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Editor-in-Chief

# O'Dwyer's

The Inside News of PR & Marketing Communications



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## ORLANDO ISSUES DOWNTOWN MARKETING RFP

The City of Orlando is requesting proposals from agencies that can provide marketing and creative services.

Orlando's Downtown Development Board is looking for an agency that can provide a variety of marketing and communication services in an effort to position downtown Orlando as a premier location for residents, visitors and businesses.



Work includes PR services, devising a brand strategy and marketing plan and strategy, content creation and copy-

writing, graphic design services, executing digital marketing campaigns, web development, social media content development, email marketing, media planning and media buying.

Terms of the contract, which is anticipated to commence in November, run for two years and may be extended for up to three additional one-year periods.

Proposals, are due by 2:00 p.m. (EST) on September 9 and should be submitted electronically to Orlando's VendorLink portal.

Questions should be directed to senior purchasing agent Angela Thomas, [Angela.Thomas@Orlando.gov](mailto:Angela.Thomas@Orlando.gov).  
[Download the RFP \(PDF\)](#).

## BRUNSWICK ADDS ESG VET WALKER

Diana Walker, who has worked with public and private groups to forge social impact and environmental programs during her 15-year career, will join the New York office of Brunswick Group on Sept. 7.



**Diana Walker**

She spent more than a decade at the United Nations Foundation, holding jobs such as senior director of partnerships initiatives and managing director of the Global Entrepreneurs Council.

Walker did a stint at the Obama White House, working on community initiatives and women's issues. She served the Biden presidential

campaign as a member of its steering committee on clean energy.

Most recently, Walker ran her own consulting shop, Walker Impact Strategies, guiding *Fortune* 500 companies on environmental, social and governance matters.

At Brunswick, she will be part of its business & society team, which the firm has been expanding throughout its global office network.

## TIME'S UP FOR SKDK

The National Women's Law Center, which houses and administers the Time's Up Legal Defense Fund, has dropped SKDKnickerbocker.

The move comes in the aftermath of the August 26 resignation of Time's Up CEO Tina Tchen due to her close ties with former New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, who faces sexual harassment allegations from 11 women.



In a review of its operations, NWLC decided to shift power back to survivors and away from institutions.

To highlight the independence of its work, NWLC is bringing the PR function in-house in a timeframe that ensures it does not disrupt the pipeline of support that it is currently providing survivors, according to its statement.

The organization is "grateful to the dedicated and passionate team at SKDK who worked with the Fund; they took on dozens of individual cases as well as recruited other PR professionals to the network and helped us scale PR services."

The firm's "continued commitment to finding pathways for survivors' stories to be heard—and holding the media accountable for doing so—has been unparalleled."

Stagwell Group owns SKDK.

## PRSA SLAPS APR ACCREDITATION

The leadership of Public Relations Society of America is backing a move to change the current "must-have" APR accreditation to "strongly preferred" as a requirement for a seat on its board of directors.

If passed by PRSA's Assembly, "the change would be a cosmic, seismic change in PRSA policies for all these years," a senior PR executive told O'Dwyer's

Veteran counselor Jim Lukaszewski called the measure a "momentous by-law change to demote all APRs."

PRSA national chair Michelle Olson denies that the proposal diminishes the value of the APR credential. "I want to state emphatically that nothing could be farther than the truth," she wrote in a "Dear PRSA Colleagues" letter.

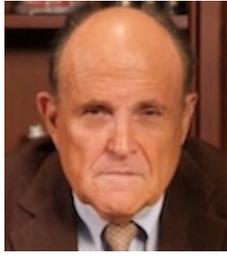
"The APR continues to be the gold standard in the profession," she added.

Eliminating the APR requirement would widen "the opportunity for a strong group of previously ineligible candidates to work closely with their colleagues for the benefit of all members and the organization," according to Olson.



## **RUDY GIULIANI'S PR GURU QUILTS**

Rudy Giuliani's PR guru Christianné Allen has finally had enough and has stepped down from her post at Giuliani Communications.



**Rudolph Giuliani**

The 22-year-old signed up for Team Rudy in August 2019 with the mission of updating the image of the former New York mayor and Donald Trump's personal attorney.

She is exiting for a tech start-up operation, according to a report in [The Daily Beast](#).

