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Editor-in-Chief

O'Dwyer's Newsletter



**The Inside News of
PR and Marketing
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DOWNTOWN SANTA MONICA WANTS PR FIRM

Santa Monica is looking for a PR firm to promote its downtown and Third Street Promenade, which is two blocks from the city's historic pier.



Downtown Santa Monica Inc. wants a PR partner to increase media coverage on a regional and national level. The RFP says the PR firm will create fresh angles, publicize free events and highlight the stores, restaurants and entertainment options available downtown and on the Promenade.

The PR firm will handle press releases; minimum four FAM trips; merchant product placement on morning shows, weather segments; and media relations.

Submissions are due May 18. They go to: Mackenzie Carter; Director, Marketing Communications; Downtown Santa Monica, Inc.; 1351 Third Street Promenade, Suite 201; Santa Monica, CA 90401-1321. Email submissions will not be accepted.

[Download RFP \(PDF\)](#)

EX-WH PRESS SECY. LOCKHART TO EDELMAN

Joe Lockhart, who was President Clinton's press secretary, has joined Edelman as vice chairman of public affairs. He'll be based in Washington.

Most recently, Lockhart stepped down as executive VP-communications and PA at the National Football League. He had joined the NFL from Facebook, where he led the social networking site's corporate policy and international communications efforts.

Lockhart worked on the presidential campaigns of Walter Mondale, Jimmy Carter and John Kerry. After exiting the Clinton White House, he co-founded Glover Park Group, which is now part of WPP.

OBAMA'S PRESS SECRETARY FLIES UNITED

Josh Earnest, who was President Obama's press secretary, is joining United Airlines as senior VP & chief communications officer.

He joined the Obama team in 2007 as Iowa communications director, after serving as spokesperson for Iowa Governor Tom Vilsack's short-lived presidential run. After eight-years in the White House, Earnest was promoted to press secretary in 2014. Most recently, he worked as political analyst at NBC News and MSNBC.



Josh Earnest

Earnest begins work at United on May 21.

PUEBLO SEEKS PR FOR PUBLIC POWER PUSH

The City of Pueblo is looking to hire a PR firm to help evaluate its relationship with Black Hills/Colorado Electric Utility Co. and study whether it makes economic sense to set up a city-owned power company.

Pueblo's 10-year supply contract with Black Hills expires Aug. 11, 2020. On Sept. 25, 2017, the City Council declared Pueblo's intent to create a municipal utility, if a due diligence feasibility study showed "municipalization"



was an economically feasibility option.

The PR firm will help "develop an appropriate approach and plan for communications based on stakeholder information needs to keep citizens and other stakeholders informed" according to the city's RFQ.

The deadline to submit proposals is May 16. Proposals are required to include project name, "Request for Qualifications for a Public Relations Firm for Municipalization of Utility Services Project" and project number, 18-054, on the outside of the submittal package and on any email.

Responses are sent to: City of Pueblo, Purchasing Dept., 230 S. Mechanic St., Pueblo, CO 81003.

Emails go to: Naomi Hedden, director of purchasing, at purchasing@pueblo.us or John Vigil, assistant city manager, at jovigil@pueblo.us.

FAHLGREN MORTINE MERGES WITH SBC

Columbus, Ohio's Fahlgren Mortine will merge with Columbus-based advertising shop SBC Advertising.

The combined entity, with projected annual revenues of \$35 million, will be known as Fahlgren Mortine SBC.

The merger comes after FM's February acquisition by private holding company Eastport Holdings LLC.

FM president and CEO Neil Mortine will be president/CEO of the combined entity.

Fahlgren Mortine, which was founded in 1962, staffs approx. 200. It also owns New York-based travel subsidiary Turner.

SBC, founded in 1969, specializes in advertising, strategic planning, social media, PR, digital strategy and business analytics services for the retail, consumer, healthcare and financial sectors.

FM last year accounted for nearly \$27 million in net fees, according to O'Dwyer's rankings of PR firms, gaining 10.4 percent in 2017 from 2016's \$24.4 million.



Neil Mortine

INVESTORS PRESSURE NEW CHEVRON CHIEF

New Chevron chief Michael Wirth faces pressure from a consortium of institutional investors to open "a new path forward in dialogue with shareholders" to address issues such as the potential \$12B acquired liability of Texaco pollution in the Ecuadorian Amazon.



