



Jack O'Dwyer,  
Editor-in-Chief

# O'Dwyer's Newsletter

The Inside News of  
PR and Marketing  
Communications

271 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016  
212/679-2471. Fax: 212/683-2750  
www.odwyerpr.com; jobs.odwyerpr.com

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## ALASKA ECONDEV AUTHORITY WANTS PR

Alaska's economic development engine has kicked off an RFP search for PR and communications to support its efforts to spur industry and infrastructure projects in The Last Frontier.

Budget is in the \$300K-\$1.8M range.

The Alaska Industrial Development and Export Authority wants a strategic communications firm to help foster public outreach and burnish its programs.

The RFP, released Sept. 9, said a firm or group of firms will be expected to provide services like strategic comms. planning, web communications, document design and publications, advertising, and other services like event organizing.

Proposals are due Oct. 1. RFP: <http://bit.ly/1tXi233>.



## EX-GRAYLING CHIEF COUNSELS WAGGED

Michael Murphy, who served as CEO and stepped down as chairman of Grayling last year, has landed at Waggener Edstrom as senior global advisor.

The Seattle-based independent firm said Murphy will advise its executive team as it looks to expand globally. "Michael's global mindset and experience offer Waggener Edstrom a strong advantage as we pursue higher levels of global growth," said president/founder Melissa Waggener Zorkin.

Since leaving Grayling in August 2013, Murphy has counseled companies through his UK-based Michael Murphy & Ltd. firm.

Murphy was deputy CEO at Weber Shandwick before leading Trimedia through its acquisition by Huntsworth, Grayling's parent. He then led Grayling as CEO for nearly four years before taking on a chairman role in 2013 to manage the transition to current CEO Pete Pederson.



Murphy

**R&R Partners' Phoenix office** is providing PR support to the family of Charlie Vacca, the gun range instructor who was shot and killed last month by a 9-year-old girl. The firm is working with Phoenix law firm Lamber-Goodnow at Fennemore Craig, which helped Vacca's four children and wife orchestrate a "Today" appearance and video statement of support for the young girl who accidentally killed their father.

## PENN STATE LURES LOKMAN TO PR POST

Penn State has named Lawrence Lokman, UCLA PR veteran, VP-strategic communications effective Oct. 8. The appointment is subject to approval of the board of trustees, which will discuss the matter at its Sept. 19 meeting.

Lokman did an eight-year stint at University of California, Los Angeles 2002-10, where he served as associate vice chancellor.

Responsible for a staff of 60, Lokman was in charge of PR, media relations, special events, crisis, executive communications and fund-raising outreach.

While at UCLA, Lockman rolled out the school's YouTube, Facebook and Twitter channels and launched its broadcast media studio.

Earlier, he did stints at The Rogers Group, LA, LA Dept. of Water & Power and The Century Council.

Most recently, Lokman was founder/managing director of Window in Communications in Los Angeles, handling educational and non-profit clients such as California Coalition for Public Higher Education, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, USC's Gould School of Law and Conrad N. Hilton's Foundation's Hilton Humanitarian Prize.

At Penn St., Lockman will oversee 55 employees in the news & media relations, Internet communications, campus & community affairs, research communications and university marketing & advertising departments.

Penn St. was front & center in the Joe Paterno scandal. It turned to Edelman to handle that crisis.

## CHR ACQUIRES TRYLON SMR

Integrated marketing agency The CHR Group has acquired Trylon SMR, a New York-based media relations and tech specialist with \$1.5M in billings in 2013.

Lloyd Trufelman founded Trylon in 1990 after handling publicity and communications for VH-1, MTV Networks and the Cable Television Ad Bureau. He started out in PR with Rubenstein Associates and WNYC.

Trufelman said the sale gives his clients access to services like branding, digital, advertising and experiential marketing.

CHR Group partner Jonathan Zaback said Trylon's results on the media relations front "are some of the best I have ever seen in my career and [I am] proud to have them as part of our holding company."

Trylon, with accounts like About.com, The Weather Channel and Scripps Networks, will retain its name under CHR.

CHR in March acquired New Jersey PR shop Raker Goldstein & Co.

## **EX-TREASURY PAO WALKS TO GLOVER PARK**

Jenni LeCompte, assistant secretary for public affairs at the US Dept. of the Treasury until last year, has landed at Glover Park Group as a managing director.

LeCompte focuses on strategic communications and financial services for the WPP-owned firm.

She led Treasury's office of PA for three years through 2013, a post confirmed by the Senate, and earlier served as deputy. She joined Treasury from the Democratic National Convention Committee, where she was deputy CEO for PA.

