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# O'Dwyer's Newsletter

The Inside News of  
PR and Marketing  
Communications

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## MASS. EXCHANGE SEEKS PR PROPOSALS

The Massachusetts Healthcare Connector Authority, the Bay State's landmark health insurance exchange, is on the hunt for an agency to guide outreach and marketing.

The program, created under Massachusetts' 2006 healthcare reform push to insure everyone in the state,



wants to reach uninsured individuals, current members and small businesses, particularly, in a bid to boost enrollment and reduce the state's uninsured rate.

Weber Shandwick has worked with the Connector for several years. Jeff Lefferts, director of comms. and marketing for the Boston-based Authority, is overseeing the search, which is expected to yield a three-year contract. The work spans research, outreach and marketing, corporate partnerships, social media and strategic communications counsel.

Proposals are due April 22. RFP:  
<http://odwpr.us/1qhM99t>.

## 'SPACE COAST' SEEKS TOURISM PR

The tourism promotion entity for Florida's Brevard County has kicked off a search for a firm to guide tourism media relations for the region, known as the Space Coast.

The Space Coast Office of Tourism expects to award a 16-month contract with a two-year renewal option to promote area attractions like



Cocoa Beach, as well as the beaches of Melbourne and Palm Bay, in addition. The goal is to "influence public attitudes, enhance Florida's Space Coast's reputation, and encourage consumers to visit our destination," according to an RFP. Proposals are due April 28.

RFP: <http://odwpr.us/1UTXqdk>.

## FACEBOOK EXEC TO HEAD SPACEX COMMS

Dex Torricke-Barton, speechwriter for Mark Zuckerberg and other execs at Facebook, has left the social network and is slated to lead communications for Elon Musk's SpaceX, starting in May.

Torricke-Barton previously held a similar executive communications role for Google's top brass and served as a media consultant for the Office of the United Nations Secretary General, writing speeches and serving as a spokesman. He was also a founding member of the UN's social media task force.

## INVENTIV HEALTH SLATES PUBLIC OFFERING

InVentiv Health, the healthcare group that includes agencies like Chandler Chicco Agency and Chamberlain Healthcare PR, is going public.

Burlington, Mass.-based parent company InVentiv Group Holdings filed April 5 for an IPO, listing \$100M as its maximum offering price, a placeholder amount.



PUBLIC RELATIONS GROUP

Revenues for 2015 were just under \$2B with a loss of \$150.6M. Private equity firm Thomas H. Lee Partners is the principal shareholder.

Its companies, and 14,000 employees, cover "lab to life" healthcare services from medical sales and training, clinical trial recruitment, advertising and patient outcome businesses, to PR, which also includes Allidura Consumer and Biosector 2.

The company said it intends to use the IPO proceeds to pay down debt and for general corporate proceeds. Total debt topped \$2.1B as of 2015.

Sard Verbinnen & Co.'s New York office is handling IPO PR support.

## ALIBABA TAPS KUPERMAN TO HEAD COMMS

Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba Group has elevated Jennifer Kuperman to head of international corporate communications.

She replaces global corporate affairs chief Jim Wilkinson, who is stepping down to start an entrepreneurial venture, the Hangzhou-based company said.

Kuperman, a former management consultant, previously led corporate marketing at Visa and was chief of staff to its CEO.



Kuperman

At Alibaba, she reports to executive vice chair Joseph Tsai, who called her a "tremendous leader." He added: "I look forward to working closely with Jennifer as we continue to globalize our company and enter the next phase of the company's growth."

Wilkinson exits Alibaba two years after joining from PepsiCo.

The former Brunswick Group partner was a top (George W.) Bush administration strategic communications aide and guided communications through Alibaba's massive 2014 IPO.

## **MD ANDERSON SEEKS PR DIAGNOSIS**

The University of Texas' MD Anderson Cancer Center, the Houston institution with a global reputation for cancer research, is reviewing its PR account.

According to the RFP, the institution wants an "expanded national presence in top-tier news media outlets" through a three-year media and public relations program.

MD Anderson wants to overcome a perceived challenge stemming from its location "outside of the nation's leading media markets" as it seeks to be a greater resource on cancer information for reporters, editors, producers "and others who influence the reporting of health, medicine and biomedical research news."

Finn Partners is the incumbent.

Proposals are due April 27. RFP: <http://odwpr.us/1Yod8uY>.

**MDAnderson  
Cancer Network™**

## **FAHLGREN APPOINTS SPONG**

Doug Spong, founder and former president of Midwest PR giant Spong and former managing partner and president of sister ad agency Carmichael Lynch, has joined Columbus, OH-based PR agency Fahlgren Mortine, where he will serve in an of-counsel role.

