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# O'Dwyer's Newsletter

The Inside News of  
PR and Marketing  
Communications

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## HHS PACT DRAWS FIRE

A \$17.6M assignment handed to Porter Novelli in late April by the Dept. of Health and Human Services to promote the benefits available to Americans under the Affordable Care Act is the latest in a long line of political PR footballs in recent years.

PN, which has promoted aspects of the law for the HHS since its passage in 2010, was one of five firms – and one of four incumbents – selected by the HHS' Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services in September to handle communications assignments.



CMS, as the Medicare agency is known, issued a task order to PN on April 30 for the maligned assignment, which the federal agency describes as “promoting the overall awareness of preventative benefits” with a goal to “target specific segments of the population to educate and raise awareness of benefits that can improve their health.”

Press reports last week lauding a \$20M PR campaign to defend “Obamacare” molded the advertising-heavy initiative into a political football.

Sen. Rob Portman (R-Ohio) was among other members of Congress to criticize the PR pact. “There is no justification for wasting \$20 million in taxpayer dollars on an advertising blitz for the President’s health care spending law,” Portman said in a letter to HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius.

Portman and Sen. Claire McCaskill (D-Mo.) in February asked 11 federal agencies to look at PR contracts to find out “how much money the administration is spending to promote its own policies.”

CMS in early March put out the campaign for bids among its five pre-qualified agencies. Within the expansive Affordable Care Act are provisions to educate the public about changes and expanded benefits.

Another HHS RFP, for the ongoing promotion of electronic health records, was released earlier this month. Ketchum, which has a handful of contracts with HHS and like PN is owned by Omnicom, has worked the e-health record PR beat for the past few years.

Government PR contracts have been a popular target of Congressmen and White House critics over the past decade. Ketchum was dragged through the Armstrong Williams controversy over a PR pact with the Dept. of Education in 2004 and a Pentagon program to dispatch retired military officials for media appearances to promote Bush administration policies was the subject of a General Accountability Office probe.

## GRAYLING TEES UP RYDER CUP

Grayling notched the job to promote the 2014 Ryder Cup, golf classic, which is slated for the Gleneagles Hotel in Perthshire, Scotland.

The Huntsworth unit will develop a program focused on Scotland, the rest of the U.K. and the Continent. It will team with golf PR boutique Landmark Media International to publicize the event scheduled for Sept. 26-28, 2014.

Under the contract with Ryder Cup Europe, Grayling also will set the stage for the 2018 tournament that is slated for Le Golf National in Paris. The Ryder Cup alternates between Europe and the U.S. every two years.

Michael Murphy, CEO of Grayling, believes the win is a testament to the strength of Grayling's network and range of capabilities across Europe.

"As one of the world's premier sporting events we believe that the Ryder Cup's reputation and appeal can be further developed in many ways, leaving a lasting legacy for Scotland and building momentum towards France in 2018," said Murphy in a statement.

The Ryder Cup event has a TV reach of nearly 650M homes.

## BEST BUY HIRES FURMAN

Matthew Furman, VP of corporate affairs for Mars Chocolate and former head of corporate communications for Google, will join slumping electronics retailer Best Buy Co. next month to lead communications.

The Minneapolis-based company said Furman is set to join June 22 as senior VP, communications and public affairs under interim CEO Mike Mikan. Mikan took the reins in April after the surprise resignation of Brian Dunn amid a probe into his personal conduct and slumping revenues.



Furman

Furman takes over for Paula Prah, who left Best Buy in December for the senior VP, strategy and marketing, slot at Data Recognition Corp.

The 41-year-old Furman, a lawyer, led corporate communications for Google from 2007-10 after top roles at CNN and ChoicePoint. Earlier, he worked political PR as a press secretary for FEMA and New York City's emergency management agency in the late 1990s.

Best Buy employs 167K worldwide. It earned \$158M on \$11.6B in revenue during the first quarter, ahead of estimates.

## **LINKEDIN HIRES MONUMENT POLICY GROUP**

LinkedIn Corp. has hired Monument Policy Group as its first lobbyist on Capitol Hill. The Mountain View, Calif.-based social networker is using MPG for general issues regarding the Internet and technology companies.

Stewart Verdery, founder and partner of MPG, spearheads the LinkedIn work. He served as a top aide for former Oklahoma Republican Senator now lobbyist Don Nickles. Verdery, who established the Senate Republican High Tech Task Force, also worked for influential Republican lawmakers Orrin Hatch (Utah) and the retired John Warner (Virginia).