Natalie Wyeth Earnest, wife of White House press secretary Josh Earnest, is now PA chief at Treasury.

In the private sector, LeCompte was director of communications for the Recording Industry Association of America.

She also worked as a PR hand for the Kerry-Edwards presidential bid in 2004 and did press stints for Sen. Dick Durbin (D-IL), Sen. Charles Schumer (D-NY) and the Clinton White House.

Glover Park CEO Chip Smith called her resume "rarely matched experience" in the public and private sector.

## **CIGNA UNVEILS BRANDING PUSH**

Healthcare giant Cigna on Sept. 8 launched a new branding campaign designed to reinforce the Connecticut-based insurer's commitment to serve as advocate 24/7/365 for the health and security needs of its 85M global customer base.

McCann Erickson developed the ad push that carries the "Together All the Way" tagline and highlights the personal stories of individual Cigna customers.

The campaign has 60- and 30-second ad spots to air on national cable and print/digital/broadcast spots slated for Atlanta, Dallas and Miami.

Ads kick off in China and India in October and November, respectively.

A micro site invites consumers to learn about forming a partnership with Cigna and explores specific services/benefits.

Stephen Cassel is Cigna's brand leader. Edelman handles the company's PR.

## **OHIO CRAFT BREWERS FORMULATE PR**

The trade group for Ohio's craft beer makers has released an RFP for "branding services" to promote the Buckeye State's fast-growing industry.

The seven-year-old, 107-member Ohio Craft Brewers Association hired its first executive director last year as it grew from a volunteer organization to a non-profit trade association.

Ohio is fourth in the country for craft beer production with more than 1M barrels in 2013 and is boosted by large regional (Great Lakes Brewing Company) and national (Sam Adams, Anheuser Busch) breweries.

The OCBA has not yet had formal branding, comms. or marketing and seeks a firm to take the reins. Proposals are due Oct. 10, but a notice of intent to submit must be in by Sept. 19. Executive director Mary MacDonald (mary@ohiocraftbeer.org) is handling the search.

## **BELL POTT POWERS VENEZUELA OIL GIANT**

Bell Pottinger has been working for Venezuela's national oil giant, which is the parent company of US-based Citgo Petroleum Corp.

Tim Bell's firm is trying to improve the overseas image of Petroleos de Venezuela, according to a report in Bloomberg.

PDVSA, which is mulling the sale of Citgo, is on the US sanctions list for its commercial relations with Iran.

UK-based BP is the first firm international PR firm hired by PDVSA since the death of Venezuela strong man Hugo Chavez.

Venezuela President Nicolas Maduro has carried out the leftist policies of his predecessor. He also has cracked down on the South American country's press.

The *Wall Street Journal* reported Sept. 8 on the surge in online media growth in Venezuela due to the hunt for news sources free of state control.



## **BRUNSWICK AIDS \$9B DOLLAR GEN. BID**

Dollar General is leaning on PR counsel from Brunswick Group as it takes a \$9.1B hostile takeover bid for rival Family Dollar to straight to shareholders.

Goodlettsville, Tenn.-based Dollar General initially went public with a \$78.50-per-share cash offer to Family Dollar's board in mid-August, a bid to break up a planned \$8.5B merger of Family Dollar and Dollar Tree.

But on Sept. 9, Dollar General announced a tender offer at \$80 per share, pitching the hostile bid as having "significantly greater value than the existing agreement with Dollar Tree, as well as immediate and certain liquidity for [shareholders'] shares."

Brunswick senior partner Steve Lipin and partner Shahed Larson are handling media and advising Dollar General. Dan MacDonald is senior director of corporate comms. for the company, while Mary Winn is VP of IR and PR.

As previously reported, Sard Verbinnen & Co and Joele Frank, Wilkinson Brimmer Katcher are working the Dollar Tree-Family Dollar deal, respectively. Seventy-five-year-old Dollar General has 11,500 stores in 40 states.

## **DCI TAPS DIGITAL GURU ZURN**

Suzanne Zurn, GM for Virginia-based digital agency The Prosper Group, has moved to DCI Group as VP of digital.

Zurn is a former senior VP for Adfero Group and VP for digital consulting at Waggener Edstrom in Washington. She will work closely with VP/technology Mark Szalay at the right-leaning communications shop based in DC.

Earlier posts included Xenophon Strategies and 720 Strategies. She also worked on as an aide to Reps. Jim Ryun (R-KS) and Sam Brownback (R-KS) in the 1990s.

