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# O'Dwyer's

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## **RHODE ISLAND TARGETS LITTERBUGS**

The Rhode Island Dept. of Transportation wants pitches for a communications campaign to educate the public about the negative impact that litter has on the environment, roadways and general quality of life.



The program's goals are to reduce trash, expand efforts to remove trash from state thoroughfares, and enhance local streets and public spaces through collaboration with all stakeholders, according to the RFP.

RIDOT spends about \$1M per year picking up trash and clearing illegal dumping zones.

Trash "destroys our state's natural beauty, pollutes land and waterways, harms wildlife, discourages economic development and undermines civic pride."

Governor Dan McKee kicked off a "Keep Rhody Litter Free" campaign last April. The RIDOT initiative will build on the effort.

The successful RIDOT proposal will "include a strategy that lays out an approach for behavioral and market research, social marketing, advertising, public relations, public outreach, and gathers quantitative data to gauge effectiveness."

RIDOT plans to award a three-year contract with options to renew for two additional 12-month periods. The work will begin in September.

Proposals are due July 21 at the [Ocean State Procures](#) electronic portal.

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

## **MGM'S MARTIN KELLEY TAKES WB POST**

Katie Martin Kelley has moved to Warner Bros. Motion Picture Group as executive VP-communications.



**WARNER BROS.**  
MOTION PICTURE GROUP

She joins from Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, where she was chief communications officer. At MGM, she worked with Mike DeLuca and Pam Abdy, who are co-chairs & CEOs of WBMPG.

Prior to MGM, Martin Kelley spent 12 years at Paramount Pictures where she handled domestic publicity and corporate communications for the studio.

At WBMPG, Martin Kelley will lead media relations and corporate communications for Warner Bros. Pictures, New Line Cinema and newly rebranded Warner Bros. Pictures Animation.

She will report to DeLuca and Abdy. They said Martin Kelley is "highly regarded as one of Hollywood's top communications executives and a true master of her craft."

## **BUCHHOLZ MOTORS TO H+K STRATEGIES**

Craig Buchholz, who was responsible for global communications at General Motors, is the new US CEO of Hill+Knowlton Strategies.

He takes over for Richard Millar, H+K global president, who has headed the US market since 2019 on an interim basis. Millar is returning to the UK.

Buchholz helped burnish the reputation of the automaker and positioned it as a leader in autonomous technology, electric vehicles and software services.

Prior to GM, he was chief communications officer at Procter & Gamble, VP-global communications at Merck, and VP-worldwide communications at Johnson & Johnson.

AnnaMaria DeSalva, H+K CEO, called Buchholz "a highly respected, admired leader in our field who has helped some of the world's most important companies advance through periods of transformation and growth."



**Craig Buchholz**

## **GLADSTONE, ICR BACK NUKE POWER SPAC**

Gladstone Place Partners and ICR are taking Oklo nuclear fission startup that is backed by Open AI CEO Sam Altman public via a merger with his AltC Acquisition Corp. blank check company.

Oklo plans to build small nuclear reactors and sell the affordable, emission-free power to customers under long-term contracts.

Those small reactors are projected to cost about \$60M, which is billions less than nuclear utility scale plants



Noting that 38 percent of Fortune 500 companies are publicly committed to decarbonization, Oklo projects a global annual spend of \$2T for clean new power generation.

Altman, who chairs Oklo, said the company "is the best positioned player to pursue commercialization of advanced fission energy solutions."

Oklo's first plant is expected to go online in Idaho in 2026 or 2027.

The SPAC deal values the company at \$850M. Oklo's stock is to trade on the New York Stock Exchange.

Gladstone Place's Christina Stenson and Michael Landau handle the media for the SPAC deal, while ICR's Caldwell Bailey and Eduardo Royes work the investment community.

## **BIOMADE SEEKS MEDIA RELATIONS SUPPORT**

BioMade, the public-private partnership working to nurture the bioindustrial manufacturing sector, is looking for a firm to handle its national media relations effort and provide reputation management services.