According to Fahlgren Mortine personnel, who announced the appointment Wednesday, Spong will now work with the agency to further refine its market and positioning strategies, and will help spur future growth through business development.

"Doug is a true icon in our industry and someone I've respected for a long time," Neil Mortine, president and CEO of Fahlgren Mortine, told O'Dwyer's. "I'm so proud to have him involved with Fahlgren Mortine as we position our agency for future growth."

Spong in November announced his departure from the Minneapolis-based agency that bears his name. A month prior it had been announced that managing director Julie Batliner was the newest president of the Interpublic Group agency, and Spong had transitioned to a president emeritus role.

Spong began his career at Minneapolis-based ad agency Colle+McVoy, which he joined in 1981 and ultimately served as senior vice president, managing director of public relations. In 1990 he teamed up with legendary Minneapolis ad man Lee Lynch to launch Carmichael Lynch, an Interpublic Group unit. Spong also founded PR shop Carmichael Lynch Spong, and led that firm for more than two decades to become one of the most successful PR agencies in the Midwest.

That agency in 2014 rebranded as Spong. Current Spong clients include Formica, Jack Link's, Jennie-O, and Thermos.

After stepping down from the top executive slot at the agency, Spong in January founded consultancy The Doug Spong Co. LLC.



**Spong**

## **OREGON ST. SEEKS FIRM TO 'ELEVATE' BRAND**

Oregon State, the 148-year-old public research institution, is looking for an agency to create a new brand "vision" and message.

OSU's division of university relations and marketing released an RFP this week to burnish its global brand, three years after it revised its marketing communications plan and after tapping a higher education firm to assess its image in 2015.

The university, which has more than 30,000 students, wants to define its "brand audience" and create messaging to "elevate that audience's perception" of OSU via integrated marketing on a global scale. Proposals are due April 15.

RFP: <http://odwpr.us/1N34qSj>.



## **YUM! BRANDS PA CHIEF STEPS DOWN**

Jonathan Blum, public affairs chief for Yum! Brands, is retiring after 23 years with the fast food giant and its Taco Bell unit.

Blum was a Carter White House aide before moving to the agency realm in the mid-1980s with Ogilvy PR. He moved to Taco Bell a decade later as VP of PA and moved to Yum! when PepsiCo created the company with the spinoff of Taco Bell, KFC and Pizza Hut.

Blum, who also held the title of chief global nutrition officer, is stepping down to devote more time to his craft beer company, Bad Martha Beer of Martha's Vineyard.

Yum! chairman and former CEO David Novak called Blum "the finest public affairs executive in the world and one of the best business leaders I know."

Blum said he wants to grow two-year-old Bad Martha Beer into a dominant regional microbrewery and a socially responsible business. The brand is sold in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and is slated to launch in Connecticut.

Yum! credits Blum with "setting the standard" for CSR, including its large food and cash donation program with the United Nations World Food Programme.

## **STUBHUB SELECTS FRANKLIN SQUARE**

Stubhub, the eBay-owned online marketplace where consumers buy and sell tickets for sports, concerts, theater and festivals, has hired Washington, D.C.-based government relations and strategic communications firm Franklin Square Group, LLC for Capitol Hill representation on consumer and computer industry issues.

Franklin Square Group will represent San Francisco-based Stubhub on issues related to ongoing innovations in the online consumer-to-consumer ticket sales market.

A five-member team will handle the Stubhub account, including co-founder Matthew Tanielian, ex-counsel to Sen. Robert Torricelli (D-NJ); co-founder Joshua Ackil, former aide to House Democratic leader Richard Gephardt and Office of Legislative Affairs staff director to President Clinton; Kara Calvert Campbell, former legislative assistant to Sen. Mike Enzi (R-WY), among oth-

**VERIZON EMERGES AS YAHOO SUITOR**

Verizon has emerged as a potential suitor of search giant Yahoo, setting up a competition with Google, according to reports.

Bloomberg reported that Time Inc. continues to mull a bid, as well, on top of private equity firms like Bain and TPG.

Verizon acquired AOL last year for \$4.4B, adding the Internet portal's array of digital media outlets as well as its digital advertising infrastructure, a similar portfolio to Yahoo's search, news and data offerings.

Yahoo is accepting bids until April 18.

**SURVEY: STUDENTS DON'T TRUST THE PRESS**

U.S. college students value freedom of speech, but many distrust the press and feel restrictions should be applied to certain forms of speech on campus, according to a March survey that gauged how U.S. college students interpret rights granted by the First Amendment.

The Gallup survey, sponsored by nonprofit journalism advocacy group The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, compared differences in the attitudes toward First Amendment rights between students and the U.S. population as a whole.

Overall, the survey found that students support free speech and press rights as a principle.