Allen joined Rudy during the Ukraine meddling fiasco and advised him during Trump's impeachment, Hunter Biden mess, Four Seasons Landscaping press conference disaster, and losing his license to practice law. Giuliani is battling a billion-dollar defamation suit for his role in spreading lies about the "stolen election."

Rudy's most recent PR disaster occurred Aug. 20 when he was videoed at the Delta lounge at JFK Airport shaving while chowing down lobster bisque.

Allen said Todd Shapiro, a former spokesperson for Lindsay Lohan's family, is Rudy's new spokesperson.

## **MIAMI ARTS DISTRICT SEEKS PR MASTERPIECE**

The Wynwood Arts District wants to book a PR firm to position it as the premier destination for street art, living, dining and working in Miami.



Working with the Wynwood Business Improvement District, the firm will assist in marketing and promoting the viability of the nearly 400 properties and their tenants in the 50 city-block district.

The PR effort will include drafting press releases, pitching stories and promoting events tied to Pride Month, Halloween, Mother's Day, Miami Art Week + Art Basel, Second Saturday Art Walks, Wynwood Life Festival and New Year's Day.

The firm will assume social media duties and conduct outreach to bloggers/influencers to increase the "viral-ness" of traditional press efforts, according to the RFP.

Responses are due Sept. 13 at: Wynwood BID; 50 NW 24 St., Ste. 104; Miami, FL 33127

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

## **BALLARD REPS JAILED AWADALLAH**

Ballard Partners is representing Bassem Awadallah, the US citizen and former advisor to Jordan's royal court and Saudi crown prince, who was sentenced to 15 years in prison in July for working to plot against Jordan's monarchy.

Awadallah was Jordan's envoy to Saudi Arabia and then an economic advisor to crown prince Mohammed bin Salman. After his arrest, the head of Saudi intelligence [pressed Jordan for his release](#). The lawyer for Awadallah, who also is a citizen of Jordan and Saudi Arabia, claims that he was beaten and tortured in person and held in solitary confinement.

Ballard represents Awadallah as a subcontractor to Ashcroft Law Firm, which was established by former attorney general John Ashcroft.

Brian Ballard, who was Donald Trump's chief fundraiser in Florida, heads his firm's Awadallah team that includes senior partners Syl Lukis and Gerald John O'Hanlon.

## **NEWS OF FIRMS**

[BCW](#) and the New York chapter of the Public Relations Society of America announce the creation of The Harold Burson Award. The first-ever winner of the award will be recognized during the [2021 Big Apple Awards](#) on Sept. 28. The award will be given to a non-agency practitioner for outstanding communications achievement.

The recipient will demonstrate a best-in-class approach to communicating with precision, conviction and transparency. A committee of PRSA-NY members will collaborate with BCW to select the recipient.

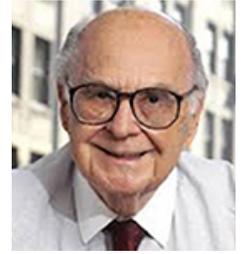
**Weber Shandwick** chairman Jack Leslie is one of 80 global leaders and more than 25 organizations across corporate, philanthropic, civil society, advocacy, academic and health sectors to sign a statement calling on world leaders attending the United Nations General Assembly this month to convene a global summit and align on an urgent global action plan to end the pandemic. Brunswick Group chairman Alan Parker and senior advisor Kate Fall also signed the statement, which proposes that seven billion doses of high-quality vaccines be made available before the end of 2021.

**Viral Nation**, a social and influencer marketing agency, launches Viral Nation Sports, a division geared toward helping collegiate athletes cultivate brand partnerships. The launch follows the June resolution by the National Collegiate Athletic Association to let college athletes use their name, image and likeness to seek brand partnership and endorsement deals. Mike Lecce, who has represented such athletes as David Ortiz and Jose Bautista, will serve as VN Sports vice president, leading recruiting and brand partnerships.

**PROI Worldwide** names its international management board slate for 2021/2022, led by global chair **Ciro Dias dos Reis**, president of Brazil-based Imagem Corporativa. In addition to Reis, the board includes EMEA region vice-chairs **Nicola Nel** of South Africa's Atmosphere Communications and **Rania Azab**, 4PR Group, Egypt; Americas region vice-chairs **Trudy Kremer** of Jackson Spalding and Lambert CEO **Jeff Lambert**; and APAC region vice-chairs **Angela Scaffidi** of Australia's Senate/SHJ and **Elaine Chuah** of Priority Communications in Malaysia.