**BERKE RESIGNS POLITICO EDITOR JOB**

Richard Berke, executive editor at *Politico*, is leaving after a ten-month stint due to a disagreement over strategy with its founders.

He informed staffers—via a Sept. 7 email—that he has agreed to disagree over strategy with Jim VandeHei and John Harris.

The former *New York Times* assistant managing editor said there is "no acrimony and no drama" connected to his departure.

VandeHei and Harris, in their note, praised Berke's editorial skills, but "we were in agreement that a vibrant and growing publication must have a leadership team that is fully in sync on its mission and how to achieve it."

Bill Nichols, editor at large, will take over Harris' duties on an interim basis.

**Pushes Into Europe**

*Politico* has joined German publisher Axel Springer to form a 50/50 venture to bring a version of the political/commentary site to Europe.

The Brussels-headquartered operation would spring to life with a war chest of at least \$10M.

*Politico* founders John Harris and Jim VandeHei said the partnership "is aimed at exploring journalistic opportunities in Europe and is being set up as a stand alone enterprise."

The European push marks *Politico*'s second foray outside its DC base following the year ago acquisition of Capital New York.



Berke

**THE STREET NAMES MANAGING EDITOR**

Scott Billings, a *Wall Street Journal* and CNBC.com alum, has moved to TheStreet.com as managing editor of the financial news portal.

Billings, who is based in New York, was senior news editor for CNBC.com from its 2006 launch until last year. He spent more than 20 years with the *Wall Street Journal*, including broadcast news editor and news editor on its national desk.

TheStreet has also added Jennifer Van Grove as technology and social media reporter in San Diego. She has reported for Mashable, NBC San Diego, VentureBeat and CNET, where she was recently a senior writer.

Janet Guyon, formerly of Investopedia and Dow Jones, was named editor-in-chief of TheStreet.com in May.

**GLOVER PARK TURNS ON TV ONE**

Glover Park Group is handling TV One, a top cable TV network aimed at African-Americans on a range of federal matters.

Susan Brophy, managing director of government affairs at the WPP property is spearheading the team.

She was deputy director of legislative affairs in the

Clinton White House, senior VP in Time Warner's global policy office in DC and counselor to its ex-CEO Dick Parsons on politics and policy.

Matt Mandel, aide to former Majority Leader Eric Cantor, and Gregg Rothschild, deputy chief of staff to Democratic heavyweight Congress John Dingell when he chaired the Energy and Commerce Committee, join Brophy on the business.

TV One, which launched in 2004, chalked up its best monthly rating performance among the key 25-54 year-old age group. It credited the upbeat viewer level to the debut of "Girlfriends' Getaway," and the second season of "Fatal Attraction."

**MAXIM SNAGS NYT'S LANPHEAR**

*Maxim* is recruiting Kate Lanphear for the editor-in-chief slot, according to a report in *WWD*.

She's style director at *T: The New York Times Style Magazine*, and was at the newspaper prior to 2013.

Before the NYT, Lanphear was style director at *Elle* and a "recognizable street style star."

*Maxim* is now owned by Sardar Biglari, who made his financial mark via the Steak 'n Shake restaurant chain.

**TWC'S LAINE JOINS COMCAST**

Julie Laine, a 13-year veteran of Time Warner Cable and its current group VP & chief counsel, is shifting to Comcast as VP, chief transaction compliance officer & deputy general counsel.

Comcast is acquiring TWC.

In her new post, Laine is responsible for government and third-party conditions arising from Comcast's joint venture and overseeing pending agreements with TWC and Charter Communications.

Earlier she was at Net2Phone and advisor in the policy division of the FCC's Common Carrier Bureau.

**FIVETHIRTYEIGHT MOVES INTO FILMS**

Nate Silver's FiveThirtyEight, data-driven journalism operation, plans to introduce two short documentaries with parent ESPN, which bought the site from the *New York Times*.

"Signals" launches next month to cover how analytics are used in sports, politics, science and economics. One installment focuses on the chess match between former world champ Gary Kasparov and IBM's Deep Blue computer.

"The Collectors" focuses on stats-savvy individuals such as official scores, census takers and weather forecasters.

Different episodes of each program will run every six weeks or so.

In a statement, Silver said the films are "exactly the kinds of projects that envisioned from the outset when I decided to bright FiveThirty Eight to ESPN."

He said the goal is to "expand our journalism in ways that prove a sound knowledge of data and statistics can make stories more compelling as well as more accurate."



