



Kevin McCauley
Editor-in-Chief

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271 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016
212/679-2471. Fax: 212/683-2750
www.odwyerpr.com; jobs.odwyerpr.com

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TURKS & CAICOS TABS FGS FOR CRISIS WORK

The Government of Turks & Caicos Islands has hired [FGS Global](#) for the development of a crisis management strategy to reduce the “reputational impact” suffered from a wave of violence that has rocked the Caribbean archipelago of 58K people since September.



There have been 15 fatal shootings since early last month, including Kent Carter, first VP of the NAACP Arlington branch.

The WPP unit will respond to “requests to mitigate negative impressions as a result of a recent tourist incident and preceding and ongoing incidents of violence in the Turks and Caicos Islands.”

It is responsible for crisis counseling, reputation management and media relations assistance, including writing and distributing statements to North American, Canadian, Caribbean and ethnic press.

The firm prepared remarks for TCI premier Washington Misick and other leaders regarding police investigations and steps taken to address the mayhem.

FGS Global began work for T&C on Oct. 5. The one-month agreement carries a fee of \$42K.

Vickie Jordan Adams, partner; Kirsti Hastings, managing director; Benjamin Waldron, director; and Lalaine Vergara, associate, handle the TCI business.

IKEA'S FINNE MOVES TO H+K STRATEGIES

Ann-Nina Finne, who most recently led the public affairs teams at IKEA, is coming on board at Hill+Knowlton Strategies as senior VP for global public affairs.

As global public affairs leader at Ingka Group, the holding company that controls the majority of IKEA's stores, Finne was responsible for geopolitical and financial market counsel, as well as for identifying strategic risks and crafting mitigation responses,



Ann-Nina Finne

She previously led corporate communications and political affairs in the Nordic countries and Poland for E.ON, one of the world's largest investor-owned electric utility service providers.

At H+K Strategies, she will work to bolster H+K's integrated communications and public affairs strategic advisory offering.

AAP AIMS AT COVID VACCINE DISINFORMATION

The American Academy of Pediatrics is looking for help to counter disinformation and misinformation about the COVID-19 vaccine.

A University of Pennsylvania survey released this month blamed disinformation for the low vaccination rate (less than a third) for kids aged 5 to 11. That group has been approved for the shot since October 2021.

AAP wants proposals for a disinformation training program for AAP chapter leaders, staff, pediatrician influencers and other trusted messengers/partners to counter dis/mis-information that is spreading on social media.

The communications goal is to “increase the capacity of pediatric health care clinicians, non-clinical staff, and other stakeholders to share credible COVID-19 vaccine information and respond to misinformation, including through culturally reaffirming strategies during individual clinical encounters, interactions with community members, and in news and social media,” according to the RFP.

Responses are due Oct. 28 at 323rfp@aap.org.
[Read the RFP \(PDF\)](#).



INTERPUBLIC REGISTERS 1.5% Q3 GROWTH

Interpublic posted a 1.5 percent growth in Q3 revenues to \$2.3B and a 4.9 percent rise in net income to \$251.8M. Organic growth jumped 5.6 percent.

CEO Philippe Krakowsky said gains were made in all of Interpublic's world regions, driven by contributions across its portfolio.

Despite the uncertain macroeconomic and geopolitical outlook, Krakowsky boosted the firm's full-year organic growth projection to 7 percent.

Interpublic's specialized communications group, which includes [Weber Shandwick](#), Golin, Current Global, Rogers & Cowan/PMK, United Minds, DeVries Global and DXTRA Health, showed 4.4 growth to \$344.9M for the quarter and a 7.8 percent advance organically.

For the nine-month, the group shattered the billion mark as revenues were up 7.9 percent and 10.4 percent organically.



Philippe Krakowsky

MASSART SEEKS PR FOR 150TH ANNIVERSARY

Massachusetts College of Art and Design plans to enroll PR consultants to help it celebrate its 150th anniversary in 2023.



