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# O'Dwyer's Newsletter

The Inside News of  
PR and Marketing  
Communications

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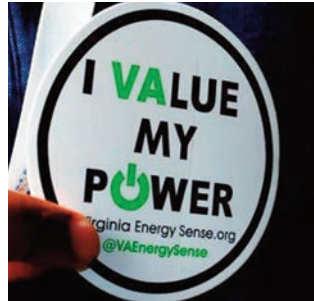
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## VIRGINIA PLUGS IN ENERGY PITCHES

Virginia has kicked off a review of its seven-figure "Energy Sense" consumer education and outreach campaign with an RFP process through August 1.

Golin's Arlington office won the last review in 2009.

The Commonwealth's State Corporation Commission, which oversees utilities, insurance and other businesses, administers the five-year-old energy conservation push under the tagline "Value Your Power."



The account encompasses earned and paid media, grassroots outreach and social media targeting businesses, households and other institutions with a goal of reducing energy consumption by 10 percent of the 2006 level by 2022.

Budget is \$1M per year over a contract that could stretch three and a half years with options.

An optional pre-proposal conference is slated for July 1. Proposals are due Aug. 1.

RFP: <http://bit.ly/113CclY>.

## OGILVY SNAGS SOCIAL STANDOUT

Ogilvy's Washington office has added Tony Silva as executive VP/group dir. for its social marketing practice.

He takes over for Jennifer Wayman, who was upped to managing director of the US social group. Silva served at ICF International for more than a decade, rising to the senior VP slot. He has public diplomacy savvy gleaned from work for the State Dept.'s "US-Middle East Partnership for Breast Cancer Awareness and Research," which included input from the First Lady, foreign politicians and corporate/NGO partnerships.

Rob Mathias, North America CEO, praised Silva's skills in "sustainability communications and behavior change related to energy, environment and health augments."

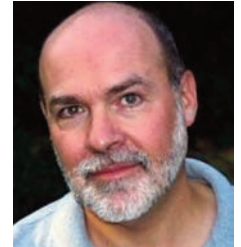
**New York City Mayor Bill deBlasio** has named Andrea Hagelgans director of agency comms. to handle his ties with various municipal units and his cabinet.

She was at Camino PR and handled Planned Parenthood's high-profile response to the decision of the Susan G. Komen Foundation to pull funding. Chelsea-based Camino works for non-profit working on progressive issues. Earlier, Hagelgans was deputy press secretary for NYC's campaign finance board.

## PR PRO IN AA HOT SEAT AFTER CEO OUSTER

Allan Mayer, head of 42West's strategic communications unit, was named co-chair of American Apparel following the board's June 18 decision to terminate "with cause" controversial founder/chief Dov Charney.

Prior to 42West, Mayer served nine-years as entertainment practice head at crisis firm Sitrick and Company, where he advised Motion Picture Assn. of America, Los Angeles Dodgers, Rush Limbaugh, MTV, Recording Industry Assn. of America, Sony, Eminem and Steven Spielberg.



Mayer

With Mike Sitrick, he wrote "Spin: How To Turn The Power of the Press to Your Advantage."

Since 2007, Mayer has been an independent board member of American Apparel, which has "an outgoing investigation into alleged misconduct" of Charney.

The board suspended Charney and intends to fire him after 30 days, in compliance with his contract.

American Apparel, which is based in downtown Los Angeles and noted for its sweatshop-free "made-in-US" policy, reported a one percent dip in first-quarter revenues to \$137M. It shaved its net loss from \$45.5M to \$5.5M.

Sitrick (Mike Sitrick and Terry Fahn) reps American Apparel.

## KEKST REPS ATLANTIC CITY CASINO FLOP

Revel Entertainment Group, which opened the \$2.5B Revel Casino Hotel in Atlantic City two years ago with great fanfare, has declared Chapter 11 and begun the process to unload the property. Kekst and Company is handling communications.

The 57-story hotel is the tallest building in Atlantic City and was to symbolize the comeback of the blighted town.

Jersey Governor Chris Christie plowed more than \$250M in state cash to facilitate construction of the project that has run up losses of \$260M for Revel's parent.

The casino employs more than 3,100 people who could be jobless if the sale of the facility falls through. Wall Street analysts say the property is worth less than \$300M.

The northeast/mid-Atlantic casino glut hurt Revel as the Garden State's gaming revenue fell to \$3B in 2013 compared to its \$5.2B peak in 2006.

Kekst's Peter Hill and Kimberly Kriger handle the Revel account. Publicis Groupe of France owns Kekst.

## **SANITAS REPS AFGHAN PREXY HOPEFUL**

Sanitas International is repping Abdullah Abdullah, the leading candidate to succeed Hamid Karzai as president of Afghanistan.



