

*Ragan Presents:*

**TOP WOMEN  
IN COMMUNICATIONS**

Class of 2021

**Special Awards Edition  
Honoring the Movers & Shakers**



*Ragan is pleased to present the profiles  
of the honorees in this year's  
Top Women in Communications Awards.  
We salute these female communications leaders  
who are advancing the profession!*

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## THE WOMEN IN COMMUNICATIONS HALL OF FAME

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### ANNE MARIE SQUEO

#### 'BATTLE PROVEN' MESSAGING MASTER

For her remarkable career as a high-profile journalist and topnotch communicator, Squeo has earned a well-deserved spot in Ragan's Women in Communications Hall of Fame in our 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.



If Anne Marie Squeo could be described in two words, they would be “battle proven.”

She has held senior roles across different industries and major corporations, including IBM, Netflix, Lockheed Martin and Xerox. Along the way, she's earned a reputation for being an inspiring leader, strategist and forthright advisor whom CEOs ask for guidance.

Prior to corporate communications, Anne Marie was a business journalist for nearly 15 years at The Wall Street Journal and Bloomberg. At the WSJ, she was part of a small team that won the 2000 Pulitzer Prize for National Reporting and also received the 2004 Gerald R. Loeb Award for Beat Reporting.

This past April, Squeo left her position as Chief Communications & Brand Officer at Xerox to start Proof Point Communications. Prior to starting her own firm, she was transforming Xerox, a legacy brand known for inventing the copier into a workplace technology company. In this role, not only was she repositioning the company, Squeo integrated Marketing and Communications into a single brand team that works seamlessly to support all stakeholders including employees,

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customers and partners. This move stands apart from industry norms—and is a precursor of likely future shifts.

In the thick of pandemic stay-at-home orders, Squeo leveraged the moment to demonstrate how Xerox supports the new hybrid work environment. By simultaneously launching a new Make Now Work brand campaign and Xerox's first Future of Work survey in early June 2020, survey results underpinned social media and marketing while driving international PR coverage and arming sales leaders with industry-specific data to enhance customer pitches. In less than two months, a brand survey conducted by Quartz found a 19% increase in awareness of Xerox's offerings and a 12% increase in the company's perception as a "leader."

Squeo has consistently gravitated toward more challenging roles. At Netflix, she volunteered to lead the announcement for a year-long, secret plan to launch the entertainment TV service globally. The result: #netflixeverywhere, a hashtag she created that encapsulated the entire moment and trended globally on Twitter. From the main stage at CES, Netflix surprised the audience and the world by "flipping the switch" on 130 countries during its hour-long keynote. Media coverage was 95% positive, with key message penetration of nearly 100%. Netflix was the most searched keyword on Naver, South Korea's No. 1 search portal, and the launch story was among the top 10 most-read business stories of all time on the Times of India's website. Netflix subscriptions jumped 21% over the previous quarter.

At Lockheed, she led more than half of the company's 500-person communications team, managing employee engagement, marketing, events and PR. She initiated strategic planning and messaging across all programs, emphasized the need for strong writing and launched the organization's first companywide intranet.

Squeo has elevated the profession at every turn, challenging herself and her teammates to earn their seat at the table and deliver results, not activity. She applied journalism skills to corporate communications and retained robust credibility with the media. She is widely respected by CEOs and communicators alike, and she is a credit to the profession.

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### SUSAN DAVIS

**LEADER, MENTOR, COMMS ICON**

The trailblazing expert in crisis management and government relations has earned a well-deserved spot in Ragan's Women in Communications Hall of Fame in our 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.



At the age of 26, Susan Davis took a bold step and bet on herself.

When she first arrived in Washington, D.C. after graduating from the University of Wisconsin, relatively few women were succeeding in the world of government relations—and even fewer owned their own business. Now, nearly four decades later, Susan Davis International is still helping clients solve problems, solidify reputations, mitigate (and avert) crises, communicate with key audiences and achieve outstanding messaging results, no matter how ambitious their goals.

Davis has personally represented the heads of more than a dozen countries on issues ranging from economic crisis to nation-building and trade expansion. In terms of top-level executive messaging, she has truly done it all.

As Davis' business has grown, she has expended more effort building on her passion for gender equity. She is a long-term strategic communications consultant on U.S. military and veteran's issues for the Department of Defense agencies, services and support organizations, and has personally raised \$5 million to establish the Women in Military Service Memorial, honoring women who have served since the Revolutionary War. For eight years she was board

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chair of Vital Voices Global Partnership, a prominent NGO that has empowered more than 15,000 emerging women leaders in 144 countries.

Davis was a founder of the 7,000-member International Women's Forum and served as its first international president. She is the board chair for Razia's Ray of Hope Foundation, which provides more than 700 young women and girls in rural Afghanistan a safe education.

Davis has worked as an advisor to the Irish and Northern Ireland governments and is a board director and communications chair of The Ireland Fund. Her groundbreaking work includes creating the U.S.- Ireland R&D Partnership, which has funded 65 projects across key sectors including agriculture, health, science and engineering, telecommunication energy and sustainability.

Davis has authored two books, including "Uplift, What People Themselves Can Do", and she has contributed to many others. Most recently, Susan wrote the foreword for "The Internet of Women: Accelerating Cultural Change."

Most importantly to her, Davis mentors more than two dozen women from countries such as India, Panama, Israel and Tanzania who have started public relations agencies. She regularly counsels and mentors them via Skype, WhatsApp and We Chat, and she supports women fighting against human rights abuse in Iraq, the Congo, Serbia and Cambodia.

Washingtonian Magazine has called Davis one of "Washington's Most Powerful Women" and the Washington Business Journal recognized her as one of the Washington D.C. region's "most influential businesswomen." But perhaps most importantly, she has blazed a trail for future industry leaders and proactively empowered the next generation of industry icons.



A close-up portrait of Susan Davis, a woman with short, wavy brown hair and bangs. She is smiling warmly at the camera, showing her teeth. She is wearing a dark-colored top and a chunky, metallic chain necklace. Her eyes are light-colored, and she has small, round earrings. The background is a plain, light gray.

# CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR HALL OF FAMER SUSAN DAVIS

Susan Davis International has thrived for decades by helping clients solve problems, solidify reputations, create events, and manage crises.

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## THE WOMEN IN COMMUNICATIONS HALL OF FAME

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### MICHELLE DELERY

**IS A FEARLESS, INSPIRATIONAL COMMUNICATOR  
WORTHY OF HONOR**

The director of employee and communications services for Entergy Corporation earns a nod in Ragan's Women in Communications Hall of Fame in our 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.



Michelle Delery is an inspirational communications leader who has been a catalyst for positive change throughout her 21-year career at Entergy Corporation, an integrated energy company engaged primarily in electric power production and retail distribution operations.

Delery is actively sought by leaders and peers for her expertise, creativity and strategic thinking. Through hard work and candid conversations, she has gained the trust and respect of Entergy's executive leadership team, allowing her to provide strategic counsel on issues affecting the business.

She consistently pushes the organization to consider broader implications of any request and how it impacts key stakeholders.

A leader with strength, integrity and humility, Delery never shrinks from hard choices and understands a strong team culture is foundational to sustained success. She champions personal and professional development, constantly preparing her team for the inevitable changes that drive our profession. She pushes teammates to broaden their understanding of our business.

## THE WOMEN IN COMMUNICATIONS HALL OF FAME

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A team player, Delery is a sounding board for peers, who consistently seek her advice. Her ability to build agreement among leaders is integral to our overall success. She monitors industry trends, constantly seeking ways to improve our ability to reach all employees.

Delery has led communications into the digital age. She transformed Entergy's in-house digital and creative services capabilities, creating a state-of-the-art studio staffed by in-house graphics and video teams. She garnered budget resources and leadership support to triple the size of the creative services team. The multimedia studio has become a key channel for leaders during the pandemic with hundreds of live webcasts and in-house video productions during the peak of the pandemic and hurricane season, including 44 separate video productions for Hurricane Laura alone. Delery's teams are entrusted with producing major external events for company leaders, shareholders and Wall Street analysts.

Two years ago, Delery persuaded executive leaders to fund a Facebook Workplace pilot that created an online social network and significantly increased online leadership engagement. Under her leadership, they built Workplace into a major company tool for keeping 9,500 employees and contractors informed and connected. She equipped senior leaders with Workplace tools to communicate company priorities. Additionally, a targeted virtual speakers series on Workplace resulted in a 3,000% increase in total active users in a Workplace group for top leaders across the company.

In internal surveys, employees consistently rate highly their understanding of the business, Entergy's brand and their role in its success.

Delery has directed employee communications strategy during major crises and change initiatives including hurricanes Katrina and Rita, company mergers, acquisitions and divestitures, cyber events, reorganizations, and leadership transitions.

Her innovative mindset and work to modernize communications platforms and reliance on them by employees and executive leaders played a key role in

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2020 by helping Entergy adapt to working in new ways through the pandemic and an unprecedented sequence of hurricanes.

Delery is a fearless, inspirational and game-changing communicator worthy of honor. She continues to make incredible strides in her career and has made an indelible impact on Entergy's success.

# Leader. Partner. Neighbor.

Entergy proudly congratulates Michelle Johnson Delery, our director of employee and communications services, for being inducted into the 2021 Women in Communications Hall of Fame. For more than two decades she has used creative storytelling, engaging video and design, and unforgettable events to help share our story with our stakeholders.

Thank you Michelle for your continued dedication to communications excellence and your commitment to the great communities we serve across Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas and Mississippi. And congratulations to all the outstanding leaders recognized by Ragan Communications.



A message from Entergy Corporation.  
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### KAREN STRONG

**INNOVATOR, LISTENER AND LEADER**

For her many years of faithful, fruitful service to public education, the comms legend earns entry into Ragan's Women in Communications Hall of Fame in our 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.



Karen Strong was already breaking barriers in the early 1970s when she received a BA in mass communications—an uncommon field for women at the time.

Her career began with a decade of service as a lead communicator for the City of Austin Public Information Office. She then served as managing partner of a marketing consulting firm. In the late 1980s she began a distinguished career with the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB). She retired in October 2020 but continues to serve in a consulting role.

Strong's tenure at TASB proved to be an exciting era in which the nonprofit member association refined its advocacy, training and legal support for more than 7,000 school board members and exponentially expanded its offerings in the areas of risk management, cooperative purchasing, investment services, energy procurement, employee benefits, and more to the 1,024 school districts of Texas.

Strong helped define TASB's outstanding reputation by demonstrating qualities of an accomplished communicator and savvy leader. She excelled as a:

**Skilled writer/speaker.** A polished wordsmith, Strong wrote countless op/eds, speeches and magazine articles for TASB leaders and connected with the

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membership through her popular Q&A column in the Texas Lone Star. She frequently educated board members on communication and marketing topics and advised the TASB Board of Directors and TASB staff on linking communication strategies with TASB's mission.

**Listener.** She refined the customer journey experience long before the term was coined. Initially without the benefit of digital data, she did it through conversations with members, never hesitating to pick up the phone to listen to their challenges and ideas. Even after shifting to digital data gathering and a member-centric approach to UX research, she continued to build empathy for members through personal connections.

**Innovator.** Where she identified opportunities, Strong presented ingenious solutions. Examples are business/education initiatives, a training conference for district administrative professionals, a student video contest, a long succession of public campaigns like Proud Products of Texas Public Schools and Stand up for Texas Public Schools, and social media advocacy outreach through Texans for Strong Public Schools. She readily embraced new communication tools, such as the online Member Center, and eagerly educated TASB staff and members on their benefits.

**Leader.** Strong led the 34 employees of an award-winning communications department, setting a high standard of excellence for TASB's communications, branding, public relations, marketing, and public advocacy efforts and contributed to the association's forward movement as part of the executive leadership team. She represented the entire organization on a long list of organizations, committees, task forces, and coalitions through the years and constantly nourished relationships with stakeholders. She was a trusted liaison with fellow education organizations, members of the Texas Legislature and the community.

Strong led with confidence, consideration, and a knack for defending the association's stance on issues with kindness, wit and candor. Talk with any school board member or education leader in this large state, and chances are that they not only know Karen Strong but greatly appreciate her contributions to public education.



# Communications

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Communications Awards!

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<https://commscouncil.ragan.com/>



## BRIDGE BUILDERS

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### Latoya Bennett-Johnson has helped Mastercard establish its employer brand identity



*Employer Brand Marketing Director's influence spans candidate and employee experience, earning her a spot among the Bridge Builders in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communication Awards.*

MasterCard has a strong, clear brand identity, thanks in large part to the work Latoya Bennett-Johnson has been doing in her role marketing the company's employer brand. She created the company's Recruitment Marketing toolkit, just one of her efforts to ensure consistency in communicating to new hires, how Mastercard positions itself in its job openings, and engage and attract talent.

As a Black woman, HBCU graduate, entrepreneur and brand marketing expert, she brings important dimensions to the company's In Solidarity steering committee. She is also the voice you hear on the company's "Inside the Circles" culture podcast.

When LinkedIn launched its new Stories feature, Latoya was on top of it, employing the new tool to tell employee stories, highlight the benefits Mastercard offers, and showcasing the diversity of the company's talent. Other social media channels are equally influenced by Latoya's contributions; she is the voice behind the employee-centric Twitter account, @WeAreMastercard.

For her inspiring work across multiple company activities, Latoya has been recognized as an honoree in the Bridge Builders category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.

## Behind the scenes at BHHS Fox & Roach, Realtors and The Trident Group, Christine Carlson builds bridges everywhere



*The VP of Executive Communications has earned kudos from employees at all levels, leading to Bridge Builder honors in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communication Awards.*

Christine Carlson has earned appreciation from multiple internal audiences at BHHS Fox & Roach, Realtors and The Trident Group. It is telling that she was nominated for this award by her company's chairman, who said, "I am always impressed by her ability to translate my vision and that of our Leadership Team into a speech, report, video, and more, with compelling messages that inform and inspire."

Real estate agents have expressed appreciation for Larry Letters, a communication sent to agents from the company's leader, Larry Flick. Employees anxiously await distribution of the Daily Huddle as an important way to kick-start their day. Internal recognition programs that include Culture Award trophies and annual sales award certificates inspire employees and agents. These are the kinds of bridges Christine builds behind the scenes.