He's joined by Tim Punge, a veteran of the Clinton White House and trade counsel to Senate Finance Committee chairman Max Baucus (D-MT); Jessica Herrera-Flanagan, ex-staff director for the House Committee on Homeland Security; Jane Alonso, legislative director for Sen. Sue Collins (R-ME); Rich Thomas, legislative director for Rep. Bill Pascrell (D-NJ); Ryan Spangler, scheduler for ex-Senator Joe Biden (D-DE), and Andrew Howell, former VP-homeland security policy at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

## **KEKST HANDLES HMH REORG**

Kekst and Co. is handling the "pre-packaged" bankruptcy filing of venerable publisher Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, which aims to slash \$3.1B debt from its balance sheet.

Founded in 1832, HMH blames the global financial crisis combined with declines in state and local spending for school books as the reason for the financial restructuring.

The reorganization will reduce HMH's annual interest costs by about \$250M. It has linked up a \$500 financing commitment from Citibank.

Linda Zecher, CEO of HMH, said a "more appropriately sized capital structure" will better position the company to exploit its "world-class brand and innovative digital education solutions" for a period of accelerated growth.

HMH books and education services are used by 57M students in the U.S. and 120 other countries. It was publisher of Ralph Waldo Emerson and J.R.R. Tolkien.

Kekst's Kimberly Kriger handles the HMH reorganization. France's Publicis Groupe owns Kekst.

## **NELSON JOINS F-H**

Chris Nelson has joined Fleishman-Hillard as senior VP in its New York corporate and PA group.

The independent PR counselor for the past two years had headed Ketchum's issues management/litigation PR practice and was a crisis staffer at Burson-Marsteller.

Earlier, Nelson worked in the communications and PA shop of Ohio State University and in the PR unit of Ashland Chemical. He reports to Christopher Tennyson, who recently assumed the helm of the New York corporate group.

Robert Dowling, who headed Weber Shandwick's New York office, is chief of F-H/New York and eastern regional president of the Omnicom property.



**Nelson**

## **TAIWAN TAPS HEATHER PODESTA + PARTNERS**

The Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office, which represents Taiwan's political interests in the U.S., signed the well-connected Democratic firm Heather Podesta + Partners to a one-year contract worth \$300K.

The contract calls for HP+P to tap its "high-level relationships" to assist TECRO's goal of strengthening ties to the U.S. government. Work began May 1.

Heather Podesta is the wife of super-lobbyist Tony Podesta. His Podesta Group in April inked a \$300K contract with the Hong Kong Trade Development Council. Hong Kong is part of China, which views Taiwan as a renegade province.

Taiwan has strong Republican representation. TECRO uses Park Strategies, the firm of former New York Senator Al D'Amato. It has a \$240K one-year pact.

In January, the Taiwanese inked Western Hemisphere Strategies to a \$15K monthly pact to keep tabs on "developments in the U.S. Congress and political scenes." That's the firm of former Florida Congressman Lincoln Diaz-Balart. His brother, Mario, took over his seat in the last election.

## **MSL'S RAJ MOVES TO B-M**

Veena Raj, who was VP-media relations at MSLGroup, has joined Burson-Marsteller as director and media strategist in its global consumer and brand marketing practice.

At the Publicis Groupe unit, Raj handled media for Procter & Gamble's tie with gold medalist Shawn Johnson for the upcoming London Olympics and Tiffany's 175th anniversary. She also pitched on behalf of Walt Disney Co., Home Depot and Amstel Light.

Earlier, she worked at DKC Communications on business from Ronald McDonald House, Rums of Puerto Rico, Nespresso and St. Vincent's Hospital Manhattan.

Creative director Lisa Travatello chairs B-M's consumer practice.

## **CO PLANTS SEEDS TO RESTORE CANTALOUPE**

Colorado has tapped a Golden-based agency for a six-figure pact aimed to restore confidence in the Rocky Ford cantaloupe, the popular variety of the fruit which took an image hit last fall after a deadly listeria outbreak.

BrandWerks Group, which specializes in marketing communications and branding for the food sector, emerged last week from an RFP process that drew 13 responses for a year-long contract worth \$100K. The firm was hired earlier this year to conduct research on the outbreak's impact.

The outbreak, which killed more than 30 people, caught the relatively small \$9M-a-year Rocky Ford cantaloupe sector off guard, but has sparked a series of reforms toward food safety, marketing and PR among growers in the newly formed Rocky Ford Growers Association and the state.

The crisis was traced to Jensen Farms, a Granada, Colo., grower which is actually 90 miles east of Rocky Ford.

"We all took a blow, and we're all standing together," state Agriculture Commissioner John Salazar told the *Denver Post* in late April.

**BUFFETT WANTS MORE NEWSPAPERS**

Berkshire Hathaway CEO Warren Buffett expects to buy more newspapers following this month's deal to acquire 63 daily and weekly papers from Media General.



Buffett

The company will focus on newspapers in cities with a strong sense of community, he wrote in a letter to the BH editors and publishers that was posted on the site of the company's *Omaha World-Herald*.