**Abdullah**

The DC shop is backing the "free and fair" advocacy campaign designed to promote a secure and transparent election.

That fairness goal took a major hit blow following allegations of fraud raised by Abdullah. He believes voter turnout in the second round of election on June 14 was inflated in areas, where his

rival Ashraf Ghani enjoys strong support.

On June 18, Abdullah charged Ghani and Karzai of committing "industrial scale" voter fraud. He demands an end to the count. Abdullah, a doctor and former foreign minister of Afghanistan, beat Ghani by a 45 to 32 percent margin in the April vote.

Pitched as Afghanistan's first democratic vote in the history, the election is key to continued western support for Afghanistan. Karzai, who is term-limited, was scheduled to hand over power to his successor on Aug. 2.

The *Wall Street Journal* reports a political crisis triggered by election fraud could prolong Karzai's rule for months and derail the bilateral security agreement needed to keep American and other forces in Afghanistan.

## **MASTERCARD CHARGES FTI WITH DC DUTIES**

MasterCard International has signed on as client at FTI Consulting for foreign policy and business support.

Tom Crawford, managing director of FTI's strategic communications operation, helms the work. He is founding partner of C2 Group, the Washington PA firm that FTI, swallowed last year.

MasterCard spent \$4M in lobbying fees during the past year as firms such as The Raben Group, Smith-Free Group and Clark Geduldig (former aide to Speaker John Boehner) Cranford & Nelson and Tassej & Assocs.

Tucker Foote heads MasterCard's US government affairs practice.

## **MP PITCHES SILICON VALLEY FOR IRELAND**

McGrath/Power PR, the San Jose high-tech PR powerhouse, has scooped up the IDA Ireland business in a competitive pitch.

The shop will showcase investment opportunities in Ireland to Silicon Valley companies involved in the tech, biotech and life sciences space.

MP, which has worked for the Economic Development Board of Northern Ireland, will serve the Irish Republic in tandem with PadillaCRT, which is more focused on US East Coast promotion. Both firms belong to Worldcom.

Ireland's leader Enda Kenny recently toured Silicon Valley, where he made investment pitches to firms such as eBay. That effort paid off as eBay's PayPal unit announced plans this month to add 400 jobs in Dundalk.

Google, Hewlett Packard and Microsoft have facilities in Ireland.

## **SITRICK WORKS H-WOOD PATERNITY SUIT**

Sitrick and Company is mounting a PR play for Danielle Schreiber, the mother of a four-year-old-child at the center of a paternity suit by the actor Jason Patric that the *New York Times* calls "one of the highest-profile custody fights in the country."

S&C CEO Mike

Sitrick is handling the campaign and has worked with Schreiber's law firm, Los Angeles' Glaser Weil, in the past.

Patric seeks to be the legally recognized father of the child, conceived via in vitro fertilization with his former girlfriend, Schreiber.

CNN noted June 13: "His unmarried status -- not hers -- has led to a painful and protracted court battle, complete with his-and-her morning show appearances, a website, Stand Up for Gus (his), a [domestic violence] restraining order (hers), appeals to the California Legislature (his), even a legal attempt (hers) to keep him from publicly speaking or tweeting Gus' name."

Schreiber's camp brought in PR support amid Patric and lawyer Fred Silberberg's ongoing media campaign over the past two years advocating for parental rights for in vitro cases and children born out of wedlock.

Patric worked with Rogers & Cowan earlier in his career but the firm declined to comment on its current status.

Schreiber claims Patric had no interest in being a father when he donated sperm at a clinic in 2009 and asked that his name not be included on the child's birth certificate. The actor says he has been a participating parent and kept his name off the document to protect the child's privacy.

In addition to reams of media coverage and legal filings, the case has sparked legislative action and challenges in a bid to "bring order to the Wild West of nonanonymous sperm donations," according to the *New York Times*.

Amid conflicting laws in California, Schreiber won the first legal round at the superior court level, but an appellate court in May sent the case back for trial, a win for Patric.

## **WILBER TAKES MEDIA POST AT QORVIS**

Colleen Wilber, a former member of the American Cancer Society's advocacy team, is now at Qorvis MSLGroup as VP/media relations.

She joins from America's Promise Alliance, the non-profit that works to cut down the number of high school dropouts.

APA, an outgrowth of the Presidents' Summit for America's Future, says six million people aged 16 to 24 are neither in school nor employed. Wilber served as VP/media relations at the Washington-based group. She was senior manager of media advocacy at the ACS and was an account staffer at Boston's O'Neill and Associates.

Publicis Groupe of France owns MSL.





**BUZZFEED'S STEINBERG TO MAIL POST**

Jon Steinberg, who was president/COO at BuzzFeed, is now North America chief for MailOnline, the No. 1 English language website.