It is an impressive achievement to communicate so effectively given that Christine began her career in real estate sales. Since moving into her current role, this honoree in the Bridge Builders category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications program has taken on the leadership role in the company's Culture Design Committee. She also participates on the Diversity Leadership Council. Christine lives up to the axiom, "It's what we say, and also how we say it," Flick says in his nomination, adding that her work "helps our company thrive."

## Bridge Builder honoree is the catalyst for connectivity across groups of women suffering from migraines



*2021 Top Women in Communications Awards recipient Asako Sakae has united specialists at Teva Pharmaceuticals into a unified team.*

As Senior Director of Consumer Strategic Marketing at Teva Pharmaceuticals, Asako Sakae has built bridges across multiple sets of stakeholders, bringing benefits to each group she connects.

For example, she has brought together a number of groups that support women with chronic and episodic migraines on behalf of the brand's prescription medication for the preventive treatment of migraines. To support the effective marketing of the medication, AJOVY, Sakae assembled a team of specialists from across Teva, including communications and marketing, which advises her on how to best serve the needs of the migraine patient population.

With the consumer in mind, she influenced the launch of multiple products and services. In the same year, 2020 (which produced its own challenges), Asako rebranded the AJOVY consumer marketing campaign while also leading the development and launch of a new campaign across multiple platforms, focusing on helping patients achieve more balance in their lives. That effort contributed directly to the medication's new patient start percentage doubling in 2020.

Asako is credited with displaying genuine empathy for the patients suffering from migraines, a trait that led her to champion projects like a doctor discussion guide and a social media campaign to provide patients with assets to help them cope with life post-pandemic.

## Jessica Dixon bridged the divide between 18 organizations in 21 states after merger



*Recipient of Bridge Builder honors in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards launched a website dedicated to bringing the organization together.*

The 2019 merger of two healthcare systems forming CommonSpirit Health created an urgent need to connect the organizations. The company's leadership tapped Jessica Dixon to lead Marketing Communications for the Enterprise Population Health (ePH) group, which is comprised of 18 value-based organizations across 21 states.

Jessica's immediate challenge: bringing together these organizations and addressing a mishmash of communications and culture.

Among the solutions she devised was ePH Connect, a website that serves as a single source of truth for data and collaboration while cultivating a common culture designed to connect, inspire, and engage employees and others across the enterprise. Dixon measured results that demonstrated the effectiveness of her efforts, one big reason we are honoring her as a Bridge Builder in our 2020 Top Women in Communications program.

Employee engagement, collaboration, and morale increased by 37%, just one of the data points that reflect the site's success. Dixon also introduced strategies to increase awareness and engagement across ePH, including a local business hero program, another on hypertension, one on opioid usage, and one on telehealth.

When the pandemic struck, Dixon led the development of a COVID-19 microsite, which has been credited with delivering vital information, resources, and tools to ePH's physicians.

## Communicator at software development company has delivered results through work with multiple teams



*Lizz Vo interprets complex processes into simplified communications, one reason she is an honoree in the Bridge Builder category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Lizz Vo, former Communications Manager at Bentley Systems in Exton, Pa., had a busy year. The results of her work include increased employee engagement and a strengthened company brand, all done while working to support the company's IPO.

Vo's approach to work has led to her being honored as in the Bridge Builder category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.

Vo, aligned closely with Bentley's operations team, worked alongside technical leads to translate complex information into simplified communications that everyone in the global organization could utilize. She explored new mediums to relay key messages for major corporate initiatives, employing quick fact sheets, in-depth FAQs, infographics, and more to ensure diverse colleagues were able to find resources most suited for their individual needs. In collaboration with the learning and development team, she developed educational videos for onboarding, regular sales training, and financial operations education. She collaborated with the sales operations group to develop a reimaged onboarding process, an effort that was so well received that the material was incorporated into cross-functional training, educating all colleagues on Bentley's licensing technology and software subscriptions.

She assumed a new role when Bentley consolidated communications into one, centralized team. In that role, she served as the liaison between each of the various business units, taking on a communications role with a heavy emphasis on project management because of the subject matter expertise she developed. A large corporate initiative took place, enabling Vo to lead communications to help migrate users to a new platform, identifying areas where sales and financial teams needed to get involved.

She also produced executive communications for the Chief Data Officer, Chief Information Officer, and Chief Commercial Officer, transforming employee engagement through her work with senior leadership. This includes the creation of an internal newsletter for the CDO, a new Data Summit event, and positioning the CIO and CDO as thought leaders within the industry.

## Coordinating internal and external COVID communication campaigns kept audiences informed



*A year of campaigns didn't keep Tina Grillos from her other responsibilities, making her an honoree in the Bridge Builder category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

The coronavirus pandemic has presented challenges to every company and communicator. Some rose to the challenge better than others. Among those is Nutanix's Tina Grillos, senior director and head of internal communications. Despite her internally-focused role, her campaigns kept external audiences up to speed, as well. Among her responses to the pandemic were the following:

- Increased frequency for all-hands meetings which included a Some Good News (SGN) segment. Grillos is responsible for all aspects of the meetings, including guest speakers like Dr. Condoleezza Rice. Between 70 and 80% of employees participated in the meetings.
- Beyond the all-hands meetings, she introduced live, unfiltered one-hour Q&A sessions with company executives, during which she helped executives develop their answers
- An enhanced intranet that now draws half of Nutanix's employees each month
- A channel of direct manager meetings for key announcements; more than 1,000 managers attended each meeting
- A digital signage program aimed at helping with the return to the office.

She also handled communications for a founder/CEO transition and a significant capital investment, along with providing communication counsel to company leaders.



## COVID-19 hit the nonprofit world hard. At Room to Read, Jacqueline Pezzillo rose to the challenge.



*Without live events, this Bridge Builder honoree in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards still raised over \$6 million.*

Nonprofits were hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic, especially those that relied on live events for fundraising. For Room to Read, the virus presented another challenge beyond lost revenue. The organization's mission is to advance literacy and gender equality among children, 1.5 billion of whom found themselves out of school. To address these challenges, Brand Communications Director Jacqueline Pezzillo got to work:

- She secured Room to Read's participation in a national broadcast event, then got celebrities like Julia Roberts to read Room to Read storybooks and endorse the group's work via video, assets that were repurposed for the group's website.
- She also secured Room to Read's participation in a celebrity-led social media fundraiser.
- She launched an "Author and Illustrator Advocates" initiative, aligning authors with the brand, enabling Room to Read to benefit from the authors' promotion.
- She wrote an application that delivered a \$50,000 award from the U.S. Library of Congress for the group's response to the pandemic and civil unrest.
- She implemented a PR strategy that delivered broad coverage of the organization's COVID-19 efforts.
- She oversaw the development for six virtual global galas that cost less than \$100,000 yet generated more than \$6 million in revenue.

We are pleased to name Pezzillo an honoree in the Bridge Builder category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.

## Sara Eberle got buy-in for a global communications strategy and led agencies to implement it



*Eberle forged relationships across the organization, resulting in being named an honoree in the Bridge Builder category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Sophos is working hard to change its brand from an old-style anti-virus company to a next-generation cybersecurity player. To make this pivot, the company relied on Sara Eberle, senior director of Global Public Relations.

To pull off this feat, Eberle established a global communications strategy, then set out to obtain the buy-in required from stakeholders across the global organization. She also needed to bring the appropriate agencies on board – 28 in all – to execute the plan and ensure they were meeting their commitments on a day-to-day basis.

Accomplishing these objectives required Eberle to stroke big egos and demonstrate the validity of her strategy. She pulled off the challenge all while leading the communication effort for an acquisition and two crisis situations (which were met with praise for transparency).

She led thought leadership campaigns to reinforce the company's new brand, covering controversial topics that previously never would have been permitted, like election security. She also produced research on imminent new industry threats, always great fodder for pitching media.

Eberle's efforts led to well-measured results in the three core success metrics for which she was responsible: 70% of the media coverage achieved focused on SophosLabs' research, she secured 10 more pieces of business press coverage than in all of the previous year, and 71% of coverage was in top-tier publications, compared to only 20% in 2019.

"If ever there was someone worthy of a Top Women in Communications award for building bridges, it's Sara Eberle," wrote her nominator. We could not agree more.

## COMMUNITY GIVERS

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**The inexhaustible Joy Scott demonstrates how much one person can accomplish to make the world a better place**



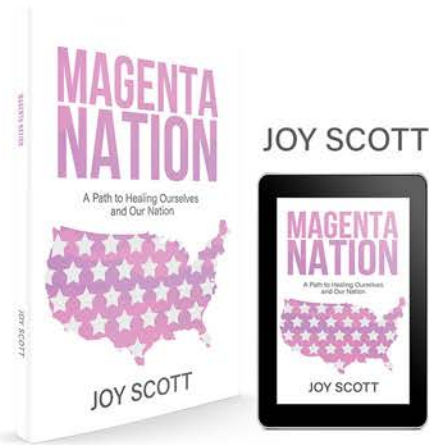
*PR agency founder amped up her already-impressive community credentials in 2020, making her an honoree in the Community Giver category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

The founder of Scott Public Relations already had a reputation for giving back. Then 2020 happened, inspiring Joy Scott to refocus her efforts on social justice and political activism.

The number of initiatives she launched is impressive; the results they produced are even more exceptional. She wrote a handbook on healing America by building bridges between people and launched a related website that includes a blog series.

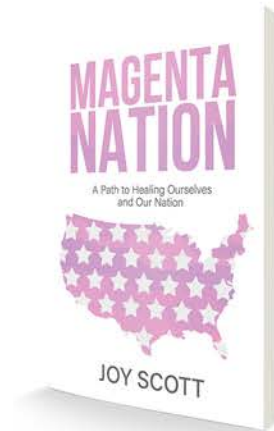
Scott uses Facebook to support the blog and the website. She has also written articles, like one published in the magazine, "Venture Inward," focused on concepts from her book along with outlining a practical process for setting and achieving her vision for the world.

Meanwhile, her agency blog pivoted from healthcare communications to healthcare issues like the impact of guns on public health and the problem of social disparities in healthcare. She hosts a virtual series and podcast where she and her guests discuss how to effect social change. She has also released a new podcast series she hosts for Public Relations Boutiques International addressing fake news and how to fight it. If that's not enough, Scott and her staff volunteered for VoteRiders, which helps people get the official ID required to vote. And during this time, she did not ease off her routine volunteer work.



# MAGENTA NATION

A Path to Healing Ourselves  
and Our Nation



***Serving Our Communities by Healing Division and Inspiring Positive Change***

## Joy Scott

*An honoree in Ragan's Top Women in Communications Award, Class of 2021:  
Community Giver category*

- ✓ Wrote the book "Magenta Nation" on healing the divisions in America
- ✓ Launched the Magenta Nation Podcast, facts about key issues for informed opinions
- ✓ Hosts the "Conversations With..." webinar series, featuring thought leaders on social change and spiritual renewal
- ✓ Sponsored more than 100 children and adults in third world countries through Childfund.org and Unbound.org
- ✓ Volunteered (with our staff) for VoteRiders.com, helping people to get the ID's needed to enable them to vote
- ✓ Encouraged voting with a line of merchandise on Magenta-Nation.com



**Joy Scott, M.B.A., M.C.**

*CEO and President, Scott Public Relations*

Scott PR is a full-service communications agency serving healthcare clients and the technologies that enable them. Based in Los Angeles, CA, the agency's team and clientele spans the globe.

Is yours a purpose-driven company? Are you inspired to make a positive change in our world? Join us at [ScottPublicRelations.com](http://ScottPublicRelations.com) and [Magenta-Nation.com](http://Magenta-Nation.com) for more information on the movement towards unity and renewal.

**"Magenta Nation"**

*Available now:*



**The Magenta Nation Podcast**



## For Niki Lim, one cause isn't enough, so she contributed in a big way to four community initiatives



*The Community Giver honoree in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards believes in accountability and action in her charitable activities.*

The director of Business Development for Big, a marketing agency based in Birmingham, Ala., didn't let her full-time gig or the COVID-19 pandemic slow down her community activities.

While some dedicated volunteers find one cause enough to satisfy them, Niki has taken on four, all while staying true to her belief that community involvement requires accountability and action.

Leadership Birmingham is the first beneficiary of Lim's passion for community involvement; during 2020, the newly confirmed 2020 class member worked on multiple community campaigns including the Alabama Census 2020. As a member of the board of Hand in Paw – an animal-assisted therapy organization – she worked to integrate Zoom virtual visits to medical facilities, schools and nursing homes.

As the chair of Crisis Center Placement with the Junior League of Birmingham, Lim volunteered with the Crisis Center Rape Response Advocate program. She also articulated the ongoing need for services aimed at the underserved Birmingham community. Last, she worked with the Women's Fund Smart Party Committee, a small, nominated group of women supporting the group's fundraiser, which raised nearly \$300,000 thanks in no small part to Lim's efforts.



## CRISIS NAVIGATORS

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### Health Network PIO Stacey Sunday managed the pandemic crisis both internally and externally



*She coordinated all communication, reactive and proactive, earning her recognition as an honoree in the Crisis Navigator category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Virtually every company experienced the same crisis in 2020. COVID-19 derailed most business plans and made every communicator a crisis communicator. Some of those communicators were able to shine during the crisis. Renown Health's Stacey

Sunday is one those, and we are pleased to name her an honoree in the Crisis Navigator category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communication Awards.

As Renown's Public Information Officer, she has responded to a constant flood of requests to coordinate with media, the local community, doctors and employees.

Sunday employed every medium, producing significant results both inside and outside the organization. For example, the coronavirus site on the company's intranet attracted more than 76,000 views, nearly twice as many as the next most viewed page. She also obtained more than 600 editorial mentions in the media, registering a positive tone and helping bolster Renown's reputation.

Internally, she distributed 31 "Decisions Made" fliers and updated the intranet over 100 times. Her media outreach included 77 emails to staff recapping news coverage and coordinated media interviews with 50 Renown experts. She distributed 27 press releases, earning coverage from 23 of them, and pitched 15 stories to the press.

