirit and take control of your career. Talk to a lot of people. Each agency has a different culture and speakers love to talk about their agencies.”

Rucker Introduced Cripps

Bob Rucker, director, School of Journalism & Mass Communications, introduced Cripps. A presentation was made by Michael Brito, group director of WCG which is part of W2O Group.

Brito said he spends a lot of time with students at UC Berkeley and Santa Clara University as well as those at San Jose and is eager to answer their questions. Students need a “mentor” to guide them, Brito noting that he still has one.

One reason for the preponderance of women in PR currently is that they tend to have “more empathy and you need empathy in this business,” he said. Being able to empathize with your customers is crucial, he added.

Christine Disalvo, lecturer in PR at SJSU, moderated a panel whose members were Lou Hoffman, CEO, The Hoffman Agency; Jason Mandell, co-founder and partner, LaunchSquad; Bill Orr, executive VP, Burson-Marsteller, and Tracey Parry, senior VP and partner, Airfoil Group.

Students said they wished there had been more time for questions and answers at the end of the formal program.

Cripps, asked whether the Council should change its name after 15 years to reflect the expanded duties of “PR” firms, said she would not take up that topic since it was not of concern to the attendees.

A buffet offering roast beef, ham, turkey and vegetarian sliders was made available by Spartan Catering at the end of the program. Iced tea, water, chips and dip were included.

Seven copies of O'Dwyer's Directory of PR Firms were raffled off at the close of the event.

GUNS & AMMO EDITOR RESIGNS

Guns & Ammo magazine editor Jim Bequette has resigned after outraged readers criticized a column in the magazine's December issue that argued for gun control measures.

Bequette quit his post and published an apology on Nov. 6, noting the magazine's history of advocating against gun control regulation, adding that its “commitment to the Second Amendment is unwavering.”

The controversial column, “Let's Talk Limits,” was written by Dick Metcalf and Bequette said in his apology that the “distinguished” gun writer will no longer write for G&A.

NEWS OF PR FIRMS**WCG GRABS EDELMAN DIGITAL MAVEN**

WCG recruited Michael Brito, who led Edelman Digital social business strategy, for the group director slot at its San Francisco headquarters office.

At the No. 1 independent firm, senior VP Brito handled key clients such as Intel, HP and Yahoo.

He is the author of "Smart Business, Social Business: A Playbook for Social Media in Your Organization" and "Your Brand: The Next Media Company."

Chris Deri, president of WCG, said in a statement that Brito has "personally influenced the way technology and social commerce have changed how brands build relationships and conduct conversation."

WCG is the healthcare, analytics and consumer technology flagship of W20.

XEROX CORP. CREATOR'S FDN. SEEKS FIRM

The foundation of Xerox founder Joseph Wilson and his wife, Peggy, is scanning for PR proposals to promote its upstate New York research of homelessness and families on a national level.

The Marie C. and Joseph C. Wilson Foundation, based in Xerox's home of Rochester, released an RFP on Nov. 8 for a firm to develop a multi-tiered communications plan supporting its in-depth study, known by the acronym SHIFT, with the National Center on Family Homelessness.

"No study of this longitudinal nature has ever been conducted in the family homelessness space and we feel the findings are tremendously important in effecting near term change both at the local application and national policy level," reads the RFP.

Proposals are due Dec. 6. RFP: <http://bit.ly/HVXqqu>.

GLOBAL E-PAYMENTS PUSH REVIEWS PR

The United Nations-administered global push toward electronic payments for government programs and relief efforts has kicked off a review of its global PR account.

The Better Than Cash Alliance is backed by Citigroup, Ford Foundation, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, MasterCard and USAID, among others. It is targeted to the estimated 2.5B around the world who lack access to formal financial services and are recipients of various forms of salaries, welfare stipends and cash-for-work programs.

FleishmanHillard is the incumbent for the global account.

The United Nations Capital Development Fund, the investment agency for the world's 49 poorest countries, serves as secretariat for the Alliance and released an RFP last week to review its PR efforts.

FH's contract runs through the end of the year and the new RFP covers similar, though not limited to, activities the firm currently implements for the Alliance, said Sarah Bel, a U.N. spokeswoman for the Alliance. The firm picked up a Silver Anvil Award for its work on the Alliance's launch in 2012.

Proposals are due Dec. 13.

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

NEW ACCOUNTS**New York Area**

5W PR, New York/Roomer, online travel marketplace at RoomerTravel.com connecting travelers stuck with nonrefundable hotel rooms to those looking for a last minute, discounted accommodation, for PR.