**BioMADE**

The organization's goal is "creating more robust and resilient supply chains, making the US more self-sufficient, re-shoring manufacturing jobs and producing more environmentally sustainable products without relying on traditional petroleum sources," according to the RFP.

The selected firm will advise on communications strategy, develop issue-specific key messages and talking points, craft pitches, provide media training and organize press conferences.

It will create risk management plans to deal with potential negative press related to a member organization or Bio-Made-funded research.

Proposals are due July 26. They go to Christine Lee, communications manager at [clee@biomade.org](mailto:clee@biomade.org).

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

## **CONWAY STRATEGIC BACKSTOPPED OPILL LAUNCH**

Conway Strategic backstopped Perrigo's PR team on the launch of Opill, the first ever over-the-counter birth control pill to receive the approval of the Food and Drug Administration.

Perrigo CEO Patrick Lockwood-Taylor said the FDA nod represented "a truly momentous day for women's health nationwide."

The *New York Times* reported on July 13 that more than 75 percent of women of reproductive age favor an OTC pill.

Nearly a third of women who have tried to get a prescription for a contraceptive pill reported difficulties in doing so.

Perrigo expects Opill to be available at US retailers in 2024.

Conway Strategic, which describes itself as a woman and queer owned shop of moms and others committed to a work-life balance, is based in Washington.

Conway principal Chrissy Faessen worked the media for the Opill launch.

## **SAPPORO PULLS PLUG ON ANCHOR BREWING**

Singer Associates represents Anchor Brewing, which bills itself as America's first craft brewer, as Japan's Sapporo decides to pull the plug on the iconic San Francisco beer maker that it acquired in 2017.

Sam Singer said the move to shutter the 127-year old brewer was an extremely difficult decision. "The impacts of the pandemic, inflation, especially in San Francisco, and a

highly competitive market left the company with no option but to make this sad decision to cease operations," he said.

Singer said the bulk of Anchor sales were made in bars and taprooms that were walloped by the pandemic. Anchor made the switch to selling in grocery stores and supermarkets but it was too late in the game, according to Singer.

Singer said there's still a chance another buyer might emerge during the liquidations process.

Anchor's 61 workers received 60-day notices on July 12, and will be given transition support and separation packages.



## **NEWS OF FIRMS**

**MikeWorldWide** has acquired **Sēd Communications**, a boutique shop headed by Loretta Markevics, who was chief strategy and creative officer of Devry's Global and EVP for global strategy at Porter Novelli. She will become MWW's first-ever chief growth office, overseeing creative services, strategy, research and insights, and marketing and business development functions globally. Markevics will continue to lead Sēd, which will operate as a subsidiary of MWW. Sēd serves start-up brands and companies in emerging categories in the beauty & wellness, and sustainability sectors. Clients include Renogy, Get Joy, Gladskin, Vaxa and BARE Zero Proof.



**Dalton** is moving its offices to New City Properties' Neuhoff District in Nashville's Germantown neighborhood. It will be the complex's first office tenant. The agency says that move to the new office space, driven by continued business growth, will allow its employees to work closely together, encouraging creative collaboration. "The opportunity to move into the vibrant Germantown area, while remaining close to our previous East Nashville location, will provide multiple benefits for the agency and our clients," said Dalton chairman Jim Dalton.

**ICR** is presenting "[Strategic Communications in the AI Era: Understand How IR & PR Shape Your Company's AI Narrative](#)," the third in its Generative AI Webinar Series. The July 20 session, which will run from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m., will explore best practices for building trust, managing expectations and showcasing an organization's commitment to ethical AI development and deployment. The webinar will be moderated by ICR managing director of technology PR Katie Creaser and partner and head of technology Greg McDowell.

**FINN Partners** managing partner and global health practice leader Fern Lazar is elected to the Cancer Research Institute's board of trustees. Lazar came to FINN Partners in 2019 following FINN's acquisition of her consultancy, Lazar Partners. "Her expertise in health communications and deep knowledge surrounding the business of health can only aid the pursuit of our mission," said Jill O'Donnell-Tormey, PhD, CRI's chief executive officer and director of scientific affairs.