## **MEDIA NEWS**

### **BOOK COVERS GRIPES WITH PR**

Jason Kincaid, former writer for TechCrunch, has written a book called "The Burned Out Blogger's Guide to PR."

He told TC founder Rick Arrington that "revenge" is the reason he wrote the book.

"For four years as a writer at TechCrunch the PR industry made me miserable," he told Arrington's blog.

Arrington wrote the book "will tell you why you probably don't want to hire a PR person any time soon, and he gives good (and funny) advice on how to deal with crazy bloggers and reporters in the meantime."

He believes PR people will groan and declare the Blogger's Guide as nonsense.

The book is supposed to appear in print in a couple of weeks and is currently available on Kindle.



**Kincaid**

### **KEKST WORKS SALE OF NO. 2 NEWSPAPER CO.**

Kekst and Company is handling the possible sale of Digital First Media Co., the nation's second biggest newspaper company based in circulation.

The parent of 76 dailies including *Denver Post*, *Mercury News*, *Los Angeles Daily News*, *Oakland Tribune*, and *Marin Independent Journal* announced Sept. 12 that it is exploring "strategic alternatives."

That exploration may include sale of the entire company, one or more "regional clusters" or continued operation of its business plan.

CEO John Paton says the news information business in "undergoing a period of seismic change, defined by the need to consolidate to rapidly compete in a digital world."

Successful companies will be those that "have meaningful scale and digital expertise," according to Paton's statement.

DFM, to Paton, "has clearly emerged as a leading player based on the high quality of our assets and the expansive work we have done to transform them into multi-platform products."

The company says it reaches 75M customers monthly via its varied platforms.

DFM was created in December through the merger of MediaNews Group and Journal Register Co.

Kekst, which is owned by Publicis Groupe, has Jeremy Fielding and Molly Morse working the DFM account.

digitalfirst  
MEDIA



### **ISIS LAB CORP IS LATEST TO CHANGE NAME**

Social gaming developer ISIS Lab Corp. said that it will change the name that it shares with the Mideast terror group known to some as the Islamic State in Iraq and

Syria.

Toronto-based ISIS, publicly traded on the Toronto Venture Exchange, did not reference the militant group in announcing the change, but it is the latest in a handful of companies that have been thrust into an association that London professor Nicholas O'Shaughnessy has called "brand suicide."



Last week, the mobile payments start-up Isis Wallet said it would change its name to Softcard because of the Islamist group association. "However coincidental, we have no desire to share a name with this group and our hearts go out to those affected by this violence," CEO Michael Abbott said on Sept. 3.

Isis Lab Corp. said Sept. 11, a day after President Barack Obama declared a US-led global crackdown on the ISIS group, that its new moniker, Imperus Technologies, was selected to reflect its direction and strategy to be a "premier, online gaming company."

The start-up earlier this year enlisted tennis star Boris Becker as "brand ambassador" for its online gambling platform in development, ISIS Friends. It said Thursday that it is in the process of securing domain names, corporate names and trademarks for its new name.

On the flip side, Carlsbad, Calif.-based Isis Pharmaceuticals, which has the Nasdaq ticker symbol ISIS, said it considered a name change but decided to keep its identity for now as investors and stakeholders did not register alarm.

### **UNCLE SAM UPS COMMS SPENDING**

The Small Business Government Communications Network has released its Federal Communications & Creative Services Report, finding that 2013 spending rose 17.2 percent to \$1.7B.

The gain is the first rise in contracting since tracking began in 2010.

The report gauges outlays at 25 federal agencies and departments for services such as PR, marketing, advertising, consulting, graphic design, video, market research, and event management.

Small businesses grabbed 42.3 percent or \$724.4M of the total outlays, which was up 15.2 percent from 2012.

Contracting dollars for PR and advertising rose 43 percent and 30.9 percent, respectively.

Smaller PR shops got 50.8 percent of the PR spending, while their advertising agency counterparts took 38.8 percent.

The federal government has established a goal of spending at least 23 percent at small firms.

Jim Krol, executive director of SBGC, said the survey results are "a great sign for creative and communicators."

He also noted that the 42.3 percent share for small business shows "the federal government continues to recognize small firms can help agencies and departments meet their communications contracting needs."

**NEWS OF PR FIRMS****COYNE CHECKS OUT COLUMBIA BIZ SCHOOL**

Jersey-based Coyne has signed on as Columbia Business School's agency of record in charge of driving its new "At the Very Center of Business" market positioning.

FleishmanHillard, which is part of Omnicom, had the account.

