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O'Dwyer's Newsletter

The Inside News of
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GLOBAL PUSH TO END HIV IN KIDS SEEKS PR

A United Nations-launched global campaign to eliminate new HIV infections in children by 2015 is looking for communications counsel.

The Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, on behalf of the international push known as the Global Plan, seeks a contractor to develop a communications plan and messaging to reach governments, private sector partners, donors and the public. The plan will organize and provide a blueprint for the efforts of a global steering group of communicators from the campaign's key participants.

The consulting agreement -- to be based in New York or Geneva, Switzerland -- will be with the Glaser Foundation but in coordination with UNAIDS.

Proposals are due May 22. RFP: <http://odwpr.us/1cL05lr>.

UBER HAILS GOOGLE PR EXEC

Rachel Whetstone, senior VP of communications and policy for Google, is moving to Uber in a similar post.

She'll take over for former Obama advisor David Plouffe, who started to stabilize the young company's rocky PR performance last year and will move into a board slot with the car service.

The UK native Whetstone worked in Conservative Party politics and Portland PR before moving to Google in 2005.

She starts at Uber in June and faces a host of policy and other communications challenges, including from Whetstone's employer.



Whetstone

BASHE TO LEAD FP HEALTHCARE PUSH

Healthcare PR maven Gil Bashe is moving on after 12 years at Makovsky for Finn Partners, to grow its health and pharmaceutical business.

Makovsky has installed senior VPs Tom Jones (Novartis) and Alexandra Peterson (Ruder Finn) atop its health practice to replace Bashe. Senior VP Lee Davies and group VP Arielle Bernstein round out an extended leadership team, the firm said.

Bashe led Makovsky's health practice after stints as CEO of Health!Quest Communications and CommonHealth, now merged with Ogilvy. He was also EVP and global director of health and pharma at Hill+Knowlton Strategies and led Medicus PR, among other posts.

The Ruder Finn/Finn Partners split in 2011 left most of the agency's healthcare business with RF. FP's healthcare roster includes Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan.

AVON CALLS BRUNSWICK FOR BOGUS BID

Avon Products used Brunswick Group to deal with fallout connected with the May 14 filing on the Securities and Exchange online database of a bogus \$18.75 per-share takeover bid, which triggered a 20 percent spike in its shares.

An unknown outfit called PTG Capital Partners was purportedly behind the tender offer.

Avon issued a statement to say, "It has not received any offer or other communication from such an entity and has not been able to confirm that such an entity exists."

The beauty products marketer's lackluster performance has increased pressure to find a buyer. In April, CEO Sherilyn McCoy announced a plan to explore strategic options, such as a sale or split-up.

Avon rejected a \$10.7B deal with Coty in 2012. Avon shares closed up six percent on May 14 to \$7.07.

Brunswick's Radina Russell assisted Avon group VP-IR Amy Low Chasen in handling the response to the phony filing.

INDIANA INKS PN TO \$750K IMAGE PACT

Indiana Economic Development Corp. has signed a \$750K contract with Porter Novelli to encourage natives and people everywhere to visit the Hoosier State's "many vibrant communities and exciting attractions," according to the professional services contract approved May 14.

Fee covers Phase I of the program that went into effect April 1 and runs through September. The contract calls for PN to assess the "perceptions and expectations of stakeholders that influence and are critical to the reputation of Indiana."

PN will meet with stakeholders and explore ways the initiative can deliver positive value to a broad and diverse audience" and "support positive actions to enhance and strengthen Indiana's reputation."

The outcome of Phase I will be a "final set of recommendations, a strategic plan and message platform and fully developed campaign ready for launch and long-term execution." Both parties will negotiate the budget for the Phase II implementation period.

IEDC and Indiana Office of Tourism Development have been closely collaborating on a new reputation initiative to boost the state's "global brand reputation as a welcoming place to live, visit and do business."

The state has already said it plans to spend \$2M for PR at PN. Indiana's reputation has been in tatters since Gov. Mike Pence's March signing of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, which critics say opened the door to discrimination against gay people.

DUPONT WINS HIGH-STAKES PROXY FIGHT

DuPont has declared victory in its proxy fight with activist investor Nelson Peltz's Trian Management as shareholders rejected his bid to win four seats on the company's 12-member board.

In one of the largest proxy battles in US history, Trian, working with Sard Verbinnen & Co., claimed DuPont was mismanaged and saddled with a bloated cost structure. Kekst & Co. and Joele Frank represented the chemical giant.

Shareholders approved each of the dozen DuPont director nominees in a victory for CEO Ellen Kullman, who said the vote shows strong support for management's "strategic vision and continued execution of our plan."

Peltz blamed the loss on DuPont doing a "better job with the press and retail shareholders who really don't understand the issues of the company."