The former CNBC Squawk Alley contributor held the BuzzFeed COO post for the last four years, establishing business relationships with high-profile brands such as Google and Facebook.

Steinberg also worked at Google, Majestic Research and Booz Allen Hamilton.

MailOnline publisher Martin Clarke called Steinberg "the perfect person to lead the charge as we grow and mature as a product in the US."

Britain's Daily Mail & General Trust owns MailOnline.



Steinberg

**BAQUET TREATED FOR CANCER**

Dean Baquet, winner of the *New York Times* power struggle that resulted in the ouster of Jill Abramson, the paper's first woman executive editor, had a malignant tumor removed from his kidney on June 14.

He sent an email June 16 to share the news with staffers.

Baquet will spend a week away from the NYT, to help recover from the operation.

He described the procedure as a "minimally invasive, completely successful surgery."



Baquet

Doctors gave Baquet "an excellent prognosis," according to his message.

The 57-year-old editor promised to keep-in-touch with management and report on any new developments.

He was managing editor before sliding into the top post on May 14.

**POST-DISPATCH DUMPS GEORGE WILL**

The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* has dropped syndicated *Washington Post* columnist George Will to protest his June 5 piece that dismissed as overblown complaints about rape and sexual assault on college campuses.

Will wrote that rape victims get a "coveted status" on campuses and that some claims of rape are "delusional."

Tony Messenger, editorial page editor of the P-D, penned a note to readers saying Michael Gerson, another Post columnist and St. Louis native, is replacing Will each Thursday and Sunday.

The former aide to George W. Bush, speechwriter for Bob Dole/Jack Kemp and senior editor at *US News & World Report* has a "compassionate conservatism" position that will "connect with our readers, regardless of their political bent," according to Messenger.

Messenger noted a change in columns had been under consideration for months, but Will's Jun 5 piece made the decision easier.

"The column was offensive and inaccurate; we apologize for publishing it," he wrote.

The National Organization for Women and others are lobbying the Washington Post to drop Will. Post editor Fred Hiatt said the controversial column was "well within bounds of legitimate debate."

**GROSSMAN TO BLOOMBERG DIGITAL POST**

Keith Grossman will become publisher of Bloomberg Digital, a new post, in mid-July.

He will exit the associate publisher post at *Wired* and *Ars Technica*.

Bloomberg Media Group chief Justin Smith on June 2 added Paul Caine, a 23-year Time Inc. veteran and former CEO of WestwoodOne, as global chief revenue officer for web, mobile, TV, digital, radio and print.

Grossman, who joined *Wired* in 2002 as account manager, will report to Caine.

**GERMAN MEDIA GIANT IN US VID PLAY**

Germany's Studio 71, part of ProSiebenSat.1 Group, targets the US with the launch of "The Mansion" channel on YouTube.

The move follows its March acquisition here of Collective Digital Studio, producer, distributor and marketer of digital video content.



Set in West Hollywood, The Mansion is positioned as a reality show for YouTube, featuring web/video stars, according to Christian Meinberger, head of content at Studio 71.

The goal is to be the "first international to target the American market," said a statement from Sebastian Weil, managing director of Studio71. "We are creating a truly global platform for American branded entertainment sponsors and leading Web talent."

**NETFLIX BAGS HANDLER**

Comedian Chelsea Handler, who will wind down her "Chelsea Lately" late-night program on "E" in August after a seven-year run, signed a production deal with Netflix.

The relationship kicks off in October as Netflix debuts a one-hour performance based on Chandler's "Uganda Be Kidding Me Live" tour.

Handler will do four docu-comedies in 2015, exploring her effort to understand politics, NASCAR, Silicon Valley and the NBA draft.

In 2016, Handler will star in the first on-demand talk show for Netflix members.

"The Internet has disrupted many of the conventions of traditional television and together with Chelsea Handler," said Netflix chief content officer Ted Sarandos. "Netflix is looking forward to reimagining the late night talk show for the on-demand generation."



Handler

**MEDIA NEWS****BRONCOS NAMED TOP NFL PR STAFF**

The Denver Broncos' PR unit, which navigated a high-profile Super Bowl defeat and the exit of its longtime VP of corporate communications, has won the top annual award for NFL communications departments given by the Professional Football Writers of America.

Patrick Smyth is executive director of media relations for the AFC Champion Broncos, who saw the retirement of VP of corporate communications Jim Saccomano at the end of the 2013-14 season. Smyth, who joined the team out of college, was named to the top media post in 2010.



Smyth, Schubert and Villanueva in the press box at Mile High Stadium in Denver.