Columbia's PR director Chris Cashman credited Tom Coyne's firm with having a "keen understanding of the complexities and trends shaping the global news cycle and impacting the business education marketplace."

Columbia dean Glenn Hubbard is committed to exposing students to real world business practice and equipping them with an entrepreneurial mindset.

Coyne is an independent firm.

**MILLENNIUM MARKS 25 YEARS IN PHILLY**

Millennium 3 Management, the Philadelphia-based ad/PR agency of A. Bruce Crawley, said it will host a series of events and activities to mark its 25th year from September through December.

The firm is collaborating with Mighty Writers, a non-profit that teaches Philadelphia kids to "think and write," to host a writing/digital video content on the "Importance of PR and communications in our society." The firm is backing a scholarship and internship.

Crawley said he has shied away from "self-focused" promotions of the firm, but felt 25 years is noteworthy considering nearly three-quarters of small businesses disappear by their 15th year.

"We'll want to take advantage of this anniversary period to talk about the issue of business survivability, and, especially, minority business survivability, how it happens and why it's important," he said.

**NEW MEXICO HEALTH EX SEEKS OUTREACH**

New Mexico's hybrid state-federal health insurance exchange has called for outreach and public education pitches to boost enrollment for Obamacare's second enrollment period starting in November.

The state in July hired Idaho's insurance exchange director Amy Dowd to serve as CEO of the New Mexico exchange, which signed up about 32K of an estimated 59K eligible people as of April.

The exchange, known as NMHIX, is also looking to hire a communications and outreach director and released an RFQ (PDF) for communications and governance support, as well.

Milwaukee-based BVK and Cooney Watson & Associates of Albuquerque handled the exchange's initial, year-long \$6M PR and marketing pact last year.

New Mexico runs the small business insurance exchange for the state while opting for the federal government to handle individual consumers.

While it planned to run the entire exchange, the exchange's board voted 11-1 in July to stick with federal support.

NMHIX said it could award small grants of under \$20K or large statewide pacts to reach consumers.

RFP: <http://bit.ly/1y6VHGI>.

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

**MSLGroup**, New York/TruGreen, national lawn care services provider, as AOR for PR, including community, government and media relations, cause marketing and crisis and issues management. MSL offices in Boston and Washington, D.C., are also engaged. TruGreen serves 1.8M customers.

**Makovsky**, New York/Keek Inc., mobile video sharing social network claiming 69M users, for corporate communications and IR, including presentations with brokers, analysts and investors, and handling shareholder enquiries. Keek, which features a 36-second video format, is paying an \$8,500-per-month retainer for three months, which increases to \$10K/month thereafter if continued.

**M&C Saatchi Sport & Entertainment**, New York/Harlem RBI, to manage PR, events and talent relations for its inaugural celebrity golf charity event Oct. 6 at Liberty National Golf Club.

**Rubenstein PR**, New York/ Victor Mooney's Goree Challenge, a solo transatlantic row from Africa to New York, for the "We Row Harder" campaign, a pro bono communications assignment. Mooney's fourth and final attempt at the 5,000-mile row honors his late brother who died of AIDS in 1983.

**East**

**Blue Wolf Communications**, Merrimack, N.H./Brookstone, product development and specialty retailer, as AOR for PR, social media and event marketing. Brookstone has around 250 stores at airports, malls and in major cities, in addition to catalog and Internet sales. BWC starts out with major initiatives for the holiday '14 season.

**ab+c Creative Intelligence**, Wilmington, Del./Newark Natural Foods, organic grocery, as AOR for a rebranding as it moves to a large space in Newark, Del.

**Southeast**

**O'Connell & Goldberg**, Hollywood, Fla./Thayer Lodging Group, for PR for the Diplomat Resort & Spa, formerly the Westin Diplomat Resort & Spa. Maryland-based TLG acquired the resort and plans to re-brand it as be as Curio – A Collection by Hilton with plans for a \$100M enhancement initiative.

**TransMedia Group**, Boca Raton/ Healthcare Nation Awareness Foundation, North Miami non-profit, for PR.

**Midwest**

**KemperLesnik**, Chicago/Whitney Young High School and Simeon High School for the national high school basketball showcase in 2014 and 2015, the Chicago Elite Classic. This year's installment is slated for Dec. 5-6 at the Univ. of Illinois. KL is handling game management and operations for the event in addition to sponsorship and group ticket sales.