An overwhelming majority of students polled — 78 percent — believe universities should expose students to different viewpoints, a percentage greater than what was gauged in the greater U.S. adult population, where only 66 percent agreed with this.

Moreover, the survey found college students remain confident regarding the freedoms granted by the First Amendment, where 81 percent reported feeling secure about the freedom of the press today, and 73 percent reported feeling secure about the current state of freedom of speech in the U.S.

Each of these categories revealed greater confidence than what was gathered in the wider U.S. adult population, whose feelings about freedom of the press and freedom of speech ranked at only 64 percent and 56 percent, respectively.

A significant minority of college students, however, were willing to entertain restrictions on the press. While nearly three-quarters — 70 percent — of students said they believed students should not be able to prevent the media from covering protests on campus, a percentage lower than U.S. adults — 76 percent — who believed this.

More than half of students polled — 54 percent — also said an intellectual climate on campus occasionally prevents some people from saying what they believe because others may find it offensive. Almost a quarter — 22 percent — of students believed colleges should prohibit speech considered biased or offensive.

The survey also found a majority of students remain distrustful of the press. More than half — 59 percent — of college students possess little or no trust in the media to report the news fairly or accurately, nearly half — 49 percent — believe reporters will exhibit bias when covering campus protests and almost the same number — 48

percent — said they have a right to be left alone while attending a protest.

The Gallup survey, which comes at a time when debates regarding limitations to freedom of speech at American colleges and universities, as well as the role and rights the press have in covering campus protests, have been frequent topics of discussion, polled 3,000 students between the ages of 18 and 24 attending a four-year college or university in the U.S.

**NY POST PLAYS UP CLINTON/ABEDIN TIE**

Photos of Hillary Clinton and aide Huma Abedin are being featured in the *New York Post* as a means of embarrassing Clinton since Abedin is married to “disgraced” former Congressman Anthony Weiner.

NYP on April 5 ran a three-column photo of Clinton and Abedin almost cheek-to-cheek under the headline, “Huma fell for Hill.”

Today's online NYPost has the headline, “Huma Abedin Gushes about How She Became a Hillary ‘Fan Girl.’” Clinton lost her sixth straight primary to Bernie Sanders yesterday. The vote in Wisconsin was 56-44% in his favor. They will debate Thursday April 14 at the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

Abedin told a “Call Your Girlfriend” podcast that she experienced a “wow” moment on meeting Clinton as a 21-year-old student in Little Rock, Ark. “I had such a fangirl moment and I was hooked,” Abedin told the podcast. “I remember thinking, ‘Oh, my God, she’s so beautiful and she’s so little!’” said Abedin who was deputy chief of staff for Clinton.

**NYP Notes Weiner Problem**

The NYP article, by Joe Tacopino, notes that Abedin is married to “disgraced former Congressman Anthony Weiner.”

Sidebars to the Tacopino story have the headlines, “Film shows Carlos Danger (pseudonym used by Weiner in emailing photos of his penis) is still in need of a good whacking”; “Hillary’s foundation subpoenaed over Huma Abedin’s work,” and “Weiner regrets giving access to filmmakers, won’t see documentary.”

MWW PR became embroiled in the controversy by retaining Weiner as a consultant from July to September 2015 when a burst of media stories led to his departure from the firm. MWW in recent months has been adopting a low profile.

The U.K.’s *Daily Mail* has given extensive coverage to Clinton's ties to Abedin/Weiner. It interviewed Donald Trump on the subject who spared no words. Four photos were also part of the *Daily Mail*'s coverage.

Trump told *DailyMail.com* last July 30 that it's reasonable to think Abedin may have shared information with Weiner, including the contents of classified emails that passed through the former secretary of state's private server.

Weiner, a former Democratic congressman, resigned in 2011 amid lewd sexting scandals, said DM. Trump told DM during an interview in New York that “the person seeing [Clinton's] emails more than anybody else is Huma. And who's Huma married to? The worst deviant in the United States of America, right? Weiner!”

**ZIKA: CONTAIN THE CRISIS, QUELL THE FEAR**

By Emma Beck

A crisis client slides into our conference room seat, her anxiety emblematic of the dire developments consuming her immediate circumstances. A quickened pulse, shortened breath, subconscious myopia. In that moment, she feels jarred by the panic, blurring her ability to address both the next steps and her overall disposition.

A mentor once told me: “We can deal with the facts, but it is the unknown that paralyzes us.” As crisis communicators, our job lies in restoring our client with a sense of control to ensure the right decisions are made in the midst of anxiety. With information as our weapon, we arm clients with the facts to give them a holistic understanding of how a matter might play out. This positions our clients to respond proactively with a strategy underwritten by substantive information.