PFWA first VP Jeff Legwold covers the Broncos for ESPN.com said the team's PR department has operated with a "high degree of professionalism" through a gauntlet of communications issues – positive and negative -- over the past few years. "From the team's anguish following cornerback Darrent Williams' murder to the world-wide phenomenon that was Tim Tebow's tenure in Denver to the hysteria of Peyton Manning and the Super Bowl trip in 2013," he said of the Pete Rozelle Award-winning staff. "There was Mike Shanahan's firing, Josh McDaniels' firing, Spygate II, John Elway's return to the team and all of the games in between."

Rebecca Villanueva and Erich Schubert round out the Broncos' PR staff as media services manager and media relations manager, along with interns Christian Edwards and Liz Mannis.

The annual PR award is named after Rozelle, the longtime NFL commissioner who started out in PR with the Los Angeles Rams in the 1950s.

Super Bowl-winning coach Pete Carroll of the Seattle Seahawks was given PFWA's annual Jack Horrigan Award for cooperation with the media by a football executive or coach. Seahawks beat writer Dave Boling of the Tacoma News Tribune praised Carroll's accessibility and articulation, as well as a "rare grasp of the emotional side of stories." Boling added that the coach is "not up there just firing off superficial answers, but actually engaged in the process."

Longtime Pittsburgh Post-Gazette scribe Ed Bouchette was honored by PFWA for his lifetime contri-

bution to football through writing, while Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson took the group's Good Guy Award for 2014.

**SEGALL UPPED AT GUGENHEIM MEDIA**

Lynn Segall, who was senior VP/publisher at *The Hollywood Reporter*, is now executive VP and group publisher of THR and *Billboard*.

Her job is to expand *Billboard's* advertising and develop cross digital promotions and sponsorships.

She reports to GM entertainment group co-president John Amato.

**KNIGHT INVESTS \$4M IN CONTENT PLATFORM**

The Knight Foundation will spend \$4M to support development of new digital journalism platforms to increase engagement with audiences.

The effort is designed to create closer audience ties with media outlets and help news organizations better management user comments/contributions.

The *New York Times*, *Washington Post* and Mozilla have teamed with Knight in the effort.

Greg Barber, director of digital news projects at the Post, described the program as not just "another commenting platform for publishers; it's a publishing platform for readers."

**AP PROBES FH-ILLINOIS OBAMACARE PACT**

The Associated Press has put FleishmanHillard's multimillion-dollar Obamacare pact with Illinois under the microscope, questioning PR spending rates that it says were among the highest in the nation.

The AP, which acknowledged that its analysis of the first four months of the base 12-month pact is a "limited snapshot," reported that more than 90 Fleishman staffers billed at least \$270 an hour for salary and overhead during the early months of the "Get Covered Illinois" campaign.

Those rates were compared with other Affordable Care Act PR rates in states like Colorado (\$120/hour) and Connecticut (\$175), as well as JWT's \$165-per-hour rate for Illinois' tourism account.

FH senior partner Jack Modzelewski said the campaign was "heavily front-loaded" and "all hands on deck."

FH's Chicago office knocked off 11 competitors in July 2013 for the pact, worth up to \$35M over three years.

State Rep. Darlene Senger, a Republican who is running for Congress and pushing for an audit of \$36M in federal funds given to the Prairie State for its Affordable Care Act push, told the AP the PR rates are "absolutely excessive."

Read the full report at <http://bit.ly/11vm7v9>.

**AFP NAMES GLOBAL NEWS DIRECTOR**

Michele Leridon was named global news director of AFP, succeeding Philippe Massonnet, who held the post since 2009. Leridon has been with the global news agency since 1981.

"This is entirely my own decision, and it is due to private considerations," Massonnet said in a statement.



## NEWS OF PR FIRMS

### BAROKAS AIDS ATARI'S LATEST COMEBACK

Video game pioneer Atari has engaged Seattle's Barokas PR as it plots its latest comeback attempt, a bid to leverage its iconic history in the online era.

The "Pong" pioneer spent 2013 in Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection but said June 18 that it has a new corporate strategy to produce online video games, apps, casinos, video content. Licensing is also expected play a key role as its portfolio of more than 200 classic games "Asteroids" and "Centipede" will be rented out to adorn everything from slot machines to t-shirts.

Sixteen-year-old Barokas PR is led by CEO Howie Barokas, a veteran of Imagio, the storied Seattle tech advertising and PR firm that was sold to JWT in 2000.

Paris-based Atari, which also has offices in New York and was founded in 1972, recently reintroduced "RollerCoaster Tycoon" and "Haunted House" as mobile games, and online multiplayer game "Minimum."

TechCrunch's Matt Burns wrote June 18 of Atari's gambit: "Successfully emerging from bankruptcy with its decades of trademarks intact has put the company in a great position, and it seems primed to capitalize on this fresh start."