[MikeWorldWide](#) accepts applications for its second-year pro bono PR program supporting small business founders and entrepreneurs from under-represented communities. Eligible applicants must represent businesses owned by people of color, women or members of the LGBTQ community, and earn less than \$5 million in annual revenue. Two applicants will be selected to enter a six-month pro bono engagement with MWW that will start in the fall.

**Tigercomm**, which focuses on the cleantech industry, acquires Tampa, FL-based **Chase Media Services**, a consultancy focused on cleantech and climate change communications. Chase Media president **Melissa Baldwin** will join Tigercomm as senior VP. The company says the acquisition is intended to help Tigercomm meet an expanding contract flow from several fast-growing clean economy sectors. "This acquisition is a strong fit with our growth trajectory," said Tigercomm founder and president **Mike Casey**.

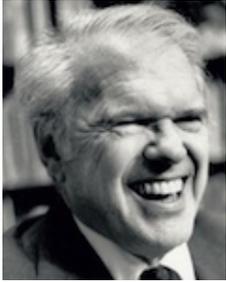


**Harold Burson**



## DAVID FINN CELEBRATES 100TH BIRTHDAY

PR legend David Finn, who co-founded Ruder Finn with Bill Ruder more than 70 years ago, celebrated his 100th birthday on August 30.



David Finn

Besides his role as a founding father of modern PR, Finn is a true Renaissance Man. He's a celebrated photographer who published more than 100 books of the photography of sculpture.

O'Dwyer's asked his children, Kathy Bloomgarden (Ruder Finn CEO), Peter Finn (Finn Partners CEO) and Amy Binder (RF|Binder CEO) for their thoughts about their father.

Below are their words:

**Kathy Bloomgarden:** "My dad had incredible foresight about the PR industry and how we as PR practitioners would add value to the business world.

"He was always hungry to learn and grow himself as a person—for example, he had a friend who was an Italian professor at Columbia University tutor him in Italian so they could read Dante's *Inferno* together in its original language.

"He also started a second career late in life, teaching himself photography and ultimately publishing over 100 beautiful books of art photography from esteemed publishers Harry Abrams, Rizzoli and others, as well as books he'd written—'How to Visit a Museum,' 'How to Look at Sculpture' and 'How to Look at Photographs,' among others.

"He was an exceptional innovator and prolific thinker who taught me to always push to do new and more work of the highest quality, and that has become a hallmark of Ruder Finn.

"David also wrote an article for *The Saturday Review* called 'The Businessman and his Critics.' David felt that PR people don't try to silence critics, that criticism was part of a free society and businessmen needed to respond constructively to critics."

**Peter Finn:** "David was a pioneer in the PR sector not only because he was one of its early practitioners, but also because he brought many new ideas to the business.

"He was an early leader in corporate involvement with the arts, and was also one of the early agency leaders to encourage clients to play a role in sponsoring sports events, in sponsoring publicly released survey research projects, and in many other ideas which were innovative at the time, but have since become the norm.

"David also brought many people into the PR world who he worked with early in their career, and who then went on to form their own successful agency, or to take on key communications roles within corporations.

"I worked with David for over 30 years before I launched Finn Partners. For so many years he was my boss and my mentor, and before the launch of Finn Partners, he was my business partner.

"He was always a best friend. So much of what I have accomplished at Finn Partners is a result of what I learned from him about the importance of kindness and justice and the potential for people to do amazing things together."

**Amy Binder:** "It has been extraordinary to see the outpouring of Happy Birthday wishes on the occasion of my father's 100th birthday. From my early years at Ruder Finn, until I formed RF|Binder, I saw firsthand the influence that David had on shaping the public relations industry as well as the influence he had on so many people's careers who are

now leaders in the field.

"I started my career as a photographer and photographed alongside my father. Just as David trained my eye to see and understand art, he also trained me and so many others to creatively think about the role that communications needs to have in addressing business challenges.

"Long before the recent rise in ESG reporting and the discussion of the need for corporations to articulate their purpose, David believed that corporations could and should be a force for good. It was integrated into all of his work with leadership at corporations around the world."