Lou Hammond & Associates, New York/Premier Rail Collection, passenger railroads with both freight and passenger services, including Pullman Rail Journeys (b/t Chicago and New Orleans), Mount Hood Railroad, Santa Cruz and Monterey Bay Railway, and Rio Grande Scenic Railroad, among others; "The Polar Express" at the Saratoga & North Creek Railway, for launch, and urbangreen, "real wood" furniture brand, all for PR, digital marketing and positioning.

LVM Group, New York/Lymphatic Education & Research Network, non-profit, for PR.

Kitchen PR, New York/Provident Bank and the Provident Bank Foundation; Denver Global Products, outdoor power products; Blue Agility, Enterprise Agile solutions provider, and Employment Resource Group, executive recruiting firm, for PR.

CPR Strategic Marketing Communications, Elmwood Park, N.J./The Job Search Solution, for PR for its tutorials and apps aimed at aiding the job search process.

East

Susan Davis International, Washington, D.C./The Navy League; Isha Foundation; Institute of Museums and Library Sciences, and Caring for Military Families: The Elizabeth Dole Foundation, for PR.

Southeast

Vine Communications, Miami/Palmcorp Development Group, luxury home developer, and The Commonwealth Institute, non-profit founded to help women executives through peer mentoring, education and high-level networking, for PR.

South

RSQ, Mobile, Ala./Bertram Yacht, sport fishing boat subsidiary of the Ferretti Group, for traditional and digital marketing. RSQ is a unit of Red Square Agency.

Mountain West**Boom Broadcast and Media Relations**,

Denver/March of Dimes Foundation, for PR for its 2013 Premature Birth Report Card, and the Joyful Heart Foundation, for pro bono PR to launch its "No More" PSA campaign aimed at domestic violence and sexual abuse.

Master Plan Communications, Salt Lake City/SaltCityOptics.com, prescription eyewear retailer, as AOR for PR.

West

Edelman, San Mateo, Calif./ValueClick, online advertising/marketing, as AOR for PR, including media relations, influencer engagement and corporate comms.

Sagon-Phior, Los Angeles/The Nonhuman Rights Project, advocacy organization pushing for legal rights for animals like chimpanzees, elephants, whales and dolphins, for branding, social media and PR to assist with their "groundbreaking pursuit of legal rights of specific nonhuman animals."

NEWS OF SERVICES**BAER ELECTED TO PBS BOARD**

Don Baer, worldwide chair and CEO of Burson-Marsteller, was elected to the PBS board of directors as general vice chair for fiscal year 2014.

Baer and WHA-TV/Wisconsin Public Television general manager Malcolm Brett (professional vice chair) were both elected to the board for the first time.

"As a system, we have worked strategically to achieve significant successes in a time of economic challenge and technological change, said president and CEO Paula Kerger. "The advice and counsel of the Board will be invaluable as we determine how to lay the foundation for facing obstacles and seizing opportunities in the days and years to come."

PBS also re-elected general director Ernest Bromley, CEO of Bromley Communications, to a second term, and Erroll B. Davis, Jr. and Ramon A. Rodriguez each won a first term as general directors.

Robert Sachs, former president & CEO of the National Cable & Telecommunications Association, was elected to fulfill the term of former general director Chuck Hagel, who resigned from his seat when he accepted the appointment of U.S. Secretary of Defense.

The PBS board includes 27 members – 14 professional, 12 general directors, along with PBS' president. They serve three-year terms and the positions are unpaid.

**Baer****NIRI HITS DODD-FRANK PROPOSAL**

The National Investor Relations Institute submitted a comment letter on the pay ratio disclosure rule proposed by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, arguing the proposal would impose significant costs on companies and cause confusing disclosures.

The draft rule under the Dodd-Frank Act would require more than 3,800 U.S. issuers to disclose the median of the annual total compensation of all employees, and the ratio of that figure to the annual total compensation of the company's CEO.

In addition to added costs, NIRI said the disclosures confuse many investors and subject companies to unfair peer comparisons. The IR group wants the SEC to narrow the scope of the employees covered and let companies use existing federal wage data to calculate the ratios.

KICKEDUP PRODUCES LA SMT

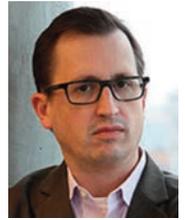
Three-month-old broadcast and digital firm KickedUp Media Group reports it recently produced a satellite media tour in Los Angeles for Minneapolis-based Karwoski & Courage PR on behalf of international restaurant chain PF Changs.