FTI Consulting advised Atari through its 2013 Chapter 11 filing.



### AKIN GUMP PUSHES FOR AMAZON'S WINGS

Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld is working to make Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos' dream of delivering packages by air a reality.

Amazon Prime Air is using Akin Gump for "federal advocacy with regard to the testing of unmanned aerial vehicles in the US."

The Seattle electronic commerce giant believes putting Prime Air into commercial use will take a number of years to advance technology and line up the required Federal Aviation Administration rules and regulations. It hopes Prime Air will take off in 2015 to provide customers with package delivery in 30 minutes or less.

Greg Walden, one-time chief counsel at the FAA; Ed Pagano, ex-aide to Sen. Pat Leahy, and Michael Drobac, ex-legislative dir. for Sen. Norm Coleman, staff the account.

**BRIEFS:** Chicago-based **Resolute Consulting** has created an all-digital crisis communications planning service that includes development of a mobile app to help clients to implement PR plans. COO David Smolensky said mobile apps can fill a critical role in crisis comms. as establishing "clearly communicated processes and credible information" are key to crisis PR. ...Milwaukee-based **Bader Rutter** was the top ad agency or PR firm in *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel's* Top Workplaces list for 2014.

## NEW ACCOUNTS

### New York Area

**Finn Partners**, New York/Strength of Nature Global Brands, ethnic hair care products, as AOR via the firm's multicultural & image marketing practice. Work includes media relations, creative, sponsorship activation and corporate relations for the company and its brands.

**TrylonSMR**, New York/Georgian Partners, growth equity firm, as AOR for US media relations.

**JPR**, New York/The Lodge at Glendorn (PA); Gurney's Montauk Resort & Seawater Spa (NY); The Lodge at Ventana Canyon (AZ); Mountain Trek, health and fitness resort and spa program; Tessemæ's, all natural dressings and condiments; Zen Monkey Breakfast, oatmeal and yogurt pre-packaged breakfast foods, and F3 Foods, healthful mail-order meal ingredients service, all for PR.

### East

**Big River**, Richmond, Va./OFIC North America, sustainable roofing solutions, for a digital redesign.

**Buffalo Communications**, Vienna, Va./Lizzie Driver, women's golf-lifestyle fashion brand, for trade and consumer PR.

**Widmeyer Communications**, Washington, DC/Cornell University's Samuel Curtis Johnson Graduate School of Management, for strategic communications planning and counsel as the Johnson School's AOR. Widmeyer is part of Finn Partners.

**DDC Advocacy**, Washington, D.C./No Greater Sacrifice Golf Digest Congressional Shoot-Out Tournament, for PR for the June 23 charity event.

### Southeast

**Harrison & Shriftman**, Miami Beach/Bal Harbour Shops, luxury, open-air shopping center in the Miami suburb of Bal Harbour, for PR.

**Fish Consulting**, Hollywood, Fla./Polaroid Fotobar, photo-printing franchise, and Lo-Lo's Chicken & Waffles, both for franchisee recruitment and consumer PR support, and Orangetheory Fitness, for national consumer PR and social media.

### West

**Morgan Marketing and PR**, Irvine, Calif./BRIO Tuscan Grille, for PR and marketing for the grand opening of BRIO's 58th location. Morgan worked the 2013 opening of its first California location in Rancho Cucamonga.

**Murphy O'Brien PR**, Los Angeles/Bruerie Gourmet Waffle Sandwiches, fast casual eatery; Cinépolis Luxury Cinemas, the largest movie theater chain in Mexico with 205 theaters there and five in the US; Four Seasons Resort Punta Mita (Mexico), and The Grafton on Sunset, West Hollywood hotel, all for PR.

**McGrath/Power PR and Communications**, San Jose/Apriva, mobile payment solutions, for traditional and social media strategy and implementation, and Ubiquity, for internal and external comms., including branding all products and services as the company moves to a Nasdaq listing.

### International

**MWW**, London/AdRoll, retargeting program, to raise awareness for the company among SME customers and media agencies as it expands in the UK.

**NEWS OF SERVICES****PR NEWSWIRE CRACKS DOWN ON CONTENT**

PR Newswire has imposed stricter guidelines to root out "low quality content" and crack down on releases more focused on gaming search engines than providing analysis and useful information.

Google sent tremors through press release services with its Panda 4.0 update late last month. A study by Seer Interactive on May 29 said Google dropped the search rankings on millions of individual press releases online, particularly those published by Vocus' PRweb.com.