He said the two-year battle created substantial value for all stockholders.

"Since we first invested in mid-2013, DuPont has upgraded its Board of Directors, authorized a \$5 billion share buyback, begun a long-overdue cost cutting initiative, improved the design of its executive compensation program, and announced the separation of Chemours with a \$4 billion return of capital," Trian said in its statement taking credit for spurring the changes.

Trian promised to continue monitoring the performance of the 212-year-old company. According to FactSet, a Trian victory would have made DuPont the biggest company to lose a board seat in a vote.

SardVerb CEO George Sard, principal Carissa Felger and senior associate Amanda Klein, worked Trian's attack.

Kekst, which continues as DuPont's strategic communications counselor, used Lissa Perlman, senior VP/corporate governance practice chief; managing directors Andrea Calise, Lyndsey Estin, Kathy Deveny, Jim David; and principal Anntal Silver in the proxy defense effort.

JF's managing partner Joele Frank; partners Jamie Moser, Andi Rose; and directors Aaron Palash, Adam Pollack worked DuPont's defense.

VISA'S COHEN CHARGES TO PAYPAL

Paul Cohen, who spent more than a decade at Visa in PR and communications roles, has charged to PayPal to as VP of corporate communications for the digital payments company slated to split from eBay.

Cohen's appointment comes as PayPal aligns its top staff under president CEO-designee Dan Schulman, a former top executive of American Express, Sprint Nextel, Virgin Mobile USA and Priceline.com.

Prior to Visa, where he exited this month as senior VP of corporate comms. and marketing, Cohen was a senior VP and partner for FleishmanHillard in San Francisco and started out in journalism as a producer for CNN. He heads corporate comms. and PR for San Jose-based PayPal. Edelman alum Christina Smedley is chief brand and comms. officer for PayPal focused on the consumer side.

eBay plans to split from PayPal this year.

ORR EXITS BURSON FOR DOUBLE FORTE

Bill Orr, executive VP and West Coast market leader for Burson-Marsteller, has moved to Double Forte PR and Marketing in San Francisco as EVP and chief strategy officer.

Orr takes up a newly created role with the 13-year-old tech, consumer and enterprise agency.

Orr did a stint as EVP at Racepoint Group and earlier at MSLGroup and Porter Novelli.

He is also a former president of PRSA.

Double Forte clients include Drync, Saison Beauty and the Entertainment Software Association.

SRI LANKA SEEKS FIRM FOR TOURISM PR

Sri Lanka Tourism and Promotion Bureau plans to invite firms to pitch to handle tourism PR by the end of the month.

The budget is estimated in the \$3.5M range, according to a report in the island nation's media.

Funding for the effort will come from a levy tapped on airline and cruise ship tickets.

Sri Lanka government officials expect an uptick in international visitors due to the wind-down of the civil war with the Tamil Tigers.

TITANS PASS PR BALL TO STANTON

The Tennessee Titans National Football League team has hired Jimmy Stanton to the VP-communications post, a new position.

He will join the Titans next month and handle media relations, digital, community relations and oversight of the broadcasting and production departments.

Steve Underwood, interim president, said the team is looking to better integrate various units that "interact directly with our fans." He lauded Stanton's previous run with the Nashville-based team and strong ties with regional media.

During the past six years, Stanton was senior associate athletics director for communications at University of Tennessee and executive director for PR & marketing at the University of Kentucky. He spent eight years with the Houston Astros Major League Baseball team, rising to the media relations director job.

BUSH SNAGS BOEHNER PR AIDE

Michael Steel, press secretary to House Speaker John Boehner, is moving to Jeb Bush's Right to Rise Policy Solutions PAC.

Steel, a former reporter, got a taste of presidential campaign PR as traveling press secretary to Rep. and vice presidential hopeful Paul Ryan during the 2012 campaign. He spent the last eight year on Boehner's staff.

"For more than seven years, I have relied on his ability to dissect an issue, win a debate, and deal openly and honestly with the press," the House Speaker said in a statement.

Politico reported that Steel will take up a leadership role in policy and communications with Bush's PAC.

Bush formed the PAC in January, ostensibly to support conservative candidates, but more realistically as a precursor to a 2016 presidential bid.

SONY REBUILDS PR AFTER HACK SCANDAL

Sony Pictures Entertainment, six months after the exit of its top PR exec and the hacking scandal that battered its image, has named a new chief communications officer.

Bob Lawson, executive VP for Rubenstein Associates, which advised Sony through the crisis, will take the EVP and CCO role with the company on June 1, under CEO Michael Lynton and president Nicole Sligman.

Charles Sipkins, a Sard Verbinen and Fleishman-Hillard alum, stepped down in November from the top Sony communications slot.