Within the health space, Zika presents the latest possibility of a crisis threatening the U.S. To date, the U.S. has confirmed at least 312 cases of Zika in-country (most contracted the virus via travel to affected zones or through sexual transmission). The World Health Organization further estimates that Zika will infect between three to four million individuals across the Americas.

At the same time, a February 2016 survey released by the Annenberg Public Policy Center reveals the speculation already at play: 42 percent of participants said those infected by Zika were “very likely” or “somewhat likely” to die. Now, more than ever, federal agencies and high-risk state and local governments have a tremendous opportunity to take control of the situation by using the facts to get ahead of public concern.

The gaffes in the U.S. government’s Ebola response resulted in a spiral of misinformation that fueled public anxiety. With an eye to Zika, public health officials and political leaders have the opportunity to retrace their steps and deliver clear information early that mobilizes the public to take preventative measures, all while dispelling the rumor mill that feeds public fear. Indeed, from a reputational hit threatening corporate standing to a health endemic with unforeseen consequences, the elements that play into an effective crisis communications response remain the same: facts must inform the messaging to build trust and spur action. With this foundation, all communication must remain consistent, transparent and credible. A misstep among any of these components poses tremendous risk in how an emergency response unfolds. In addressing a potential Zika outbreak, the government has several elements to consider:

An audience that trusts the messenger will heed to the call to action. The government can build trust by being honest — in a responsible way — about what they do not know or have under control. Readily offering all information at hand, and efficiently updating as new developments arise, will empower the public to make informed decisions and collectively help prevent the start — or, worse, spread — of a Zika epidemic. The government’s messaging must address Zika’s real risks, detail precautionary measures the public can take, explain how one can identify Zika infection and highlight the surveillance mechanisms already in place.

Demonstrate a controlled, streamlined approach. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Zika Communication Planning Guide for States provides a roadmap for how states can implement phased responses should Zika go viral: the preparatory, contingency phase — where we currently find ourselves — to messaging for use during the summer mosquito season; following confirmed local transmission; and in the case of a widespread outbreak, the CDC’s guidelines streamlines the communications plan. This ensures the facts imparted protect citizens, inform key decision makers and prevent the duplication of efforts. A triaged approach further demonstrates a proactive and controlled response, bolstering the public’s confidence in the government’s ability to effectively manage a potential viral outbreak.

Ensure the message reaches a broad spectrum of the public by tapping into various communications channels. In today’s hyper-digitalized world, one can no longer rely on solely one platform to reach a target audience. Whether a Zika-specific government landing page that can be repurposed across state and local government websites or a Twitter and Facebook page dedicated to Zika updates, government agencies can reach the public across a range of digital platforms. At the same time, the government can ensure Zika-related media outreach gives emphasis to the states prone to a possible epidemic. This gives weight to the government’s grasp of where to channel their resources and attention with consideration to who remains at highest risk for Zika contraction.

All crisis clients — from a CEO who steps into our office to the government agencies responding to Zika at the national level — have to understand that addressing anxiety at the outset of a situation ensures decisions are made based on solid information. An effective crisis communications strategy will mobilize those impacted, direct attention to the areas most needed and counter fear by disseminating facts. The government should thus have a firm crisis communications plan in place so they can demonstrate headstrong action, inspiring public trust in the ability to control the response.

*Emma Beck is an A/E at crisis comms. agency LEV-ICK. She can be reached at [ebeck@levick.com](mailto:ebeck@levick.com).*

**BOSTON GLOBE EYES NEWS REVAMP**

*Boston Globe* editor Brian McGrory is planning an overhaul of the paper's news operations he dubbed “a reinvention initiative” in a memo.

The paper has enlisted help from the American Press Institute and former *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* editor Marty Kaiser in a bid to remake its newsroom.

McGrory posed two key questions: “If a wealthy individual was to give us funding to launch a news organization designed to take on the *Boston Globe*, what would it look like?” and “Is it possible to build something bold rather than shrink what we have?”

Financier and Red Sox owner John Henry owns the *Globe*.

Added McGrory: “The key is to create a process that involves as many people as possible, at all levels, tapping into the wealth of creativity that is this newsroom’s trademark.”

**NEWS OF PR FIRMS****WEBER SHANDWICK EXPANDS MEDIACO**

Weber Shandwick has expanded brand-publishing platform Mediaco, the content creation and distribution unit it launched in 2013, in a bid to evolve its approach and operating model in a changing digital media landscape.

Since its launch three years ago, Mediaco has successfully executed more than 100 content programs for clients such as Excedrin, UNICEF, Ricoh and Fisher-Price.

Mediaco's expanded content operation will now rely on an open, R&D model that will incorporate a toolkit of customizable services to help clients address specific challenges and achieve higher value when utilizing brand-publishing in today's media environment. Those new services will include an interactive technology unit, content analytics services and an expanded network of external partnerships with platforms, publishers and content companies.