"If a citizenry cares little about its community, it will eventually care little about its newspaper. In a very general way, strong interest in com-

munity affairs varies inversely with population size and directly with the number of years a community's population has been in residence.

"Therefore, we will focus on small and mid-sized papers in long-established communities," explained Buffett.

Newspapers that intensively cover their communities have a good future, according to Buffett. "No one has ever stopped reading when half-way through a story that was about them or their neighbors."

The business must charge for its content on the web. "We must rethink the industry's initial response to the Internet. The original instinct of newspapers then was to offer free in digital form what they were charging for in print.

"This is an unsustainable model and certain of our papers are already making progress in moving to something that makes more sense. We want your best thinking as we work out the blend of digital and print that will attract both the audience and the revenue we need," wrote Buffett.

**TIMES-PICAYUNE SCALES BACK**

The *Times-Picayune* is moving to a three days a week publishing schedule in the fall, making New Orleans the largest American city without a daily newspaper.

Publisher Ashton Phelps put a positive spin on the cut-back, saying the Advance Publications unit will now contain richer and deeper coverage of events than what the daily currently offers.

The paper will come out Wednesday, Friday and Sunday.

The T-P has a Sunday circulation of 155K and weekday readership of 134K.

In conjunction with the reduced printing schedule, Advance is setting up NOLA Media Group, a digitally focused operation to deliver news online and mobile readers.

The T-P revamp will result in job cuts.



**Times-Picayune's Aug. 30, 2005 front page after Hurricane Katrina.**

**PINTEREST TAPS FACEBOOK, GOOGLE PR HAND**

Pinterest, the growing, female-dominated social network, has hired Facebook PR hand Barry Schnitt to head communications and public policy.

Schnitt is slated to start next month. He joined Facebook in 2008 as director of corporate comms. and public policy after eight years in comms. at Google. He did a year on the agency side at FitzGerald Communications before its acquisition by Omnicom.



Schnitt

Pinterest, which counts more than 11.7M monthly active users, acts as a de facto online scrapbook, allowing users to pull images and content from around the web to place on their "boards." Pinterest content often includes products and its users tend to purchase more online than via other social networks, according to some estimates, drawing interest from marketers.

Last week, the company said it raised \$100M in a venture financing round, leading to a \$1.5B valuation, up from \$200M last year. One notable speed bump for Pinterest has been copyright concerns, but the company has moved in recent months to strengthen its rules and shift liability toward its users.

The OutCast Agency, which has strong ties with early Pinterest investor Andreessen Horowitz, works PR for the Palo Alto-based company.

**OPRAH JOINS ARIANNA**

Oprah Winfrey will have a special section on the Huffingtonpost.com site beginning Aug. 22, according to an announcement from Arianna Huffington.

The site will carry content from writers and producers from OWN: Oprah Winfrey Network specifically for the site.



The material will provide information about living life to the fullest. It will cover personal growth, spirituality and pieces about physical and mental health. Huffington Post bloggers will supply comment.

Arianna Huffington said: "Oprah was about engagement and authenticity long before engagement and authenticity ruled the web." She is "delighted that we'll be working together to enlarge the conversation on living our best lives, as Oprah puts it, just as we launch our GPS for the Soul app."

The HuffingtonPost had 36.9M unique visitors in April.

**Balis Named HuffPo Media Publisher**

Janet Balis, former senior VP and head of sales strategy, marketing and partnerships at AOL, has been named publisher of the Huffington Post Media Group.

Prior to AOL, Balis worked for Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia as executive VP- media sales & marketing responsible for its magazines, TV shows, and digital media. She joined MSLO from Digital Media Strategies, a company she founded to counsel entertainment and media companies (New York Times Co., Discovery Communications, Turner Broadcasting and Warner Bros. TV) on their digital strategies.

**MEDIA NEWS continued****THE ECONOMIST COMES AROUND ON CSR**

The Economist's May 19 Schumpeter column notes that corporate social responsibility programs are evolving from empty phrases and becoming a little less flaky.

"Gone are the days when it was mainly about managing corporate reputations or "greenwashing," to its critics. It is now more about business fundamentals, such as how products are designed and how supply chains are managed," according to the piece.

The magazine credits the push for "sustainability" for making CSR more attractive to business.

Sustainability "fits nicely with lean production and tight supply-chain management" and "provides new ideas for reducing costs."

Schumpeter cites Unilever as an example of a company that extended the notion of 'lean' from the factory to the home, by producing detergents that use less water when you rinse your laundry."



Sustainability can also be measured. UPS, for instance, has a carbon calculator to track the carbon footprint of individual packages. That "allows green consumers to buy carbon offsets that will compensate for the pollution caused by having

parcels trucked to their door."