And while her breakneck pace dealing with the pandemic crisis was consuming much of her time, Sunday still was able to take on the presidency of the local chapter of the Public Relations Society of America.

## Crisis plans pay off when pandemic hits



*Heather Handyside was ready for the challenges of the coronavirus. That's earned her honors in the 'Crisis Navigator' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Heather Handyside's 20+ years of experience primed her to handle every challenge of 2020 so seamlessly that the position of chief communications officer at GCI, Alaska's largest telecommunications company, was created for her in the middle of a pandemic.

Coming to GCI in 2015, Handyside transformed a company that preferred to stay out of the news to a company that embraced her proactive PR approach. GCI had existed without a VP or operating executive in a PR capacity for years, until Handyside proved the impact and value communications could make.

Like a true PR pro, Handyside is never without a plan. At GCI, she spearheaded the creation and development of a modern crisis communications plan and team structure, which includes representation from people companywide. This paid off for GCI during the 7.1 earthquake on November 30, 2018, and during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Handyside quickly took the lead of the company's Coronavirus Response Team. She has led policy updates, developed messaging and led a group of GCI executives in sometimes daily internal situation report calls. The information gathered helps inform messaging, social media strategy, marketing, customer response, field technician protocols, pitches and more for a diverse audience, including village elders in remote communities.

Her efforts have resulted in almost 500 GCI mentions in news stories since March 2020, with a positive sentiment rate as high as 97%. An internal survey revealed 92% of GCI employees felt they received sufficient updates from GCI on the pandemic.



# Oh, no you didn't! (She did.)

Congratulations to  
Heather on her

## Crisis Navigator Award.



We're thrilled.  
But not surprised.

Heather Handyside has never backed down from a communication challenge and 2020 wasn't going to change that.

As Chief Communications Officer for GCI, Heather took the lead of our Coronavirus Response Team—leading daily policy updates, developing messaging, and establishing a dialogue with village elders in remote Alaska communities about essential travel during statewide shutdowns, which calmed fears and increased goodwill.

Her creation and development of a modern crisis communications plan includes representation from people companywide. Heather has also helped to create a new formation of diversity and inclusion at GCI.

They're all reasons why Heather is so deserving of her Crisis Navigator Award.

Heather, thank you for inspiring us.



[gci.com](http://gci.com)



## Communicator for City of Jacksonville pioneered several COVID-19 responses



*Nikki Kimbleton led a strong pandemic response with half her staff sidelined, making her an honoree in the Crisis Navigator category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Nikki Kimbleton and the City of Jacksonville, Fla., didn't wait around to see how other cities would deal with the growing pandemic threat. The lead communicator for the 12th largest city government operation in the country recognized in March 2020 that virtual press conferences were a requirement as the pandemic posed a risk to the mayor, city staff and media. That made Jacksonville the first city in the Southeast to take that step, leading Kimbleton and her team to help prepare other cities for their own switch to virtual press conferences.

Kimbleton managed more than 45 virtual press conferences, then made the video available on a city website. Recognizing the importance of sharing relevant information with schoolchildren, she ensured student journalists were among those able to pose questions at these events. She also helped launch one of the first federal COVID-19 testing sites in the U.S. She and her team fielded thousands of questions, many related to the eight region hospitals for which Kimbleton also served as spokesperson.

All this went down among protests and demonstrations that gripped much of the rest of the country. What the rest of the country didn't have to cope with was the announcement that the Republican National Convention would move to Jacksonville. While it ultimately didn't, the media requests poured in and were handled in a timely and professional manner. And all of this happened with more than half of her staff sidelined as non-essential employees were furloughed.

## Coronavirus pandemic was both a crisis and an opportunity for Katharine Mobley



*Development of marketing plan on the future of work is a key reason Katharine is an honoree in the Crisis Navigator category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

As was the case for many organizations, the proliferation of the COVID-19 virus led First Advantage to close offices and send the company's employees home. Katharine Mobley, head of Global Marketing at the background-checking organization, assisted with the closure of 26 workplaces in 36 hours and directed all global communications internally and externally. But Mobley also saw an opportunity to build First Advantage's reputation and generate media coverage based on what she learned during the process.

She developed and led a 90-day strategic marketing plan on "The New Future of Work," which focused on the urgent need for essential workers to resume work as quickly as possible. The effort led First Advantage to launch 14 new products in less than four months, enabling the company's clients to hire more than 3 million frontline workers worldwide.

The pandemic was not Mobley's first experience with a high-pressure situation. Her financial focus contributed to the sale of First Advantage to Silver Lake Partners, a deal announced in 2019. For all her efforts, she is being honored as a Crisis Navigator in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.

## The pandemic was just one of many crises Sarah Manley Robertson deftly handled in 2020



*Her transparent and empathetic approach are among the reasons Sarah is being honored in the Crisis Navigator category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Purdue Pharma has become a household name for its role in the opioid crisis. After months and months of media coverage, Purdue and the U.S. Justice Department resolved criminal and civil charges related to the company's marketing practices.

Sarah Manley Robertson, Purdue's vice president of communications and corporate social responsibility, was right there, calmly and efficiently handling the company's communications with both internal and external audiences.

That crisis – as big as crises get for PR practitioners – was not Robertson's sole 2020 crisis. The company filed Chapter 11. It engaged in the most expensive and expansive bar-date notification campaign in American history (notifying anyone who believes they have a claim against the company that claims needed to be filed by June 30). There was also the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through it all, Robertson was calm, cool, and competent. Her colleagues note that she brings empathy to all her tasks, taking the impact of the situation and her communications on all stakeholders. She has a reputation for being transparent; for example, she is proactive with the media even when the resulting coverage could be negative. She is also lauded for her planning, reviewing a situation from all angles to ensure the communications team is prepared and aligned.

Because these efforts are being credited with a deliberate, brick-by-brick rebuilding of the company, Robertson earns the Crisis Navigator award in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.

## A subject matter expert in Chapter 11 communications, Jennifer Mercer handles crises for a living



*This Crisis Navigator honoree in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards focuses on frequent communication, candor and empathy.*

As the leader of the strategic communications practice for Paladin, an advisory firm, Jennifer Mercer is no stranger to crisis communication. As a subject matter expert in Chapter 11 communications, her expertise in crisis communication is highly valued as evidenced by three recent engagements:

- She led the strategic communications for Bumble Bee Foods, the sale of which was facilitated by its Chapter 11 filing in January 2020, during which the communication plan was upended by a media leak two days before the filing.
- She oversaw the Chapter 11 communications for Imperial Toy. The outreach campaign helped maintain operations during the filing.
- In March 2020, she led the communications surrounding the bankruptcy filing by Apex Parks Group, which ran 10 family entertainment centers and two water parks in California, Florida and New Jersey. The company closed its parks in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, then, a month later filed for Chapter 11. Mercer established three pillars for her team: communicate early and often, be open and honest and express empathy.



## Communication on behalf of long-term care facilities results in funding and public understanding



*Leading this pandemic-related communication effort has made Beth Martino a Crisis Navigator honoree in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

When the history of the COVID-19 pandemic is written, long-term care facilities will be featured prominently.

Less than 1% of America's population lives in long-term care facilities but they account for more than 35% of US COVID-19 deaths. The role of the American Health Care Association and the National Center for Assisted Living – the largest association representing America's nursing homes – has been pivotal during the crisis. As senior vice president of public affairs for AHCA/NCAL, Beth Martino has been working since February 2020 on ensuring proper attention is paid to these facilities, fighting for the survival and safety of residents, staff, and the industry.

Martino's work played a vital part in the distribution of billions of dollars from the White House to long-term care facilities. Her efforts also raised the visibility of the AHCA/NCAL's president and CEO, who appeared on major media outlets and cable news programs beginning in early March 2020.

Through these appearances that Martino orchestrated, the public learned of the threat to nursing home residents, resulting in public health officials prioritizing nursing home providers. She also is leading a multimillion-dollar media campaign to advocate for government aid to long-term care facilities, generating nearly 58 million impressions from cable TV and more than 52 million from digital platforms.

For demonstrating the power of a strong media strategy during a long-running crisis, we are pleased to name Martino an honoree in the Crisis Navigator category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.

## Hospital Network communicator coordinated internal and external COVID-19 communications



*Outperforming the governor's video updates is one reason Ayoka Pond is a Crisis Navigator honoree in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

As system director of internal communications and public relations for Baptist Memorial Health Care, Ayoka Pond tackled communicating with both sets of stakeholders once the coronavirus pandemic struck.

Externally, she coordinated media outreach and handled requests, ultimately resulting in more than 500 placements in articles in the mid-South since early March 2020, in addition to top-tier outlets like ABC, NBC, CNN, The Washington Post, The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal.

Under her guidance, Baptist Memorial's physicians spent more than 150 hours educating the mid-South community since the pandemic. She also established daily COVID-19 press conferences via Facebook Live; these were viewed 682,000 times, nearly six times as many viewers as the Tennessee governor's updates. Internally, she produced 18 video updates featuring the system's CEO to reassure and inform the organization's 19,000 team members about the steps taken to protect them and patients; employees viewed them an average of 5,410 times per video.

Pond also worked with other teams to drive audiences to the organization's COVID Resource Center web site, all while handling the routine, non-pandemic-related communications that come with the job, along with other crises, like a shooting outside one of the system's hospitals.

## Basketball communicator coordinated responses to both COVID-19 and the social justice movement



*Effective handling of crises for NBA and WNBA teams nets Bri Bauer a Crisis Navigator honor in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

The two big crises of 2020 posed special challenges in professional sports. COVID-19 led to efforts to ensure player and staff safety while the social justice movement arising from the murder of George Floyd put pressure on leagues to take a stand. In the middle of this was Bri Bauer, vice president of communications and engagement for the NBA Minnesota Timberwolves and the WNBA Lynx.

As one of the few women in professional sports in her position, Bauer developed a PR campaign, assembling leaders that included her own CEO along with a former doctor (now a Timberwolves executive), a former Obama Healthcare Administrator, and the FDA to create a narrative to explain how the organization was supporting its stakeholders, accruing over 450 million impressions in top-tier media.

When the social justice movement arose after George Floyd was killed in the Timberwolves' and Lynx's backyard, Bauer got team leaders to agree to an approach that called for change, unity and action. She helped players participate in peaceful protests and rallies, attend the Floyd memorial, and strategize meaningful change. She also helped launch a voter registration campaign aimed at underserved communities. The campaign generated 61 million impressions, including top-tier media.

## Four-pronged strategy drove Key Bank's communications during COVID-19 pandemic



*As CCO, Susan Donlan differentiated Key Bank from the rest of the pack, earning praise from the media and a Crisis Navigator designation from Ragan in our 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

In her role as Chief Communications Officer at Key Bank (based on Cleveland, Ohio), Susan Donlan developed a four-pronged support strategy to guide Key through the COVID-19 pandemic, deftly crafting a plan without a precedent she could lean on. She secured support from Key partners and leaders, focusing on small business clients, employees and the communities in which the bank operated. The plan's four prongs included:

- Consumer Support – With the temporary closing of branches and others converting to drive-through and appointment models, communication was instrumental in informing both customers and employees.
- Small Business Support – In just one week, Key was a partner in the Paycheck Protection Program, securing over \$8.1 billion in loans for more than 43,000 small businesses.
- Employee Support – A series of communications were needed to inform employees of measures the company took, such as flexible work arrangements and childcare reimbursement.
- Community Support – Donlan's team ensured the community knew about an initial \$1 million commitment to the bank's communities, along with other activities.

For developing a digitally-driven and client-focused strategy, Donlan has been named an honoree in the Crisis Navigator category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.

## A range of tactics addressed pandemic and maintained awareness of Freddie Mac products



*Communications from Riham El-Lakany's team expanded during the pandemic, leading to her designation as a Crisis Navigator in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Riham El-Lakany isn't likely to let a global pandemic stop her from achieving key objectives for Freddie Mac, where she serves as vice president and chief marketing and communications officer for its Single-Family business unit. Despite the challenges the pandemic presented, her team elevated their game, producing materials for several new campaigns and channels. Among them were the following:

- The #HelpStartsHere campaign, focused on helping the industry and borrowers understand mortgage policies and options during the pandemic
- A podcast series, "Home Starts Here," covers timely topics and features industry experts
- Digital books on topics important to the organization's clients were distributed through online channels
- "Sightline," a new online magazine, offered clients insights and perspectives
- For employees, Riham's team developed a campaign encouraging colleagues to share their views on unity and race

During 2020, Riham was also a force behind #LeadingTheWay, Freddie Mac's campaign addressing the advancement of women in the workplace. Because she addressed the pandemic while continuing to expand Freddie Mac's key values-based objectives, we are pleased to name El-Lakany an honoree in the Crisis Navigator category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.





**“THE MORE WE AS COMMUNICATORS PUT OUR EMPATHY FRONT AND CENTER, THE MORE WE STRENGTHEN OUR IMPORTANT RELATIONSHIPS.”**

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Freddie Mac congratulates Riham El-Lakany for being named an honoree in **Ragan’s Top Women in Communications Awards, Class of 2021**. This honor recognizes her exemplary role as a Crisis Navigator, never losing sight of our mission to help American families obtain and maintain sustainable homeownership.

Riham El-Lakany  
Chief Marketing and Communications Officer  
Freddie Mac Single-Family Division



## Tamara Macgregor steered nascent cannabis company through financial crisis



*The Crisis Navigator honoree in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards took charge of the narrative, enabling company to achieve financial success.*

For a while, things did not look good for Aphria, which was founded in 2014 and grew to become a key player in Canada's cannabis industry. In late 2018, though, the company found itself mired in a crisis after a short-seller report asserted the company had wasted millions of dollars on dodgy foreign acquisitions; the report also alleged illegal insider trading. Within weeks, the company also faced a hostile takeover bid.

As chief corporate affairs officer, Tamara Macgregor dove into action, inventing strategies to address situations that were brand new to the industry. She also adopted traditional crisis techniques, like working to control the narrative.