## CIRCULATION AT TOP U.S. PAPERS DOWN 20%

Profits at most U.S. newspaper companies have been declining for years, as advertising budgets have dried up and print subscription numbers diminished. [A recent analysis](#) by British media trade nonprofit Press-Gazette shows how the COVID-19 pandemic has only accelerated that death spiral.

The Press-Gazette's analysis, which looked only at daily print circulation numbers—excluding digital subscription numbers, as well as Sunday or other weekend editions—found that the top 25 newspapers in the U.S. saw their daily print circulations drop by 20 percent (or about 840,000 readers) between the first quarter of 2020 and the first quarter of this year, from a combined circulation of 4.2 million to a total circulation of 3.4 million.

National papers suffered the steepest declines. According to the Press Gazette report, the three largest titles in the country—the *Wall Street Journal*, the *New York Times* and *USA Today*—lost a combined total circulation of more than a half-million between Q1 2020 and Q1 2021.

USA Today fared worst of any paper in the top 25. That Gannett property saw a year-over-year daily print circulation decline of 62 percent, accounting for an average weekday circulation loss of about 303,000 papers.

The *Wall Street Journal*, which now boasts the largest daily print circulation in the U.S., lost 21 percent of its circulation since 2020's first quarter (about 208,000 papers). The *New York Times*, which has seen marked success focusing on digital subscriptions in recent years, saw its print circulation decline by 12 percent, or by about 48,000 papers.

## OHIO'S GREENE CO. SEEKS ECODEV PARTNER

Ohio's Greene County is looking for an economic development partner to help it rebound from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Bordering Dayton and home (with neighboring Montgomery County) of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Greene County has 170K people.

They are 86 percent White, seven percent Black, three percent Hispanic and three percent Asian-American. Median household income is \$68K.

The Department of Development wants a partner to help create a coherent strategy informed by the lessons learned from the pandemic.

It seeks to grow a resilient economy in which businesses, workers and schools are fully engaged and well-coordinated.

Proposals are due Sept. 12. They go to: Jeff Gord; Economic Development Coordinator; Green County Department of Development; 61 Greene Street; Xenia, Ohio 45385

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



## **BINGHAMTON U MAKING DIVERSITY PUSH**

Binghamton University is seeking a marketing partner to develop a high-impact, high-visibility campaign to promote its goal of creating a diverse and inclusive community where everyone can experience a sense of belonging.

According to BU's RFP, significant anecdotal evidence suggests that it has "lost the possibility to recruit diverse faculty due to the perceived lack of cultural diversity in our surroundings." That is due to faculty interviewees "not spending time in the community during their visits" and "an unawareness of BU's diversity and inclusivity efforts."



BU's communications partner will create a series of videos based on the "Work, Live and Thrive: A Tour of the Binghamton University Experience" theme to demonstrate how the school is committed to supporting the success of employees through research and professional development.

The work will feature faculty sharing stories about what attracted and kept them in Binghamton with a link to online position announcements. It also will show how the on- and off-campus community offers a quality of life that resonates with employees and their families.

Deadline to respond is Sept. 10.

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

## **LIBYA POLITICO HIRES BGR**

A Libyan politician who has a good shot at becoming the battered country's first elected president has hired BGR Group to a \$50K a month contract to build support in the US for the Dec. 24 general election.



**Fathi Bashagha**

Fathi Bashagha, Libya's former interior minister who survived an assassination attempt in Tripoli, gave BGR a six-month contract that went into effect Aug. 20.

The BGR team is led by Maya Seiden (former aide to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton), who is supported by Lester Munson (principal in the international and trade practice) and Jeff Birnbaum (president of the PR group).

Libya, which holds Africa's largest reserves of oil, has been torn by civil war since the 2011 ouster of Muammar Gaddafi.

Al-Jazeera reported Sept. 1 that the election may be postponed unless Libya's parliament crafts a new election law.

## **NORTH SIXTH SCORES STAKE IN SOCCER TEAM**

North Sixth Group, which includes [N6A](#) as well as marketing and content house Studios, has acquired an ownership interest in Italian professional football club Ascoli Calcio 1898 FC in partnership with Massimo Pulcinelli and Bricofier S.p.A., a retailer in the home goods and DIY sector in Italy. North Sixth Group will control international market operations and will share governance and decision-making rights with Pulcinelli in coordination with the club's board of directors.