As part of the expansion, the Interpublic Group unit is unveiling an Innovation Council that will serve as an advisory board and will workshop solutions with members of that outfit's team. That council will be chaired by Weber Shandwick executive editor in residence Vivian Schiller, who was previously global chair of news at Twitter, chief digital officer at NBC and general manager of NYTimes.com. Schiller, who joined Weber Shandwick in September, has now been named editor-in-chief and head of Mediaco in North America, and will lead Mediaco's operations and expand upon its network of talent and advisors.

Other Mediaco Innovation Council members will include Tony Haile, founding CEO of Chartbeat; Gaby Darbyshire, principal of Framestore Ventures; Mariana Santos, director of interactive and animation at Fusion; and Rahul Chopra, CEO of Storyful.

**HAVAS PR CELEBRATES 40TH ANNIVERSARY**

Havas PR North America, part of publicly-held Havas, is celebrating the 40th anniversary of its founding as Creamer Dickson Basford by donating \$400,000 of PR professional time to pro bono work in the year to March 1, 2017.

The program was announced by Marian Salzman, CEO of Havas PR North America.

Each Havas North American office will provide pro bono help to organizations in the respective city or region.

The New York office will work with the Bob Woodruff Foundation which helps injured veterans, service members and their families.

The Phoenix team will work with Tucson Values Teachers and the Pittsburgh office will work with New Sun Rising which supports leaders of social enterprises and community projects to create local, sustainable and measurable impact.

Havas/Pittsburgh will also work with the University of Pittsburgh Cancer Institute and other local citizens' groups.

"This is a landmark year in an extremely exciting time for Havas PR," said Salzman.

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

**Hill+Knowlton Strategies**, New York/Hurtigruten, a Norwegian cruise line that sails Scandinavia and the Arctic and is eyeing global expansion, has consolidated global PR with H+K. Anne Marit Bjørnflaten, senior VP of comm. for the Oslo-based cruise line, said the company wanted a global partner and found a strong fit with H+K after previously working with several agencies in various markets. Gambit H+K in Oslo will head the account with H+K's offices around the world contributing in each market, including Europe, the US and Asia Pacific. Hurtigruten is building its cruise empire from its iconic Norwegian Coastal Express trip. In addition to expanding its Antarctic voyages, the company plans expanded service in the Amazon River and Brazilian rainforest, as well as added Canadian ports to its Arctic cruises.

**Beautiful Planning Marketing & PR**, New York/Alpessence, luxury skincare line, as AOR. The newly launched brand includes a line of Swiss moisturizers, serums, cleansers, toners and masks. The company's products are currently available in 14 countries. BPMR's campaign includes US consumer outreach, including a series of earned media features across national press in print, online and broadcast outlets.

**Magrino**, New York/Hilton Worldwide Inc.'s luxury and lifestyle portfolio, which includes brands such as Waldorf Astoria Hotels & Resorts, Conrad Hotels & Resorts and Canopy by Hilton, as global AOR. The work includes developing communications strategies for the luxury hotel brands.

**Nicholas & Lence Communications**, New York/Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway, Westchester County gaming, racing and entertainment venue, and Emerson Resort & Spa, Hudson Valley resort and spa, for PR.

**R&J Strategic Communications**, Bridgewater, N.J./Falcon Safety Products, as digital marketing AOR. Falcon makes technology and household cleaning products, as well as a line of compressed-gas signal horns and is particularly known for its Dust-Off brand of consumer electronics cleaning products. R&J will lead a digital marketing campaign for its social media and web properties. R&J has been the company's PR AOR since 2003.

**Southeast**

**Fetching Communications**, Tampa/The American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine; American College of Veterinary Ophthalmologists; biORb, aquarium products, and John Paul Pet, pet grooming and hygiene product line, for PR.

**Southwest**

**TrizCom PR**, Dallas/Fan Expo Dallas, comics, sci-fi, horror, anime and gaming event, June 3-5 at the Dallas Convention Center, as AOR for PR.

**Leverage PR**, Austin/Student Loan Genius, student loan employer benefits solution, for strategic planning, media strategy and execution. SLG aims to help companies pay off employees' student loans faster or to use student loan payments to help grow employees' 401(k) plans.

**NEWS OF SERVICES****C&W GRANS COCCHIERE FROM EMANATE**

Scott Cocchiere, creative director for Ketchum's Emanate PR, has moved to Cohn & Wolfe as managing director of creative and content.

C&W wants Cocchiere to oversee and expand its content strategy and production machine, including video, mobile, digital, print and experiential. He is a creative and content vet of Ogilvy-Action and Marketing Drive.