Her approach involved two phases. First, she worked to regain public trust by slowing the pace of negative media coverage. Once the company's path forward was defined, she moved to reinvent the brand, building out purpose-focused values and corporate social responsibility initiatives.

Over the past year, she led development of Aphria's CSR report, including benchmarking sustainability efforts; it would be the first CSR report in the Canadian cannabis industry (and perhaps all of North America). Her efforts improved public sentiment and delivered positive media headlines, leading us to name Macgregor an honoree in the Crisis Navigator category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.

## Agency founder and CEO maintained focus on her staff while navigating the COVID-19 crisis



*Kim Eberl also found ways to add to agency's client roster, another reason she is a Crisis Navigator honoree in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Kimberly Eberl, founder and CEO of Chicago's The Motion Agency, dealt with the COVID-19 pandemic by not only excelling at her efforts to ensure her employees' safety and security, but also by building her client roster and finding ways to support her community. Despite the impact of the pandemic on

business, Eberl was able to retain 100% of her staff, standing up an internal task force that developed a return-to-work strategy.

During the pandemic, she posted daily videos for 100 consecutive days while employees worked remotely. She reduced salaries in order to keep everyone employed, taking the biggest cut herself and asking her senior staff to accept larger cuts so junior staff would be least affected. Later, she returned everyone to full salary and gave retroactive pay to make all employees whole again. Eberl even launched a Puppy Pilot Program that permitted dogs in the office. Meanwhile, she found ways to maintain her existing client roster and surface prospective new clients, including offering creative billing options for clients without the means to pay during the crisis. The agency's D&I committee introduced an initiative to support the community, raising \$10,000 in matching funds linked to employee donations.

Her efforts have earned her recognition as PR Professional of the Year from PRSA. To that she can add Crisis Navigator in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.

## DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION CHAMPIONS

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### DE&I practice leader's efforts result in expanded client work while elevating Vanguard's thought leadership



*Through multiple communication activities, Crystal Borde earned honoree designation as Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Champion in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DE&I) became a hot topic in 2020 following several high-profile killings of unarmed Black people by police. But Crystal Borde has been focused on DE&I since long before that: She has been Vanguard Communications' DE&I practice leader for four years, helping clients address the issue in their organizations.

Her expertise served Vanguard well as the issue exploded into mainstream consciousness. She provided counsel and support for clients, leading to expanded client work (and billings). Her efforts did not end with client work, however. She delivered presentations for the National Press Club and the Social Marketing Association of North America (SMANA). She also developed statements related to multiple DE&I headlines, from George Floyd's murder to a Supreme Court decision on LGBTQ rights in the workplace.

One of her earlier articles was republished by PRSA. Another article Borde authored was published in the International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction. She also posted to a blog about how organizations can contribute to the Black Lives Matter dialogue; this article was also republished by Bulldog Reporter and PRSA. She delivered a version of her SMANA presentation to the Northwest Pacific Social Marketing Association's SPARKS conference. Borde has clearly earned the DE&I Champion honor in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.

### Janet Stovall's list of DE&I accomplishments makes her an obvious choice for Ragan's Top Women in Communications honor



*As speechwriter for UPS's CEO and D&I strategic advisor, Janet Stovall aligned organizational functions to key DE&I issues and earned recognition as a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Champion.*

As a speechwriter for the CEO of UPS, one of the world's biggest businesses with half a million employees in 220 countries, Janet Stovall might have felt daunted by the challenge of promoting Diversity, Equity & Inclusion. Instead, she became a diversity-and-inclusion strategic advisor and subject matter expert, advising and coaching members of the executive leadership team and other regarding all matters related to DE&I.

Her access to the company's leadership enabled her to ensure DE&I was addressed consistently across multiple business functions and units. Having launched DE&I communications for UPS, Stovall has racked up a long list of accomplishments. She developed the framework for action for the company's DE&I task force, wrote and co-produced a D&I video that earned multiple awards, developed and moderated a live-streamed panel that was also made accessible via UPS's LONGITUDES Radio podcast, and developed and hosted a Black Business Month series for the podcast.

Advancing DE&I thought leadership nationally and internationally in her current role as Senior Client Strategist at NeuroLeadership Institute—a global research firm and cognitive science consultancy—Stovall helps companies evolve DE&I practices to be more brain-friendly and human. Her responsibilities range from delivering C-suite briefings and keynote presentations to writing and contributing to thought leadership articles, moderating and presenting webinars and podcasts, facilitating workshops and contributing to solution development for some of the world's leading corporations. We are pleased to name Stovall a DE&I Champion honoree in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.

## Agency co-founder pushed firm to adopt stronger DE&I policies in wake of killings of unarmed Black people



*Inclusive hiring practices are among initiatives Rebecca Honeyman implemented, resulting in her being named a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Champion honoree in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

For Rebecca Honeyman, the social justice movement that arose in 2020 following multiple killings of unarmed Blacks by police officers was personal. A co-founder and managing partner of the PR agency SourceCode Communications, Honeyman is in a biracial marriage and has two Black stepsons. She has first-hand experience with the hardships facing the Black community.

For her children and her husband, she was determined to play a significant part in promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Believing that doing nothing is complicity, Honeyman – serving as the agency's DE&I lead – introduced several initiatives across the agency.

The agency proactively published its own diversity data as part of an industry campaign. She partnered with diversity agency Mathison to introduce more inclusive hiring and employment practices. The agency encouraged its team to sign several change petitions introduced at the height of the Black Lives Matter movement.

SourceCode has also taken a hard look at its own team's diversity and has pledged to work with Historically Black Colleges and Universities as well as organizations like DiversitySearch to ensure the team accurately represents the society in which it exists. Since these efforts began, SourceCode has increased BIPOC-identifying staff by nearly 35%.

## The summer of 2020's social justice movement inspired DE&I Champion honoree to dive deep into association's trailblazers



*The series of articles that followed have paid off for the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association and earned Jennifer Non Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Champion honors in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

When the Black Lives Matter movement soared into public consciousness alongside the COVID-19 pandemic in the summer of 2020, Jennifer Non decided it was necessary to make a more concerted effort to share the stories from the Black, female and minority pilots who comprised the membership of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, where she serves as senior manager of media relations and public affairs.

To learn more about how these pilots developed their interest in an industry not well known for its diversity, she conducted interviews about how they overcame obstacles. She identified some who flew for fun and others who want to fly professionally and helped them tell their stories through online and magazine stories, spotlighting minority pilots who have achieved success in aviation. Using their own words, these pilots were able to share their own words to help others understand and appreciate their achievements.

The articles attracted the attention of ABC's Good Morning America, which highlighted Sisters of the Skies. And, two Black female students enrolled in AOPA's high school aviation STEM curriculum, showing how the association's program is assisting minorities and women pursue their dreams of becoming airline pilots. The articles also led to a CNN Travel International story, leading us to proclaim Non a DE&I Champion honoree in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.



## National Geographic's communications VP's commitment to diversity transcends programs



*Work inside and outside of National Geographic make Jennifer DeGuzman a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Champion in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Jennifer DeGuzman has been making her impact felt at National Geographic, where she serves as communications VP. She has promoted inclusion on and off the air with show talent, on-set members and departmental hires. She developed publicity campaigns for programming that highlight diverse talent, such as “Genius: Aretha” and “City So Real,” which showcases America’s diverse culture.

Last June, she spearheaded a special screening of “LA 92,” followed by a live panel on race in America. She was also a key coordinator of National Geographic Field Ready program, which allows diverse talent behind the camera in the Natural History genre, pairing emerging talent with top filmmakers and production companies, leading to a diverse group of filmmakers available to bring into the National Geographic fold.

Outside her job, she works with students from New York’s Ghetto Film School, an inclusive film academy that educates and develops the next generation of storytellers. On the job and in her other pursuits, DeGuzman is known for bringing DE&I ideas to the table and carrying through with their development.

For working to create equity for women, people of color, and the LGBTQ+ community, she has been designated a DE&I Champion in Ragan’s 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.

## Communications Assistant VP emerges as DE&I leader at Barclays US Consumer Bank



*Her relentless pursuit social justice is one reason Nicole Dye-Anderson is a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Champion honoree in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

While her job is focused on media relations, Nicole Dye-Anderson has been committed to DE&I principles across the organization. A founding member of the bank's Black Professionals Forum, an employee resource group, she led employee and community events for Black History Month and coordinated a Black-Owned Small Business Expo at the bank's Delaware headquarters.

Through her media work, she built awareness of these activities and volunteered as the deputy lead of communications for Barclays' Global Race at Work taskforce.

In a short time span, Dye-Anderson has:

- Led a "Celebrating Black Talent" video series spotlighting Barclays' Black colleagues.
- Created a newsletter that addresses actions to address racial inequalities in the workplace.
- Managed the #BlackWealthMatters Instagram Live series on Barclays' behalf
- Advocated for financial investments to communities of color affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to funding to a historically black university.
- Partnered with JetBlue to sponsor and lead a STEM-focused session for HBCU (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) Week
- Directed a partnership with the NFL to advance economic and social justice for underserved communities.

For transforming her passion into meaningful action, we are pleased to honor Dye-Anderson as a DE&I Champion in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.

## Marketing VP is disrupting the male-dominated status quo in the tech and government worlds



*Through her job and volunteer work, Heidi Lorenzen is a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Champion honoree in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Women make up only about a quarter of government leaders and leadership in the tech industry. Heidi Lorenzen has been working for decades to change that. As marketing vice president at Accela – a cloud solutions company focused on state and local government – she has helped drive meaningful change through activities like hosting a panel of women leaders from the government technology marketplace.

Their discussion at an annual company conference explored leadership lessons from the pandemic and how leaders can cultivate greater diversity in their field. The HR department launched the CARE (Culture, Activities, Responsibility, Engagement) team under Lorenzen's leadership; the team leads change through HR policies, job postings and communication channels. The team also developed a Diversity Awareness Calendar to recognize the diversity and achievements of underserved groups.

Externally, Lorenzen is co-chair of the National League of Cities Corporate Partners Leadership Council. She also serves on other boards and committees devoted to elevating a diverse group of voices. She was, for example, selected to serve as president of Microsoft's Women Executives' Channel Advisory Board; she is also a member of the Athena Alliance, bringing diversity to the boardroom, and of Rising International, committed to lifting women out of poverty and oppression.

## DYNAMIC DO-ERS

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**As partner and client services lead, Shelli Lissick has left her mark on a variety of agency's activities**



*Her work included guiding Minnesota tourism organization through pandemic and social unrest, earning her the Dynamic Do-er honor in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Shelli Lissick has spent 12 years at Belmont Partners, a Minneapolis-based PR and communications agency; she has been a partner for nine of them. Leading the agency's client services, she is a key contact for employees and for many Belmont clients. Her efforts have led Inc. Magazine to name Belmont a Best Workplace for two consecutive years, among other recognition (including one from Ragan).

When the COVID-19 pandemic erupted, she helped guide clients based on her media relations, crisis and other comms experience. In particular, she worked with health care and travel/tourism clients, notably Explore Minnesota Tourism, which was hit hard by virus-related travel restrictions and the killing of George Floyd by a Minnesota police officer.

She helped develop a transitional communication strategy, drafting messaging, managing media requests, consulting on social content, and developing a pandemic communications toolkit. She also coordinated proactive Zoom discussions between the tourism office and top national and regional travel writers.

Lissick's other efforts including strengthening the agency's crisis communications counsel and leading work for health clients that have contributed to the COVID-19 response, among many others.

## Cisco Systems' talent branding star rose on social media during pandemic thanks to Jen Burns



*Social media manager's efforts produced measurable benefits for Cisco, one reason for naming her a Dynamic Do-er honoree in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Cisco Systems' Employee/r Brand Team's work and members are routinely recognized in Ragan awards programs. Year after year, the work is groundbreaking and inspiring. Much of the credit belongs to Jen Burns, the team's social media manager.

In 2020, Burns didn't let a pandemic slow her down. It was during the virus that she took the @WeAreCisco brand to TikTok. She coordinated interns and employee mentors' creation of content that aligned with TikTok's vibe, earning 284,000 views related to Cisco's new virtual internship program.

Burns didn't ignore existing channels. Her work on Instagram Stories resulted in 20% higher reach than most brands. She engaged audiences with Stories content via templates that could be filled out by employees using GIFs and shared in their networks (along with the WeAreCisco account). These stories led users to tap back (revisiting Stories content) at a significantly higher rate than normal.

Under Burns's leadership, Instagram newsfeed posts regularly achieved two times more engagement than the industry baseline. She also drove a content campaign during the week that included National Intern Day with WeAreCisco intern content shared on the accounts of universities from which the interns came.

For innovating new approaches while producing enviable results with existing channels, we are pleased to name Burns a Dynamic Do-er honoree in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.

## Brand purpose is at the heart of initiatives led by Visa's Tuesday Uhland



*Communications VP also responded to Olympics postponement, one of the reasons she is a Dynamic Do-er honoree in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Visa was sponsoring 96 Olympic athletes when the COVID-19 pandemic forced the postponement of the games to 2021. The decision left those athletes in limbo – but not for long. Tuesday Uhland helped guide Visa's decision to extend its sponsorships through 2021 – and obtained an AP exclusive as the first Olympics sponsor to take this step.

That's just another day for Uhland, Visa's vice president of global communications for product, sponsorship, and brand. She collaborated with Visa's marketing team to repurpose existing Olympic creative for a social media PSA campaign featuring more than 20 of these athletes promoting COVID-19-related safety measures and, again, placed stories about it.

Beyond the Olympics, Uhland founded and leads Visa's Women's Economic Advancement program. She coordinated a strategic partnership to launch a Visa grant and mentorship program for women entrepreneurs and awarded \$250,000 to more than 30 U.S. small businesses, including a program for Black women entrepreneurs. She also hosted a three-day virtual global summit for women entrepreneurs.

Uhland also produced a campaign promoting Visa's capabilities to help small and medium-sized businesses recover from the pandemic. The first phase of the campaign earned some 2,000 pieces of coverage. Uhland reflects the ideals of a Dynamic Do-er, earning her the honor in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.