"We have many exciting plans as our vision to bring Ascoli to Serie A continues in the years ahead, including the opening of fan clubs, youth academies and other important investments," said Pulcinelli.

## **MEDIA TRUST FALLS AMONG CONSERVATIVES**

Americans identifying as Republican exhibit a marked lack of trust in national news organizations, and one that has been virtually cut in half in the last five years, according to [a recent analysis by the Pew Research Center](#).

Pew's analysis, which is part of the nonpartisan think tank's ongoing investigation into the state of news and journalism in the digital age, discovered a gap in trust of national news organizations that's widening among partisan lines.

Overall, nearly six-in-ten Americans (58 percent) claim to have at least some trust in the information they receive from national news organizations. According to Pew, this is the smallest share since 2016 and accounts for a seven-point drop from the 65 percent reported in late 2019.

However, it appears that much of this loss in trust is being driven by sharp trust declines among Republicans. While nearly eight-in-ten Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents (78 percent) claim they have "a lot" or "some" trust in the information they get from national news organizations, only 35 percent of Republicans said the same.

According to Pew, this 43 percentage-point partisan gap is the largest reported at any time that this question has been asked since 2016, and grows even wider—to 53 points—when contrasted between liberal Democrats (83 percent) and conservative Republicans (30 percent).

The Pew analysis also found that the number of Republicans who trust national news organizations is shrinking: The 35 percent of Republicans who said they currently have at least some trust in the national news is half of the 70 percent who said they trusted the media five years ago. As recently as late 2019, that trust was gauged at 49 percent. Democrats have remained consistent in their trust in the media for the past five years, ranging between 78 percent and 86 percent.

Only 12 percent of Americans said they have "a lot" of trust in information from national news organizations.

Pew's analysis was based on a survey of more than 10,600 U.S. adults drawn from the Center's American Trends Panel, a nationally representative list of randomly selected respondents. Surveys were conducted between June 14 and June 27.

## **MARATHON STRATEGIES BOOSTS EGYPT**

Marathon Strategies has been providing media support for Egypt's Washington embassy.

The New York firm, which has close ties to the Democratic party, operated as a subcontractor to lobbying firm Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, which represents Egypt's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

BHFS hauled in \$400K from Egypt during the six-month period ended Feb. 28.

Marathon, which did not have a formal agreement, pitched op-eds to CNN, *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, Bloomberg, *The Atlantic*, Fox News, CBS and the *Guardian* on behalf of the Egyptians.

Egyptian president Abdel Fatah al-Sissi has faced criticism for his harsh crackdown on dissidents.

Phil Singer, Marathon founder/managing director, and VP Joshua Rosen worked the Egyptian business.

Singer used to handle press for now-Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and played roles in the presidential campaigns of John Kerry/Hillary Clinton and gubernatorial races of Andrew Cuomo.



## **FTI HIRES GOLDMAN'S CHINA SPOKESPERSON**

FTI Consulting strategic communications unit has recruited Goldman Sachs China spokesperson Angela Yu as managing director in its Beijing office.



**Angela Yu**

The 15-year Goldman veteran handled corporate communications strategy for the investment banker and has broad experience in branding, media relations, special events and crisis management.

Prior to Goldman, Yu established Citigate Dewe Rogerson's offices in Beijing and Shanghai and did a seven-year stint at Morgan Stanley.

FTI also has hired Renfeng Zhao, who exited Brunswick Group after a two-year stint, for the Beijing office.

Zhao spent more than a decade at both corporate communications/IR firm Kreab Worldwide (managing partner) and *China Daily* (reporter/editor).

## **OGILVY KEEPS ASML IN THE CHIPS**

Ogilvy Government Relations is handling the US unit of Dutch semiconductor company ASML Holding NV as it deals with the impact of the global shortage of chips due to increased COVID-19 pandemic-triggered demand.



ASML's photolithography systems are used in leading-edge semiconductor manufacturing.

The company, which has had a Silicon Valley presence for more than 20 years, opened a new campus on Aug. 20 that will boost its headcount there by 20 percent in 2022.

Ogilvy will help ASML in areas such as the CHIPS Act, which will pump money into the domestic semiconductor sector, and the US Innovation and Competition Act, designed to counter China's economic and political influence.