"This was our client's first experience with an SMT and it could not have gone any better," said K&C A/S Emily Finley.

West Glen Communications alum Larry Saperstein founded KickedUp, based in New York. Added KickedUp VP Stephanie Rittenhouse: "It's very exciting to have clients who we've worked with over the years confirm their confidence in us and continue to give us business."

PEOPLE**Joined**

Jeff Ventura, director of corporate communications at CVS Caremark, to Golin-Harris in Washington as executive director for media. He was press officer in the Food and Drug Administration's office of the commissioner and comms. director at the House of Representative's chief administrative unit. In Congress, Ventura helped introduce former Speaker Nancy Pelosi's "Green the Capitol Initiative." He was also media relations chief for Johns Hopkins Univ. School of Medicine and PA manager at Brigham and Women's Hosp. At GH, Ventura reports to Susan Corsini, managing director of GH/DC.

**Ventura**

Mark Veverka, financial and tech columnist, *USA Today*, to Eastwick, Sunnyvale, Calif., to lead the firm's content marketing group. He was West Coast editor of *Barron's* and a staff writer for the *Wall Street Journal*.

Patrick Brady, director of business development, Ketchum Digital, to DeVries Global, New York, as senior director, global services. He was previously VP, international network relations director, at Ketchum.

Tea Romano, a veteran of SapientNitro, Y&R/Wunderman and Universal McCann, joins as executive VP and the firm's first global digital lead.

Ann Peterson, executive VP at Lippe Taylor, to marlo marketing/communications, Boston, as executive VP of its consumer products and professional services unit. She was previously an executive VP at Rogers & Cowan and has handled clients like Nordstrom, Monistat, Capitol One Bank and VF Corp.

**Peterson**

Jim Whaley, senior VP of corporate communications for Siemens' North American unit, has moved to \$7.6B packaging producer Sealed Air Corp., to head corporate comms. and sustainability. Elmwood Park, N.J.-based Sealed Air produces brands like Bubble Wrap and food packaging system Cryovac. It has 25,000 employees. Whaley was director of public affairs and comms. for the U.S. Military Academy at West Point before he moved to Siemens in 2004.

Doug Smiley, chief marketing officer, Downtown Music's RCRD LBL, to Cornerstone, New York, as account director. **Winifred Chance**, assoc. producer, CMJ Music Marathon and dir. of marketing, CMJ, joins as director of events.

Joe Trentacosta, VP, Springer Associates PR, to Steinerreich Communications Group, Fort Lee, N.J., as VP and consumer practice leader.

Glen Fellman, SVP and creative dir., McKinney, to French/West/Vaughan, Raleigh, N.C., as senior VP and chief creative officer.

Adrienne Lee to Susan Davis International, Washington, D.C., as a senior A/E. **Andrew Dawson** joins as digital strategist/A/E, and **Aliza Bran** and **David Bahr** sign on as associate A/Es.

Sarah Larson, VP of media strategy, DEETER, to Furia Rubel Comms., Doylestown, Pa., as VP of PR.

BARNEYS TAPS CRISIS PRO IN 'SHOP AND FRISK'

Barneys New York, the upscale retailer immersed in an alleged "shop and frisk" policy toward black shoppers crisis, has retained civil rights consultant/crisis PR/PA pro Michael Yaki to review its customer service practices.

Barneys CEO Mark Lee apologized on Oct. 24 after two black shoppers said police allegedly accosted them earlier this year after buying a \$350 Ferragamo belt and \$2,500 Celine handbag at Barneys Madison Ave store. One sued the retailer and the other plans to do the same.

Lee said "no customers should have the unacceptable" practice of harassment after making a purchase.

NYPD claims it acted following tips from Barneys security people. Barneys denies its staff contacted the cops. Incoming New York mayor Bill DeBlasio has promised to end NYPD's "shop and frisk" policy.

The New Yorker's Nov. 11 "Talk of the Town" section features Yaki, a former advisor to Democratic Congressional leader Nancy Pelosi.

Lee plans to dig through "every policy, operation and practice" in place at Barneys and talk to staffers before making recommendations. He runs Michael Yaki Consulting, which advised Abercrombie & Fitch in the aftermath of blowback on its "Wong Bros. Laundry Service" t-shirts and persuaded Bravo to drop the term "JAP" (acronym for Jewish American Princess) from its "Princesses: Long Island" program.

Yaki's father is a third-generation Japanese-American who grew up in an internment camp.