## Children's Health communicator's efforts help the organization navigate turbulent change



*Anna Bootenhoff inspires those she works with, one reason she is a Dynamic Do-er honoree in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

The last year has challenged organizations of all stripes to address unanticipated change, mainly from the COVID-19 pandemic. Few organizations, though, have been affected as much as health care, which also continues to cope with new regulatory requirements. The industry is also responding to changing expectations of patients.

At Children's Health, one of the largest pediatric nonprofit healthcare systems in the U.S., maintaining a leadership position as an independent organization is a priority, one that Anna Bootenhoff is helping achieve. The corporate communications manager, responsible for leading the strategic development and execution of all corporate communications, has innovated programs to support change, like the "Children's Health Narrative Project," which showcases the system's strategic initiatives as well as explaining to the system's more than 10,000 employees the rationale for expansion. She has restructured the internal communications strategy to be more transparent and informative, including a bi-weekly virtual Town Hall, which has coincided with Children's Health's best-ever employee engagement scores.

Other projects under Bootenhoff's leadership include announcing a joint pediatric enterprise with UT Southwestern and managing online reviews, operationalizing feedback with key leaders to improve the patient and family experience.

## Agency's managing director took advantage of increased connectivity to launch vlog series



*Courtney Walker reinvented employee experience program, one of the efforts that led to her recognition as a Dynamic Do-er in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards,*

As managing director and founder of Goodfuse, a new name for Y&R PR, a fully-integrated communications agency, Courtney Walker has delivered the goods, achieving more than 40% organic growth year over year, including 2020, the year of the coronavirus pandemic.

In fact, Walker took advantage of the pandemic, during which organizations and individuals found new ways to connect with one another. With her own team connected digitally while working remotely, she introduced "The New Abnormal," a vlog series that team members recorded from home and featuring commentary about communications in a world turned upside down. Dozens of episodes have been shared, serving as a catalyst for conversations with clients and producing new leads.

The pandemic also led to a rethinking of Goodbox, a monthly immersive experience for employees. The innovative program Walker developed has been recognized with multiple awards, but with stay-at-home orders, she swapped the "missions" the team undertook to that of curated boxes delivered to employees' homes, filled with activities based on each individual employees' interests.

Walker has also stayed active in the industry, judging competitions, participating on industry panels, and writing thought leadership pieces. Goodfuse itself helped clients win more than 30 awards, making Walker a Dynamic Do-er in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.

## Miranda Foster has already been recognized for her communications leadership



*The worldwide communications VP handled COVID-19 communications alongside launching key business initiatives, making her a Dynamic Do-er honoree in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Like many communicators during 2020, Miranda Foster had to pivot quickly to address both internal and external COVID-19-related matters. For employees of intelligent data management provider Commvault, the vice president of worldwide communications developed messaging designed to keep them safe and foster their productivity as they shifted to remote work. At the same time, she reached out to customers and partners.

Foster used a landing page, blogs, social media and media relations to get the message out. With her COVID-19 activities firing on all cylinders, she was still able to develop a campaign to expand the visibility of Commvault's new partnership, employing a three-pronged media strategy across business press, trade press, and broadcast media. This effort produced more than 100 pieces of media coverage and endorsements from 15 industry analysts.

At the same time, she introduced FutureReady, a new Commvault virtual event for influencers which she and her team used to promote an important new partnership and several product launches. More than 160 people attended FutureReady, including 70 journalists and 50 influencers, leading to 160 pieces of media coverage and a social reach of 6 million.

Foster has already been honored with Ragan and PR Daily awards. She can now add Dynamic Do-er to the list.

## Linguist-turned-communicator is helping tobacco company undergo a transformation



*The future is smoke-free products – and Bessie Kokalis Pescio is getting employees on board, one reason she is a Dynamic Do-er in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

After 14 years in a variety of roles at Philip Morris International, Bessie Kikalís Pescio was named PMI's global head of internal communication in October 2019. She inherited a corporate team that reported to many different managers and a group of more than 100 communication leads who worked in internal communication silos. To get them aligned around global messages, voice, tone, and style, she formed the Global IC Network and then, in 2020, mobilized the network to unify and accelerate employee communications, an effort that also involved a partnership with senior leadership.

A former linguist from Massachusetts, Pescio does her work from Lausanne, Switzerland, where she led the creation of a Transformation narrative, Transformation Hub, and a variety of other channels to help employees understand and embrace the transformation the company is undergoing, leading to the replacement of cigarettes with smoke-free products.

These tools contributed to a 13-point improvement in employee confidence about the transformation. Pescio also accelerated digital engagement during the coronavirus pandemic, working with the organization's Special Situations Management Team. Part of that effort included quarterly webcasts with senior leaders and a monthly "PMI in Mic" program that covers business topics with leading external experts.

Using Yammer, she introduced a series of e-challenges that have generated 44,000-plus views. She also designed PMI1, a new content streaming platform featuring employee-generated content, including music from employee musicians. Pescio is the epitome of a Dynamic Do-er, the reason she has received that honor from Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Award.

## Cancer is personal to Nisha Morris, who manages communications and marketing for new City of Hope campus



*The \$1 billion expansion into California's Orange County was just one of Nisha Morris's achievements that make her a Dynamic Do-er in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Nisha Morris is no stranger to recognition, having twice been named a top PR Women by industry trades. That comes as no surprise to those who witness the energy she brings to her work as associate vice president of marketing and communications for City of Hope, the Los Angeles-based cancer research and treatment center.

When City of Hope announced a \$1 billion expansion into California's Orange County, Morris took on the communications and marketing for the new diagnosis, treatment and prevention facility. Cancer is personal to Morris, who lost her mother and an uncle to it, leading her to join City of Hope and dive into development of communication strategies.

She effectively positioned physicians and executives in the national spotlight through top-tier media placement and national keynote speaking opportunities. She and her team orchestrated a successful "safe to return" campaign that brought patients back to their medical care after the coronavirus pandemic disrupted regular outpatient treatment.

Morris is also a mentor and educator for young women rising through the communication ranks. Away from work, as the parent of a daughter with a chronic condition, she has emerged as a spokesperson for pediatric health. Her energy and drive make her an obvious choice for the Dynamic Do-er honor in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.

# CONGRATULATIONS **NISHA MORRIS** ONE OF THE TOP WOMEN IN AMERICAN COMMUNICATIONS

Ragan Communications named Nisha for its most prestigious award and we couldn't be prouder. As City of Hope Orange County's Vice President of Marketing and Communications, she's the strategist who keeps our entire community informed of our advanced cancer care.

Thank you, Nisha. Your commitment helps us say **Hope Lives Here** in Orange County



City of  
Hope®

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## Lone communicator obtains positive coverage for her employer, a fitness provider



*ClassPass senior PR Manager Mandy Menaker single-handedly increased share of voice and introduced a digital platform to address pandemic, leading to her designation as a Dynamic Do-er in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

ClassPass's business model was disrupted as much as any business when the COVID-19 pandemic struck. The membership providing access to a network of fitness and wellness experiences saw a 95% hit to revenue due to the pandemic, leading ClassPass to develop a digital platform.

As ClassPass's sole communicator, Mandy Menaker communicated the pivot, driving international traffic to the company's digital offerings and obtaining media coverage from GQ, SHAPE, and others. She also increased the company's share of voice by 25%, including a rise of domestic mentions by 28% and global mentions by 29%.

The social unrest of 2020 was another opportunity for this Dynamic Do-er in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications to shine. Menaker helped her CEO draft an open letter highlighting ClassPass's commitment to diversity and the steps the company would take to intensify its efforts; she also coached teams on how to make their language more inclusive and helped the company's diversity manager celebrate Black, LGBTQ, Indigenous, and Latinx/Hispanic fitness studio owners.

In addition to these events-driven endeavors, Menaker led the creation of an annual data-driven trends report that generated 7 billion impressions and 20 earned editorial features in publications like USA Today, Business Insider, Runner's World and others. She generated more than 400 pieces of global coverage for a fundraising story, branding ClassPass as "The First Unicorn of the Decade."

## RVshare communicator matched available RVs with first responders in need of temporary housing



*Goodwill story earned 105 million media impressions and top-tier media coverage for Maddie Bourgerie, a Dynamic Do-er in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Knowing the value of research, Maddi Bourgerie undertook a travel trend research project in 2019 that predicted 2020 would be “the year of RV rentals.” 2020 was the biggest year for RVs, but not for the reasons the research predicted. The pandemic had the opposite impact on RVshare, whose earnings plummeted along with the rest of the industry.

In response, Bourgerie assembled a task force to match RVs listed on RVshare's site with first responders in need of temporary housing. Thousands of matches were made across the country, earning RVshare well-deserved attention with coverage from the likes of The TODAY Show and Newsweek. Then, state and national parks began to reopen and RV rentals soared, with RVshare bookings growing by 1,600%, leading Bourgerie to launch a campaign to leverage the trend. A press release sparked conversation about the wisdom of traveling by RV during the pandemic. Bourgerie conducted more than 75 interviews, which contributed to 2,119 mentions of the company compared to 376 from the prior summer.

The director of communications and PR also landed exclusives with The New York Times, Wall Street Journal, NPR, and others from a Fourth of July media relations campaign. She landed another Wall Street Journal exclusive when RVshare announced a new funding round. We're pleased to name Bourgerie a Dynamic Do-er in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.

## From intern to manager in five years, Kara Gibson now schools others in pitching and placement



*This Dynamic Do-er in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards has mastered the art of digital storytelling.*

Kara Gibson, public relations manager for New York-based SmartAsset, leads a content development team that includes a copy editor, senior editor, PR associate, and data journalist. Under Gibson's leadership, the team develops, publishes and pitches more than 150 independent research studies annually.

Understanding the importance of telling stories with numbers, she leads the effort to interpret the data produced by this research into compelling, educational news stories about consumer issues and local economies.

An effective developer of pitches, Gibson has placed stories with The New York Times, The Washington Post, Business Insider, CNBC, and FOX Business, to name just a few. That's a remarkable track record for someone who joined the company as an intern a mere five years ago.

With the rise of the coronavirus pandemic, Gibson sought to publish useful material like guides and resources to help consumers and small businesses. Making these assets available in a timely manner meant shortening the cycle for study production from six weeks to about six days.

The effort paid off.

For example, the study, "Workers and Places Most Likely to Be Affected by a COVID-19 Recession" yielded 23 pieces of earned media coverage. While undertaking the development and pitching of 47 studies, Gibson trained a new PR associate, securing her recognition as a Dynamic Do-er in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.

## Supermarket chain's charitable activities were well-known and coordinated thanks to Rachael Tiby



*COVID-19 was not the only disaster driving Hy-Vee's programs, but the Dynamic Do-er in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications handled everything thrown at her.*

Every communicator in every market sector has had to add COVID-19 communications to their to-do lists. For Hy-Vee Communications Manager Rachael Tiby, the pandemic was just one disaster that occupied the time and attention of the grocery chain. There was also the August 10, 2020, "derecho," an intense "land hurricane" that spread through the Midwest, causing billions of dollars of devastation and destruction in its wake.

On the coronavirus front, Tiby implemented more than 115 contactless summer produce giveaways through which Hy-Vee donated more than 1.3 million pieces of produce. Her communication and coordination of these drive-through events throughout eight states ensured widespread awareness through media coverage and other channels. She also organized the PR behind 13 major food bank donation events over just four weeks.

In addition to food distribution to aid victims of both crises, Tiby played a key role in Hy-Vee's participation in National Family Meals Month (in September), providing tools and resources, along with organized giveaways, to help families have at least one more meal together each week. Among these programs were seven shopping-sprees contests that drew 3.4 million media impressions.

## Having earned leadership's trust, Ashley Flower was well-positioned to lead retailer's COVID-19 communications



*From creating and executing a grant program to positioning CEO as thought leader, Ashley Flower epitomizes a Dynamic Do-er, a recognition she has earned in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

As public relations manager for The GIANT Company, a Pennsylvania-based grocery chain, Ashley Flower has proven the effectiveness of strategic PR.

The company's leadership has come to rely on her judgment about how best to make announcements based on audiences, timing, media channels, presentation, and more. Flower works with other departments to ensure messages are well-communicated across the company's four-state territory. Having earned the C-suite's trust, she was named advisor to the entire leadership group when COVID-19 struck.

With grocery workers deemed "essential," she handled a stream of updates to communications on a sometimes-hourly basis. She took leveraged the pandemic to position her CEO as a thought leader in the grocery industry, securing interviews on Good Morning America, Fox News, CNBC and a variety of regional print and online channels.

Flower was behind the U.S. Secretary of Labor's visit to a GIANT facility and played a role in a CARE Act press conference by Pennsylvania's governor in front of a GIANT store. Most impressive, she developed and executed the company's Small Business Emergency Grant program, vetting and selecting recipients, then distributing \$500,000 in grants to small businesses throughout Pennsylvania.

Media coverage of the grants garnered nearly 350,000 impressions in the program's first month, then nearly doubled in the second.

## Jessica Kline helped pharma navigate COVID-19 and national dialogue on racism



*Company workforce is highly engaged despite a year of challenges thanks to efforts of this Dynamic Do-er in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

It was less than two years ago when Jessica Kline joined Blueprint Medicines as head of the company's employee communications effort. She immediately made a difference through efforts like introducing the company's first intranet.

In 2020, as the company prepared for regulatory approval of two medicines, the pandemic struck. Those product introductions proceeded despite the spread of the virus, which led Kline to develop a communications plan at the center of which was an intranet information center and a twice-weekly newsletter that provided employees with timely and actionable information on safety, employee support and well-being resources.

A year after the pandemic began, these newsletters still deliver an open rate greater than 80%. As the company's COVID-19 task force project manager, Kline managed all dimensions of operational response while maintaining the company's culture through a number of activities, including Zoom town halls, a Parents Group and a virtual version of the company's annual Core Values Week.

When racial unrest followed a series of killings of unarmed Blacks by police officers, Kline initiated and co-chaired a new Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee. None of these crises deterred her from maintaining communication about business milestones, all of which accounts for high levels of employee engagement despite the challenging year, just one factor leading to her designation as a Dynamic Do-er in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.