Michael Wirth

"Instead of negotiating an expedient, fair and comprehensive settlement with the affected communities in Ecuador, Chevron management pursued a costly legal strategy that has continued for more than two decades," the consortium wrote in an April 30 letter to Wirth, who became CEO on Feb. 1.

In 2013, Ecuador's highest court ordered a \$9.5B judgment (now \$12B including interest) against Chevron, which acquired Texaco in 2001.

Chevron maintains the Ecuadorian judgment was secured through fraud and deceit. US District Court (New York) backed Chevron and its decision was upheld in appeal. The oil giant has waged legal battles over Ecuador in Brazil, Argentina and Canada, where Chevron remains a defendant.

Organized by Newground Social Investment and Zevin Asset Management, the investment group seeks a meeting with Wirth, which "would set the right tone for you to broaden the existing conversation by engaging directly in constructive dialogue with investors."

NYT CO. POSTS 22% Q1 PROFIT JUMP

The New York Times Co. reported first-quarter operating profit rose 22.4 percent to \$34.1M on a 3.8 percent jump in revenues to \$413.9M. Net income soared 66.2 percent to \$21.9M.

Subscription revenues rose 7.5 percent to \$260.6M, offsetting the 3.4 percent dip in ad sales to \$125.7M.

CEO Mark Thompson noted that digital advertising slipped six percent during the quarter compared with last year's strong performance that was driven by the fall-out from the post-election and Trump inauguration.

FORMER NY GOV. PATAKI REPS TURKISH STEEL

Former New York Governor George Pataki is representing Turkey's Borusan Mannesmann, which bills itself as Europe's top steel pipe producer, on President Trump's steel tariffs policy.

The Republican politico, who made a bid for the 2016 GOP presidential nomination, is handling the client through Pataki-Cahill Group.

Pataki formed P-CG with his former chief of staff John Cahill, who coordinated the Empire State's response to the World Trade Center attack and served as state's Dept. of Environmental Conservation commissioner.

New York City-based P-CG targets environmental, energy, water infrastructure and government relations clients.



George Pataki

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

The Glover Park Group has brought on **Randy DeValk** as managing director. DeValk comes to GPG after almost 30 years of public service, having held several positions within the Obama Administration, including counselor to the White House Office of Legislative Affairs, and counselor to Secretaries Geithner and Lew at the Treasury Department. At GPG, he will focus on such issues as taxes, trade, appropriations, financial services, cryptocurrency and national security.



Randy DeValk

Development Counsellors International has promoted **Dariel Y. Curren** to executive vice president. Curren joined DCI in 1995 and has served as director of the company's economic development division since 2010, creating programs that integrate high-profile media exposure for clients with websites and other digital strategies.



Dariel Y. Curren

Mobile PR network Spry has hired **Andrew Stoltzfus** as vice president of audience strategy & growth. Stoltzfus comes to Spry from Porter Novelli, where he led West Coast digital services. At Spry, he is responsible for creating digital strategies to recruit PR pros and journalists to join the Spry workforce, and growing its clients.

MetLife has named **Randy Clerihue** chief communications officer. Clerihue was previously head of Corporate Communications for the company, with responsibility for financial, executive, public policy, and corporate responsibility communications. Before joining MetLife in 2011, he oversaw corporate and executive communications for clean-energy company NextEra Energy. The company has also named **Jennifer Gottlieb**, a 25-year MetLife veteran, head of global employee communication.

CommCore Consulting Group has brought on **Craig Rothenberg** as a senior strategic advisor and **Rob Doolittle** as a senior consultant. Rothenberg heads Rothenberg Communication LLC, a communications consultancy. He previously led the global employee and executive communications team at Johnson & Johnson. Doolittle was previously assistant VP—media & communications at CSX Corporation.



Craig Rothenberg

Gatesman has brought on **Craig Ferrence** as senior VP, creative director and **Christy Kelly** as VP, group account director. Ferrence joins Gatesman from MARC USA, where he was associate creative director. At Gatesman, he will play a central role in evolving creative strategies and executions. Kelly comes to Gatesman from Discover Financial Services, where she was senior manager, marketing acquisition. In her new role, she will be tasked with driving strategy and creative thinking for the agency's higher education clients.

CAPOZZI WINS PRSA'S PALADIN AWARD

Louis Capozzi, former chair of the MSL Group and former CCO of Aetna, is the 2018 Paladin Award Honoree.

Capozzi, who has raised more than \$3 million for Public Relations Society of America's Foundation, scholarships and programs, will receive the Award Wednesday, May 9 at the Helen Mills Event Space and Theater, 137 W. 26th St.