**Fern Lazar**

**160over90**, part of the Endeavor network, acquires London-based creative brand experience agency **XYZ**. XYZ managing director Will Mould and executive creative director Paul Stanway will join 160over90 as senior VPs. XYZ's 35 full-time employees will now operate as part of 160over90, joining the agency's existing London-based team of approximately 60 full-time employees.

**Cision** launches a monitoring, insights and outreach platform, CisionOne, in the UK, with plans to launch it in additional markets, including the US., over the next 12 months. The company says that CisionOne Monitoring, powered by its proprietary artificial intelligence models, can identify the most relevant news, trends and conversations across all media channels, surfacing potentially harmful content and uncovering the intent behind individual mentions, in real-time.

## QATAR'S EDUCATION ABOVE ALL SEEKS PR

Qatar's Education Above All Foundation is looking for a firm to support its communications shop with strategic planning, content creation, risk analysis and international media outreach services.

التعليم  
فوق  
الجميع | education  
above  
all

Founded in 2012 by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, EAA aims to foster social and economic development through educational and social welfare programming.

EAA plans to issue a two-year contract that calls for engagement with journalists, editors and producers at traditional media outlets; media monitoring and taking advantages of opportunities that arise from breaking news; organization of press conferences; and development of a crisis management plan featuring 24-hour support.

Responses are due July 23. They go to: Attn: The Procurement Department; Education Above All; MB3 Building, Education City; P.O. Box: 34173, Doha, Qatar

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

## REVLON'S ROBINSON SWITCHES TO AUGUST

Former Revlon executive VP and general counsel Cari Robinson comes on board at [August](#) as senior managing director, based in New York.

At Revlon, Robinson advised senior management on matters including litigation, cybersecurity, M&A and bankruptcy.



**Cari Robinson**

She was previously VP, assistant general counsel at IBM, leading a global team of attorneys responsible for conducting regulatory, internal and cybersecurity investigations.

She has also served as assistant US attorney in the Southern District of New York and worked in the litigation department of Davis Polk.

In her new post, Robinson will help lead client engagements with a focus on providing strategic com-

munications and crisis management counsel to clients in high stakes litigation, investigations, and crisis situations.

## STANTON HANDLES CONNING'S DEAL

Stanton represents Conning Holdings Ltd. as the asset manager for the insurance industry agrees to be acquired by Generali Investment Holdings.



GENERALI



CONNING

Conning, which is owned by Cathay Life Insurance Ltd., has \$157B in assets under management.

As part of the transaction, Cathay will forge a partnership with Generali and take a 16.75 percent ownership position in it.

Woody Bradford, CEO of Conning, will continue in his leadership role. He said the transaction "provides stability for our

clients and employees, maintains continuity of leadership and strategy, and will generate new collaboration opportunities."

Operating across the Asia-Pacific region, Cathay has \$392B in assets under management.

Stanton's Katrin Lieberwirth works the Conning deal.

Alex Stanton heads the New York firm that holds the [No. 9 spot in O'Dwyer's rankings of financial PR firms](#) with \$10.5M in 2022 fee income.

## MEDIA MANEUVERS

The *San Diego Union-Tribune* is sold to MediaNews Group for an undisclosed amount. MediaNews Group is owned by Alden Global Capital, which owns approximately 200 publications, including the *Chicago Tribune* and *Denver Post*. Its Southern California News Group papers include the *Orange County Register* and *Los Angeles Daily News*. The Union-Tribune was previously owned by Patrick Soon-Shiong, who bought it from Tribune Publishing in 2018.



In keeping with Alden's reputation for slashing costs at its papers, Sharon Ryan, executive VP of California for MediaNews Group said in an email to employees that cutbacks will be necessary to "offset the slowdown in revenues as economic headwinds continue to impact the media industry."

The *New York Times* is making "an evolution in how we cover sports" by closing down its sports department and moving its coverage of teams and games over to The Athletic, the sports platform it purchased for \$550 million last year. According to Times executive editor Joe Kahn and deputy managing editor Monica Drake, there no plans to eliminate any staff positions as part of the change. While The Athletic has been gaining in readership—hitting three million in March—it still does not report an operating profit, losing \$7.8 million in the first quarter of this year.