He now runs Sipkins Communications out of Los Angeles.

A month after Sipkins' ouster, Sony was hit by the devastating cyber attack linked to North Korea and the release of the satirical film, "The Interview."

Lawson has represented Sony, Paramount Pictures, the NFL, and Michael Bloomberg, among other clients, at Rubenstein. He is a former deputy press secretary during Bloomberg's mayoral term in New York.

At Sony, he heads media relations, executive comms., crisis and issues management and thought leadership. Lynton said Lawson worked with Sony on the film "Captain Phillips" before handling the cyber attack.

Jean Guerin is senior VP of media relations at SPE in Culver City, Calif.

VERIZON DIALS UP \$4.4B AOL ACQUISITION

Verizon will spend \$4.4B in cash to purchase AOL and its burgeoning video advertising business and programmatic ad technology practice.

The telco says the deal further "drives its LTE wireless video and OTT (over-the-top video) strategy."

Lowell McAdam, Verizon CEO, said in a statement the company's vision "is to provide customers with a premium digital experience based on a global multi-screen network platform."



This acquisition supports Verizon's goal to provide a cross-screen connection to consumers, creators and advertisers.

Tim Armstrong, AOL's chief, said in a staff memo, "The deal will give our content businesses more distribution and it will give our advertisers more distribution and mobile-first features. The deal will add scale and it will add a mobile lens to everything we do inside of our content, video, and ads strategy."

AOL's global content brands include The Huffington Post, TechCrunch, Engadget, MAKERS and AOL.com.

Armstrong, who will continue to oversee AOL, said the content group will benefit from more distribution and enable advertisers more mobile-first features.

AOL still gets \$182M in annual revenues from dial-up customers.

NY TIMES VET WYATT TO SPHERE IN DC

Edward Wyatt, a 20-year reporter for the *New York Times* in Washington, D.C., has landed at Sphere Consulting in the capital as a senior VP in the PR and public affairs firm's public policy research and intelligence unit.

Wyatt, who took a buyout from the Times last year, covered telecommunications, technology, copyright and antitrust, among other topics during his stint at the times. He was previously a reporter and writer for Dow Jones Newswires and *Barron's*.



Wyatt

Sphere founder and managing partner Jim Courtovich said regulatory issues and implementation dominate the policy agenda in Washington, and he sees Wyatt's ability to distill complex policy issues as key for clients.

GONZALES GETS AMPTP SPOKESMAN DUTIES

Jarryd Gonzales, who was political director of the Republican party in California from 2001 to 2006, is the new spokesman for the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers.

The politico also served a campaign trainer in Venezuela and Serbia for the International Republican Institute in 2003 and 2005 and deputy political director for Richard Riordan campaign for Golden State governor in 2001.

Most recently, Gonzales was Verizon spokesperson for California and Texas.

He replaces Jess Hiestand, who recently moved to the FX Networks and Productions as corporate communications director.

SISTER MARY ANN WALSH DIES AT 68

Sister Mary Ann Walsh, first woman media relations person at the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, and reporter for *Catholic News Service* and *America*, died April 28 from recurring cancer at a hospice in Albany. She was 68.

Walsh, who joined the Sisters of Mercy at age 17, began her journalism career at *The Evangelist*, Albany's diocesan newspaper.

She moved on to the Catholic News Service as Rome and Washington correspondent before joining the USCCB in 1993.

Walsh handled media for American cardinals during the papal conclaves in 2005 and '12, edited books on Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI, produced videos for the bishops and wrote op-eds to explain/defend the conference's policies in the secular press.

Last summer, she became Church correspondent for *America*, the US Jesuit magazine.

The Catholic Press Assn. in March honored Walsh with its St. Francis de Sales Award, which recognizes lifetime achievement in the Catholic media.

Father Matt Malone, editor-in-chief of *America*, issued a statement upon Walsh's passing, praising her as "a valued colleague and friend, a writer of exceptional talent and insight, whose faith animated her entire life."

J'ACCUSE THE NFL OF IMMORALITY

By Arthur Solomon

The National Football League finally decided that Tom Brady should be penalized for using an underinflated football. What a travesty!

It's as if the criminals were the judges. Based on history, if anyone deserved to be punished it should be the entire NFL hierarchy for actions devoid of decency.

For decades the NFL, its commissioner, team owners, team doctors and coaches sent players back into the games after being sidelined for a play or two despite the players being injured.

More recently the NFL, its commissioner and team owners thought nothing about turning their backs on fans who stood by the teams during good times and bad times by increasing ticket prices to levels that were unaffordable, except to the well-heeled.

But let the NFL discover that footballs were under inflated and a full-court press investigation is the result.