Louis Capozzi

Now an adjunct professor at the University of Oregon where he teaches in the M.A. program in strategic communications, he was president of the PRSA Foundation three years, and while in the position worked to drive diversity in PR.

Capozzi started his career in public relations as a financial writer, writing and producing corporate annual reports, acting as a speechwriter for CEOs and handling communications for dozens of companies from small, newly listed businesses to *Fortune* 50 global companies.

He was CCO at Aetna Life & Casualty when it was the nation's largest publicly owned insurance company, managing a 150-person corporate comms department with a budget of more than \$80 million. As chairman of the MSL Group from 1999 until his retirement in 2008, he managed operations in more than 30 cities.

Capozzi was awarded the PRSA Gold Anvil, the society's highest individual award, in 2017.

He is a member of the Arthur Page Society, a former chairman of the Council of Public Relations Firms and the International Communications Consultants Organization as well as an accredited member of PRSA and a member of its College of Fellows.

Tickets are \$250 for members, \$350 for non-members and \$150 for students. Sponsorships and ad opportunities are available from Beth-Ellen Keyes, director of operations and programs.

BOWMAN EXITS EPA PA POST

Liz Bowman, spokesperson for the Environmental Protection Agency and its embattled leader Scott Pruitt, is exiting her post on May 11. She will join the staff of Republican Senator Joni Ernst of Iowa.

Bowman joined EPA from the American Chemistry Council, where she was director of issues and advocacy communications.

She also was VP at HDMK and senior communications associate at Pew Charitable Trusts.

The *New York Times* reported April 18 that Pruitt faces 11 federal investigations concerning travel expenses, dismissal of EPA scientists, close ties with industry lobbyists, pay raises for aides, security outlays and office upgrades, including the installation of a \$43K secure phone booth.

A Politico/Morning Consult poll found that 53 percent of respondents believe Pruitt should be removed from office, while 12 percent say he should remain.



Liz Bowman

GOOGLE, HERSHEY ARE 'MOST LOVED' BRANDS

Google and Hershey are the most loved brands in the U.S., according to a survey released May 2 by Morning Consult. Compiled from over 250,000 interviews with adults 18 and up nationwide, Morning Consult's Most Loved Brands in America takes an in-depth look at the changing branding landscape.



The survey measured a brand's net favorability, which subtracts negative responses from its overall favorability. Using that scale, Google got an impressive 78.7 net favorability rating, with Hershey close on its heels at 78.6.

Food and tech companies dominated in the survey's top 10 brands. In addition to Hershey, that group included Pillsbury, Kellogg's, Betty Crocker and the Campbell Soup Company. Amazon and YouTube joined Google on the tech side of the top 10, with Sony and UPS rounding out the list.

Morning Consult also broke its numbers down to show how brands score with such demographics as young adults, financial elites, men vs. women and whether a consumer lives in an urban, suburban or rural community.

With men, *Playboy*, *Sports Illustrated* and Fox Sports registered a considerably larger net favorability than they did with the overall population. Women had a higher opinion of Revlon, L'Oreal and Pinterest. Young adults (ages 18-29) liked Red Bull and Snapchat more than the population at large did, with financial elites giving the thumbs up to Fidelity Investments, Williams-Sonoma and Westin.

Urban dwellers gave an edge to MTV (22.9 net favorability over 10.9 for the general population), suburbanites favored Trader Joe's (51.8 vs. 44.3) and rural residents had a better view of Carhartt (52.1 vs. 38.9).

The survey, which asked respondents to rate over 1,000 companies, was conducted between January and March of this year.

NJ DROPS FUNDS FOR MILITARY LOBBYING

New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy has dropped the \$200K military lobbying outlay from his proposed budget.

His predecessor Chris Christie earmarked that funding for the state's Dept. of Military and Veterans' Affairs to lobby DC on defense issues, especially to protect Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst against closures.

The Christie administration hired Cassidy & Assocs. in 2015 to serve as its Washington representative.

The Pentagon closed Fort Monmouth in 2005.

It has also consolidated Fort Dix, McGuire Air Force Base and Naval Air Station Lakehurst into the country's only tri-service facility.

The joint base contributes \$7B to the Jersey's economy. It employs more than 40K people.

Jersey's Legislature may restore the military lobbying funds under a revised budget. The budget must be approved by July 1.