The Economist said CSR was bad for the reputation of business when it was just considered a PR move.

Companies "seemed to concede that profit making was a bad thing. They bowed to anti-business activists and made amends through good deeds.

"Today's iteration of CSR is less self-abasing and more constructive. It is encouraging businesses to become more frugal in their use of resources and more imaginative in the way they think about competitive advantage."

**Took Swipe at Rep Management Biz**

Schumpeter, last month, rapped the reputation management industry for the naïve view that a company with a good image will find it easier to attract customers and survive crises.

The column noted that companies with "awful reputations" like tobacco sellers and discount airline Ryanair are highly successful operations.

The biggest problem is the "central conceit: that the way to deal with potential threats to your reputation is to work harder at managing your reputation.

"The opposite is more likely: the best strategy may be to think less about managing your reputation and concentrate more on producing the best products and services you can," said the piece.

Schumpeter wrote that BP's "beyond petroleum" branding campaign "did nothing to deflect the jeers after the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico," while successful companies like Southwest Air and Costco "are noted for their intense focus on their core businesses, not for their fancy marketing."

The column concludes: "If you do your job well, customers will say nice things about you and your products."

**FOER RETURNS TO TNR**

Franklin Foer, who exited the editor post at *The New Republic* in 2010, has returned to the magazine that is now owned by Facebook co-founder Chris Hughes.

He replaces Richard Just at the high-brow magazine that has a circulation of nearly 30,000.

Foer first joined TNR in 2000, and edited the magazine for five years. He has been working on book projects, such as "Jewish Jocks," which is slated for publication in the fall.

Hughes, who is worth about \$700M, has doubled TNR staff to 30 people since he bought the magazine earlier this year.

He considers TNR a long-term investment.

**ROMER MOVES TO THE ATLANTIC**

Hayley Romer, executive director of corporate sales at Conde Nast Media Group, takes the associate publisher post at *The Atlantic* on May 30.

She will work with publisher Jay Lauf to lead sales across the Atlantic platforms.

Lauf said Romer "has a stellar reputation from all corners of the publishing landscape—from our peers, clients, and partners on the agency side."

At Conde Nast, she handled magazines such as *Vanity Fair*, *New Yorker* and *Wired*. Earlier, Romer was handled luxury accounts at Forbes Media.

**DOW JONES UPS LATOUR**

Almar Latour, editor-in-chief of the *Wall Street Journal's* Asia edition has been given expanded duties as e-i-c of Dow Jones Newswires in that region. The move comes with the combination of the editorial operation of those entities.

Robert Thomson, e-i-c of Dow Jones and managing editor of the WSJ, credits Latour for growing WSJA into a media powerhouse that reaches more than 10M readers across various platforms and languages including Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Hindi.

Latour reports to Thomson for overall strategy, new initiatives and the WSJ, and to Neil Lipschutz, managing director of DJN.

**NPR HAS MOST INFORMED AUDIENCE**

Americans' media sources have a significant impact on their knowledge of current events, according to a study by Farleigh Dickinson University and PublicMind.

NPR educates its audience the most while more partisan outlets like Fox News and MSNBC have a negative impact on people's knowledge of current events, the study found.

"The most popular of the national media sources – Fox, CNN, MSNBC – seem to be the least informative," said poll analyst Dan Cassino.

Full report (PDF): <http://bit.ly/LBCgII>.

**NEWS OF PR FIRMS****SM ADDS SOCIAL MEDIA UNIT**

Sharon Merrill, the Boston-based financial communications firm, is offering a consulting service designed for public companies that incorporates social media into shareholder engagement programs.

Dennis Walsh, senior consultant and director of social media, heads the practice, dubbed Socialize IR.

SM president and partner Maureen Wolff said social media, when used "properly," can be a valuable extension of IR efforts. She said the new practice is aimed to help IR teams who want to implement social media into their plans, but need expert counsel as well as the capacity to manage the extra responsibility that comes with engaging online.

Wolff said that adding SM tools like Twitter, StockTwits, Facebook, YouTube, SlideShare and smart phone applications into IR programs can provide benefits like increasing company/brand awareness, driving traffic to a corporate and IR website or generating media coverage.

**METZGER: MEDIA RELS. STARTS ONLINE**

John Metzger, CEO of Boulder, Colo.-based Metzger Associates, said media relations often starts with a clients' own website, noting his firm is using its decades of "wordsmithing" and media experience to build search-engine optimized websites.

"Today, the most important media outreach for any company starts with its own website," he said. "Public relations professionals, especially those with technology and business-to-business backgrounds, were the marketing industry's original 'wordsmiths' who pitched our clients' complex stories to traditional media. Now we're aligning our understanding of journalism, social media and keyword analysis with writing skills, design and online community management, and baking those ingredients into our clients' sites."