Microsoft's bid to acquire to acquire video game publisher Activision Blizzard for \$69 billion now has one less hurdle in its way. The Federal Trade Commission's attempt to delay the deal, which argued that the acquisition would stifle competition, got a thumbs-down from Judge Jacqueline Scott Corley of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California on July 11. Following that decision, Britain's antitrust regulator said it was open to Microsoft changing its acquisition of Activision Blizzard to address its concerns that blocked the deal in the UK in April. The merger could now go through in the US as early as this month.

The *Irish Voice*, a New York-based newspaper that focuses on news and stories from an Irish-American perspective, put out its last print edition on July 5. First published in the fall of 1987, the paper was targeted at Irish immigrants who were then moving to the US in large numbers. Its editorial content, along with founder Niall O'Dowd's twice-weekly column, will now appear on IrishCentral.com. The Voice's other publication, Irish America, remains in print, and its event management side continues to operate. "We have been a crusading paper," O'Dowd wrote. "We are, indeed, an activist paper; we don't believe in journalism that uses phrases like, 'On the one hand and the other.' Have an opinion and defend it!"



Canada's federal government plans to pull all its advertising from Facebook and Instagram in the wake of Meta's move to restrict news content for Canadians. That move followed the passage of a law by Canada's parliament that will force tech firms to pay media outlets for news that appears on their platforms. Canadian officials say they are still attempting to avert a similar situation with Alphabet, which has also announced plans to block news content for users in Canada. Canadian heritage minister Pablo Rodriguez says that suspending government advertising will cost Facebook and Instagram about 10 million Canadian dollars (\$7.5m) per year.

## LUQUIRE LANDS COLUMBUS

Luquire has picked up Experience Columbus, the destination marketing organization for Ohio's capital city, following a competitive pitch. [Fahlgren Mortine](#) of Columbus was the incumbent on the account.



Charlotte-based Luquire will work to raise awareness of the greater Columbus region among key audiences including convention, trade show and sporting event attendees, and leisure visitors.

It will use paid, earned and owned opportunities to promote homegrown cultural experiences across the city, as well as its diverse neighborhoods.

Nearly 43M people visit Columbus annually. They spend \$6.6B and support 75K jobs. The city hosted the 2023 US Conference of Mayors annual meeting in June.

Luquire has experience working with DMOs. It has represented Visit North Carolina since 2010.

## FTI RECRUITS STANDARD BANK'S DOBSON

[FTI Consulting](#) appoints Wendy Dobson as a senior managing director in the financial services practice of its strategic communications segment.

Dobson was most recently head of group corporate citizenship at Standard Bank, Africa's largest bank with a presence in Europe, Asia and the US. She also served as the co-chair of the United Nations Environment Programme Finance Initiative Banking Board until May 2023.



**Wendy Dobson**

At FTI, Dobson, based in London, will lead the development of the segment's financial services-focused sustainability offering.

“Wendy is a highly respected expert with deep experience in navigating a dynamic, complex set of pressures, risks and opportunities,” said Neil Doyle, senior managing

director and EMEA head of financial services in FTI's strategic communications segment.

## KEKST WORKS PALLADIUM'S NAP ACQUISITION

Kekst CNC reps Palladium Equity Partners and its joint venture affiliate, Palladium Heritage, on the acquisition of National Auto Parts, USA, Inc.; NAP San Diego, LLC; and National Auto Parts-Oakland, LLC to form Collision Auto Parts LLC, a platform serving customers in the automotive aftermarket collision repair sector.

The goal of the deal is to grow the three companies and, over time, expand the combined entity's base through further acquisitions and opening additional locations. Financial terms were not disclosed.



**PALLADIUM**  
EQUITY PARTNERS

The newly formed company will serve markets in the Western U.S. with six distribution facilities and a base of over 3,000 customers comprised of regional body shops, multiple-shop operators and walk-ins. The new Company also has partnerships with insurance companies and is integrated with major estimation platforms.