The WPP unit has an eight-person team representing ASML. That includes Dean Aguillen, ex-aide to Nancy Pelosi; Karissa Willhite, deputy CoS for Jersey Senator Robert Menendez; Moses Mercado, deputy CoS to ex-Democratic leader Dick Gephardt; and Chris Giblin, CoS to Texas Congressman John Carter.

## **WASAGA BEACH SEEKS BRAND MAKEOVER**

The Town of Wasaga Beach is seeking a firm to develop a new brand that distinguishes it from other Ontario vacation spots on Lake Huron's Georgian Bay.



Wasaga Beach is home to the world's largest freshwater beach, which boasts a panoramic view of the Niagara Escarpment, a 1,000-mile-long-cliff that is a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve.

Wasaga Beach, which currently uses a "Sparkle" tourism brand, wants a new identity that will build economic sustainability through "community

unity, citizen pride and increased potential to attract residents, visitors, businesses and investment," according to the RFP.

Proposals are due Sept. 13.

Interested firms must register at the Town's electronic bidding portal at <https://wasagabeach.bidsandtenders.ca>.

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

## **MEDIA MANEUVERS**

The **Associated Press** names Julie Pace to lead its worldwide news operation as executive editor and senior VP. Pace succeeds Sally Buzbee, who joined the *Washington Post* as executive editor in June, and is the third consecutive woman to hold the AP's top editorial spot. She has been with the organization since 2007, most recently serving as Washington bureau chief. In that position, Pace has worked to expand the AP's fact-checking operation. AP president Gary Pruitt said that Pace "has a vision for AP's future that is in line with our long-standing values but also forward-thinking."



**Julie Pace**

**Twitter** introduces Super Follows, which the company calls "a new way for people to earn monthly revenue by sharing subscriber-only content with their followers." It has also recently introduced Tip Jar, which allows Twitter users to send and receive tips, and Ticketed Spaces, in which hosts can charge users to join a live space. Super Follows lets creators set a monthly subscription fee of \$2.99, \$4.99 or \$9.99 a month, giving their Super Followers access to content not available on the creator's public feed.

The **National Press Club** will commemorate the recent donation of items from Edward R. Murrow's personal archive at a [Sept. 14 event](#). The event will also celebrate the loan to the NPC of the historic microphone used by Murrow for his World War II CBS Radio Network broadcasts from London. It will include comments from Murrow's son, Casey Murrow, as well as from journalist Marvin Kalb, the last correspondent personally hired by Edward R. Murrow at CBS News. Donated items that will be on display include historic photographs, Murrow's briefcase and his poker chips.

## **ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT**

**Red Lorry Yellow Lorry** hauls in **Imprivata**, which provides digital identity solutions for the healthcare industry. The lorries will implement a media relations campaign to raise brand awareness and extend Imprivata's audience reach via social media. The PR program, run out of the RLYL's Boston office, will highlight Imprivata's leadership in the healthcare space with first-to-market solutions for hospitals, patients and providers. The agency will also work on thought leadership campaigns.



**5W Public Relations** lands **Kasasa**, a financial technology and marketing services company that offers services including reward checking accounts and ongoing expert consulting services to community financial institutions. 5W will lead Kasasa's media relations strategy, focusing on both B2B and B2C communications to increase brand awareness. The agency will position Kasasa as a leader in the fintech industry and a champion for community banks and credit unions.

**Hunt Marketing**, based in Oxford, Mississippi, has been named by **Ole Miss Athletics** as the brand's agency of record for traditional media. The agency will assist Ole Miss Athletics in planning and placing their traditional media elements, such as television, outdoor, print and radio advertising, as well as helping conceptualize and execute community engagement efforts.

## COMMENTARY



**Dan Darling**

“What Would Jesus Do” was a popular slogan used by evangelical Christians during the 1990s to remind them to live their lives in a fashion that demonstrated their faith in the Savior.

What would Jesus do in today’s troubled COVID-19 times?

The Good Shepherd would encourage His flock to get the COVID-19 vaccine so they can remain strong to serve Him and spread His message of

salvation of the Gospel through their words and deeds.

What wouldn’t Jesus do? He would not muster His Almighty wrath and smite one of His faithful followers who endorsed the COVID-19 shot for its life-saving capabilities.

But that is what His so-called media messenger did.