The Boston-based institution plans a “robust series of events and community-based programs, alongside a comprehensive marketing and PR campaign to position the college and garner broad visibility in order to leverage new support,” according to the RFP.

The festivities will begin Jan. 20 with the inauguration of president Mary Grant and launch of a leadership visibility push to support her presidency.

The RFP cites three goals of the PR drive. They are “to elevate the college’s profile, generate a great amount of visibility, and deepen the public’s understanding of MassArt’s impact in order to secure funding from the legislature, inspire gifts from philanthropists, and secure the college’s place at the top of our prospective students’ application lists.”

The selected PR partners will support the MassArt team by developing stories and content and pitching media outlets.

MassArt is the only freestanding public college of art and design in the US.

Proposals are due Nov. 1 at purchasing@massart.edu.

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

THREAT TO DEMOCRACY NOT A TOP CONCERN

An alarming number of Americans now believe that our democracy is under attack, but oddly, most don’t see that as the biggest problem currently facing the country, according to a [New York Times/Siena College poll](#) of voters.

According to the poll, nearly three-quarters of voters (71 percent) believe that our democracy is at risk. Astonishingly, however, only seven percent view this threat as the most important problem currently facing the country.

Puzzling as it sounds that voters could be so cavalier about the possibility of our form of government disappearing, it makes slightly more sense when their greater concerns are taken into account, concerns they perceive to be the cause of the tenuous state of our democracy: the opposing party.

It appears that another contributing factor to these views is a growing cynicism and lack of trust in the U.S. government. More than a third (39 percent) of those polled said they’d be comfortable voting for a candidate who said they believe the 2020 election was stolen. Among Republicans, that number was 71 percent, but more than a third (37 percent) of independent voters agreed, as did 12 percent of Democrats. Even 19 percent of those who believe Biden won the election fairly said they were comfortable voting for a candidate who claimed the election was rigged.

An additional 28 percent of all voters—including 41 percent of Republicans—said they had little to no faith in the accuracy of the upcoming election results. More than a quarter (26 percent) of independents and 13 percent of Democrats agreed.

About a third of respondents (34 percent) said they don’t think someone’s political views revealed much regarding whether someone is a good person, while 14 percent said it does. Nearly 20 percent admitted that political disagreements had been the cause of hurt relationships with friends or family.

The Times/Siena College poll surveyed approx. 800 registered voters via telephone in October.



ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT

Ruder Finn Interactive Asia is named the official marketing partner for the **11th Gay Games**, which will be held in Hong Kong and Guadalajara, Mexico from Nov. 3-11, 2023.

The agency will handle all aspects of the Gay Games Organizing Committee’s communications, including branding, media relations and social media. RFI Asia managing director David Ko has been appointed as director of marketing and communications for the Games. Originally scheduled to take place in Hong Kong in November of this year, the Games were postponed due to COVID-19 complications and travel restrictions.

Marino adds several women-led companies to its growing roster of cannabis clients. For Latina-owned puffware and smoking accessory brand **House of Puff**, Marino is tasked with building brand identity and creating buzz around new product launches and establishing company founder Kristina Adduci as a leading expert voice in the cannabis and business world. Online CBD marketing platform **Poplar** has engaged the agency to elevate the brand’s visibility through strategic media relations and position founder Beryl Solomon as a leader of the opt-in movement on Long Island, where cannabis business owners are hoping to convince local municipalities to opt into retail cannabis sales.

We Are Rally and **Lucky Break PR**, both of which are LGBTQ owned and operated media, communications and events firms, are retained by the **National LGBTQ Task Force** to guide the organization as it marks its 50th anniversary year. The anniversary will officially kick off at the organization’s annual Creating Change conference, February 17-21, 2023, at the Hilton San Francisco Union Square, where thousands of LGBTQ+ and allied activists will come together in person for the first time since 2020.