Kekst CNC's Todd Fogarty and Jeffrey Taufield are handling media for the deal.

## ACCOUNTS IN TRANSIT

[The Decker/Royal Agency](#) is named agency of record for ecotourism company **Natural Habitat Adventures** and the **Claremont Hotel**, a property located in Southwest Harbor, ME. Natural Habitat's eco-conscious expeditions include polar bear tours in Churchill, Canada; Alaskan grizzly bear adventures; small-group Galapagos tours and African safaris. Since 2003, the company has partnered with the World Wildlife Fund to offer conservation travel—sustainable travel that directly protects nature. The Claremont Hotel, which first opened in 1884 and underwent a complete renovation in 2021, is a 52-accommodation property that focuses on maintaining what it calls a sophisticated summer camp atmosphere.



**Red Lorry Yellow Lorry** signs on as US agency of record for **Mercer Mass Timber**, a low-carbon advanced manufacturer of timber building materials and subsidiary of Mercer International Inc. Led from the lorries' Boston office and supported by teams in Austin and Los Angeles, the program will focus on building awareness through strategic media and social campaigns as well as promoting the brand's voice and internal experts through thought leadership, timely commentary and news-sharing opportunities.

**Stretch PR** is retained by **Heritage Golf Group**, a boutique owner-operator of upscale private country clubs and daily fee/destination golf courses, to provide internal and external content marketing programs to drive new business acquisition and engage employees. “This partnership will enable us to communicate the rich history of our clubs, showcase capital investments, promote improved member/guest experiences while also bolstering employee pride,” said Heritage Golf Group chief revenue officer Andy Miller.

[5W Public Relations](#) is named public relations agency of record for New York Cruise Lines. 5W, which already works with NYCL subsidiary Circle Line, will handle New York Cruise Lines' strategic communications planning, organic influencer relations, event ideation and management and media relations. In addition to Circle Line Sightseeing Cruises, New York Cruise Lines includes The BEAST speedboat attraction, seafood restaurant North River Lobster Company and La Barca Cantina – NYC's first and only Mexican cuisine yacht.

**NEW YORK**  
CRUISE LINES



**Brunner** is selected as strategic-creative AOR for **Church's Texas Chicken**. The agency will provide social marketing, digital marketing, analytics, creative development and strategic planning for the quick-service chicken restaurant chain. “Their proven expertise in the marketing landscape and deep understanding of our industry will undouble help us amplify our brand and engage with our loyal customers,” said Church's Texas Chicken executive VP and CMO Natalia Franco.

**InnoVision Marketing Group** signs on as AOR for **Solutions for Change**, a nonprofit organization dedicated to solving the root causes of homelessness and transforming the lives of individuals and families in need. InnoVision will collaborate with the organization to develop a comprehensive marketing and communications strategy with the goal of raising awareness, engaging the community and driving increased support for its programs.

## **WEBER SHANDWICK'S JANIN JOINS CI**

Melanie Janin, who was executive VP at Weber Shandwick, has joined Conservation International as chief communications & marketing officer.



**Melanie Janin**

She is responsible for PR strategy, messaging and promotion of the CI brand.

CI has offices in 30 countries and runs projects in more than 100 nations.

At Weber Shandwick, Janin led the sustainability and social impact practice on the West Coast and counseled companies, NGOs and foundations.

Earlier, she ran sustainability communications at Amazon, handled marketing and PR for the Business for Social Responsibility group, developed corporate partnerships at the Environmental Defense Fund, and served as director of communications at Greenpeace.

## **PORT HOPE SEEKS DMO PARTNER**

Port Hope, which bills itself as Ontario's favorite small town, is looking to hire a firm to provide destination marketing services.



It wants a firm to promote community and visitor events, attractions, and downtown heritage districts in a fashion that reflects Port Hope's core values and aligns with its brand, according to the RFP.

Port Hope has hosted many TV and film shoots including "Schitt's Creek," "Stephen King's IT," "The Marsh King's Daughter," "Murdoch Mysteries" and "The Hardy Boys."

Located on Lake Ontario, Port Hope boasts of sandy beaches, boating, fishing, hiking trails and golf.