J'accuse the actions of the NFL, its commissioner and team owners of being guilty of being in the forefront of sullyng sports.

In a way, "deflategate" is similar to the use of PEDs during baseball's "steroid era."

Many players used steroids (while the commissioner's office looked the other way), but few players reached the goals set by Barry Bonds, A-Rod and other super stars.

The equation of how much use of PEDs adds to natural ability has not been proven, but we do know that if steroids made every baseball player who used them superstars the "steroid era" would have resulted in every players hitting 30-40 home runs and every pitcher winning 25 games each season.

Brady has never been accused of using PEDs to increase his efficiency.

Does anyone really believe that if he had used overinflated footballs, instead of underinflated ones, he would be less than the stellar quarterback that he is?

If the amount of air in a football is that important to a quarterback's efficiency a football game would have to be stopped after each play so officials could measure the amount of air in the ball.

This is not written as a defense of Tom Brady. Rules are rules, even those written by a league with as sullied a history as the NFL, the league that took the word "sports" out of "sportsmanship."

If the NFL is serious about cleansing the sport, they should provide mirrors to team owners, coaches, the commissioner, network executives and sponsors and have them ask what the wicked witch in "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" asked: "Magic mirror on the wall, who is the fairest one of all?"

And if the mirror didn't have a financial association with the NFL the answer assuredly would be, "None of you."

The one positive thing that might result from the NFL punishing Brady is several Saturday Night Live routines, because nothing could provide funnier material than the NFL playing "good cop."

Arthur Solomon is a former senior VP at Burson-Marsteller.

THIN-SKINNED BIG BANKS CRY OVER WARREN

By Kevin McCauley

Massachusetts firebrand Senator Elizabeth Warren has Big Banks quaking in their boots, according to a report in the May 12 *Wall Street Journal*.

The paper reported about a secret meeting held in Bank of America's New York building off Bryant Park in which a who's who in US banking hashed out a strategy to deal with Lizzie.

James Maloney, BA's corporate communications and public policy chief, and John Rogers, executive VP at Goldman Sachs, organized the session. Reps from JP Morgan Chase, Mellon Corp., Wells Fargo, Morgan Stanley Citigroup and State State Corp. attended the pow-wow.

It seems the thin-skinned banking sector feels underappreciated for reforms that it was forced to make in the aftermath of the financial crisis. They feel the need for a little love.



Warren

The bankers also bristle when they hear Warren calling for their break-up, fearing that such rhetoric will become commonplace once the Democratic presidential primary kicks into gear.

Bernie Sanders, so far the only opponent to Hillary Clinton, shares Warren's views on banks.

The WSJ reported that the Big Banks aren't planning a PR or ad blitz to counter Warren because a backlash would ensue.

Since the banks have ruled out a communications effort to defend their business, why were they meeting in the Big Apple other than to cry on each other's shoulder? Pretty pitiful.

These days Warren isn't getting under the skin of just Big Banks. President Obama criticized the Senator for leading the opposition to his trade deal with Pacific nations.

He criticized Warren in language that some felt was sexist. Ohio Senator Sherrod Brown took Obama to task yesterday, which triggered a counter-attack from White House spokesman Josh Earnest.

In pushing back against calls for her to run for President, Warren has said she has more clout as a Senator. She may have a point.

Kevin McCauley is editor of O'Dwyer's.

NEWS OF PR FIRMS**SINGAPORE FINDS FINSBURY FOR \$435K**

International Enterprise Singapore has inked Finsbury to a one-year \$435K PR and marketing communications contract covering the US.

The goal is to promote "Singapore's status as a leading commodities trading hub in Asia" to journalists and influencers.



The work calls for the WPP unit to "make all reasonable efforts to arrange three meetings or activities with top tier media or influencers in each quarter of the term in relevant US-based media publications" and to conduct two media perception surveys to gauge the progress toward Singapore's image goal.

The contract also calls for Finsbury to conduct an "online and social media landscape." That analysis will report on conversations, as well as key influencers related to trade clusters such as agri-commodities, energy, metals and minerals.

Finsbury will charge IES from \$875 per-hour (partner) to \$155 (A/E) for additional PR services.

GOP OPERATIVE LEAVES FOR LEVICK

Hans Klinger, who was chief of staff to House Committee on Homeland Security chairman Michael McCaul, has joined Levick.

He ran the personal office of the Texas Republican Congressman and directed the security panel's communications, legislative and political strategies.

Earlier, McCaul served as chief of staff to House Republican Conference chair Jeb Hensarling, who also hails from the Lone Star State.

Mark Irion, Levick president, said Klinger is "one of the country's most sought after political minds" with an "unmatched skill at framing an issue in ways that connect with target audiences."