The Pollack Group is named agency of record for **Jewish Future Pledge**, a nonprofit organization that encourages individuals of all backgrounds to designate that half of the charity they leave at their passing is earmarked to support Jewish organizations and/or the State of Israel. TPG is tasked with increasing awareness of the organization’s key mission and securing pledge commitments from supporters of Jewish and Israeli philanthropic efforts worldwide.

CIIC PR adds **Grand Hotel Cancún** to its hospitality portfolio, expanding the agency’s presence in Mexico. CIIC PR will spearhead the hotel’s communications strategy as it transitions into the Kempinski Hotels portfolio. Europe’s oldest luxury hotel group. The agency will support the property with a brand awareness and positioning campaign targeting the U.S. market.

Kite Hill PR is appointed public relations agency of record for **atNorth**, a data center services company that offers sustainable, cost-effective, and scalable high-performance computing across the Nordics. It was recently acquired by Swiss-based global private equity firm Partners Group. Kite Hill PR’s UK team will lead atNorth’s pan-European PR efforts, working to educate the wider market on the growing importance of practicing sustainable operations across the European data center industry.



LEAVE YOUR MARK.

INCLUSIVITY: FROM INTENTIONS TO ACTION

The use of inclusive language to communicate with and about people from diverse backgrounds and identities has never been more important. Thanks, in large part, to recent



Julia Louise Krahe

social justice movements, healthcare organizations are increasingly attuned to the effects of discrimination and systemic racism, and widespread efforts are being made to ensure people of all genders hear themselves reflected in health-related messages and materials. What's more, these considerations extend to a variety of subjects like sexual orientation, religion, ability level, age, and more. As a result, nearly everyone is thinking

about how to communicate inclusively.

While numerous inclusive language guides for health communication practitioners exist and generally rely on similar principles, a close review reveals that they often provide differing and sometimes conflicting guidance. For example, the Associated Press does not recommend capitalizing "white," but the CDC does. Anyone using the Census as a guide might restrict conversations around gender to "male, female, transgender or none of these," whereas the guide produced by the American Medical Association names at least a dozen different gender identities.

As a result, each organization is left to choose for itself what inclusive language standards it will use to meet its specific needs. Any group that does not have clear, comprehensive guidelines risks—at best—having well-intentioned communicators making disparate choices that undermine brand consistency. At worst, you could quickly find yourself in the middle of a high-profile controversy around your organization's values and practices.

The following tips can help any organization that is committed to using inclusive language move from intention to action, making smart choices along the way.

Choose your guide wisely

You can't expect consistent, inclusive communication if you don't offer clear guidance for people to follow. When considering how to provide that guidance, if you can use another organization's existing inclusive language resource, do it. If you're primarily writing for the media, you might find that the Associated Press' guidelines fit your needs. Healthcare organizations may choose to examine the American Medical Association's guide first.

But don't stop there. You need to assess each guide based on your own organizational needs and values. Read the guidelines you're considering carefully and think about whether they address all of the circumstances that your colleagues and constituents commonly face. If there is no single guide that meets all of your organization's needs, it's worth the time to build off of an existing guide or create your own.

Build your own resource

To develop an inclusive language guide that works for your organization, think process before content. Start by orchestrating an approach that will not only help you effectively examine the relevant issues but also establish the buy-in necessary to see the resulting guidance widely adopted.

The first step is asking, "Who should be in the room?" Think about bringing together diverse voices that offer

different lived experiences and represent various internal and external stakeholders.

Once you know who your contributors are, think about how decisions will be made. Consider your organization's role, goals, values, and audiences to help guide your approach.

Next, you need to create a process for examining discrete issues and making decisions. It's also important to ensure that you create the space to dive deep into issues that are relevant to your organization while setting aside any that might be less so.

Recognize that there is often no perfect option. There are instances where there are good arguments on both sides of an issue. Also, build in an understanding that things will change, and you will need to revisit your guidance over time.

Throughout this effort, keep in mind that many of these issues are deeply emotional. It's important to establish a culture that encourages deep and open discussion. With a clear process and set of expectations in place, you will be well down the path toward establishing the shared inclusive language that best connects with your audience and communicates your organization's values.