Metzger said his firm has handled website and SEO campaigns for clients like RE/MAX's Above Magazine, FastMax Alternators, A Keepsake Company, Creative Brain, and the Motomathon Association, as well as a booking site for former Las Vegas mayor and public speaker Oscar Goodman.

**SCHEIBEL HALASKA REBRANDS**

Milwaukee-based Scheibel Halaska has changed its name to Trefoil Group, a nod to the trefoil knot in mathematics.

Founder Mary Scheibel praised the trefoil's "strength and simplicity," adding that she believes her firm's strength comes from its ability to "get to the heart of our clients' issues and execute the compelling strategies and communications they need to succeed."

The firm, a member of the IPREX network of firms, counts Milacron, DME Company, Park Bank, Dickten Masch Plastics and Dedicated Computing among its clients.

**BRIEF:** Boston-based **Regan Communications Group** is marking five years of growth in its New York office, its second largest outpost. The firm produced a spoof on NBC's "30 Rock" to mark its relocation to a larger space this year. Video: <http://bit.ly/JrZzDN>.

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

**Trylon SMR**, New York/The Motion Picture Licensing Corp., 25-year-old copyright compliance organization, as AOR for media relations. MPLC provides licenses to more than 250,000 facilities in the U.S. and 450K globally.

**The Pollack PR Marketing Group**, New York/Stiles Associates, retained search firm specializing in Lean and Six Sigma executive talent, for PR.

**G.S. Schwartz & Co.**, New York/McGraw-Hill Federal Credit Union, 75-year-old institution serving 120 businesses and member groups, for PR. Rachel Honig, COO of the firm, noted the financial crisis of the last few years has increased the need for consumer financial education and wellness.

**Child's Play Communications**, New York/Produce for Kids, consortium of fruit and vegetable growers, for traditional media and blogger outreach for its 10th anniversary fundraising campaign, "Get Healthy, Give Hope."

**5W PR**, New York/Promises Treatment Center, California addiction treatment centers, for PR.

**East**

**Kemp Goldberg Partners**, Portland, Me./Yale Cordage, custom and specialty rope manufacturer, for marketing and PR aimed to increase the market share and visibility.

**Enviroics Communications**, Washington, D.C./The Epilepsy Foundation, national voluntary organization with more than 50 affiliates, for PR following a competitive review.

**Midwest**

**Elasticity**, St. Louis/SunEdison, solar energy services provider and subsidiary of MEMC Electronic Materials, to manage communications for its "Eradication of Darkness" program, which brings solar power to rural villages in third-world countries; Appistry, as AOR for PR for the developer of "big data" cloud-based technology, and Hair Salon For Men, as AOR for marketing comms. for the national chain of men's grooming shops.

**Southwest**

**Hill+Knowlton Strategies**, Dallas/The Harold Hamm Diabetes Center at The University of Oklahoma, as AOR. H+K offices in Austin, New York, Tampa Bay and Washington, D.C., support the work for the four-year-old institution. H+K/Tampa has also picked up Front Row Tampa Bay, a four-day live Web TV broadcast that will highlight economic opportunities across the area during the Republican National Convention in late August.

**West**

**Nadel Phelan**, Scotts Valley, Calif./SOTI Inc., solutions for managing, securing, supporting and tracking remote, mobile and desktop computing devices, as AOR for PR.

**Christie Communications**, Santa Barbara, Calif./Mr. Pink Collections, beverage marketer, for PR supporting a new ginseng drink as well as future launches.

**DIALOGO**, San Diego/Warner Music Latina, Banamex USA and Atel USA, for PR.

— Greg Hazley

## NEWS OF SERVICES

### RESEARCH TRACES YAHOO! COVERAGE

Ousted Yahoo! CEO Scott Thompson improved the media's favorable reporting about the company by 15 percent from January to April, according to PRIME Research, New York.

The uptick came despite news of 2,000 job cuts but was almost immediately reversed by the messy exit of Thompson, who listed a degree on a résumé that he did not earn.

PRIME CEO Mark Weiner said media savvy among top CEOs is a major factor affecting the strength or weakness of a company's reputation today. "The CEO who understands the dynamics of news, acts responsibly, communicates credibly, and builds confidence through transparency is an essential asset," he said. "Those CEOs who are capable, trained and poised when in the media spotlight ensure the best possible result for themselves, their companies and the shareholders they serve."

PRIME found that pre-Thompson Yahoo's media coverage across 43 key print, broadcast and digital sources skewed negatively with 40 percent of all news critical of the company. At that time, former CEO Carol Bartz, who was fired in September after two rocky years, accounted for 17 percent of the company's coverage.