C&W has also upped Callie Jernigan, who joined last year from Twentieth Century Fox, to US entertainment marketing leader.

Both report to chief integrated marketing officer and Americas president Jim Joseph.

**Cocchiere****PHONY RELEASE GIVES PFIZER HEADACHE**

A bogus press release purportedly from Pfizer that fooled the *Washington Post* on March 31 led to a retraction by the paper and legal threat by the drugmaker.

The release, which claimed that Pfizer would "cease routine price increases," used the name of a Pfizer spokesman and the domain pfizerinternational.com, which is not controlled by the drug company. A reporter for the Washington Post called the number on the release and left a message before publishing an item on the Post website based on the release.

"A false press release related to drug pricing and linking to a fake web site was anonymously issued earlier today," Pfizer said that a false release related to drug pricing and linked to a fake website was disseminated on March 31. "Pfizer is investigating this matter and evaluating its legal options against the parties responsible," the company said. "Pfizer is committed to engaging in an honest discussion and real dialogue about the issues that matter to patients."

The source of the release has not been publicly identified.

The Post retracted its story the same day.

**CISION DROPS VOCUS ON GR SOFTWARE**

Cision has rebranded Vocus Government Relations and PAC software as Cision Government Relations. As a part of Cision, the government relations platform will continue to grow and improve its software and services.

The software, which claims to be one of only two on the market to collect its own data on legislators and staff, helps organizations create targeted lists and distribute action alerts, track projects, activities and legislation, maintain an online advocacy site, and analyze lobbying efforts and legislative success.

Cision said customer login and access information remains the same.

**BRIEF:** Aurora (Colo.) Water released an RFP for media monitoring services to track traditional and digital media, social and other public forums. Proposals are due April 15. AW wants daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly reports. Details are at auroragov.org.

**PEOPLE****Joined**

**Kim Sample**, a former Ketchum partner who served as CEO of its Emanate PR unit, has moved to Text100 as GM of its New York office. Sample spent more than 20 years at Ketchum and its 2006 spinoff, Emanate, which she served as founding CEO. She stepped down in September when Ketchum merged the shop into Access Communications. Text100 chief Aedmar Hynes praised Sample's success in building an agency in the New York market, as well as client experience in B2B, corporate and consumer communications.

**Sample**

**Gaude Paez**, senior VP of corporate communications a digital publicity for Fox Broadcasting Co., to Hulu to head corporate comms. for the streaming video content service backed by big media. Paez, a Burson-Marsteller alum, spent the past seven years with Fox Broadcasting. She earlier worked in-house PR roles with Veoh Networks and Yahoo! She takes a VP role with Hulu, reporting to CEO Mike Hopkins. On the agency side, she was a corporate practice manager at B-M and corporate comms. associate for Bozell Sawyer Miller Group. Hulu, based in Santa Monica, Calif., is backed by Disney, 21st Century Fox and Comcast.

**Paez**

**Jack Evans**, a comms. director for public affairs at Microsoft, is stepping down for the VP, comms. and PA, slot at timber and wood products titan Weyerhaeuser this month. Evans spent the last decade at Microsoft, heading a comms. unit in its legal and corporate affairs department, including competition, antitrust and other litigation issues. He previously managed media relations for the US airline trade group Airlines for America after a stint in corporate comms. with Alaska Airlines. He moved to PR in the early 1990s with AAA Washington after posts at the *Orange County Register*, *New York Times* and *Dallas Morning News*.

**Brenda Urban** to Klick Communications, Santa Monica, as communications director. The veteran hospitality PR pro and culinary publicist in 2012 co-founded Los Angeles-based PR and marketing shop Urban + Allen, which focuses on hospitality and lifestyle. Prior to that she was a senior A/S at Wagstaff Worldwide and a senior A/S at M Booth & Assocs. She began her career in the New York office of the William Morris Agency, where she served as an assistant, and later was a senior A/E at Lou Hammond & Assocs. She also starred in the Bravo reality TV series "Eat, Drink, Love," which ran for one season in 2013.

**Sheila Long O'Mara**, former editor-in-chief of furnishing industry publication *Home Furnishings Business*, to Steinreich Communications, Fort Lee, N.J., as content manager. O'Mara launched Home Furnishings Business in 2005, and in 2013 it was acquired by Atlanta, GA-based company Impact Consulting Services. Prior to that, she was an editor at Progressive Business Media property *Furniture Today*.

## **OBAMA NOMINATES PN ALUM LEHRICH**

President Barack Obama has nominated Matthew Lehrich for the top communications post at the Department of Education, assistant secretary for communications and outreach.

Lehrich, who re-joined the administration last year from Porter Novelli, has been serving as communications director since February. He was among four nominees by the President this week -- three at the Dept. of Education and a lone nominee at the Dept. of Energy.