Julia Louise Krahe is a lead strategist and Senior Vice President at Crosby Marketing Communications.

UPPER MARLBORO NEEDS MEDIA RELATIONS

Upper Marlboro, the seat of Maryland's Prince George's County, wants pitches from firms to handle its media relations.

The communications partner will ensure the accurate flow of information, serve as UM's official spokesperson, respond to crisis outbreaks, organize press conferences, manage social media messaging and promote local activities.

The selected firm is required to have "demonstrable working relationships" with media outlets in Washington and Baltimore, an understanding of how local, state and federal governments work and extensive experience in handling crises that threaten public safety and/or a corporate reputation.

Responses are due Oct. 31.

They can be sent electronically to Info@UpperMarlboro-MD.gov or mailed to: Town of Upper Marlboro; P.O. Box 280; Upper Marlboro, MD 20773.

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



BGR PICKS UP TRANSAMERICA

BGR Government Affairs is providing strategic counsel and advocacy services to insurer Transamerica Cos. on issues related to retirement products.

The Baltimore-based company unveiled a new program on Oct. 13 that waives administrative and participant fees on employee retirement and health plans for small businesses.

Maya Seiden, co-head of BGR's international and trade practice, and Andy Lewin, co-head of the financial services group, handle the Transamerica account.

Transamerica is owned by Netherlands-based Aegon plc.



In September, Transamerica named Maurice Perkins its first corporate affairs officer to advance thought leadership, global government affairs, corporate communications and brand engagement. Based in DC, Perkins reports to Transamerica CEO Will Fuller and Aegon general counsel Onno van Klinken.

EX-REID COS REPS CHINA'S HIKVISION

Drew Willison, who was chief of staff to Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, has registered Chinese-government-linked Hikvision USA for work regarding federal sanctions slapped on the world's largest maker of video surveillance systems.



Drew Willison

His Elevation Association began work on May 12 following a *Financial Times* article reported that the Biden administration was planning to impose tougher sanctions on Hikvision for enabling human rights abuses.

Chinese security forces use Hikvision's facial recognition systems to track and detain Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang province.

Elevation has received \$300K in fees from Hikvision through Oct. 14.

BCW also works for Hikvision. It hauled in \$1.6M in fees/expenses for the six-month period ended June 30.

The WPP unit advised Hikvision on PA and policy issues, strategic planning & guidance and how to execute digital infrastructure. It also handled media relations, tracking and reporting and key message development.

FTI NAMES WROBEL GLOBAL ESG CHIEF

FTI Consulting has named Miriam Wrobel as global leader of its ESG and sustainability offering.



Miriam Wrobel

She joined FTI in 2021 after running her own consulting firm in the San Francisco Bay area for six years, advising clients on how to develop clean energy and ESG investment strategies.

Earlier, she was a director at Citi and primary relationship manager for renewable and energy efficiency developers in the Bay area, director of solar development at Invenery, director at Fotowatio Renewable Ventures and associate at JPMorgan.

FTI's ESG & sustainability unit offers end-to-end support for clients via risk & investigations, compliance, finance, transactions, due diligence, cybersecurity and PR services.

ACTUM PROMOTES US/TURKEY TRADE

The Turkey-US Business Council has hired Actum to enhance trade and investment between the two nations.



Actum will handle outreach to state and federal officials under the one-year contract worth \$250K. The Turkey-US Business Council operates under the Foreign Economic Relations Board of Turkey.

Former staffers at Mercury Public Affairs launched Actum in late 2021.

Kirill Goncharenko, founding partner at Mercury and now managing partner at Actum, said the firm is targeting clients looking for "large, meaningful and measurable outcomes at the intersection of politics, media, business and government."

Morris Reid, Actum's partner and former head of BGR Group's international practice, spearheads the firm's five-member Turkey-US Business Council team.