Phil Murphy

FH MAKES MURPHY CHIEF PRACTICE OFFICER

Janise Murphy, a FleishmanHillard senior partner who was previously regional president of the Omnicom PR unit's southern U.S. region, has been appointed chief practice officer.



Janise Murphy

It's a new role at the agency, intended to help the global PR powerhouse identify strengths and new areas of innovation and bring them to scale for the benefit of its clients.

Murphy, who joined FH in 1990, initially held a post at the agency in Washington, D.C. before moving to Dallas to found FleishmanHillard

Texas. She served as general manager of that office until 1999. She began her career at Burson-Marsteller in Chicago, where she was a Senior Account Executive

In the chief practice officer role, Murphy will oversee the work done by FH's global practice and industry leaders and will work alongside client, business development and office leaders.

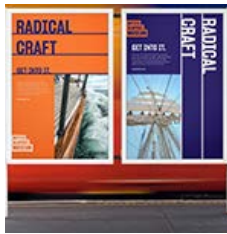
MYSTIC SEAPORT GOES 'RAD'

Mystic Seaport kicked off a rebranding campaign May 1 to expand its reach and position as a relevant cultural center that connects Americans to the country's maritime experience.

The rebrand restores "museum" to its name and introduces a logo with "Radical Craft. Get Into It" byline that will run in its advertising.

Steve White, president of the eastern Connecticut institution, believes people value the community created by a museum.

MSM views the "Radical Craft" byline as "an action-oriented statement" that will celebrate the immersive experiences, craft and the evolution of seafaring innovation that was radical in its time. Advertising will feature images created by the Museum's staff.



Carbone Smolan Agency, an independent design-led branding firm developed MSM's rebrand.

LIVINGSTON SPEAKS FOR UKRAINIAN STEEL

The Livingston Group represents the trade association of the Ukrainian steel sector as it lobbies Washington on US policies that affect its members and the Government of Ukraine.

President Trump slapped a 25 percent tariff on steel and aluminum imports on March 22. Ukraine did not get a temporary exclusion from that levy, as did the European Union, Canada, Australia, Mexico, South Korea and Brazil. Those exclusions expired May 1.

Ukraine's Ministry of Economic Development had submitted an application for an exclusion, but it fell short.

TLG, which is headed by former House Speaker-Designate Bob Livingston (R-LA), entered into a three-month agreement on April 2 with Assn. of Enterprises UKRMETALURGPROM for government affairs and lobbying services.

PET GROUPS PICK UP LOBBYING SUPPORT

Washington, D.C.-based government relations firm Federal Advocates, Inc. has signed lobbying pacts with national pet retailer Petland, Inc., as well as pet trade organization Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council, as the U.S. House and Senate Agriculture Committees finalize their work on the 2018 Farm Bill.

The House's current reauthorization of the bill includes provisions protecting domestic animals, such as an amendment successfully passed by Rep. Jeff Denham (R-CA) that would alter the Animal Welfare Act and ban the killing of dogs or cats in the U.S. for human consumption.

However, an amendment introduced by Rep. Steve King (R-IA) would override states' current ability to set their own individual animal protection standards.

Animal rights nonprofits are concerned that King's amendment would effectively override anti-puppy-mill ordinances on the books in several states, like the one signed into law by California Governor Jerry Brown, which goes into effect in January 2019 and will prohibit pet stores from selling non-rescue, non-shelter dogs, cats or rabbits.

PIJAC last year unsuccessfully petitioned Brown to veto the anti-puppy-mill law.

Chillicothe, OH-based Petland, which operates approx. 150 stores in the U.S., was subject to a Humane Society investigation last year in which the advocacy group alleged that the retailer receives some of its dogs from puppy mills with poor or unknown standards of care.

The Petland and PIJAC accounts will be managed by Federal Advocates founder Michael Esposito, along with Michael Stroud, formerly Congressional Relations Officer for the U.S. International Trade Commission and an Acting Assistant Secretary for the Private Sector Office at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.



LEWIS LEADS LOBBYING PUSH AT ACLI

Robert Lewis has joined the American Council of Life Insurers to lead its lobbying effort on the financial services front.

He joins the nearly 300-member company group from the Financial Services Institute, where he led government relations as VP for legislative and political affairs.

Earlier, Lewis was aide to former Georgia Congressman Zell Miller (R) and staffer at the House Judiciary Committee and Financial Executives International.

ACLI has been active in its effort to support the traditional state-by-state oversight of the life insurance sector.