## After four promotions in 10 years, Lara McCauley now leads internal and change communications at iconic candy company



*Taking charge of COVID-19 communications is one reason Lara McCauley is a Dynamic Do-er honoree in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

At Mars, Incorporated, a communicator is the facilitator of the company leadership team as well as the board of directors. She is also the go-to resource for the company's top executives, a rare role for an internal communicator but one Lara McCauley has earned with four promotions in 10 years.

Her latest promotion made her VP of Business and Change Communications, where she continues to earn praise for her commitment and energy. When the COVID-19 pandemic attracted attention from shareholders and leadership, requiring new processes for making decisions that would ensure timely communication to the company's more than 130,000 employees worldwide, McCauley and her team put themselves in the center of the action. She set up a centralized COVID-19 communications team and reprioritized her own team's work to ensure the company's communications were centralized. She participated in daily leadership team meetings and, in a matter of days, oversaw the switch from an in-person board meeting to a fully virtual one.

In an employee survey, 80% of staff agreed or strongly agreed that the company's response to the pandemic aligned with the company's purpose; employees also agreed that Mars communicated a clear plan of action in response to the pandemic. We are honored to include Lara among the Dynamic Do-er honorees in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.

# Mars, Incorporated is proud to celebrate our communications leaders and trailblazers.

Congratulations, Lara McCauley and Dr. Tiph Turpin, for being recognized among Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications!

During one of the most disruptive years in history, Lara and Tiph met the moment and challenges fearlessly. We are grateful for their contributions to the business and to the many Associates they impact and influence. Their actions, every day, help us bring our Purpose to life: **The world we want tomorrow starts with how we do business today.**



**Lara McCauley**

VICE PRESIDENT,  
BUSINESS & CHANGE COMMUNICATIONS



**Dr. Tiph Turpin**

SENIOR DIRECTOR,  
BOARD & MLT STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

# MARS



## Pandemic presents opportunity for healthcare communicator to deliver outsized results for client



*Learning national media relations on the fly, Jessica Clifton builds relationships and earns the Dynamic Do-er honor in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

As a senior account manager in the healthcare practice of boutique PR firm Agency Ten22, Jess Clifton produced stellar results for clients interested in publicity through industry trade media. Among those clients was BioIQ, an Atlanta-based medical testing company that found itself in the public eye as testing became a central issue in the COVID-19 pandemic.

Suddenly, Clifton needed to get her client in front of mainstream national-level media, a dimension of PR with which she had little experience. She got up to speed in a hurry, though, building relationships with journalists and editors and learning the ins and outs of managing national and broadcast media. Among her efforts was securing broadcast news interviews for BioIQ's CEO, which led to more than 50 regional and national opportunities on media outlets like ABC, CBS, FOX, The Wall Street Journal, Forbes, and The Washington Post.

Clifton wrote and distributed 17 press releases and seven blog posts during the pandemic's peak, reaching a total audience of more than 2 million viewers. To date, her efforts on behalf of BioIQ have produced nearly 500 placements in more than 125 top-tier publications and 30 national-level broadcast outlets. She also pioneered national coverage for Agency Ten22. As her nominator wrote, "Jess undoubtedly represents the qualities of a Dynamic Do-er and is worthy of this award."

## In response to reduced media opportunities, Jennifer Massaro turned to content marketing to raise Nutanix's profile



*Developing a brand journalism website produced huge results and delivered a Dynamic Do-er honor in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Tech companies are among those most needing to identify new ways to communicate their messages to key audiences. In the face of reduced media opportunities, companies like Nutanix have had to find other ways to tell their stories to the right audiences. Jennifer Massaro, Nutanix's senior director of public relations, embraced the idea that every company is a media company, developing a news site, The Forecast, which is focused on topics of interest to decision-makers, investors and other key audiences.

The brand journalism site attracted 250,000 visitors and nearly 400,000 page views in the past 12 months. From April to August 2020, the site averaged 36,000 monthly page views; 2,400 people subscribed to the email newsletter and podcast segments average 30,000-plus monthly downloads. Massaro also conceived and launched Nutanix's global Enterprise Cloud Index, an annual report that evaluates IT decision-makers through processes for selecting and using cloud software.

Her efforts have produced 624 pieces of earned media from key tech and IT publications. She has been integral to growing the company's share of voice 5 points in a highly competitive industry. Mentions of the company increased 7% in the company's top technology media outlets and 24% in top business outlets. With a reputation for accountability and outside-the-box thinking, Massaro has been named a Dynamic Do-er in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communication Awards.

## Healthcare PR pro launches agency practice and grows it 400% in just a few years



*Sharon Golubchik and her team guided Antenna's healthcare clients through COVID-19; she is a Dynamic Do-er honoree in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

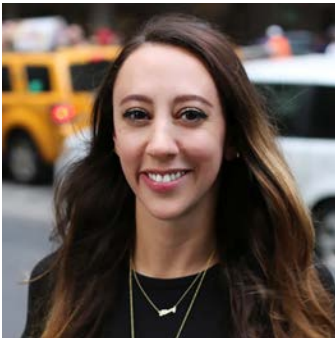
When Sharon Golubchik joined Antenna Group, she brought her extensive healthcare communication experience with her and launched the agency's fast-growing health practice. In the few years since that launch, the practice has grown over 400% in revenue, aided by the team she has assembled.

With the COVID-19 pandemic affecting virtually all of Antenna's health clients, Golubchik laid out the objectives for communication, including ensuring that messaging was supported by sound science, that patients knew how to get treatments and support, and that all stakeholders continued to engage in communication despite working remotely.

While other many other agencies saw business decline during 2020, Golubchik brought new accounts to the agency, including its largest client to date. Among her team's 2020 efforts was work with Medly, a digital pharmacy, communicating a Series B \$100-million funding round. Her efforts produced more than 156 million impressions with placements in key media outlets like The Wall Street Journal, Business Insider, FOX Business, Venture Beat, and more.

For another client, BrainsWay, she and her team developed and led #TheRe-aLOCD campaign designed to educate and increase awareness of the misuses of the acronym for Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. The campaign produced more than 376,600 impressions in just one week.

## PR practitioner finds opportunities for pandemic-related communications to support consumer brands



*Lysol was among the company's clients, leading to Dynamic Do-er recognition for Anna Boisvert in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Access Brand Communications represents some of the biggest consumer brands in the world, including Philips, Reckitt Benckiser and Blue Diamond. Leading the communication efforts on behalf of these brands is Anna Boisvert, senior VP and group director for Consumer & Lifestyle, who found the coronavirus presented some of the agency's clients with unique opportunities.

Among them was Lysol, the sanitization brand that grabbed an outsized share of public attention as its products vanished from store shelves. Boisvert delivered around-the-clock strategic communications and social media support for the brand to address shortages along with reinforcing proper use of the product.

But it was the development of an award-winning creative campaign to support Lysol's Laundry Sanitizer that has earned her our admiration and the Dynamic Do-er honor in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards. The "Teddy Repair" initiative provided parents with the tools to fix and sanitize their children's stuffed animals. The campaign included influencer engagement to deliver tips to parents. The campaign was nominated for four major PR industry awards, winning two and being named one of the top 40 campaigns of the year worldwide at the Global Sabre Awards.

Amid these efforts, Boisvert maintained the culture and energy of her team by helping them navigate remote working and spearheading virtual activities that rejuvenated staff and created fun team-building moments.



## Owned media development was a priority for Maximus's Laura Klebanow



*Senior marketing manager was after big new clients; her efforts have made her a Dynamic Do-er honoree in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Maximus has an extremely well-defined client base: government agencies around the world avail themselves of the firm's business process management and technology solutions. When Laura Klebanow joined the company, she brought with her a deep understanding of the government contracting market. That was important to Maximus, which was expanding to new government agencies.

Klebanow recognized that Maximus needed more owned content, leading her to author, edit, or ghostwrite a variety of articles and launch a series to spotlight the company's subject matter expertise. She was also tasked with launching a major offering from an alliance partner, creating buzz in the market and generating significant new business.

She also launched an omnichannel brand campaign featuring the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency, one of Maximus's key federal customers, to support an effort to win a contract that would become one of the largest in the company's history.

Klebanow designed and implemented a brand campaign featuring the IRS, a longstanding partner, which contributed to major contract wins and a stronger relationship with the IRS.

## When COVID-19 shut down museums, the National Museum of African American History and Culture responded quickly with an online experience



*Public Affairs Leader Shrita Hernandez also addressed racial unrest by accelerating a program, another reason she is a Dynamic Do-er honoree in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a heavy toll on museums, which had to close for extended periods to slow the virus's spread. Shrita Hernandez, chief communications and public affairs officer for the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C., wasted no time, directing her team to redirect audience engagement to an online digital experience.

She introduced a digital resource guide and online video curator chat series, along with interactive social media campaigns, to draw visitors to the museum's online venues. She also opted to release the museum's Talking About Race web portal months ahead of schedule, injecting the museum into the conversation about the deaths of George Floyd and other unarmed Blacks at the hands of police officers. The launch produced hundreds of thousands of media mentions while serving as a resource for people seeking tools to help them understand race and racism.

When a national political leader attacked the portal, leading some people to attack the museum on social media, an undaunted Hernandez shortened the crisis and built confidence with stakeholders. Under her leadership, the museum documented the social protest along with pandemic-related disparities in health outcome. For helping the museum fulfill its mission to make America better, we are honored to name Hernandez a Dynamic Do-er in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.

## LEADERS

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### Shari Shane shows the best of health care comms in work for Ascension Health



*For her work to respond to the COVID-19 crisis for one of the largest health care systems in the U.S, Shane is an honoree in the “Leader” category of Ragan’s Top Women in Communications Awards for 2021.*

The year 2020 was a tough test for most organizations, but particularly for health care facilities. As vice president of marketing and communications for Ascension, one of the biggest health care systems in the country, Shari Shane had to move quickly to respond to extraordinary challenges.

In January of 2020, Shane led Ascension’s rapid response when a patient in one of the network’s hospitals was confirmed as the second case of COVID-19 in the U.S., coordinating with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, reassuring staff and patients and responding to media inquiries.

During the pandemic, Shane led more than 100 daily leadership briefings, worked to provide timely updates to staff and developed new channels to disseminate essential information. The team developed and launched the “Good Day Ascension Podcast” in just three weeks and worked to rollout the ABIDE framework to improve DE&I efforts after the death of George Floyd shocked the conscience of the nation.

In addition to responding to the many crises of 2020, Shane also helped roll out Google Workspace, with Ascension becoming one of the largest organizations to ever adopt the G-Suite. The transition impacted thousands of associates who required lots of outreach and education.

Measuring Shane’s efforts of the past year, Ascension’s team under her leadership has secured approximately 9,649 earned media placements, 2.5 billion media impressions and more than \$125 million in publicity value – more than half of which resulted from COVID-19-related news coverage.

## Cisco's Carmen Collins embraces the future of social media



*The social media and employer brand lead developed innovative ways to engage employees and interns on TikTok and other platforms, earning Collins recognition as an honoree in the “Leader” category of Ragan’s Top Women in Communications Awards for 2021.*

For Carmen Collins, social media and employer brand lead for Cisco, the year 2020 offered unique challenges. Her role developing social media content to support talent acquisition was tested as never before as employees were sent home during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Her brainchild? A TikTok campaign led by employee ambassadors that yielded almost 300K total views in three months on topics from intern talent to TikTok “résumés.”

Collins also makes her team feel seen and appreciated. “Carmen leads with empathy and transparency—she’s a standout leader because she is truly interested in the lives of those she leads,” says one of her team members.

She also gives back to her industry and community, presenting virtual sessions for conferences like “Digital Summit,” “Meltwater Social Media Festival” and “Social Media Day Philly”—as well as offering career advice and more on her social media channels, an effort which colleagues were inspired to join, resulting in 375 hours of content from more than 60 participants.

Her work has resulted in many industry honors, including Digital Communicator of the Year from Ragan Communications and the Stevie Awards and her team won over 15 awards in 2020.

## Michelle Hecht drives customer engagement with bank group during PPP program



*Hecht was an essential strategist for Citizens Financial Group as it navigated the rollout of key programs during the COVID-19 crisis, earning her recognition as an honoree in the “Leader” category of Ragan’s Top Women in Communications Awards for 2021.*

As the leader of communications for Citizens Financial Group, Michelle Hecht owns executive and internal comms, social media, content strategy, programs and events, digital and media. Hecht also leads a Communications Council, which pursues its mission to elevate the reputation of Citizens by ensuring alignment from all constituents in the organization.

This role was challenged by the outbreak of COVID-19, prompting many initiatives both internally and externally. For the external community, Hecht organized an online resource center with 50+ COVID-19 resources that received 1.09 million visits and customer engagement through an outreach program that drove about \$5 billion in loans to 47,000 customers with the Paycheck Protection Program and 134 grants to small businesses through the Small Business Grant Program.

Internally, Hecht spearheaded intranet resource hub with COVID-19 resources that yielded more than 500k page views from employees and published 143 FAQs and 43 COVID-related articles. She also led company livestreams, beaming conversations with leaders to 18,000 colleagues and hosting multiple enterprise-wide forums.

During the protests against racial violence and discrimination in the summer of 2020, Hecht led the strategy, engaging a cross-functional team to develop an \$10 million investment strategy to support community groups and businesses.

## Brodeur Partner's Andrea Coville leads with compassion and data



*For her many accomplishments and steady hands, Andrea Coville is recognized as an honoree in the “Leader” category of Ragan’s Top Women in Communications Awards for 2021.*

Throughout the disruptions of 2020, Andrea Coville (Andy to her team) has led her PR agency, Brodeur Partners, with compassion and purpose.

In the face of remote work due to COVID-19, Coville built a flexible framework that accommodated all employees—from working parents to interns. With an emphasis on health and safety, she kept the agencies’ culture alive with regular Zoom meetings and plenty of transparency around employee feedback and concerns.

Coville created a wellness program for the agency—BWell—that addressed physical and mental health, ensuring employees took breaks, went outside, took mental health days and more. The wellness program encouraged staff to share a favorite recipe, participate in step physical challenges and share mindfulness techniques to help ease the pressures of lockdown living.