NEWS OF FIRMS

Stagwell acquires **Epicenter Experience**, an enterprise software company that leverages mobile and location data to map and sequence complex consumer behavior patterns. Epicenter will become part of the Stagwell Marketing Cloud, the company's proprietary suite of software-as-a-service and data-as-a-service products built for in-house marketing teams. Epicenter's cloud-based technology, The People Platform, allows companies to communicate with specific groups of consumers to receive additional direct response, or to deliver personalized messaging or value at scale. "With The People Platform, we've built a tool that provides contextual awareness and behavioral understanding on a granular level, providing our clients with a connective tissue that they've come to view as a 'currency service,'" said Epicenter Experience CEO and co-founder Paul Krasinski.



Sloane & Company is opening an office in South Florida. Managing director Lauren Nussbaum will serve as head of the South Florida office, and VP Sarah Braunstein will be the office's deputy head. Both are based in the Miami area. The agency says that the new office will help it better serve clients in the financial services, technology and healthcare industries, all of which have a rapidly expanding presence in the region.

MAD Global Strategy is launching a Pittsburgh operation. The Summit, NJ, based agency, which was founded in 2021, also opened a Columbus outpost in June. The Pittsburgh office will be led by Buonomo Group founder Frank Buonomo, who in addition to serving as vice president, public affairs at Dollar Bank has held senior communications and operations roles for the Pittsburgh Penguins, Minnesota Wild, St. Louis Blues, Nashville Predators and New York Rangers.

The Worldcom PR Group launches Salus, a crisis preparedness and response service. The first Worldcom branded service, Salus is designed to help organizations protect high-value human, physical, intellectual or brand assets. It has two phases, Prepare, which provides an initial risk assessment as well as client access to Worldcom's crisis experts, and Protect, which delivers expert protection during a live crisis. Salus is being launched in 19 countries in Europe, the Middle East and Africa.



Bacchus, a luxury brand development and creative communications agency with headquarters in London, New York and Dubai, launches an office in Miami. Wellness, hospitality and property will be the core sectors of focus for the new location, which the agency says is a response to growing client demand from clients seeking a local agency partner to service the Florida market and beyond.

Dalton, which operates in Atlanta, Jacksonville and Nashville, undergoes a brand refresh. The agency says its new positioning statement, "We get people," reflects its commitment to understanding their clients' businesses and ability to develop deep connections with their audiences. Founded in 1989 by Jim Dalton, the agency currently has nearly 100 employees. It offers services that include branding, advertising, public relations and communications, paid media, social media, content creation, video production, website development, experiential design, corporate shows and events and market research.

OMNICOM POSTS FLAT Q3 PERFORMANCE

Omnicom reported flat Q3 revenues of \$3.4B and a 2.5 percent boost in net income to \$364.4M as the ad/PR combine wrestled with the challenging global economic environment.



John Wren

CEO John Wren said the performance shows that Omnicom “can navigate through current business uncertainty.”

North America was Omnicom’s top performer as revenues grew 8.4 percent to \$1.9B. That compared to a 15.8 percent slide to \$540M in continental Europe, a 6.9 percent dip to \$427M in Asia Pacific and a 3.9 percent drop to

\$368.3M in the UK.

The PR group ([FleishmanHillard](#), Ketchum, Marina Maher Communications, Portland, Mercury and Porter Novelli) advanced 8.8 percent to \$391.2M. It was up 12.6 percent on an organic basis.

For the nine-month period, the PR segment reported 5.0 percent growth to \$1.1B and a 7.3 percent rise organically.

EDELMAN HIRES FERNANDEZ FOR APAC POST

Warren Fernandez, editor of Singapore’s *The Straits Times* English language media company, is joining [Edelman](#) on Oct. 25 as CEO of its Asia Pacific network of 21 offices and 1,300 staffers.



Warren Fernandez

He succeeds Stephen Kehoe, who departed in June.

Dave Samson, vice chairman of corporate affairs, has been running the APAC group on an interim basis.

Fernandez will report to COO Matt Harrington.