EDELMAN ACQUIRES COLUMBIA AGENCY

Edelman has acquired Bogotá, Columbia's Position Comunicaciones to bolster its existing Latin American operations in Brazil, Argentina, Mexico and Miami.

Allam McCrea, acting CEO of Edelman Latin America, said Columbia has been steadily growing as a market for global clients.

PC, now known as Edelman Position, counts clients like Disney Parks, FEMSA, HBI, Lewis Energy Group, Perenco, SC Johnson, Symantec and Tiffany & Co.

Mauricio Ferro Cadena is GM.

TURNER OPENS IN CHICAGO

Turner PR has opened a Chicago outpost led by senior director Melanie Dennig.

Christine Turner, founder and president, said the Windy City has always been a key market for the firm's travel and lifestyle business, in addition to media and influencers.

Dennig, a six-year Turner alum, was previously based in New York for the firm, which was acquired by Fahlgren Mortine last year.

NEW ACCOUNTS**New York Area**

Turner PR, New York/Pure Barre, fitness studio chain, for a consumer and B2B campaign. The firm's Denver and Chicago outposts will assist to support the 300-franchise group, which also markets DVDs, exercise equipment and apparel.

The Brandman Agency, New York/Independent Collection, hotel group in residential city neighborhoods across the US, for PR. IC has properties in New York (Brooklyn and Manhattan), Boston, Philadelphia, Washington, Miami and Santa Barbara.

Conundrum, New York/Kypris, natural skin care products, as AOR for PR, including external comms. and partnership initiatives.

M&C Saatchi, New York/ROK Mobile, prepaid, contract-free mobile and music service, as AOR.

Brandstyle Communications, New York/Quad Jobs, community jobs portal for college students; Magnises, luxury credit card, and Bene Rialto, retail, showroom and education platform for designers and artists, all for PR.

Montgomery Communications, New York/Desert & Delta Safaris in Botswana, eight luxury lodges in the African country, for PR.

Beautiful Planning Marketing & PR, New York/Limitless La Vie, non-profit fashion start-up that gives proceeds to organizations for young students and aspiring professionals.

East

LavoieHealthScience, Boston/Dipexium Pharmaceuticals, publicly traded, late-stage pharma, for IR, and NewLink, biopharma focused on cancer treatments, for PR and IR.

Buffalo Brand Invigoration Group, Vienna, Va./Rio Verde Community, active-adult residential, golf course development in Scottsdale, Ariz., for PR.

Southeast

Arketi Group, Atlanta/Cohesive Solutions, business services and consulting for enterprise assets, for messaging, brand enhancement and web design.

JoTo PR, Clearwater, Fla./Centers of Integrative Medicine and Healing, for PR for the 25-year-old clinic in Providence, R.I.

Dreamweaver Brand Comms., Fort Lauderdale, Fla./SproutLoud Media Networks, hyper-local marketing platform, for PR.

Southwest

TrizCom PR, Dallas/Heroes for Children, 10-year-old Texas-based non-profit providing social and financial help to families battling childhood cancer, as AOR for PR.

Phoenix Marketing Associates, Scottsdale, Ariz./Ahi Mahi Fish Grill; Arizona Ballroom Champions, Define Yourself Clothing and Shari Rowe, country singer, for PR, digital, branding and related efforts.

West

Marketing Maven, Los Angeles/WaterAid, non-profit focused on water access in poor regions, for PR, a renewal.

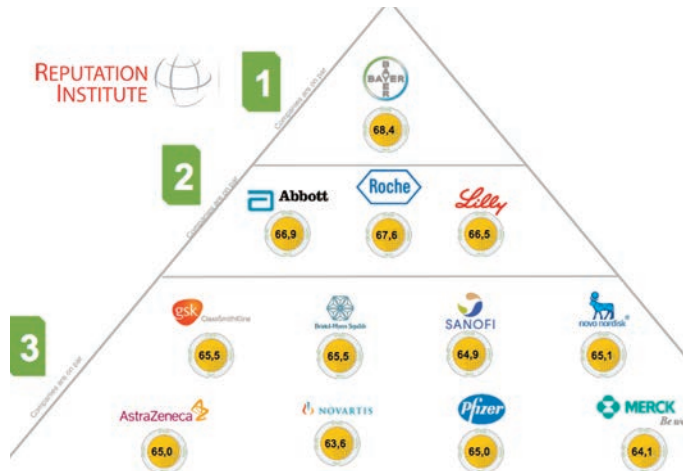
KCOMM, San Clemente, Calif./Evite, digital invitation service, as AOR for PR.

NEWS OF SERVICES

BAYER HAS TOP PHARMA REP. INDUSTRY LAGS

Bayer has secured the top slot among pharmaceutical sector corporate reputations for the fourth straight year, according to the Reputation Institute's annual ranking, but the sector as a whole lags behind other industries.