Thompson quickly guided Yahoo's image to a much more favorable view with 34 percent of all coverage positive and only 14 percent negative, PRIME found. Since this month's disclosure of Thompson's "resume padding" and exit, positive momentum reversed immediately, PRIME said, plummeting to 48 percent negative, with 57 percent of all Yahoo corporate coverage dominated by news of Thompson's error.

### FLORIDA WANTS TO RE-UP WITH VOCUS

The Florida Dept. of Health's office of communication said it will issue a sole-source contract without competition to Vocus for media research, press release and news monitoring services.

The contract is worth \$88,260.

Under state procurement rules, the state agency released a notice on May 21 to alert vendors that might be able to provide the same services. The Dept. of Health argues that the account does not need to be reviewed because Vocus' services are unique and proprietary. Other vendors have until May 31 to contest the award. Details: <http://bit.ly/KZTTWE>.

**BRIEFS:** CMI, an Atlanta-based marketing research company, has added **Bill Douglas** as an account manager and **Valerie Deaton** a qualitative manager. Douglas, president of Envision Research, is in CMI's consumer and shopper strategy unit. Deaton was previously VP of research for Zaicom Research Plus USA. ...**We are Social**, London, was named global AOR for social media for Jaguar, following a project for the carmaker. Clem Hancox, senior account director, said the firm is in the midst of developing a global social media strategy and will be working on campaigns to support brand activity and product launches. That includes the launch of the XF Sportbrake, which was first pictured outside the Jaguar factory emblazoned with the Twitter handle @sportbrake on its side.

## PEOPLE

### Joined

**Talley Summerlin**, director, EnviroMedia Social Marketing, Austin, to Emanate, New York, as a VP to oversee corporate reputation management for Philips and counsel and account management for the Legacy Asset Servicing division of Bank of America. He was previously VP at GCI Group handling Dell, Seventh Generation, and Whole Foods Market.

**Tatiana Deligiannakis**, comms. director, New York City Council Member Peter Vallone, to Widmeyer Communications, New York, as a senior associate in the firm's Pre-K-12 education unit. She is a former *New York Post* reporter.

**Alan Hicks**, creative director for design agency Signal, to Gibbs & Soell, New York, as creative director, a new position at the firm based in Raleigh, N.C.

**Ritchenya Dodd**, business development director for Princeton law firm Hill Wallack, to Infinite PR, New York, as a VP. She has a law degree and is a former reporter for the *National Law Journal* and Associated Press.

**Paula Butler**, senior director of global communications, Marriott International, returns to The Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corp., as VP of communications. She held the post from 1999-2006.

**Mike Little**, managing director, Laidlaw & Co., to Laser Energetics, Mercerville, N.J., as head of corporate comms. and IR.

**Faith Boone**, reporter for General Newspapers, to Stevens Strategic Communications, Westlake, Ohio, as an A/E and social media strategist.

**Christina Pantin**, veteran journalist most recently South Asia general manager for Thomson Reuters in Bangalore, to Brunswick Group, Hong Kong, as a director. Bangalore is one of TR's largest newsroom with more than 100 reporters.

**Jessica Presley**, external affairs specialist, Tennessee American Water Co., to Waterhouse PR, Chattanooga, Tenn., as an A/E. Taylor Hartley, comms. intern, Unum, joins as market research specialist.

**Melina Kennedy**, a lawyer and Indianapolis mayoral candidate last year, to Cummins Inc., Columbus, Ind., as director of executive comms. based at the engine manufacturer's Indianapolis office. Mel Raines, VP of operations for the 2012 Super Bowl Host Committee, joins as director of internal comms.

**Nicole Wesch**, who led overseas PR for Natixis Global Asset Management, to Newedge, London, as global head of media and public relations for the brokerage and clearing firm. She previously led the Asia-Pacific PR team at Dow Jones Indexes.

### Promoted

**David Fausel** to managing director, interactive design, Horn Group, New York.

**Brooke Worden** to senior VP, financial services practice, Weber Shandwick, Minneapolis. She joined in 2000.

**Jackie Heiss** to A/E, Marx Layne & Co., Farmington Hills, Mich.



Hicks



Boone

## **FITZGIBBON MEDIA TARGETS T-MOBILE**

FitzGibbon Media is repping the Communications Workers of America union, which is fighting T-Mobile's plan to close seven U.S. call centers and off-shore those jobs.

The CWA last week unveiled a video that parodies T-Mobile's ad campaign that features a perky young woman in a pink dress.

In CWA's version, the pink-dressed spokeswoman receives a "pink slip" from T-Mobile and is hopping mad over the plan to drop 3,300 Americans from the payroll. She changes into a black leather outfit, and hops on a motorcycle to protest T-Mobile's cutbacks.