He joined the *The Straits Times* in 1990 as a political editor. Fernandez rose to deputy editor before exiting to

Royal Dutch Shell in 2008 and rejoining the paper in 2012.

Currently, Fernandez is president of the World Editors Forum, a global network of print/digital professionals.

CA WATER DISTRICT SEEKS TO TAP PR FIRM

The Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District wants proposals for social media and PR services.

Located in the foothills of the San Bernardo Mountains, about 75 miles east of Los Angeles, the district serves about 50K residents. It is looking for a firm experienced in creating unique brands and identities, memorable messages and effective communications through multiple media formats.

The selected partner will develop a digital news platform to educate the area residents about meetings, events, programs and new services.

It will create news releases, media advisories, articles, website content and fact sheets for various initiatives and projects.

Proposals are due Oct. 27. They go to: Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District; Attn. Dr. Kirene M. Bargas; 560 Magnolia Ave.; Beaumont, CA 92223.

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



ON THE MOVE

Invariant brings on **Caroline Swann** as chief people officer. Swann joins Invariant from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, where she oversaw all employee experience programming, including initiatives to increase employee engagement and foster inclusivity. She previously led human resources for the Republican National Committee and worked as director of White House personnel during the George W. Bush Administration. At Invariant, Swann will be responsible for all elements of Invariant’s people function, including employee experience; leadership development and training; talent acquisition and management; strategic planning; and diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging initiatives.

Brunswick Group adds **Geraldine Buckingham** to its board of directors as a non-executive director, effective Nov. 1. Buckingham is currently a senior advisor to BlackRock chairman and CEO Larry Fink, and she previously was chair and head of Asia Pacific at the firm. She has also served as a partner in McKinsey & Company’s financial services practice. Buckingham will work closely with Brunswick Group’s leadership team.

BlueTriton Brands, which produces a portfolio of regional spring water and national purified water brands, names **Kheri Holland Tillman** as chief marketing officer. Tillman joins the company from audio electronics firm Harman International, where she served as vice president of global development and marketing services. She was previously vice president of trade marketing and sales strategy at Heineken USA.

Ungerboeck, which develops venue and event management software for users in more than 50 countries, brings on **Laurie McGrath** as CMO. McGrath most recently served as CMO at international supply chain firm Tecsys. In her new post, McGrath will lead Ungerboeck’s global corporate branding and product marketing initiatives.

Quantum Health hires John Hallock as CCO. Hallock was most recently CCO at Transcarent. Before that, he served as SVP of corporate communications at Livongo Health, Imprivata and CareCloud; led global corporate communications at athenahealth at worked in healthcare communications at Weber Shandwick. In his new role, Hallock will lead Quantum Health’s corporate communications function, including external and internal communications and investor relations.

LivePerson, which develops AI-powered customer engagement solutions, names **Ruth Zive** CMO. Zive was most recently CMO at enterprise software company Ada; before that she held the CMO spot at Blueprint Software Systems. She was also founder and CEO of MarketingWise, a life-cycle marketing agency. At LivePerson, Zive will oversee the company’s global marketing organization, including digital and demand generation, field marketing and sales development, vertical and product marketing, branding, and internal and external communications.



Geraldine Buckingham



John Hallock

COMMENTARY



Mike Pence

Did Mike Pence grow a spine?

A vigorous Pence lashed out at the “appeasement wing” of the Republican party that wants to end US support for Ukraine.

That’s rich coming from a guy who, as vice president, licked the boots of a president that he viewed as corrupt and morally bankrupt.

Pence told the Heritage Foundation on Oct. 19 that a “rising chorus in our party” wants the US to disengage from

the wider world. He said:

“But appeasement has never worked, ever, in history. And now more than ever, we need a conservative movement committed to America’s role as leader of the free world and as a vanguard of American values.”

Mr. Conservative and Champion of Freedom was AOL when his old boss cozied up to his best buddy, Vlad.

Pence is on the promotional trail for his new autobiography, “So Help Me God,” and setting the stage for his own presidential run.