"These fine public servants bring a depth of experience and tremendous dedication to their important roles," said Obama. "I look forward to working with them."

Lehrich was VP of global reputation management and crisis communications for Porter Novelli. He joined the firm from the White House, where he was an assistant press secretary from 2011-2014, regional comms. director, and deputy director of response dating back to 2009. He previously worked on the Obama campaign in New Hampshire and Wisconsin.

The assistant secretary post requires Senate confirmation.

Jonathan Schorr, a former Oakland Tribune reporter, previously served as acting assistant secretary under previously Education Secretary Arne Duncan.

## **LIBYAN PARTY GETS DC REPRESENTATION**

Longtime lobbyist Marshall Harris, working as a partner with firm Alexandria Group International LLC, has signed a pact with Libyan political party the General National Congress and its appointed National Salvation Government to assist in representing Libya's interests in Washington.

According to Foreign Agents Registration Act documents filed in April, Alexandria Group International will work to advance the GNC and NSG's goals of positioning the African nation as a greater priority in Washington's political agenda.

The firm's work is expected to include contacting and scheduling meetings between administration officials and members of Congress, media representatives, think-tank experts and other U.S. policymakers and opinion-shapers, as well as increasing exposure of the GNC and NSG's political goals by finding appropriate opportunities for op-ed articles, press releases and speeches, and aiding in messaging, as well as providing advice and analysis regarding U.S. policies and other relevant political developments.

Libya has been torn apart by warring factions of rival militia groups and increased acts of terrorism since quasi-dictator Col. Muammar Gaddafi was ousted and killed during Libya's armed, UN-backed rebellion in 2011.

The General National Congress was elected by popular vote in 2012 during Libya's first parliamentary elections since the Gaddafi regime. In 2014, however, the GNC was defeated in a landslide election, leading to an ensuing political struggle, as that legislative authority refused to recognize Libya's new legislature, the House of Representatives, sending that elected governmental body to relocate in the eastern city Tobruk, essentially resulting in two rival Libyan governments competing for power

and plunging the country further into the throes of civil war.

A newly reformed GNC in 2014 appointed the National Salvation Government to serve as Libya's alternative government.

A series of United Nations-sponsored peace talks culminated in a December agreement for the installation of a newly established, UN-supported interim government, the Government of National Accord, to act as Libya's sole legitimate government. The GNA on March 30 arrived in Tripoli and assumed control of the prime ministerial offices the following day. Rival government the NSG on April 5 formally announced its dissolution.

GNC's/NSG's yearlong, \$14,000-a-month pact with Alexandria Group International was signed into effect on March 30. It is slated to continue until March 29, 2017.

## **SURVEY: M&A MARKET TO PICK UP IN 2016**

An appetite for mergers and acquisitions could be returning to the U.S. this year, according to a recent survey of executives leading industries across the M&A market.

The findings, the result of a survey published by audit and advisory firm KPMG in partnership with Fortune Knowledge Group, revealed that 91 percent of executives surveyed said they intended to initiate at least one acquisition this year, compared to 81 percent in 2015 and 63 percent in 2014. While 38 percent said they would initiate between one and three acquisition deals — fewer than the 48 percent who aligned with this statement in 2015 — 34 percent said they now plan to set in motion between four and six deals this year, double the 17 percent who said this in 2015. While nine percent admitted they either wouldn't take up an M&A deal or simply didn't know, this was half the 18 percent who offered the same statement a year prior.

According to the KPMG study, executives' appetite for M&A in 2015 was characterized overwhelmingly by an organizational desire to fortify competitive positions in current markets. This year, however, more than a third of respondents — 37 percent — said their primary motivations for planning to initiate M&A deals was due to a desire to enter into lines of new business or to expand their customer reach. Other reasons included expanding geographic reach — 36 percent — enhancing intellectual property or acquiring new technologies — 34 percent — or in the advent that a strategic target became available.

A majority of respondents — 52 percent — anticipate the average enterprise value of acquisitions this year to be less than \$250 million, and an even larger percentage — 71 percent — see technology as being the biggest industry for overall M&A activity in 2016.

An overwhelming majority — 79 percent — said the U.S. was the geographical area where respondents anticipate the most M&A activity this year. Other noted destinations included western Europe — 21 percent — and countries in North America excluding the U.S. China, whose economy has faltered in recent months, ranked only 11 percent, as did the rest of Asia.

The KPMG/Fortune Knowledge Group survey polled more than 550 U.S. corporate and private equity leaders, M&A professionals, investors and advisors.

## **PR OPINION**

**PR Society of America director Garland Stansell**, CCO of the third largest pediatric center in the U.S., and PRSA are logical hopes of Wi-Fi health advocates for a PR campaign vs. the plague of radiation that is especially harmful to children.