Notably, in the Institute's ranking of top corporations across all sectors released last month, Bayer came in at No. 80.



Roche, Abbott and Lilly round out the top tier of the measurement of the top 12 global pharma companies in 15 markets. But those companies landed at 85, 89 and 92 among all sectors.

The Institute sees reputation formed by seven factors: performance, leadership, citizenship, governance, workplace, innovation and products/services. But it reports that from 48% to 58% of the public is unsure about what pharmaceutical companies are doing in those areas.

Globally, the pharma sector scored its highest reputation points in the US, Russia and Australia, while its lowest marks came out of Asia.

BRIEFS: **David Drobis**, chairman emeritus of Ketchum, is the recipient of the Trustee Alumni Award from his alma mater, McDaniel College. Drobis, a member of the class of 1963, earned a bachelor's degree in psychology. He started out in Washington and moved to Ketchum in 1967, rising from A/E to CEO in a 36-year run handling clients like Dow Chemical and FedEx. Drobis has retired to Naples, Fla., with his wife and McDaniel alum Bobbi Love Drobis. ...**PR Newswire** has signed the **Chief Marketing Officer Council** for communications, media monitoring, and distribution services. The Council reps 8,500 senior corporate marketing executives across 110 countries, controlling an estimated \$400B marketing spend. ...**Cision** has unveiled two new products, Cision Public Relations Edition and Cision Social Edition. The first combines features from Cision and Vocus, including PR, content and social media management. The latter covers social media management services, including posting and scheduling from one platform for 11 channels, including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Tumblr, among others.

PEOPLE

Joined

Maureen Byrne, senior director of global and US comms., Novartis Oncology, to Kyne, New York, as executive VP and general manager of its N.Y. outpost. She was previously with Roche and GCI before a 10-year Novartis stint.



Byrne

Cynthia Clayton, VP of IR and corporate comms., Alnylam Pharmaceuticals, Cambridge, Mass., is leaving the company to "pursue personal interests." An external search for a replacement has commenced.

Will Roberts, VP, IR and corporate comms., Discovery Labs, to Adaptimmune, Philadelphia, as VP of IR for the publicly traded, UK- and Pa.-based biopharma. He was VP of corporate comms. and IR for ViroPharma through its acquisition by Shire in 2014 and directed IR at MedImmune.

David Grabert, who led corporate comms. for Clear Channel Outdoor's Americas division, to GroupM, New York, as global director of corporate comms. for the WPP-owned media agency parent. He previously held comms. roles with Cox Comms., Comcast and Canoe Ventures.

Anu Kher, senior A/E, Affect, to Rubenstein PR, New York, as an associate VP. She was a reporter for the Times of India and editor for Multi-Housing News.

Matthew Beck, VP of strategic comms., Glover Park Group, to the Investment Company Institute, the Washington trade group of mutual funds and other regulated funds, as senior director, media relations, under chief public comms. officer Mike McNamee. Beck held staff posts with Reps. Sander Levin (D-Mich.) and the late Robert Matsui (D-Md.), as well as former Congressman Brian Baird (D-Wash.).

Jonathan Carroll, head of creative client services, to Weber Shandwick, San Francisco, as senior VP to lead its digital and creative teams. Heather Gallegos, comms. advisor at Cisco Systems, joins as senior VP in the office's employee engagement & change management group. And Douglas Myers, director, Landis Comms., joins the SF corporate practice as a VP.

Betsy Cooper to Kwittken, as managing director of its Toronto operation. Kwittken started the office last year through sister MDC Partners agency KBS Toronto. She ran her own shop and held posts at Labatt Breweries of Canada, Harbinger Comms. and Thornley Fallis Comms.



Cooper

Julie Collins, external affairs officer, Port of Tacoma, to Port of Seattle, as director of public affairs.

Anthony Reynolds, sports info director, Northern Michigan Univ., to Ohio University, Athens, as assistant athletic director of media relations.

Jillian Watts, A/E, CM Communications, to 451 Marketing, Boston, as a senior A/E. She was an A/E at AMP agency and held posts at True North Brand Group, Boston Bruins and McNeil, Gray & Rice.

ARCHITECTURE FIRM SEEKS PR PLAN

Bailey Edward, the Midwest architecture and engineering firm focused on the public sector, is calling for PR proposals to shift its image from "capable" to "creative," among other goals.

BE, based in Chicago, released an RFP on May 15 for the work, seeking agencies with experience in the engineering, architecture and construction management sectors. The company said it is seen as technically capable and highly responsive, but it wants to burnish its reputation for creative designs through a proactive PR effort.