The call centers slated to close are located in Allentown, PA; Fort Lauderdale, FL; Brownsville and Frisco, TX; Thornton, CO; Redmond, OR, and Lenexa, KS. CWA also is pushing for support of the U.S. Call Center Worker and Consumer Protection Act, which has 120 co-sponsors in the House. The bill bans companies that receive U.S. grants and tax breaks from shipping call centers overseas.

More than 500,000 U.S. call center jobs have gone off-shore during the past five years. Some of those centers benefited from funding from the U.S. Agency for International Development.

On April 26, USAID suspended a program to train Filipino workers for call center jobs and promised to review overseas English language training programs to gauge whether they contribute to job losses here.

## **U.K.'S CAMPBELL WORKS AGENCY PR**

Alastair Campbell, the high-profile U.K. pro who shaped the image of former Prime Minister Tony Blair, has landed at Portland, the London PR firm of former Blair aide Tim Allan.

The *Daily Mail* reported that Campbell is working two days a week advising clients on corporate communications and crisis management. The firm's roster includes Facebook, McDonald's and Virgin Media.

The firm's website lists him as a member of its advisory board who joined this month in a "senior part-time role."

"I have had plenty of offers since I left Downing Street to join PR consultancies or go in-house," he said in a blog post on the Portland website. "It was not something I ever thought, to be honest, that I would do. ... A great deal of nonsense is talked about spin. It is not just legitimate for businesses to consider strategic communications but essential. It can often be the difference between success and failure. It is also something where we have developed real expertise in this country."

Campbell, who resigned as Blair's communications director in late 2003 amid inquiries about the U.K.'s push for war with Iraq, was among 15 parties who settled hacking suits against News Corp. in February.

Campbell is a prolific blogger at [alastaircampbell.org](http://alastaircampbell.org) and his published diaries of his Blair years were best-sellers in the U.K.



**Campbell**

## **MN SEEKS ANTI-GAMBLING PR**

Minnesota is searching for an advertising or PR agency to develop a statewide campaign on "problem gambling" as the state pursues a plan to fund its share of a new billion-dollar NFL stadium with a large expansion of gambling.

State officials this month approved a plan for taxpayers to pay slightly more than half the cost of a new \$975M stadium for the Minnesota Vikings. The state's tab includes revenue projections from an expansion of so-called e-gambling to bars and restaurants, a move forecast to bring in an additional \$1.3B for the state.

Meanwhile, the Minnesota Dept. of Human Services on May 7 released an RFP for an agency to develop a statewide public education campaign to "increase awareness of problem gambling and the availability of treatment services," according to the document.

Tom Pritchard, president of the conservative Minnesota Family Council, blasted the state's plan to fund football with gambling revenues, arguing that video and electronic gambling is the most addictive form of wagering and prays on "problem gamblers."

"There are various ways for the state to pay for a new Vikings stadium," he wrote in an op-ed for Minnesota Public Radio online. "Turning more Minnesotans into problem gamblers shouldn't be one of them."

The RFP says that Minnesota implemented a compulsive gambling program in 1990 on the introduction of a state lottery, which funds a gambling help line and other programs.

The anticipated campaign utilizes social media, the NoJudgment.com website, workshops and a overall message delivered across various media.

Proposals are due June 8 for the gambling awareness campaign.

Under the gambling expansion plans, Minnesota will become the first state to widely offer electronic "pull-tabs" in bars and restaurants and the only state with electronic (multi-player) bingo, according to the Associated Press. The electronic gaming plans are aimed in part to draw in younger, tech-savvy players.

View the RFP: <http://bit.ly/JShH9q>.



## **PROVINCETOWN SEEKS TRAVEL PR**

Provincetown, Mass., the Cape Cod vacation community and popular resort area for the LGBTQ demographic, is reviewing its tourism PR account with an open RFP process.

The year-long PR pact represents \$40K of the town's \$320K marketing budget.

Provincetown wants to prioritize pitching Provincetown as a year-round arts and pet-friendly destination for weddings and honeymoons, LGBTQs, and a burgeoning eco-tourism set.

Proposals are due June 7.

View the RFP: <http://bit.ly/KCoLKI>.

## PR OPINION

**The 60th anniversary meeting of (PR) Seminar will take place June 3-6, Sunday to Wednesday, at the Park Hyatt Aviara Resort north of San Diego.**

The “luxurious hotel and resort,” says its website, has “spacious guestrooms,” a “world-class golf course” designed by Arnold Palmer, “acclaimed dining,” fitness center, swimming, tennis and a “full-service spa.”

Having just read economist Paul Krugman’s column in the May 24 *New York Times*, in which he declared that “irresponsible bankers” and Wall Street “wheeler-dealers” gave the nation the “nightmare” of “a five-year slump,” we doubt he would approve of the conspicuous consumption at the Park Hyatt by PR execs from such institutions as JPMorgan Chase (Joe Evangelisti); PNC Financial (Donna Peterman); Prudential Financial (Robert DeFillippo); Fannie Mae (Kelli Parsons); UBS (Michiko Kurahashi); City National Bank/L.A. (Cary Walker); Union Bank (Thomas Taggart), and BNY Mellon (Ronald Bryant).