PR Newswire senior VP Jason Edelboim said the recent update to Google's algorithm amounts to a "technology-based editorial guidelines for content quality." He said PRN editorial staff will review releases for analysis and original content, use of varied formats rather than template copy, length to cut down on short releases intended only as link-bait, and overuse of keywords.

Sarah Skerik, VP of strategic communications for PRN, said in a blog post that an audit of PRN's site after the Google update identified spam press releases garnering substantial traffic because of "black hat" SEO tactics. She said most of PRN's customers will not be affected by the beefed up content guidelines and stressed that, in addition to the millions of visitors to its website, the company's proprietary distribution network reaches a large global audience.

Google's update, known as Panda 4.0, also whacked sites like eBay and ask.com.

**M BROWN ACQUIRES EFFECTIVEBRANDS**

WPP's Millward Brown research operation has acquired marketing strategy firm EffectiveBrands.

MWW will combine the acquisition with its Optimor strategy consulting unit to form Millward Brown Vermeer.

Travyn Rhall, CEO of MW, said the new entity helps clients "answer the key questions that unleash brand-led business growth and ensure that the resulting strategies are implemented effectively around the world."

EB, known for its Marketing2020 study, was founded in 2001 by Marc de Swaan Arons and Frank van den Driest and counts 65 employees.

MBV will be run by an executive board of Mario Simon, currently president and global chair of Millward Brown Optimor, as CEO; van den Driest as chief commercial officer, and de Swaan Arons as CMO.

**GMR EYES SPORTS, ENTERTAINMENT DOLLARS**

Milwaukee-based marketing giant GMR has formed a sports and entertainment consulting group to operation across North America, Asia, Europe and Latin America, aimed to capitalize on the billions being spent on sponsorships and media rights.

Jan Katzoff, who heads the new operation, said the practice will lean on industry relationships, regional insights and other resources to help brands direct their dollars in the sector.

Adam Lippard is EVP and Vince O'Brien joined GMR from Momentum Worldwide to serve as SVP of the new unit.

**PEOPLE****Joined**

**Emily David**, PA staffer at FleishmanHillard and former White House press intern, to ASGK Public Strategies. Washington, D.C., as an associate. **Michael Johnston**, an aide to Rep. Michael Capuano (D-MA) and former ASGK intern, also joins as an associate.

**Justine Sacco**, the former IAC/Interactive Corp communications director who was fired after an offensive tweet last year, has landed at Hot or Not, the website being re-made into a dating app. She is heading PR for Hot or Not, part of UK-based Badoo. Sacco, a South Africa native, was fired from her senior director of communications post at IAC in December after tweeting: "Going to Africa. Hope I don't get AIDS. Just kidding. I'm white!" She previously handled PR at WWE, The Morris+King company and DKC.

**Sacco**

**Noah Theran**, dir. of comms. for the Private Equity Growth Capital Council, to The Internet Association, Washington, D.C., as head of group comms. to speak for top tech companies like Amazon, Uber, Google, Airbnb and Facebook. Theran worked PR for the former Private Equity Council and picked up a Silver Anvil Award through the industry's 2011-2 turn in the spotlight amid Bain Capital founder Mitt Romney's presidential campaign. He was previously with Rasky Baerlein Strategic Communications in DC.

**Mike Mayzel**, a tech PR veteran of StumbleUpon, Google and Porter Novelli, to social media platform Pinterest in San Francisco to guide partner communications. Mayzel exits the project-focused consultancy The Pramana Collective, where he was its first executive in residence over the past five months and worked with Pinterest. At Pinterest, he takes a role vacated by Facebook alum **Annie Ta** in April when she became product manager. He oversees communications efforts for the company and partners that leverage the platform in marketing and PR. Mayzel previously directed comms. for StumbleUpon and worked comms. and partner development at Google. **Barry Schnitt** heads communications and public policy for Pinterest, which he joined in 2012 from Facebook.

**Libi Sprow Rice**, dir. of global comms. and employment branding for research firm CEB, to The Executive Leadership Council, Alexandria, Va., as dir. of comms., external affairs and PR. She earlier worked corporate comms. and events for Discovery Comms.

**Promoted**

**Dennis Dembia** to senior VP, Rogers & Cowan, Los Angeles, expanding his role overseeing publicity, marketing and branding efforts for clients in the film and TV space. The 10-year R&C alum adds responsibility for shaping and managing strategic corporate PR initiatives clients like Miramax, Walden Media, Unified Pictures, Saban Brands, AMBI Pictures, and Japanese TV company WOWOW.

**Dembia**



## **KRL BOOSTS EMBATTLED SOUTH SUDAN**

KRL International is working Washington to boost the profile of embattled South Sudan, which has suffered six months of bloodshed during battles between forces loyal to the country's president and VP.