LA BIZ GROUP CALLS FOR PITCHES

An influential, 90-year-old Los Angeles business advocacy organization has cast a net for PR proposals from firms with experience in regional and state politics and crisis PR.

The Central City Association wants a firm to provide strategic PR counsel and execute a communications strategy as it works to be "the voice of business and community interest in the corridors of power."

Crafting press inquiries, media relations, counsel, a 90th anniversary plan, op-eds and other PR assignments are covered in the scope of work.

Proposals are due Nov. 22. RFP: <http://bit.ly/17RDrop>.

NEXT FIFTEEN SEES GAINS IN TOUGH YEAR

Next Fifteen Communications Group reported Nov. 5 a five percent increase in revenue to £96.1M (about \$155M) for the year ended July 31 on strong performances from Text 100, OutCast and M Booth.

Financial issues at its Bite PR unit – the holding company issued a profit warning last week -- cut into profitability as accounting problems in two of the firm's 12 offices were ironed out. Profit fell from £4.3M in 2012 to £721K for the year, dropping 65% on a pre-tax basis.

Chairman Richard Eyre said the company's re-tooling for the digital landscape has paid off as work for clients like IBM, Google, American Express and Facebook expanded beyond its media relations scope.

While this has been a tough year, it remains a year of progress in many ways," he said, noting recent business additions from Sainsbury's and HBO.

JEWISH AGENCY GETS LOBBY BEACHEAD

The Jewish Agency for Israel, which promotes Zionism/Judaism and Jewish immigration to Israel, has registered as a lobbyist with the U.S. Justice Dept.

The Government of Israel has granted a legal and public voluntary status upon JAFI, authorizing it to "develop and settle the country, absorb immigrants from the diaspora and coordinate activities with other groups in the country, according to the federal filing.

Haaretz reported Nov. 7 that Israel plans to hike overseas spending by "hundreds of millions of shekels during the next few years" for outreach to Jews abroad and on college campuses across Americas as part of a new campaign to strengthen Jewish identity abroad and diaspora ties to the Jewish state."

Jewish Agency director Alan Hoffman said the government currently spends \$125M a year on outreach effort. More than 120 Israeli and Jewish leaders have just wrapped up an outreach "brainstorming summit" in Jerusalem, which JAIF praised as a "historic moment."

JAFI's programs also promote the study of Hebrew, Jewish culture, history, philosophy, and the Zionist ideal.

CATALINA RESORT CO. ROLLS REVIEW

The company that runs resorts and outdoor recreation on California's Catalina Island is reviewing its PR account with an RFP process this month as it eyes a larger profile in the travel and tourism space.

The Santa Catalina Island Company wants to hear from agencies with media connections to the Los Angeles and Orange County markets, as well as a strong background in the travel-tourism sectors.

"Catalina has been somewhat of a lost treasure in Los Angeles and we're looking to help visitors rediscover the island," said SCICo director of marketing Julie Sevilla.

The review follows an expansion of the company's marketing and sales staff, including the hire of Sevilla in October. The company's properties include the Descanso Beach Club, Pavilion Hotel, Atwater Hotel and Avalon Grille. Catalina Island sits 22 miles off the California coast.

Colorado-based Backbone Media and Lyman PR of Northern California previously handled the account.

Proposals are due Nov. 22. RFP: <http://bit.ly/1brvm8C>.

CAMPBELL SOUP'S SLOVES TO FOODMINDS

Julie Mandel Sloves, a senior communications exec at Campbell Soup Company, has moved to food PR specialists FoodMinds as a senior VP.

Sloves exits Campbell's after 12 years as senior manager of global R&D comms. She is stationed in Voorhees, N.J., for the Chicago-based firm, heading strategy and oversight of teams on several accounts. Sloves previously ran her own shop and was at AronowPollock Comms.

FM has also added Weber Shandwick's Julie Alessi as a senior A/E in the Windy City. The firm, which posted \$4.9M in revenues in 2012, says its staff is up to 24 with an expert network of around 40. Campbell's, Dole, McCormick, Nestle, and Welch's are among its client experience.

“How to work with senior managers who defer to the legal function and the court of law rather than PR and the court of public opinion” was the title of a workshop at the PR Society of America conference Oct. 28 in Philadelphia.

That is exactly the situation that Stephanie Cegielski, VP-PR of the Society, finds herself in.

Under orders from CEO Bill Murray, to whom she reports (there is no reporting line to the board or elected chair), she bombards us with a string of draconian legal pronouncements that wouldn't get to first base in the Court of Public Opinion.