Former Idaho Governor/Senator Dirk Kempthorne heads the ACLI, which covers 95 percent of the assets in life insurance, annuities, retirement plans, disability income insurance, long-term care and dental/vision benefits.



Robert Lewis

A FACT IS A FACT

Lynn Sweet, Washington, D.C. bureau chief for the *Chicago Sun-Times*, got right to the point at the 5th annual Washington Women in Journalism Awards and addressed the impact of the Trump era on journalism.

"The most important thing is for journalists to do the job, no matter what platform, and not be distracted by everything going on around you," Sweet said.



Lynn Sweet

"A fact is a fact," Sweet stressed. Sweet, honored for her work in print, was one of four recognized at the event attended by over 300 at the home of Gloria Story Dittus, chairman of public affairs shop Story Partners, in D.C.'s Kalorama neighborhood.

Dittus' next door neighbor Cathy Merrill Williams, president and publisher, *Washingtonian* magazine, co-hosted the festivities. Williams presented the Washington Female Distinguished Journalist of the Year award to Amanda Bennett, director of the Voice of America.

Bennett served as a *Wall Street Journal* reporter for 20 years. In 2003, she became the first female editor in the *Philadelphia Inquirer's* 174-year history. She stayed on until 2006.

Bennett explained how her work at Voice of America keeps her grounded. She compared herself to "It's a Wonderful Life"'s George Bailey because of how she has been able to speak to the most repressed societies on earth and see what it would be like if journalists weren't here.



Amanda Bennett

Audie Cornish, co-host of NPR's "All Things Considered," was honored for her work in broadcast radio. She was previously the host of NPR's "Weekend Edition Sunday," and has been a Capitol Hill reporter for the network.

Cornish noted that just seeing other women in journalism is what matters. "It didn't occur to me to do the job until I saw Gwen Ifill," Cornish said.

Amy Walter, national editor of The Cook Political Report, was recognized for her work in broadcast journalism. Former political director at ABC News, Walter is also a political analyst for "PBS NewsHour."

"We've finally reached this point where it's no longer weird to see a woman covering politics," Walter said. She dedicated her award to Gwen Ifill. "There's not a day that goes by that I don't go into the NewsHour and desperately want to talk to her."

The award winners were selected from an advisory committee made up of public affairs and government relations professionals and congressional press secretaries.

Story Partners publishes the Washington DC 100 every two weeks, a digital thought leadership platform consisting of 100-word stories and 100-second videos aimed at addressing key policy issues in the nation's capital. Readership is estimated at nearly 10,000 inside the Beltway including members of Congress and staff, federal agencies, business leaders and media.

EMPLOYEE RETENTION TOP PRIORITY IN '18

The threat of cybercrime, the looming possibility of government or legislative changes and a lack of available talent are seen as the top threats facing global companies' success today, according to a recent survey of C-Level executives released by global PR network Worldcom Public Relations Group.

According to the survey, cybercrime is universally seen as a major threat to business' plans — particularly among larger and global organizations — with only 22 percent of business leaders suggesting they feel confident in their ability to protect their organization from cyberattacks. At least 50 percent more U.S. companies see cybercrime as a greater threat compared to companies located in other regions, although 60 percent more U.S. companies also said they're confident in their ability to protect themselves against cybercrime compared to companies stationed abroad.

A spate of government or legislative changes on the horizon this year was seen as the number-one threat facing businesses' future objectives. On the other hand, business leaders don't seem to consider these challenges much of a priority, as more than a quarter — 26 percent — gave government/legislative change the lowest ranking when asked what threats would hold their attention the most in 2018.

However, an ability to attract top talent was cited as the number-one criteria for companies this year, ranking three times higher than disruptive competition and even beating out worries surrounding the strength of the global economy.

Attracting, retaining and energizing employees appears to be a primary goal for companies of all sizes this year, as the study revealed that 43 percent more C-Level executives said employees would receive the bulk of their attention in 2018 compared to last year.

Conversely, when we asked about potential sources of optimism in the market today, an available talent pool received the second lowest ranking, at just six percent.

These anxieties seem especially pronounced among business leaders working for smaller organizations, 71 percent more of whom believe their ability to attract talent would have the single greatest influence on their success compared to larger organizations.

Despite a lower than average confidence in ability to attract and retain quality talent, business leaders remain surprisingly optimistic about their ability to satisfy customers, rating it as their top source of optimism for the year.