Port Hope will issue a contract for 18 months. Proposals are due July 21 and go to Port Hope's electronic portal.

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

## **CORNERSTONE ADDS BEL EDWARDS ALUM**

Cornerstone has hired Richard Carbo, who was deputy chief of staff and communications director to Louisiana's Democratic Governor John Bel Edwards.



**Richard Carbo**

Carbo has more than 15 years of experience in state, federal and political affairs.

He began his Capitol Hill career in the office of Louisiana Senator Mary Landrieu and Georgia Democrat Rep. John Barrow.

Carbo in 2019 managed Bel Edwards re-election campaign and helped him become the first Democratic incumbent Governor to win re-election in Louisiana in nearly 40 years.

Campbell Kaufman, Cornerstone president, said the firm will leverage Carbo's experience and expertise to help clients navigate complex communications and policy challenges.

Carbo joins Cornerstone from S-3 Public Affairs, where he helped pilot its PA and strategic communications operation.

## **YANKEES SELL OUT AMERICA'S PASTIME**

What novelist Tom Wolfe once derisively called "hog-stomping capitalism" has taken over America's pastime.

The New York Yankees' pinstripes and gray roadies will be sporting a sleeve patch for Starr Insurance, a company founded by the old pirate Maurice Greenburg. For that showcase, Starr will pay the Yankees a reported \$25 million fee.

Does the association with the Yankees make people more likely or less likely to approve of Starr, support Starr, or purchase its insurance? And how about the Yankees, who aren't doing so hot this season? This move shows definitively how some companies believe branding means slapping your name and logo all over everything the consumer is expected to encounter or see.

Of course, Ball Park Franks won't be far behind, and even the much reviled, totally trashed Bud Light brand might be making a sleeve patch appearance in a late bid to regain its masculine credentials. After all, Anheuser-Busch has a ready-made partner in the St. Louis Cardinals.

One ball player said that baseball players will soon look like NASCAR drivers—plastered from head to toe in sponsorship tags.

We don't know how far this will go, but America is well down the road to selling out everything that can be monetized. However, we can rest assured that one totally monetized group will never wear sponsorship patches—Congress.

*Bill Huey is president of Strategic Communications and the author of Advertising's Double Helix: A Proposed New Process Model. Journal of Advertising Research, May/June 1999. His article about advertising effects has been cited in books and academic papers around the world.*



**Bill Huey**

## **PR LEGEND BOB COHN DIES AT 88**

Legendary PR man Bob Cohn, who launched Cohn & Wolfe with Norman Wolfe in 1971, died in Tuscaloosa on July 4. He was 88.

Atlanta-based C&W emerged as a consumer products & sports powerhouse, serving blue-chip clients such as Coca-Cola, FedEx and Chick-fil-A. Young & Rubicam acquired the firm and merged it with Burson-Marsteller. C&W exists today as BCW Global, which is a unit of WPP.

Brooklyn-born Cohn served in the Air Force and enrolled at the University of Alabama via the GI Bill.

As a journalist, Cohn covered the Civil Rights Movement and served as Atlanta bureau chief for a number of Georgia newspapers.

In 2021, Cohn and wife, June, moved to a senior living facility at the University of Alabama campus.

A celebration of Cohn's life is slated for August 5 in Barge Commons at The Westminster Schools in Atlanta.

Donations may be made in Cohn's name to Hospice of West Alabama, 3851 Loop Road, Tuscaloosa, AL 35404.



**Bob Cohn**

# COMMENTARY



**Impressed by Saudi Arabia's sportswashing deal** with the PGA Tour, the Qatar Investment Authority has taken a minority stake in Monumental Sports & Entertainment, owner of seven professional and amateur teams including the

NBA's Washington Wizards, WNBA's Washington Mystics and NHL's Washington Capitals.

The investment comes in the aftermath of Qatar's hosting of the 2022 World Cup, a PR dream turned nightmare as the world focused on the mistreatment and deaths of the migrant workers who were recruited to build the infrastructure to support the desert event.