Riva Levinson's firm's advocacy program supports efforts to "consolidate peace, reconciliation and the development priorities" of President Salva Kir's government, according to its contract.



KRL targets the US government, donor/philanthropic communities, NGOs and media.

The one-year contract is worth fees of \$240K.

Before establishing KRL in 2007, Levinson was managing director at Burson-Marsteller's BKSH & Assocs., which is now Prime Policy Group.

She's a long-time advisor to Liberia President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Africa's first woman chief of state.

Kir and rival politico Riek Machar met this month to negotiate a truce, but are now boycotting the talks.

Thousands have been killed and 1.3M people have been displaced since the outbreak began in December.

South Sudan gained its independence from Sudan in 2011, which makes it the world's youngest nation.

## **WINNIPEG REVIEWS PR**

Winnipeg is reviewing its PR management, budget and outreach for the Canadian city of 650K people.

The *Winnipeg Free Press* reports Manitoba's capital last conducted a PR overhaul in 2005, and wants to modernize communications to incorporate advances in technology and social media into the mix, according to Linda Burch, director of corporate-support services.

The review also is assessing how central PR unit deals with the city's 17 municipal agencies.

Winnipeg recently established an office of policy development and communications, which oversees strategic PR.

Bonnie Staples-Lyon, ex-chief of staff to Mayor Sam Katz, heads that unit.

## **EDELMAN EXPANDS FINANCIAL SAVVY**

Edelman has added David Ryan, a financial communications pro, to its corporate practice in Toronto.

As senior VP, he will build out the firm's financial communications practice. His capital market savvy includes takeovers, proxy fights, disclosure, restructurings and going-private transactions.

Ryan has worked for Karyo Communications (Vancouver), Colour (Halifax) and Longview Communications (Toronto).

He handled CNOOC Ltd's Nexen acquisition, Accelerero Capital's bid for Allstream, Maple Leaf Food's effort to fend off West Face Capital and Placer Dome's transactions with Barrick Gold.

Scott Thompson heads Edelman's Canadian corporate practice.

## **ALBUQUERQUE LOADS PR AMID DOJ PROBE**

Albuquerque's city council is turning to PR firm Garrity Group for help as the city and its police force draw national scrutiny amid a scathing report by the US Department of Justice.

The DOJ, following an investigation, in April ripped the Albuquerque Police Dept. for "engag[ing] in a pattern or practice of excessive force that violates the Constitution and federal law." The report has sparked protests and calls for reform in the city as police officials meet with federal law enforcement officials to resolve the concerns raised in the report.

Tom Garrity, former VP of communications for the Albuquerque Convention Visitors Bureau and chief of staff for the city's public schools, told *O'Dwyer's* the city interviewed five firms, adding that his shop is currently in negotiations for the work. He said he pitched research and a media relations assessment, media training and a new communications approach for city councilors, among other elements.

City council president Ken Sanchez told KOAT-TV on June 18 that a \$25K PR pact is more cost effective than the city hiring a full-time public information officer. The APD last month tapped reporter-turned-PR consultant Janet Blair for its own \$95K-per-year PR post.

The DOJ, among other findings, said Albuquerque officers too frequently use deadly force against people who pose a minimal or threat or in situations where officers' conduct heightens the danger and contributes to the need of such force. Acting U.S. Attorney Damon Martinez said the report was a milestone in addressing problems "that have plagued our community and the [APD] for years."

Garrity's firm is part of the Worldcom PR network.

## **GENETICS TESTER 23ANDME FILLS PR SLOT**

The Silicon Valley-based personal genetics test maker 23andMe, which has been stymied by the US Food and Drug Administration, has brought in healthcare PR veteran Angela Wonson as VP of communications.

The company, which was forced to limit its marketing by the US Food and Drug Administration in November, said Wonson will oversee corporate comms., media relations, IR and internal comms.

Wonson takes over for Christine Castro, who left the Mountain View, Calif., company in January for a senior VP/comms. slot at CBS Interactive.

Wonson was VP of comms. for robotic surgery technology company Intuitive Surgical. She is a former chief communications officer at The Cleveland Clinic and did stints at Weber Shandwick (EVP for healthcare media) and Edelman (SVP, nat'l health media) after starting out in TV news.

W20 Group is 23andMe's outside PR agency and has helped handle fallout from the FDA's November order that the company stop marketing health-related claims for its \$100 DNA testing kits without approval. That regulatory warning prevents 23andMe from telling customers about, for example, their genetic potential for illness, a major setback for the product and service. 23andMe says it is in talks with the FDA for a resolution.

**IABC chair Russell Grossman, faced with shrinking corporate PR departments**, says IABC must target counselors who could serve the 28 million U.S. small/medium-sized businesses.