At a time when many organizations were shedding jobs, Coville ensured that all team members were retained and provided stipends for employees to set up home offices. New employees were hired to take on extra work—and the investment paid off in business wins.

Overall, Coville was able to double down on her own research, offering new insights around her signature methodology: relevance. The study provided key insights into American values and ideals and led to her completing her second book, “Relevance: Changing Minds and Behavior in a Time of Uncertainty.”



## Affect's Sandra Fathi defines her leadership with service



*For her many accomplishments and ongoing service to her community, Sandra Fathi is recognized as an honoree in the “Leader” category of Ragan’s Top Women in Communications Awards for 2021.*

In a year that revealed the tenacity demanded of the PR pro, Sandra Fathi, founder and president of Affect, showed why she is a revered leader in the PR industry.

Despite facing the challenges of COVID-19, Affect achieved double-digit growth and record profitability. Notable client work included helping one client make a \$1.5 billion exit and creating an environment that kept her team thriving and engaged. The business wins allowed Affect to grow the company headcount by 15% without any reductions to staff pay or benefits and minimal churn for current employees.

In keeping with the conversation around race in the U.S. and globally, Fathi created a DE&I committee at Affect, leading to outspoken support of the Black Lives Matter movement and donations to other organizations like NAACP and ACLU.

Fathi also continues to be a leader in the PR industry, having served as a board member for the PR Council, president of PRSA-NY, chair of PRSA’s Tri-state Chapter and other leadership roles.

She also works hard to give back to her community, holding a coat drive for NY Cares, supporting essential workers by donating meals to first responders, and offering pro bono work to groups like HavServe, A Second U Foundation and Last Mile Talent.

## HBI's Wendy Hsiao offers solace to colleagues in tough times



*Amid the many losses of the past year, colleagues see Hsiao as the backbone of her organization and share their awe of her media relations success, earning her recognition as an honoree in the “Leader” category of Ragan’s Top Women in Communications Awards for 2021.*

To her colleagues, Wendy Hsiao is a “firecracker.”

As a vice president with Atlanta PR firm Hope-Beckham Inc., Hsiao became an essential resource for her colleagues when the agency experienced the loss of its co-founder and chairman Paul Beckham. Colleagues credit Hsiao’s work ethic, commitment to client service and knack for creative solutions that allowed HBI to avoid furloughs and layoffs during the pandemic.

When it comes to her client work, Hsiao has some major accomplishments under her belt. For the 2019 ESPN Events’ Celebration Bowl, Hsiao’s deft management of social media engagement led to increased follower numbers across all accounts and the successful launch of their first-ever Reddit presence, leading to HBI being asked to coordinate with the official college football Reddit account. She also led the celebration of Atlanta baseball icon Hank Aaron’s 86th birthday, leading to coverage in more than 220 media outlets. Hsiao’s work has been awarded with industry accolades like the Hermes Creative Awards Gold and Platinum award and helping HBI secure superlative rankings in industry lists.

## Michelle Martinez Reyes helps put her law firm on the map



*For her many achievements, Michelle Martinez Reyes is recognized as an honoree in the “Leader” category of Ragan’s Top Women in Communications Awards for 2021.*

As chief relations officer for law firm Kelley Kronenberg, Michelle Martinez Reyes oversees marketing strategy, public relations, community initiatives, internal and external communications and much more, as well as serving as a senior advisor to the owners and business units. Joining the team in May of 2020,

Martinez Reyes had to onboard remotely and has relied heavily on email, phone and Zoom calls to build a new department.

The firm has broken records under her leadership, bringing in more than 5 billion online readers and 4 million through November of 2020, after less than a year on the job at the law firm, which celebrates 40 years of business and has been recognized as one of the fastest-growing firms in Florida.

Martinez Reyes has a decorated career of over 20 years with accolades from Ragan Communications and PR Daily as a “Game Changer”, National Latino Leader from the National Diversity Council and an honoree for the Corporate Latina Executive of the Year Award.

Martinez Reyes also supports her organization’s numerous efforts involving charitable, community service and pro bono work, always looking to give back to her home community of Miami.

## Mastercard's Kerri Warner sets the bar with mentorship and messaging



*The global head of employee communications is a consummate champion of her team, earning Kerri Warner the recognition of “Leader” in Ragan’s Top Women in Communications Awards for 2021.*

As global head of employee communications for Mastercard, Kerri Warner is the steward of the most important relationship the organization has—the one with its employees.

In 2020, that relationship was put in the spotlight as COVID-19 drastically changed how employees did their jobs and the responsibilities of employers were highlighted unlike ever before. Warner’s team delivered the goods, leading an organizational shift to a more human-centric, non-corporate tone, giving employees access to top leaders at Mastercard, and developing new technology solutions to meet the needs of employees.

The efforts have worked: In the annual employee experience survey, communications-related categories all scored above 95% satisfaction.

However, colleagues say where Warner stands apart is her commitment to their wellbeing, empowering team members to manage their schedules in a way that works for them and taking time to let them know they are appreciated. Warner supports her colleague’s development, providing individual feedback and coaching and helping her direct reports take on more responsibilities and stretch themselves at work.

It’s this commitment to empathy and compassion that has allowed Warner to find success in a challenging year, and a trait that has endeared her to her colleagues as a leader of remarkable merit.

## NCR's Marija Zivanovic-Smith takes an historic brand into the future



*For her work helping NCR meet the needs of a modern marketplace, Marija Zivanovic-Smith is recognized as an honoree in the “Leader” category of Ragan’s Top Women in Communications Awards for 2021.*

As senior vice president for corporate marketing, communications and chief external affairs officer for NCR Corporation, Marija Zivanovic-Smith has had to be nothing short of revolutionary.

During the COVID-19 crisis, Zivanovic-Smith started working with her team to reimagine the 135-year-old brand to meet the demands of the disruption caused by the pandemic. Her team brainstormed and created a theme, “Simple made possible,” to highlight the organization’s forward-thinking approach to helping customers run their store, restaurant and digital banking.

The new brand presence was an earned media success, resulting in more than 36,000 media placements and analyst quotes such as, “This is not my mother’s NCR!”

Zivanovic-Smith also worked to revamp the company’s website with a new content strategy and developed and delivered it under 100 days, driving a 1,000% increase in web traffic to NCR’s website and 2.5 million unique visitors in February of 2020 (compared to 226,326 in September of 2019).

Amid all her other work, Zivanovic-Smith also led NCR’s COVID-19 Task Force, establishing internal and external resources to keep employees and stakeholder safe and promote business continuity amid worldwide disruption of services.

## Vonage's Jo Ann Tizzano sets the standard for earned media excellence



*Her team leadership led to an impressive number of speaking appearances, original articles and industry awards, earning Tizzano the recognition of “Leader” in Ragan’s Top Women in Communications Awards for 2021.*

As vice president for corporate communications with Vonage, Jo Ann Tizzano leads the external and internal communications strategy across all lines of the company’s global business as an essential member of the senior leadership team.

With 23 years of experience in the profession, Tizzano has built a small but mighty team to derive PR and internal communications results for the company year after year. In 2019, the results from her team spoke volumes: More than 950 original articles that resulted in more than 1.9 billion total media impressions, 75 speaking engagements, 44 awards, 127 analyst engagements and more.

And then there was 2020, a year unlike any other for companies around the world. Still, Tizzano’s work wasn’t hindered and her team continued to find media placements and opportunities to offer thought leadership. Numbers for the first half of 2020 included:

- 500+ original articles, resulting in more than 6.8 billion total media impressions
- 26 speaking engagements
- Participation in 178 global events
- 2 awards
- 96 analyst engagements

To her colleagues, Tizzano is a compassionate advocate for their success. She has completed numerous pro bono projects over her career to help entrepre-



neurs and nonprofits succeed and has mentored more than a dozen young pros looking to find their way in the industry.

And on top of everything, she is a consummate cross-functional communicator. She works daily with executives, team leaders and stakeholders in every area of the company, from product to HR to legal to customer care, to ensure that the Vonage story is clearly communicated and understood. In the words of her team, one of the secrets of their success is having “a leader like Jo Ann at the helm.”

## Aubrey Quinn's meteoric rise is lifting up others, too



*Clyde Group's groundbreaking managing director overcame the odds to find great success in the industry. Her outstanding efforts to give back have earned recognition as a Leader in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Throughout her career, Aubrey Quinn has always stood out from the pack.

She was promoted from the role of intern to associate, and then again to manager in less than 18 months at her first agency. At her second job, at age 24, she led the pitch team that won a multimillion-dollar Utah Department of Transportation contract away from the incumbent, which doubled the size of the agency.

She was named VP of Communications for Children's Miracle Network Hospitals at just 28, the youngest VP ever in the nonprofit's history. At 34, she became Clyde Group's first vice president, going on to become its managing director and first partner (beyond the founder). She has expanded Clyde Group from eight employees to more than 30, quadrupled the firm's client and staff retention, and increased revenue from \$1.1 million to nearly \$6 million—all in just four years.

Quinn has never been satisfied with the status quo—in every role she's held, she's pushed her employer to new heights. While at Children's Miracle Network, she arranged for 50 young hospital patients and their families from around the country to meet President Obama at the White House in March 2009, just two months after his inauguration (a tradition that continued throughout his eight years in office). She also conceived of and opened the Lansinoh Lounge at Nationals Park, the first breastfeeding lounge at the baseball stadium.

At Clyde Group, Quinn has been a fierce advocate for employees, clients and her community. For a major tech client, she led the creation of a program to support survivors of domestic violence, generating an outpouring of support

and positive response from employees and clients alike. She spearheaded the creation of “Clyde Impact,” Clyde Group’s Corporate Social Responsibility program that offers pro bono communications support to local nonprofits and philanthropy organizations in the DC-metro area. She also created and leads an affinity group for Clyde Group’s female employees that provides regular mentoring and professional development opportunities.

She accomplished all of this despite an unconventional start to her career. After completing the majority of her Bachelor’s in communications at Brigham Young University, Quinn was asked to leave the conservative school just a few credits shy of graduation upon becoming pregnant outside of marriage. She began her career without a degree and with a newborn son. Her unique experience as a working PR professional who started a family at age 21—and who has worked continuously while raising her three children—has driven her to support parents and families in every leadership role she has held.

## Julie Talenfeld is living proof that investing in others never comes back void



*The beloved founder and CEO of BoardroomPR has earned recognition as a Leader in Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Julie Talenfeld was head of the public relations division of an investment banking firm when the stock market crashed in 1987. She was attending the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas when she learned the firm couldn't raise the capital needed to stay in business. She told her boss at the time that she'd like to take the firm's public relations division as her own—so long as she got to change the name. She was just 25 years old.

This is how Talenfeld began her career as the founder and CEO of Boardroom Communications, (now BoardroomPR). At the time it was a blank slate and a business of one. Two decades later, it's one of the largest PR firms in the state of Florida, with six locations and 18 employees.

Amid steady business growth and professional success, Talenfeld has always made time to be a mentor. She is famous for making employees feel valued, heard and respected. Talenfeld is also known for her keen insights and sharp way with words, her fearlessness at navigating crises, and for putting all of those around her at ease.

Talenfeld is also a dedicated philanthropist. She is an Ambassador for the Holocaust Museum of South Florida and remains a strong advocate for female business founders—locally and nationwide. She is also heavily involved with JAFCO and the Jewish Federation. She has been recognized for her charitable efforts, receiving the Jacob's Ladder Award for community advocacy, as well as Legal Aid's Advocacy Award. She and her husband, Howard, were named Community Champions by Deliver the Dream and one of South Florida's Leading Couples by the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

Talenfeld is an embodiment of a well-rounded, well-respected communicator who is creating a meaningful legacy of well-earned praise.

## A leader who believes in the power of representation—and stories



*Medela's Kimberly Aasen listens to employee and consumers, striving for an inclusive approach to marketing. It's won her honors in the 'Leader' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Kimberly Aasen of Medela puts in the work to create strong teams, rewards those who empower and encourage those around them and deeply values creating a strong, authentically emotional brand story.

As Medela's Senior Director of Global Communications & Corporate Social Responsibility, Aasen listened to consumer feedback about lack of representation in marketing, and strove to take an inclusive approach, ensuring that all sizes, genders and families would feel represented in Medela's marketing. She worked to feature ads with real moms confidently showing stretch marks instead of airbrushing, and to inspire others to see themselves instead of an unattainable image of perfection.

When Medela removed a racist remark on social media instead of commenting on it, customers made it clear that they expected more from the brand. To rebuild trust, Aasen spearheaded discussions with disparity advocates around the country that evolved into a listening campaign with community leaders sharing how the company could have a positive impact as a brand. She led a team that helped deliver on the brand mission, driving a nine percent increase in emotional connection in less than six months.

The focus of Aasen's message is always the same: Stories provide the perspective we need to help us find common ground and give others a voice.

## Kristy Campbell spearheads cybersecurity response



*Her 'Predicting the Unexpected' campaign for Proofpoint warned nations of worldwide threats. Her work has won her honors in the 'Leader' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

When Kristy Campbell first joined Proofpoint five years ago, the cybersecurity firm was often mistaken for “PowerPoint,” and sales teams had to explain Proofpoint’s market value instead of solving the toughest security issues of our time. Fast-forward to today, and that’s no longer the case—despite serious headwinds in a very crowded market of 700+ security vendors.

As the Vice President of Global Corporate Communications at Proofpoint, Campbell led the “Predicting the Unexpected” campaign last year, elevating the company’s reputation as a leading voice in cybersecurity by telling people-centric stories that warned nations worldwide of the emerging cyber threats.

The strategy took center stage when the coronavirus descended upon the world, as no one anticipated the impact it would have on how we lived and worked. While cybercriminals were quick to find novel ways to exploit people and corporate data, Proofpoint’s Threat Research team was quicker.

Recognizing the threat posed by emerging coronavirus-themed cyberattacks, Campbell’s team aggressively delivered on her year-long campaign and rapid response function to get the word out. She partnered with Proofpoint’s threat research team to create 40+ newsworthy threat blogs, five research reports and customer media-only roundtables with exclusive insight on how top organizations were staying safe.