Those individuals were among the 151 at the 2011 misnamed “Seminar” at the Ritz-Carlton in South Beach, Fla., and will probably be at the 2012 meeting.

Nearly \$1 million will be spent in this year’s four-day meeting by PR execs and their companions since registration is about \$3,500 and expenses add about \$5,000. Not one word of what is said will escape if the leaders have their way. How this group can enjoy 501/c/6 “educational” status is beyond us. It only “educates” a handful of PR execs. C/6’s are supposed to improve an entire “line of business” and not just the fortunes of its members.

### Opulent “Follies” Night Is Holdover

The annual “Financial Follies” show and banquet of the New York Financial Writers Assn. is also something that would not win the approval of Krugman.

It is another relic of the 1960s and 70s when PR people used reporters as props when they wanted to go to the latest Broadway show, spend a day playing golf, dine at the best restaurants, etc.

The “Follies” night does not even win the approval of NYFWA itself. The group’s “Statement of Ethics” says, “Members should avoid any preferential treatment, favors, gifts, and entertainment which might, or might appear to, influence their judgment.”

The spectacle of more than 400 writers employed by the biggest names in financial journalism (*New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, Bloomberg, Reuters, etc.) being wined and dined at a \$400-a-ticket dinner (plus drinks before, during and after) certainly gives the appearance of coziness.

A mystery is why NYFWA in 1995 ignored the victory scored by the O’Dwyer Co. in its battle vs. Dean Rotbart (both Rotbart and myself were members). The Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press headlined “Good News: PR Mogul Beats PR Mogul.” The New York chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists, headlined: “Deadline Club Supports Jack O’Dwyer in Lawsuit.”

Lawyer Jane Kirtley, executive director of the Reporters Committee, said the decision “underscored the right of journalists to accurately report on speeches, writings and presentations that are of public interest and concern.”

She was quoted by Anne Jennings of Sinkler & Boyd, Charleston, who wrote 2,500 words on the decision in 1996. Jennings said the decision “supports the rights of the press and their ability to accurately report news...”

Not a word of praise or even recognition escaped NYFWA. It is refusing a request for it to join the National Press Club, New York Senator Liz Krueger and PR Watch in condemning PRS’s written boycott against the O’Dwyer Co.

### Rotbart vs. O’Dwyer Needs Revisiting

The \$21.5M lawsuit by Rotbart vs. the O’Dwyer Co. and me, with the PR Society sitting in the wings since it had perpetual full copyright to the speech, needs to be re-examined.

There were inaccurate statements in coverage by NYT’s William Glaberson, who wrote 926 words on the Rotbart speech on Dec. 27, 1993 based on materials I supplied him.

However, he incorrectly reported I made “a secret tape recording” of the speech. The Rotbart speech on Nov. 16, 1993 was given in open session at the PRS conference and was based on the lengthier “Newroom Confidential” seminars that Rotbart gave. However, at PRS no one was asked to sign a confidentiality agreement as was usually required. I made a tape recording to insure accuracy. Rotbart saw me and acknowledged my presence.

Glaberson also falsely wrote I “published the transcript.” Less than 800 words were used in stories, as instructed by a law firm. Large portions of what Rotbart said were sent to nine reporters who were mentioned by name. They wanted to see the “context” in which their names appeared. The Court ruled that was not a violation of copyright.

Glaberson wrote March 7, 1994 that I “slipped in to a sample session” of Newsroom Confidential. I did not “slip in to” anything but had all flags flying.

Glaberson falsely claimed that “Attack by transcript appears to have worked. Mr. Rotbart recently announced that he had canceled the seminars scheduled for cities across the country because of a ‘campaign of harassment and intimidation’ by a competitive newsletter.” No transcript was published so it was not used in any “attack.”

Rotbart’s lawsuit and the O’Dwyer Co. victory went unmentioned by the NYT.

Newsroom Confidential is still being offered including a \$2,000 “Professional Executive Workshop” version.

Rotbart was a graduate of the Columbia University J School. *The Columbia Journalism Review* ignored the subject although the decision made the top story in the *New York Law Journal* and a page in the *American Journalism Review*.

The issue on the table now is an epidemic of press persecution and interference worldwide that is being attacked by Navi Pillay, High Commissioner for Human Rights of UNESCO. Her campaign has been kicked off with a 51-page report on the “impunity” enjoyed by the press bashers.

Reporters should be able to write critically of governments, trade associations and media without fear of being sued, jailed, slandered, defamed or threatened with arrest.

— Jack O’Dwyer