Ongoing media outreach, positioning of company principals and staff, along with industry and regional outreach are among PR goals.

BE's resume includes the \$48M Illinois Army National Guard operation to replace its Midway Airport outpost, the US Dept. of Agriculture's research facility at the Univ. of Toledo, and the Univ. of Chicago's Institute of Politics.

Deadline: May 29. RFP: <http://odwpr.us/1EXeJh9>.

CONGO PROMOTES WAR VS. SEX ABUSE

The Democratic Republic of Congo has hired KRL International to support the country's office in charge of combatting sexual violence.

The Washington firm will do outreach on behalf of the Office of the Special Representative to the US government, media, non-profit organizations and engage foreign investors and the private sector to build support for the fight against sexual violence and child recruitment.

Human Rights Watch reports that hundreds of thousands of women and girls—young and old—have been victims of rape and brutalization since conflicts in the Congo began in 1996.

Riva Levinson, who once managed the international business of Burson-Marsteller's BKSH & Assocs. lobbying unit, which is now Prime Policy Group, founded KRL, which has a three-month pact with the Congo.

She's the longtime advisor of Liberia President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who celebrated the May 11 decision of the World Health Organization to rule her country Ebola-free.

KRL also handles PR for South Sudan, which is Africa's youngest nation.

SAUDIS BOLSTER SPENDING AT QORVIS

Saudi Arabia bolstered spending at Qorvis to \$3.2M during the six-month period ended March 31 as the Kingdom adopted a more aggressive response to the upheaval in the Middle East.

The MSL unit, which received \$500K from the Saudis in the year ago period, supported Saudi Arabia's military intervention in Yemen ("Operation Decisive Storm") and its backing of Syrian rebels seeking the ouster of Bashar al-Assad.

Saudi Arabia transitioned from Operation Decisive Storm to "Operation Renewal of Hope" on April 21, a shift capped by a May 7 announcement of a five-day cease-fire to facilitate shipments of humanitarian aid to Yemen.

Secretary John Kerry and Saudi Foreign Minister Adel bin Ahmed Al-Jubeir unveiled the agreement at a

joint press conference in Riyadh.

The two diplomats also discussed the joint battle against ISIS, Iran's nuclear program and the Camp David summit between the US and Arab states of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

Saudi Arabia's King Salman skipped Obama's summit last week at Camp David. His absence was reported as a snub to the US.

King Hamad of Bahrain, which is the base of U.S. Fifth Fleet, is also snubbing the summit.

Bahrain, a satellite of Saudi Arabia, is another Qorvis client.

It spent \$280K at Qorvis during the period. Qorvis has been Saudi Arabia's "go-to" US PR firm since the days following the 9/11 terror attacks.

WIDMEYER AIDS OLE MISS CRISIS

The University of Mississippi's board has called in PR support after its decision to not offer a new contract to chancellor Dan Jones roiled alumni and donors.

New York-based Widmeyer Communications, part of Finn Partners, is advising Ole Miss' 12-member board amid the blowback.

Students, faculty, prominent alumni and wealthy donors contributed to two weeks of protests last month, including criticism from author John Grisham, football great Archie Manning and ex-Netscape CEO Jim Barksdale.

The university's board, which initially declined to extend a new contract based on financial issues at the university's medical center, then offered a two-year extension to Jones with mandatory retirement after 2017. He turned it down.

CNN reported that Jones' successful run as head of the university (rising test scores and fundraising) was tempered in the eyes of some as he worked to distance the 167-year-old school from its Confederate history.

Barksdale, now a venture capitalist who has given the school nearly \$30M, called the board's decision "unforgivable."

Veteran agency pro and PR counselor Tom Eppes is chief communications officer for Ole Miss.

"The circumstances of the past six weeks have certainly been outside the norm for our office," Glenn Boyce, higher education commissioner of Mississippi, told the Clarion-Ledger.

GSG's BRYAN JOINS CLS

Allison Bryan of independent shop Global Strategy Group has joined CLS Strategies, which is part of Omnicom's diversified agency services unit.

At GLS, Bryan handled media relations and PA duties for League of Conservation Voters and Elon Musk's SpaceX commercial space venture.

She also worked as a field organization for President Obama's Organizing for America and MWW.

Bryan takes the managing associate slot, a title she shares with fellow recent hire Jonathan Ewing, who joined CLS from the US Global Leadership Coalition.

Juan Cortinas, CLS partner, said the duo "fits in with our ethos of collaboration and strategic foresight" in playing a key role in client campaigns.

Products that consumers usually approach with caution—coffee and granola bars—got “good ink” recently thanks no doubt to PR efforts by the industries involved. An article on page three of the May 14 *New York Times* sang the praises of coffee consumption, saying “data vindicates a sometimes maligned beverage.”