The National Religious Broadcasters, an association of more than 1,100 members that claims a monthly audience of 141M people, fired Dan Darling, senior VP of communications, for spreading the Good Word about the COVID-19 shot.

Darling, a Nashville-based evangelical pastor, said on MSNBC’s “Morning Joe” on Aug. 2:

“I believe in this vaccine because I don’t want to see anyone else die of COVID. Our family has lost too many close friends and relatives to COVID, including an uncle, a beloved church member and our piano teacher.”

That inconvenient truth set Darling free of his NRB job.

Apparently, NRB has an official policy of neutrality on the COVID-19 vaccine, a position that is inexplicable.

When it comes to a decision about life and death, how can NRB cop out by rolling out a ridiculous neutrality stance?

NRB’s executive committee of the board issued a statement on Sept. 3 to say it has neither a policy nor official position on the vaccines.

*“The association has not weighed in on the question of the personal choices being made with respect to vaccines, because this is outside the scope of NRB’s public policy engagement,”* it said in the statement.

The executive committee unanimously adopted the following motion: “After review, The Executive Committee affirms in every particular the administrative actions taken by the CEO in the termination of [the dismissed employee].”

The committee then took a cheap shot at the media coverage of the Darling affair.

“The Committee considers the runaway media narrative that developed in the aftermath of the dismissal to have been inaccurate, incomplete, and almost incomprehensible given the objective facts of the situation.”

The NRB claims it exists “to represent the Christian broadcasters’ right to communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost and dying world.”

There would be less dying in the world if the NRB spread the word about the importance of getting the COVID-19 shot.

**If a pitcher strikes out 18 guys during a game**, announcers do not rush to interview the poor slob who earned a Golden Sombrero (four whiffs). They rush to talk to the pitcher.

Similarly, Congressman Ruben Gallego (D-AR), a former Marine who served in Iraq, wants to know why cable TV gives high-profile platforms to former generals who were responsible for waging America’s forever war in Afghanistan.

They are wearers of the Golden Sombrero for their puffing up non-existent US progress in Afghanistan.

“We heard time and again from these Generals that Afghanistan was turning the corner. Same generals are out there claiming the outcome could have been different. Please stop listening to Petraeus and McMaster to start,” Gallego tweeted.

The Phoenix Democrat told Politico:

“The biggest frustration is the fact that the D.C. media elites don’t see what we see. They see these guys as heroes and as these all-knowing geniuses when we know better.”

Gallego also took aim at think tanks, who distorted our nation-building boondoggle.

“Combat ops only ended because the Taliban had agreed to stop attacking us because we agreed to pull out. This is the problem with think tankers, they forget that the enemy has a vote when it comes to warfare.” he tweeted.

Guys like Gallego deserve more cable TV facetime than the blowhard generals and think-tankers.

**Mike Richards, executive producer of Jeopardy**, whom Sony Pictures Entertainment anointed as the weeknight replacement for the dearly departed Alex Trebek, a move that triggered outrage among diehard fans, is canned.

Richards basked in the glory of his new gig for a nano-second until a cascade of past discrimination lawsuits and offensive jokes entangled him.

Deciding to quit while he was ahead, Richards gave up the Jeopardy host opportunity.

Mike’s decision to give up his dream job was not enough for his boss, Suzanne Prete, executive VP, business strategy at Wheel of Fortune and Jeopardy.

She sent a note to staffers saying that Richards is no longer executive VP of the Wheel and Jeopardy.

“We had hoped that when Mike stepped down from the host position at Jeopardy, it would have minimized the disruption and internal difficulties we all have experienced these last few weeks,” she wrote. “That clearly has not happened.”

Note to Prete: if Jeopardy had selected Mayim Bialik or LaVar Burton, both of whom did well in their tryouts, the “disruption and internal difficulties” wouldn’t have happened.

**Ireland’s New York consulate is aware** of Quinnipiac University’s boneheaded decision not to reopen its “Great Hunger Museum” and wants to help find a new home for the collection. It sent the following message to O’Dwyer’s:

“We believe it is important that a new home be found for this important collection in the months ahead.

“The aim should be to re-house the collection so that the works it contains remain accessible to the public and researchers alike.

“The Consulate is willing to work with the University to try to find a home for the collection in the months ahead.”

The ball is in your court, Quinnipiac. —Kevin McCauley