The findings come as part of Worldcom's inaugural Worldcom Confidence Index, an annual report dedicated to highlighting trends and key issues global business leaders believe will most influence their organization's success in the coming year. The report was conducted by independent research companies Research Now and 3Gem and polled more than 580 C-Level executive respondents living in China, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, United Kingdom and the United States via an online survey.^o



COMMENTARY

WHCA MOCKS FIRST AMENDMENT

White House Correspondents' Assn. President Margaret Talev didn't cover herself in glory with her criticism of comedian Michelle Wolf's performance at its annual over-the-top gala on April 28.

The program, according to Talev's note to members, was "meant to offer a unifying message about or common commitment to a vigorous and free press, while honoring civility, great reporting and scholarship winners, not to divide people. Unfortunately, the entertainer's monologue was not in the spirit of that mission."



Margaret Talev

What did you expect, Margaret? Wolf is an edgy, up and coming comedian who worked as a writer for "The Daily Show" and "Late Night with Seth Meyers." She's certainly no plain vanilla comic like Jay Leno.

The Correspondents' Dinner is pitched as a celebration of the First Amendment. Wolf certainly celebrated her free speech rights with a performance that some viewed as mean-spirited and vulgar. The First Amendment, Margaret, covers speech that provokes, and yes, sometimes offends people.

It's not like Wolf stormed the podium to trash Donald Trump, Hillary Clinton, Sarah Sanders, Kellyanne Conway, Mike Pence, Fox News, CNN, MSNBC and others. Since the Association invited Wolf to keynote, the very least it could do is to stand behind her.

Talev asked members about their views "on the format of the dinner going forward." Though not a member, my view is to kill it. The Dinner is an embarrassment to journalism. The annual gala is where journalists preen and woo potential sources in the government. It's an elitist affair that hurts the credibility of journalism. It should have been killed years ago.

LIES, LIES AND MORE LIES

Love him or hate him, James Comey nails it. On the first page of his book, "A Higher Loyalty," Comey clearly lays out the problem of living in our post-truth era.

"We are experiencing a dangerous time in our country, with a political environment where basic facts are disputed, fundamental truth is questioned, lying is normalized, and unethical behavior is ignored, excused or rewarded," wrote the former FBI director. "This is not just happening in our nation's capital, and not just in the US. It is a troubling trend that has touched institutions across America and around the world."

The post-truth era makes a PR person long for the good old days of "spin," where facts were repackaged to appeal to an audience's emotions or instincts to prompt

group action. Spin, at least, had facts at its core.

Donald Trump, of course, is the ringmaster of the circus of deceit and confusion.

The *Washington Post's* Fact-Checker blog reported May 1 that the president made 3,001 false or misleading claims in his first 466 days of office.

Trump is a firm believer in the Big Lie theory, where the falsehood is repeated again and again.

The Post reported the president has made the same 113 false claims at least three times. They include whoppers such as he passed the biggest tax cut in history (actually it was the eighth largest) and that the Democrats really don't care about the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program that Trump killed.

In Comey's view, it's pointless to try to correct every exaggeration that flows out of Trump's mouth because you would be constantly interrupting him.

The former G-Man is wrong. That's just what the nation needs.

HATS OFF TO RYAN FOR GETTING IT RIGHT

Hats Off to Speaker Paul Ryan for reinstating Rev. Patrick Conroy, whom he had canned in a huff, to his post as House chaplain. The Republican politico, owned up to his mistake and then fixed it. That's a very rare bird in DC.

Ryan though didn't have a prayer against the eloquent and media savvy Jesuit whose dismissal triggered an uproar from Republicans and Democrats, an extraordinary occasion in super-partisan Washington.

On May 3, the priest sent a letter to Ryan to revoke his resignation, which was effective May 24, on the advice of counsel after learning that the Speaker did not have the "absolute prerogative and authority" to fire up. That's the job of the full House.

Ryan, who really didn't need this self-inflicted crisis, caved and gave his blessing to the feisty priest.

Elected in 2011, Conroy's record of administering to the spiritual needs of Congress was unblemished.

The Congressman accepted Conroy's letter and decided that he would remain on the job.

Ryan, a conservative Catholic, was apparently irked by the chaplain's prayer in the House in which he expressed the wish for a "guarantee that there are not winners and losers under new tax laws, but benefits balanced and shared by all Americans."

Ryan told him: "Padre, you just got to stay out of politics."

But the miffed Ryan failed to realize that Conroy was just living his faith and following his order's "preferential option for the poor."

Conroy is happy to be back in business and that people are reading his prayers.

Keep 'em coming.

—Kevin McCauley