Grossman, a U.K. Government PR employee, has just seen IABC digest a \$528,573 loss and sees more of the same in the future unless IABC “reaches out to new places.”

First thing Grossman should do is stop the board from reaching into the nearly bare IABC pantry—spending \$589,187 on travel/meals/hotels for itself or 10% of 2013 revenues.

There’s no doubt the main source of IABC members, corporate departments focused on internal communications, is in free fall. Lawyers, in particular, have gained the ears of CEOs. They battled the government tooth and nail in the wake of the 2007-08 meltdown, succeeding in limiting jail time to one financier who turned himself in—Kareem Serageldin of Credit Suisse. Lawyers argued that much evidence could be concealed under the doctrine of “client confidentiality” and also won the right of companies to pick up the legal bills of accused execs. Numerous other legal ploys were used, said the *New York Times* April 30, 2014.

The Obama Administration caved to Wall Street by appointing as reformers financiers “who should have been getting subpoenas,” Noam Chomsky told the New York University student newspaper Feb. 27, 2013.

None of the 35 new members of blue chip PR Seminar has “PR” in his or her title. They use “communications,” “corporate communications,” “marketing” or “public affairs.”

The Centre for Corporate PA, Australia, a group like Seminar, this year said in a four-page treatise that “PR Is Dead.” Their members can get their way with legislators so why bother with press relations, says this essay.

### **PR Students, Grads Are Ill-Informed**

The shutdown of corporate PR under the lash of lawyers and the shift of press relations and other PR duties to PR firms is a development has yet to hit the halls of academe.

IABC has to acknowledge this. But only 20% of its members are counselors. The rest never venture outside the corporate hothouse. IABC barred press from covering its annual meeting in Toronto June 10, proving how inept it is at press relations. Dave Murray, a reporter who focuses on IABC, has given up trying to reach leaders or staff.

The Small Business Administration says 23 million small businesses account for 54% of all U.S. sales.

They have provided 55% of all jobs and 66% of new jobs since the 1970s. Their number has grown 49% since 1982. Big business, meanwhile, has cut four million jobs since 1990 while small biz added eight million new jobs.

PR firms, as tracked by the O’Dwyer Co., have been expanding for decades. Landing a job in one of these firms is a desirable goal for grads but they must also think of starting their own small businesses.

Marketer James Altucher advises them to do just that even if they obtain a full time job. The odds of generating “real wealth” from a job are low, he says, because of profit pressures on employers.

### **Grads Can Do Much for Small Biz**

Besides contacting local ad/PR firms, grads need to knock on doors of biz owners and offer services at “extremely affordable rates,” says PR/marketing veteran Jane Genova. Targets are local restaurants, delis, retailers, condos, computer stores, etc. Join biz groups, not PR groups. Volunteer at local charities where biz leaders (and spouses) congregate.

Ben Sonnenberg became the richest person in PR in the 1950s and early 1960s by finding out what was in the “heart of hearts” of clients and working on that problem (which could be getting a son or daughter into the right college or a spouse into the right club). Grads should ask what a prospect needs before offering various services.

This reporter, having attended at least 25 spring meetings of the PR Society Counselors Academy, used to ask members each year “What are you doing for clients?” The answer always was: “Whatever they want.”

Sonnenberg was also known as an “idea person”—he would shower the client with up to 100 ideas to solve any particular problem. Grads should copy. PR is a creative occupation.

Send pitch letters to local biz leaders and nonprofits, Genova advises. Take a course in sales. Accept that PR is often a “hard sell.” An old saying is that “most PR is done ON the client rather than FOR the client.” The unending quest for new business that dominates agency life is covered in *Army of Entrepreneurs* by Jennifer Prosek.

Genova took an eight-week Dale Carnegie course and found the results to be “amazing.” An attractive personality and strong will are needed, say Genova.

### **Celebrity Leverage Good for Grads**

Another book of help to grads is *Celebrity Leverage* by Jordan McAuley. He notes that celebrities expect those around them to go to great lengths to answer their every wish and that even owners of small businesses are “celebrities.”

Since newspaper jobs have disappeared in the tens of thousands and other J posts are under pressure, J grads should consider PR. A different mindset is needed—complete devotion to client aims.

PR people are not there to reform clients but to pitch their products and services and help biz owners in any way they can. Genova advises answering job ads on Mediabistro which also lists bios for \$21 monthly or \$145 yearly. Also a spot for job-hunting and resume-listing is journalismjob.com.

Editorial Freelancers Assn., New York, calls itself the “largest and oldest national organization of editorial freelancers.” Posting bios costs \$145 yearly plus \$35fee.

PR and J grads should also look into joining the O’Dwyer database of more than 1,600 PR firms and freelancers which costs \$300 yearly.

– Jack O’Dwyer