O'Dwyer reporters, for instance, were barred from all sessions of the 2013 conference. Ironically, we were unable to cover the fascinating session on legal vs. the Court of Public Opinion. Other reporters were “credentialed” which our lawyers say makes the Society guilty of discrimination. It would take a lawsuit to pursue that claim.

The National Press Club, New York State Senator Liz Krueger, PR Watch and a half dozen blogs have scolded the Society to no avail.

The Court of Public Opinion does not cut much ice at the Society.

What cuts ice is where the power lies. That is in the Assembly where, 70% of the delegates are APR, and the board, where all 17 members are APR.

As long as the board and Assembly approve of Murray's policies, they are not going to change.

Although blocked from the covering the session, we are trying to contact the panelists, who include two lawyers, in an effort to find out how to deal with PR Society staff and leaders who constantly brandish legal swords not only at us but at members.

Jennings, Smith, Jalbert on Panel

The lawyers are Thomas Jennings, partner in the law firm of Hill Wallack, Morristown, N.J., a graduate of Harvard and the law school of Notre Dame, “representing national and local businesses in a wide range of commercial transactions”; Stacey Smith, a partner in Jackson, Jackson & Wagner, Rye, N.H., the firm founded by Patrick Jackson, 1980 president of the PR Society, who has been with the firm since 1981, and Michele Jalbert, who is “of counsel” to JJ&W. Her bio says she is “uniquely positioned to help bridge the gap between two often adversarial interests within organizations—PR professionals and lawyers.”

Jackson led the shift of Society power from New York to chapters throughout the nation. His policies of press avoidance and staffing h.q. almost totally with non-PR people still dominate.

We wouldn't mind it if good law were being practiced by the Society but that is not the case. The Society has spent \$581,608 for legal advice in the past nine years. It has never had a PR firm.

Freebairn-Smith's work was undercut from the start by chair Mickey Nall who said cancelling the program “was not an option.”

Bylaws Rewrite Was a Travesty

The 2009 bylaws rewrite was a legal travesty.

The committee was chaired by Dave Rickey, who was also chair of the 2012 Definition of PR Task Force and 2012 national secretary. The panel never faced a live audience, causing the resignation of Cynthia Sharpe, who condemned a deliberative process that is “mostly e-mails, phone calls and blog posts.” Ten of those on the 11-member committee were APR when only two should have been to reflect the 82% non-APR membership. Consideration of an entire new set of bylaws by the Assembly, which took place at its regular meeting on Nov. 7, 2009, violated not only Robert's Rules but common sense and the rules of fair play.

Robert's advises that such an undertaking be made at a series of special meetings and never at the regular annual meeting. There was only time for discussion of a few of the more than 15 articles that were in the new bylaws. Robert's requires that all articles be discussed.

Fifty-six proxy votes were used for the purpose of approving proxy voting even though adoption of Robert's satisfies any state demand for a specific rule barring proxies. The new bylaws can be challenged in perpetuity. The Society paid \$98,865 to its law firm Venable in 2008 and \$124,016 in 2009 for a total of \$222,881 for the two years.

Legal Trumps Ethics at PR Society

IRS Form 990, showing the pay packages of any staffer making more than \$100,000, in recent years has been kept from the Assembly and the press until a few days before the final deadline—Nov. 15.

The Society's claim is that it is following the letter of the law. Initial deadline for this document is May 15 each year.

The Society this year said it made the 55-page document “available” to the Assembly on the day that it met, Oct. 26. However, delegates we talked to said they were not aware of this. If they had access to the 990, they would have found that Murray received a bonus of \$61,000 in 2012, resulting in a total package of \$423,647. That would have been a topic at the Town Hall.

Cegielski, asked about the bonus, said Murray has fulfilled certain terms in his contract. The LinkedIn entry for Murray, who joined the Society in January, 2007, says “Collectively, my leadership resulted in PRSA meeting or exceeding financial goals for every year of my tenure, including thru the Great Recession.”

Revenues in 2006 were \$11,426,867. Six years later, in 2012, they were less than that—\$11,083,420. There was a \$30 dues increase in 2011. Dues income in 2007 was \$4,952,680, which divided by the \$225 rate means there were about 22,000 members. Dues income of \$5,133,776 in 2012, divided by the new rate of \$255, means there are about 21,000 members.

The official membership total in 2000 was 20,266.

Net assets rose to \$4.2M as of Dec. 31, 2012 from \$2.8M at the end of 2006.

— Jack O'Dwyer