**West**

**Fineman PR**, San Francisco/National Marine Manufacturers Association, for the 2015 Progressive Insurance San Francisco Boat Show Jan. 22-25; The Pacific Companies, Idaho-based developer of multi-family, charter school and special-use projects; Lynmar Estate, Sonoma County winery; Roadhouse Winery (Sonoma), and the Athletic Heart of San Francisco, sports cardiology clinic.



**NEWS OF SERVICES****BOOZ ALLEN IS 'BEST IN SHOW' AT THOTHS**

Booz Allen Hamilton won Best of Show honors at PRSA/National Capital Chapter's annual Thoth Awards in Arlington on Sept. 9.

BAH's "Keep What You've Earned" campaign for the US Navy's 21st Century Sailor Office that encouraged responsible drinking among Sailors earned the evening's top honor. The push, along with policy changes in the Navy, are credited with leading to fewer alcohol-related incidents.

The 46th annual Thoth ceremony also inducted the late Jody Powell and Sheila Tate into the chapter's PR Hall of Fame. The founders of Powell Tate in 1991 were honored for the firm's contributions to PR and public affairs.

"Their work has positively influenced many, not only in Washington but throughout the country and the world," said PRSA/NCC past-president Samantha Villegas, who called the duo "communications giants."

Powell's wife, Nan, and daughter, Emily, accepted the award on behalf of the former White House press secretary for President Jimmy Carter.

The chapter handed out 41 Thoth Awards and Certificates of Excellence.

Thoth winners included Ketchum (Dr Pepper Snapple Group, Hertz - 2, BD, Clorox Co. - 2, DoubleTree by Hilton); Ogilvy Washington (National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, American Floral Endowment, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, National Association of Broadcasters, Get Covered America); AAA; Crosby Marketing Communications (Dept. of Health and Human Services - 2); Susan Davis International (Institute of Museum and Library Services); News Generation; Strauss Radio Strategies; Lyons PR; Entertainment Software Assn.; National Association of Manufacturers, and DC Water.

**PAULA PAYTON LEAVES NYU CC/PR PROGRAM**

Paula Payton, who succeeded John Doorley as head of the NYU graduate corporate communications & PR sequence in February, will join SmartSports, sports technology firm, in October.

Dennis Di Lorenzo, dean of the School of Continuing and Professional Studies, who announced the resignation, has scheduled a meeting of faculty Sept. 19 from 3:30-5:30 p.m. to discuss the future of the program.

It is the largest of its type worldwide, enrolling about 370 students who pay tuition of \$65,000 for the two to four-year course. Many of the students are from abroad including a large contingent from China. Many have jobs and attend classes part time.

Di Lorenzo said in March that PR offers "a plethora of multifaceted career options," spurred by the rise of social media and the "permeation of technology into every facet of communication."

There will be increased emphasis on helping students from abroad to cope with conditions at an American university, he said. A new name was adopted for the department -- Strategic Communication, Marketing and Media Management. The sequence continues to offer an M.S. in PR and corporate communications.

**PEOPLE****Joined**

**John Michael Kennedy** to Goodman Media International, New York, as head of its new Boston outpost. Tom Goodman says his firm has done a lot of work in Boston for clients such as the Institute for Healthcare Optimization, The Economist's Healthcare Forum 2014, Elysium Digital, Boston Ballet, MIT Securities Study Program, Clean Air Task Force and Candlewick Press. Kennedy, a six-year GMI veteran, lived in Boston from 1994-2008, working for Boston Ballet, Huntington Theater Co. and Massachusetts Cultural Council. Goodman says the time is ripe for a Beantown push since businesses there in the sectors served by GMI are "more robust than ever." Those categories are healthcare, travel, media advocacy and culture.

**Kennedy**

**Maureen Varnon**, a senior agency pro for Spectrum and Porter Novelli, has taken the reins of marketing and communications for Catholic Charities USA, the multibillion-dollar Virginia-based network that is one of the country's largest charities. Varnon was recently a senior VP at Spectrum, specializing in food and nutrition clients. She takes the role of SVP of comms. and marketing for the Alexandria-based organization, overseeing internal and external comms. and national branding. Candy Hill stepped down in April as EVP of social policy and external affairs at CCUSA. She spent 14 years at Porter Novelli through 2011 after trade group experience with the National PromoFlor Council (dir., marketing) and the National Dairy Promotion and Research Board (marketing comms. director).

**Varnon**

**Gina Avila**, senior VP-Internet and mobile marketing at Citicorp, to the top digital post at Edelman in the Pacific Northwest. As senior VP/group digital director, Avila will work with staffers in Seattle and Portland and report to Will Ludlam, Seattle GM. Earlier, Avila was VP-business development at IMG, VP at Saatchi & Saatchi (New York State Tourism) and Ogilvy (American Express). Ludlam expects Avila's experience will bolster the social marketing programs of clients.