Stansell, former chair of the Society's Health Academy and past president, Alabama chapter, heads PR for Children's of Alabama, Birmingham, tenth busiest such facility in the nation, where he has worked since 1994.

The Wi-Fi industry, supported by many of the biggest corporations and trade groups in the U.S., will be in full flower April 19-21 in Tysons Corner, Va., for the inaugural "Wi-Fi Now 2016" conference which will draw thousands. EMF (electromagnetic field) healthcare advocates are planning a demonstration of some kind.

### **Eight PRSA Directors in Health/Education**

Three other Society directors are in the health sector and should look into the EMF threat.

They are Sonja Popp-Stahly, Eli Lilly and Co., Indianapolis; Amy Coward, VP-PR, Palmetto Health Foundation, Columbia, S.C., and Joyce Lofstrom, HIMSS, Chicago (Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society), a non-profit.

The four Society education-related directors, since they deal mainly with teenagers and young adults, should also raise their voices for basic Wi-Fi and cellphone precautions.

They are treasurer Deborah Silverman, SUNY Buffalo State; secretary Anthony D'Angelo, PR professor, Syracuse University; Don Hale, VP-PR, Georgia State University, and Janet Kacsos, DC, Millersville University. The precautions include never putting a cellphone next to an ear, never carrying one in a pocket, and switching from cordless to landlines at home and work. EMF health advocates say children under 12 should not use cellphones. Computers, keyboards and the computer mouse should be hard-wired. Schools, libraries and doctors' waiting offices should not have wi-fi.

Eleven of the 17 national board members are women and many if not most are married and mothers. We hope they will see themselves as women and mothers first who care about the welfare of children and who can put aside their titles with the Society for this cause. What is good for the children would be good for the Society.

### **Children's Hospital Skips EMF Dangers**

The Children's of Alabama website lists numerous dangers for children but not those from EMF. A sampling is below.

#### **Bike Safety**

Bike riding is fun but a bike crash can be dangerous if a child is not wearing a helmet. Why? Because many bike accidents involve a head injury, so a crash could mean permanent brain damage or death for someone who doesn't wear a helmet while riding...

#### **Choking: What to Do and How to Prevent It**

Choking is common in children and can be a true medical emergency. Signs of choking include gasping or wheezing, an inability to talk, cry, or make noise, grab-

bing the throat or waving the arms, appearing panicked or turning blue in the face...

#### **Lightning Safety**

Summer is the most likely time to be injured by lightning during a thunderstorm. Lightning strikes can be fatal and can strike up to eight miles ahead of a rain shower. The most dangerous places to be during a thunderstorm are on the road, in a body of water or at sports fields...

#### **Poisonous Snakebites**

They're the stuff of nightmares but venomous snakes really do pose a threat in Alabama. Six kinds – the copperhead, eastern diamondback rattlesnake, cottonmouth/water moccasin, pigmy rattlesnake, timber or canebrake rattlesnake and the eastern coral snake...

#### **Playground Safety**

Playgrounds and outdoor play equipment offer kids fresh air, friends and exercise. However, it's important for parents to make sure that faulty equipment, improper surfaces and careless behavior don't ruin the fun...

Where are precautions for cellphone and computer use and the threats to health that include cancer and numerous other diseases, many of which take years to develop but can be fatal nevertheless.

#### **Military Uses EMF to Sicken, Kill Enemy**

Two scientists who had long careers in the military specializing in the use of EMF to injure the enemy are being quoted by EMF health advocates.

Jerry Flynn, retired Canadian Army captain who spent 22 years in its "electronic warfare" unit, is urging Canadian public and health officials to admit there is a danger to health.

Barrie Trower, retired U.K. military intelligence scientist specializing in microwave and stealth warfare, has made statements on numerous websites.

One of his earliest appearances was an interview April 19, 2010 on Radio 7 RSA South Africa by Jenny Williams.

Said Trower: "During the 1950s and 1960s during the Cold War, it was realized by accident that microwaves could be used as stealth weapons. The Russians beamed the American embassy in Moscow and gave everybody cancer, breast cancers, leukemia's whatever, and it was realized then that low level microwaves were the perfect stealth weapon to be used on dissident groups around the world, because you could make dissident groups sick, give them cancer, change their mental outlook on life without them even knowing they were being radiated.

"And one of my tasks...I spent eleven years questioning captured spies...was to learn the particular frequencies of microwaves that they used on which victims, if I may use that word, and what the outcome was, and I built up a dossier...I'm probably the only person in the world with the complete list...I built up a dossier of what pulse frequencies of microwaves will cause what psychological or physiological damage to a person."

– Jack O'Dwyer