While “most of us are worrying that it (coffee drinking) might be hurting us” there is “almost no evidence for that at all,” says the article by Aaron Carroll, MD and professor of pediatrics, Indiana University School of Medicine.

Most of the article had appeared May 11 in The Upshot on New Health Care titled “More Consensus on Coffee’s Benefits Than You Might Think.” In NYT, the head became, “A Surprising Consensus on Coffee’s Health Benefits.” Left out of the NYT version was this paragraph toward the end: “But it’s way past time that we stopped viewing coffee as something we all need to cut back on. It’s a completely reasonable addition to a healthy diet, with more potential benefits seen in research than almost any other beverage we’re consuming. It’s time we started treating it as such.”

The graph, excised by NYT editors, typifies the rah-rah tone of the article.

Health Sites Rip Article

Health News Review called the article “unbalanced,” saying “the exploration of harms was not nearly as thorough as the coverage of benefits” and showed “coffee confirmation bias.”

“We have to wade 18 paragraphs into this story through a mug full of studies showing benefits of coffee on every health condition imaginable, before we receive a weak restraining comment about the lack of randomized trials in this area. That’s too little, too late.”

HNR is suspicious that “Big Coffee” is somehow involved, perhaps in funding some of the studies.

“Big Coffee” is the National Coffee Assn. whose CEO is William Murray, former CEO of PR Society of America. Joe DeRupo, who was a PR staffer under Murray at the Society, is director of member relations and communications.

If NCA is involved in this story, Murray and DeRupo deserve a lot of credit since its upbeat tone matches that of any press release we have ever seen.

Statistical Examples Challenged

Drinking lots of coffee—even six or seven black cups a day—might reduce the risk of Type 2 diabetes, the article says.

“Increasing coffee consumption by two cups a day was associated with a lower relative risk of liver cancer by more than 40%,” says the article.

ANH pounced on this by asking: “Really? 40% of what? My lifetime risk of liver cancer to start with, according to the American Cancer Society, is one in 81, while an average woman’s risk is about one in 196. This equates to 1.23% for men and 0.51% in women. Reducing a man’s relative risk of liver cancer then goes from 1.2% down to 0.72%, a difference of about 0.48. Is that

worth an extra two cups of coffee per day?”

65% Use Milk & Sugar

A flaw in the article is its failure to mention that 65% of Americans add milk and sugar to their coffee, according to Statistics Brain. All the results cited by Carroll apply only to the 35% who drink coffee black.

Why is milk and sugar so popular with coffee? Because it “makes the coffee taste wonderful,” says the Alliance for National Health.

Negatives left out include the fact that caffeine is addictive and cutting down or stopping coffee consumption can be difficult and even on a par with trying to stop smoking.

Coffee is used by some for its laxative effect. But this means that nutrients are expelled by the body before they can be absorbed, say scientists. The caffeine in coffee may cause “jitteriness” and pregnant women should avoid that substance, says the Carroll article. Caffeine should not be consumed after 2 p.m. to avoid interference with sleep, say some doctors.

“The fact that coffee contains good stuff does not necessarily mean that it’s good for us,” says James D. Lane, Phd., professor of medical psychology and behavioral medicine at Duke.

Daily News Lists “Good” Granola Bars

Granola bars, another product that has been hit with negative news recently such as the FDA ordering Kind Healthy Snacks to take the word “healthy” off at least four of its products, got some “good ink” in the May 12 *New York News*.

The article by Jeanette Settembre names “five good bars”: Chocolate Peanut Butter Quest Bar; Think Thin Cinnamon Bun White Chocolate; That’s It Apple + Coconut; NuGo Slim Espresso Bar, and Mango Health Warrior Chia Bar.

Among the five “bad bars” was Kind Dark Chocolate Cherry Cashew + Antioxidants with 180 calories (equivalent of 12 teaspoons of sugar), 9g fat, 4g protein and 14g sugar.

Dietician Tanya Zuckerbrot says it is “A bar with little or no fiber and protein digests quickly, so it won’t satisfy hunger for very long.

Joseph Cohen, Kind SVP and 2014 chair of the PR Society, said, when the company was hit with the order in April, that Kind is fully committed to working with the FDA.

Bars “Nothing More Than Candy

Settembre says “Energy bars marketed as healthy alternatives to full meals are often nothing more than candy wrapped in a protein or fiber skin.” She calls it a “billion-dollar boondoggle” that is “making America fat.”

NBC News and other media have noted that granola bars can contribute to cavities since the sticky material in them stays on the teeth long after the bars have been digested. The bars are often consumed “on the run” when rinsing out the mouth with water or brushing the teeth are not readily available options.

— Jack O’Dwyer