**Avila**

**Mark Malinowski**, founder of Ketchum's entertainment marketing group, has joined PAN Communications to expand its consumer practice. The more than 25-year veteran has worked in New York, Boston and Los Angeles and did a stint at Cone Communications as senior VP. He counseled Ben & Jerry's, IKEA, Levi Strauss, Puma, Estee Lauder, General Mills, Green Mountain Coffee and Callaway Golf. As VP/group director of PAN's consumer offering, Malinowski will work closely with PAN founder/president Philip Nardone.

**Malinowski**

## **PR' REPUTATION SHREDDED AT MOCK TRIAL**

A prosecution team shredded the reputation of PR last night at a mock trial of the profession held in New York City.

The jury (audience members) listened to the argument about whether PR is "deceptive, non-transparent and of little value to clients or society."

PRSA's NY chapter staged the event at SUNY's Global Center on E55th St. It drew more than 80 people.

Paul Holmes, editor of *Holmes Report*, served as prosecutor, while Michael Schubert, Ruder Finn's chief innovation officer, countered as defense attorney.

Randy Cohen, who wrote the *New York Times* "The Ethicist" column, was the judge.



**L-R: Mock trial panelists Steve Cody, Michael Schubert, Randy Cohen and Paul Holmes.** Photos: Sharlene Spingler

### **Raps Intellectual Dishonesty**

Holmes launched a spirited attack on PR, saying the profession at times relies on spin and practices intellectual dishonesty. Trouble mostly occurs when the focus is on "transactional" rather than strategic PR.

PR is tarnished by hyperbole, lack of identification of paid spokespeople, failure to exhibit moral courage and omission of pertinent facts in order to burnish the reputation of clients, according to Holmes.

He decried the phoniness of Exxon promoting its efforts on global warming, while supporting groups like ALEC, which is dead-set against environmental safeguards.

Holmes cited a major PR firm that recently established a front group in support of management's view in Washington Redskins name controversy.

Conceding that the vast majority of PR people conduct themselves in an ethical fashion, Holmes blamed a "relatively small" bunch of people who hurt PR's image and cheat clients, employees and communities.

He warned that the rise of social media calls for higher standards of ethical behavior, noting that PR people are now directly targeting consumers and completely bypassing journalists, the traditional media-gatekeepers.

To Holmes, consumers are not aware of the "game played between PR people and journalists," making them more vulnerable to hucksters.

### **Deceivers, Not Liars**

Fran Hawthorne, a regular contributor to the *New*

*York Times*, and Delbert Spurlock, former Assistant Secretary of the Army and executive VP at the *New York Daily News*, were witnesses for the prosecutions.

Hawthorne commended the audience for "looking like very nice people," but then said "your job is to make me write about things you want me to and steer me away from bad news."

She said PR people "rarely lie," but practice deception. They string along reporters from small publications with promises of access to the CEO, when in reality they are waiting for a call from the NYT.

Spurlock attacked PR as "monolithic" and a danger to civil society. He believes it's wrong to fault Washington for gridlock. "The problem is New York," he said due to



**Ruder Finn's Emmanuel Tchividjian, former NY Daily News EVP Delbert Spurlock, and Camila Lyngsby.**

the city's role as center of world finance, commerce and communications.

To Spurlock, PR has led to the "destruction of journalism."

### **Practiced by Angels**

Schubert acknowledged that PR may have some flaws but he's always acted in an open and transparent fashion.

Jacqueline Brevard, ex-chief ethics officer at Merck & Co., said all communications at that pharmaceutical giant adhered to the highest code of ethics.

Steve Cody, co-founder & CEO of Peppercomm, is proud to be part of the industry. He's also "walked away" from potential clients who are engaged in questionable behavior.

"PR is largely practiced by angels" is how Cohen summed up the defense argument in the case.

September is PRSA's national ethics month.

## **CVS HEALTH HIRES LANGOWSKI**

CVS Health has named Mary Langowski executive VP for strategy, policy and market development effective Oct. 14.

She will assume responsibilities for government affairs and policy development for CVS on the federal and state levels.

Langowski joins from DLA Piper, where she chaired its healthcare policy & regulatory practice and co-chaired the food/beverage sector.



**Blake Lewis is opposing Mark McClennan for chair-elect of PRSA**—the first contested election since 2000. The battle of Joann Killeen and Art Stevens generated charges of impropriety.