He will need divine intervention in order to snatch the GOP nomination from his old boss.

Keep on praying, Mike.

Nuclear power is on a PR roll... The acquisition of Westinghouse Electric by Brookfield Renewable Partners and uranium miner/refiner Cameco Corp. announced Oct. 11 is the latest sign of the revival of the nuclear energy sector.

Westinghouse built about half of the world’s nuclear power stations and continues to service them.

Mark Carney, Brookfield vice chair and head of transition investing, said, “every credible net-zero pathway relies on significant growth in nuclear power.”

The Westinghouse deal comes on the heels of Congressional passage of the Inflation Reduction Act that aims to reduce carbon emissions by 40 percent by 2030.

The IRA, which president Joe Biden called the “biggest step forward on climate ever,” provides a first-ever production tax credit for existing technologies, such as nuclear.

Maria Korsnick, president of the Nuclear Energy Institute, said the IRA’s energy provisions send a “clear signal that nuclear is essential to the transition toward a carbon-free economy that also provides long-term, quality clean energy jobs.”

Deep-blue California may have provided the biggest boost for nuclear energy.

In September, Golden State lawmakers decided to extend the life of its last nuclear plant until 2030, overcoming fierce opposition from environmentalists. The Diablo Canyon plant was supposed to shut down in 2025.

Westinghouse built the nuclear reactors at Diablo Canyon, which are less than a mile from the Shoreline fault line.

They opened in 1985 and 1986. About two thousand protesters were arrested during a two-week period in 1981 in noisy demonstrations to halt construction of the plant.

Diablo Canyon faces a much quieter future.

Pandemic proves fruitful for IR pros... The 2022 Korn Ferry/NIRI survey found that compensation rose for investor relations officers during the pandemic.

Richard Marshall, KF’s global managing director for communications and IR, noted that after a short hiatus in hiring when COVID-19 first hit, demand for IR talent accelerated due to a flurry of SPAC deals and the robust stock market.

The increased focus on ESG also boosted the IR function.

The survey of nearly 300 IROs found that more than 30 percent reported base salaries from \$276K to \$350K, while 12 percent earned more. Most IROs reported a higher base salary bracket compared to the 2019 pre-pandemic levels.

Marshall said some IROs are even members of the million-dollar compensation club.

Publicis Groupe says “merci.” The French ad/PR combine chalked up 23 percent growth during the third quarter, sparked by strong performances in the US and Europe.

CEO Arthur Sadoun rewarded staffers for the financial results with an “exceptional bonus” of one week’s salary for half of the employees that do not have any variable remuneration.

“I also want to say a big ‘merci’ to all of our people for their outstanding efforts in a context where inflation is impacting the daily lives of many of them,” said Sadoun.

The bonuses will be paid in November in time for the holiday season.

Classy move.

Qatar clamps down on the press. The 2022 FIFA World Cup will kick off on Nov. 20 and the Reporters Without Borders group is worried about restrictions that will be placed on reporters traveling to the emirate.

The media credentials site says journalists will not be able to film or take pictures in residential properties, private businesses and industrial zones. Those are the areas in which reporters covered the abuse of migrant workers.

Human Rights Watch reports that Qatar has introduced some labor reforms, though they are woefully inadequate in protecting workers’ rights and are poorly enforced.

Migrant worker deaths are not investigated, and their families are not provided reparations.

Qatar’s FIFA team has its work cut out.

Countering fake news. The Women’s Disinformation Defense Project is spending \$5M to combat disinformation and fend off sexist or racial attacks on women running for office in the midterm election.

WDDP will hold media outlets and social media platforms accountable for spreading disinformation. It will engage in media tracking, advertising, rapid response mobilization, media training, polling around the impacts of disinformation and development of the most effective counter-narratives.

WDDP is a coalition of gender and racial justice organizations led by UltraViolet.

Emily’s List, Higher Heights for America, Planned Parenthood, Kairos, The League, NARAL Pro-Choice America and Women’s March are members of WDDP. —Kevin McCauley