Hassan Al-Thawadi, who headed the World Cup, said 400 to 500 worker migrants died in connection with the construction of facilities since the Gulf State was awarded the games in 2010. Human rights organization say that number is ridiculously low.

The Qataris prefer to focus on US fun and games rather than compensating the impoverished families of victims living in the Philippines, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Nepal.

They found a willing but close-mouthed partner in Monumental. The company [issued a very low-key press release](#) on July 10 to announce the tie-up with Qatar. It downplayed such a monumental investment.

The release did not include a statement from Monumental billionaire founder/chairman/CEO Ted Leonsis about why he sold a chunk of his business to the Qataris.

There are no press contacts. Inquiries are directed to [media@qia@qa](mailto:media@qia@qa).

Monumental is definitely a high-value sportswashing investment for the QIA.

But Leonsis has some explaining to do about why he decided to aid and abet Qatar's effort to wash away its human rights abuses.

**Kudos to former AT&T chief Randall Stephenson** for resigning his post on the PGA Tour's policy board to protest its organization's decision to jump into bed with Saudi Arabia.

The deal "is not one that I can objectively evaluate or in good conscience support, particularly in light of the US intelligence report concerning Jamal Khashoggi in 2018," Stephenson wrote in his resignation letter.

Released in 2021, the intelligence report concluded that Saudi Arabia Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman approved the operation to capture or kill the Washington Post contributor and Saudi dissident.

Connecticut Senator Richard Blumenthal on July 11 urged PGA Tour executives to stand up to Saudi sportswashing.

He promised to continue shining a spotlight on the Saudi/PGA alliance.

**Stressed out ESGers.** Political polarization and the anti-woke crusade are making it a lot harder for CSR and ESG executives to carry out their jobs, according to a [survey from](#)

[the Association of Corporate Citizenship Professionals.](#)

The survey of 149 companies with more than \$1B in community investments found intense pressure to produce results in a charged environment, often with fewer resources and continuing post-pandemic challenges.

Eighty-six percent of respondents report increased demand for their services, 50 percent suffered burnout and 46 percent doubt they can meet expectations.

"Without the financial and human resources and support from the C-suite that these initiatives require to be effective, the gains companies have made in the last five years will quickly lose momentum," said Carolyn Berkowitz, ACCP president.

The top five social priority areas for companies are environmental sustainability (56 percent), K-12 education (53 percent), food insecurity (49 percent), workforce development/job training (46 percent) and racial justice/equity (44 percent).

**PR play of the month goes to Don Stevens**, chief of the Nulhegan Band of The Coosuk Abenaki Nation, who called out the phonies at Ben & Jerry's.

The company issued a statement on July 4, saying the country was founded on stolen indigenous land and it is time to return it to Native Americans.

It suggested beginning in South Dakota and giving Mount Rushmore to the Lakota tribe.

Stevens believes Ben & Jerry's is on the right track but should kick off its effort in Burlington, Vermont, where it is headquartered. Burlington sits on ancestral lands of the Abenaki confederacy. He is willing to work with Ben & Jerry's on the best path forward.

What's the hold-up, Ben and Jerry, in returning the Burlington HQ land to its rightful owners?

**Three of the architects of Fox Broadcasting and Fox TV** have issued [a public apology for their roles in unknowingly creating the "Fox disinformation machine."](#)

Bill Reyner, who was outside counsel; Preston Padden, DC lobbyist; and Ken Solomon, EVP-network distribution; worked with Rupert Murdoch during the 1990s to create the fourth TV network.

They admired Murdoch and believed the creation of a fourth competitive force in broadcast television was in the public interest, according to their blog of July 12.

The trio never envisioned what Fox would become.

They wrote: *The connection between Fox and the January 6 attack is so strong that multiple Jan 6 defendants have pleaded not guilty arguing they were suffering from "Fox-itis"—a disease caused by watching false news on Fox!*

The writers call out Murdoch for letting the lies and disinformation run amok on Fox.

They claim that many people who worked to create Fox "share our resentment that the reputation of the Fox brand we helped to build has been ruined by false news."

The other Fox enablers should come forward.

—Kevin McCauley