Burning questions present themselves to the two candidates and we hope they will answer them.

The New York chapter's Sept. 8 webinar on ethics showed that inexpensive technology is available for "live," real time broadcasting of events.

A question for national is why hasn't this been used for the Assembly in recent years? The Society says it is dedicated to the "free flow of accurate and truthful information" so there can be "informed decision making in a democratic society."

Below are some of the issues the candidates should face. The presentations of McClennan to the nomcom and Lewis are bereft of any opinions on such subjects. They pledge to work on membership growth and diversity and laud social media and the use of technology instead of dealing with key Society issues.

A question for Lewis, currently secretary, is what issues made you toss your hat in the ring?

Here are other questions for both:

1. Do you favor setting up one or more live webinars, a la the New York chapter, at which members and the press can question you between now and Oct. 11?
2. Do you favor allowing the entire membership, after hearing your views on key subjects, to pick by secure e-mail voting, one of you as chair-elect? The free Condorcet system of Cornell has been used by thousands of organizations for this purpose.
3. Do you favor immediate removal from the bylaws of APR as a condition for any office or committee? The Assembly has the power to do this, over-riding any bylaws about prior notification. This reform has been sought since 1999.
4. Do you favor returning the titles of president and CEO to members and removing them from the staff?
5. Will you let reporters again cover the Assembly? Will you support removal of the boycott against O'Dwyer reporters at the national conference and the bar against an exhibit of the six O'Dwyer informational products?
6. Will you align the Society with groups such as the AMA, ABA, AICPA an ASAE by deferring about half of your dues instead of booking them as cash, bloating "net assets?" Members pay \$300K yearly for CFO/CPA reports that are minimally informative. Members need to work at h.q. to see how their money is spent.

#### **APRs from the South Support Lewis**

Lewis, who has headed his own firm in Dallas since 2000, submitted 21 signatures to Society h.q. Sept. 11, the last day for such petitions. The last minute submission allowed Lewis to build support secretly without tipping off McClennan's allies. All of the signers are from the South or Southwest.

The Dallas chapter is a hotbed of APR—13 of the 17 board members, including president Leah Williams,

VP Sandra Duhe and treasurer Jeff Smith, holding that designation.

At the Boston chapter of McClennan, only two of the 19 leaders listed on the website are APR. Not APR are the four top officers—president Julie Dennehy, president-elect Josh Gitelson, secretary Erin Caron and treasurer Edna Kaplan.

Only three of the 31 New York officers and other leaders are APR, which helps to account for the low standing of New Yorkers with national leadership and the staff.

#### **Society Leaders Alienated from Members**

Both chapters and national have a poor record of listening to or even asking members about major topics.

New York h.q. was moved downtown in 2004 with no input from either the members or the Assembly.

Ditching the printed members' directory was made in 2005 with no poll of members nor any vote in the Assembly. Society leaders and staff refuse to discuss the possibility of a PDF of the directory which would put printing costs in the hands of members.

The Boston chapter's 400 members in 2010 voted by a 61% margin to remove APR from the national bylaws. The question was put to them after the Committee for a Democratic PRSA, headed by Richard Edelman, Art Stevens and Dave Rickey, proposed a bylaw allowing non-APRs to run for office for the first time since the 1970s.

McClennan, a director and Assembly delegate, enraged Stevens by saying that the board "has not yet decided what we will do with the delegates" on that issue.

"Why is not a popular answer to a question not always the solution?" asked Stevens. "Can you simply ignore what members say and want... what happened to democracy?" None of the other 109 chapters put the issue to their members for a binding vote.

#### **Ethical Abuses Charged in 2000 Election**

Stevens, the official candidate for chair-elect in 2000, who was opposed from the floor by Joann Killeen, charged that he lost the nomination because of unethical influence by the board.

Nine of the 17 sitting board members signed the petition for Killeen, touching off charges of improper influence by 1987 president Jack Felton. He said that under the bylaws, directors are not supposed to be involved in picking officers or directors. That function is carried out only by the nomcom, he said.

Killeen, in her presentation to the 2000 Assembly, emphasized her strong support of APR.

Stevens, an ardent foe of the APR rule for national office, favored the annual conference being in New York every second or third year.

Lewis's battle against McClennan is a battle of believers in APR vs. non-believers-- a battle of the South vs. the North. Joe Cohen of New York as 2014 chair, from a chapter with little regard for APR, is enough Northeast representation for the moment, reason the Southerners.

— Jack O'Dwyer