As a result, Kristy Campbell’s “Predicting the Unexpected” campaign exceeded previous results by a significant margin, with 3,900 articles secured worldwide, a 68% year-over-year increase and nearly two thirds (61%, up from 48%) of total global coverage appearing in tier-one media, including AP, BBC News, CNBC, CNN, The Wall Street Journal, USA Today, VOX and WIRED.



## Top comms officer demonstrates grace under pressure during COVID



*Linda Boff of the GE Foundation handled crisis communications, helped build an employee relief fund and led the launch of the foundation's new purpose campaign, earning her honors in the 'Leader' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit General Electric hard in the midst of a multiyear transformation, Linda Boff, chief marketing and communications officer at the GE Foundation, led her global teams with resilience, empathy and grace under pressure. This included managing GE's robust crisis communications response—both internal and external—encompassing everything from employee health and safety to business and financial impacts.

In addition to crisis communications, Boff led the charge to proactively tell positive stories to both internal and external stakeholders about the incredible grit and resilience of GE employees in the face of COVID-19. She also led a cross-functional team to build GE's Employee Relief Fund from the ground up in under two months. The Fund helped 3,900 GE employees around the world facing unprecedented challenges due to COVID-19.

After building momentum with employees, Boff led the external launch of GE's new purpose with a multipronged marketing campaign. The campaign, which appeared on television, print and social media, showcased the importance of the work GE does and its impact on communities around the world. Boff's creativity and resourcefulness resonated throughout the entire team, which developed and executed a brand-new campaign in the midst of the pandemic.

Building  
a world  
that works  
takes a true  
visionary.



Congratulations,  
Linda Boff (Chief  
Marketing and  
Communications  
Officer, GE) for being  
honored as one of  
the Top Women in  
Communications 2021.



Building a world that works

## PR pro champions collaboration, empowerment, and mentorship



*FleishmanHillard's Elizabeth Cook managed crises and a major media event, and counseled her organization on community engagement during the pandemic. She's taken honors in the 'Leader' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Elizabeth Cook, senior vice president and senior partner at FleishmanHillard, is committed to a culture of respect, quality work and the highest ethical standards. As a trusted advisor and agency leader, she serves as a mentor and role model, managing one of the agency's largest and most complex clients.

During her time as global client lead for General Motors, Cook has managed multiple crises and major announcements, including overseeing the UAW/GM negotiations and subsequent labor strike in Q4 of 2019, and, more recently, GM's momentous "EV Week" in early March 2020. The successful, multichannel events for media and investors showcased highly guarded vehicle developments that typically are confidential until released, resulting in more than 600 media hits and a measurable increase in positive brand reputation.

The pandemic presented new challenges. Cook served a lead role in counseling GM on community engagement and helping to bring GM's Return to Workplace plan to media, policymakers and community stakeholders. Via webinars, GM shared its manufacturing plant safety protocols to use as a model for business and organization reopenings and to bolster confidence among workers and plant communities.

Cook's leadership style is ingrained in collaboration and empowerment, always challenging the team to perform at its best. With unexpected challenges occurring this past year, Cook has swiftly worked to ensure her team feels well-connected, supported and motivated.



Congratulations!

# LIZ COOK

Liz Cook is at the top of her game ... serving as the Global Client Lead on FleishmanHillard's General Motors account, she is balancing her role as a senior strategic client counselor, a collaborative and empowering team leader, and, if that wasn't enough, being a new mom. It's all a day-in-the-life of a FleishmanHillard superstar. Congratulations, Liz, on being named one of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications.

**A little national recognition for all your hard work? It's the cherry on top.**



## Dartmouth-Hitchcock Health's comms VP Jennifer Gilkie takes the lead in pandemic response



*Gilkie's team provided information and education to patients and the general public, encouraging masks and more. That's earned her honors in the 'Leader' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Jennifer E. Gilkie is vice president of communications and marketing for Dartmouth-Hitchcock Health (D-HH), New Hampshire's largest private employer and the state's only academic health system, serving a population of 1.9 million across northern New England.

Gilkie has all the individual characteristics that define an outstanding leader. First and foremost she has built a robust team of integrated communications professionals and partners, and organized systemwide communications and marketing efforts focused on promoting and supporting the system's strategic priorities. While serving as a communications chief on D-HH's systemwide Incident Command team demanding and intense role, Jen led her C&M team in standing up and executing a complex, multichannel communications effort in response to the pandemic.

Her team was responsible for daily (sometimes hourly) internal communications to employees, managing media inquiries and handling integrated, ongoing communications to provide patients and the general public with fact-based information and guidance, quickly establishing D-HH as the go-to source for COVID-related information. For example, under Gilkie's leadership, D-HH took the lead on encouraging people to wear a mask through op-eds, advertising and earned media.

## Adriana Senior improved and expanded communications during the pandemic



*She transformed an in-person conference into a six-day virtual extravaganza for participants working from home—and their families. That and other initiatives have earned her recognition as an honoree in the ‘Leader’ category of Ragan’s 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Adriana Senior leads the internal and external communications, PR, social media and brand strategy for financial services company Cetera.

Among her many accomplishments, Senior completely overhauled and modernized Cetera’s communications team, transforming it into a revenue-driving engine feeding 20% year-over-year growth. This was driven in part by her introduction of message frameworks, more fluid social and PR, efforts to streamline communications and launch of new brand guidelines.

Senior led numerous initiatives to improve and expand communications amid COVID-19, including reimagining the firm’s in-person conference to a six-day virtual experience with screen breaks, entertainment and sessions for participants and their families who might be working at home together, as well as sessions for investors for the first time in firm history. The conference itself had record attendance and an average speaker rating of 4.6/5. Senior and her team positioned speakers and led all pre-, during and post-conference communications.

Senior has high integrity and a distinguished ability to create opportunity, influence those around her and look outside to be effective for her team, company and profession. She invests hours of message coaching, training and rehearsal to help executives nail interviews and speaking engagements. She’s committed to her team’s personal and professional well-being, as well as to Cetera.



## PR CEO's firm thrives during COVID thanks to client diversification, crucial hiring and more



*Jennifer Curley's company also focused on workplace wellness and mental health, earning the CEO honors in the 'Leader' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Jennifer Curley, president and CEO of Curley Company, leads with her values, conscious of her role in paving the way for women to thrive in communications and promoting women's leadership.

When the global pandemic threw the world and PR industry into a tailspin, Curley's 18-year-old firm not only survived, but saw exponential growth. Curley prioritized diversifying its client base, protecting the company from some of the COVID-19 fallout. She made important investment hires to build capabilities in crucial growth areas. Curley's Association 100 newsletter helped generate 47% gross revenue growth.

Curley focuses on staff wellness and mental health, offering employees company-paid wellness sessions. Curley has an unlimited personal time off/vacation policy, but to ensure employees took time off, the CEO required one full week for each employee during the summer, ensured no meetings after 1 p.m. on summer Fridays and added mandatory mental health days.

Curley created an internal diversity, equity & inclusion task force for training staff, and implemented a long-term plan to support inclusiveness. Since starting Curley, she has hired 75+ employees/interns (94% female).

A member of the PRSA Counselors Academy and PR Council, in 2020, Curley obtained WBENC/woman-owned business certification, and was named a finalist for Washington Women in PR, Woman of the Year for 2020.

## From the comms department to Capitol Hill, this VP gets it done



*Jennifer de Vallance expanded the communications department, launched the company's first government affairs team and more—earning honors in the 'Leader' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

In her nine-year tenure at Mathematica, Jennifer de Vallance has built a high-functioning, multidisciplinary communications department and launched and led the company's first government affairs team. Her work as vice president of communications and public affairs has transformed the pipeline of news and information from the operating divisions and introduced interactive data visualizations and new standards for video. She also developed and implemented a turnkey approach to events in the Washington, DC, office.

Under de Vallance's leadership, the communications department has more than doubled in size to 60 employees, and she has been recognized by management and the board as essential to Mathematica's ability to deliver on its mission. Examples of her accomplishments include:

- Initiating partnership discussions with key state organizations, such as the National Governors Association, to better understand what's happening at the state level and where our work might intersect. These discussions resulted in Dataween, a Halloween-inspired partnership where policymakers could "trick or treat" at a series of data analytics displays and activities.
- Coordinating a policy road tour with Mathematica nutrition researchers to spread word about its work with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Those meetings and the accompanying data visualization led to an invitation to testify on Capitol Hill.
- Persuading her research colleagues to pursue work related to her area of passion—opioid abuse. She has since taken an unofficial leadership role in expanding our external presence and visibility in this area.

De Vallance consistently demonstrates and delivers on the 10 leadership characteristics Mathematica values. Through all her activities, she takes an enterprise-level perspective and keeps the company and its employees' best interests in mind, representing Mathematica to a wide variety of clients, policymakers and other high-profile stakeholders.

## Employee communications channels improve under steady leadership



*Robin McCasland expanded her comms team, launched an improved publication and saw response skyrocket. She's earned honors in the 'Leader' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards*

Robin McCasland's employer, Health Care Service Corporation, (HCSC), went through significant changes over the past year. As part of corporate communications' role in this transformation, McCasland became part of corporate communications' leadership team. Her scope expanded with more team members who managed all the employee communication channels (publication, intranet, targeted messages and Yammer).

Despite all the turmoil of 2020, McCasland's team improved dramatically.

Timeline/improvement highlights:

- Launched an improved employee publication via a technology platform and began receiving favorable feedback from employees and leaders.
- Led daily team "stand-ups" to keep members engaged and working cohesively.
- Set challenging business acumen goals for each team member, and a goal for each to increase the business content they contribute by at least 30%.
- At the beginning of the year, the team was considered tactical by senior leadership and some business partners. Now, the team is viewed as integral to HCSC's business progress.

Samples of ongoing measurement:

- Ninety-six percent of employees open the publication every edition. Roughly 75% (month-over-month average) read some or all content. To date, the year-over-year, business content increase is 69% (far exceeding its goal).
- In survey feedback, employees report convincingly that they like reading more business content, presented in an engaging way. Sixty percent report understanding the business direction better than they did one year ago.
- More than 80% of employees read all targeted messages from senior leadership.

## She took the lead on health and safety protocols—and also crisis communications



*Lisa Miles had to fight false information about her firm's safety efforts. She also helped the company grow during the pandemic, earning her honors in the 'Leader' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Throughout her 18-year tenure at Maximus, Lisa Miles has played a pivotal role in the company's success and growth. Last year was unlike any other, and Miles has been crucial to ensuring that Maximus remained strong throughout.

She took the lead on ensuring the health and safety protocols and procedures were broadly communicated to every single employee. She also handled nearly constant crisis communications, a task which was exacerbated by groups spreading false information about the company's approach to keeping employees safe.

Miles's prior investment and efforts in building its brand and market position allowed Maximus to be seen as the leading provider to government, leading to market expansion and the company's entry into work with government agencies that it hadn't previously been able to secure.

During all of this, Miles's top priority remained ensuring that her 30-plus staff were successful in supporting company communications. One of her greatest accomplishments was achieving the department's goals by using her own communication skills to develop collaborative relationships with Maximus team members. This enabled her and the team to be successful in helping the company through a very challenging year.

## Health care leader has launched winning brands while supporting women in the medtech field



*Nicole Osmer's firm has won accolades for its growth and culture. Now Osmer has earned honors in the 'Leader' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Since building Health+Commerce, her public relations and communications agency, from the ground up in 2017, Nicole Osmer has continued to grow and develop her business. The company is now a leading communications partner for today's brightest innovators who are revolutionizing health care and improving patients' lives around the world.

Over the years, Osmer has helped launch some of health care's leading brands, including Auris Health, Ardian, Endpoint and Imperative Care. In addition to helping her clients achieve growth and success, Osmer has led her company with excellence, as evidenced by recent accolades it has received for its fast growth and strong culture.

Osmer is a founding member of MedtechWomen, a nonprofit organization dedicated to highlighting women leaders in the medical technology industry. Her team also provides pro bono and in-kind support to MedTech Color, an organization dedicated to advancing the representation of people of color in the medtech industry, and Medtech Innovator, a nonprofit global competition and accelerator for companies that are transforming the health care system.

Osmer has played an integral part in growing her 25-member team, seeking out professionals with diverse experience from a variety of health care sectors, including medical devices, biotech, health care systems, and health tech.



## PR pros leads with empathy and charisma



*Christa Segalini rose to the pandemic's challenges, addressing issues vital to employees and her firm's real estate clients. Her efforts have earned honors in the 'Leader' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Christa Segalini has spent more than 13 years advancing the real estate industry through marketing innovation at Antenna Group, an integrated marketing, public relations and digital agency. Over the course of her career, Segalini has:

- More than doubled Antenna's real estate practice.
- Launched the industry's first dedicated "proptech" PR/marketing practice.
- Led Antenna to become a founding member and the official PR partner for Women in Proptech—a networking and professional development organization dedicated to supporting diversity in the proptech sector.

Segalini understood the responsibility to address the issues created by the pandemic—many of which didn't directly pertain to the company's work—and rose to the challenge with empathy and charisma. For Antenna employees, this included introducing weekly all-staff company calls as well as weekly practice-specific meetings with employees to keep staff feeling connected and informed.

On the client side, Segalini took a proactive approach to real estate's looming challenges early. Understanding that multifamily property owners and landlords needed prompt messaging about safety guidelines, rent payments and in-person work protocols, Segalini and her team created messaging frameworks that kept clients ahead of the curve.

The impact of these efforts on Antenna's morale and overall business performance was significant. With Segalini guiding the team throughout the crisis, Antenna was fortunate enough to avoid both client and staff attrition (as well as staff cuts) and the agency revenues are now at an all-time high.



# Congratulations to Christa Segalini and Sharon Golubchik on being named amongst Ragan's Top Women in Communications



**Christa Segalini**

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT | SPACES



**Sharon Golubchik**

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT | HEALTH

We cannot imagine Antenna without you both and feel grateful for the invaluable insights we've gained while witnessing you grow our Real Estate and Health practices, respectively.

## People-first culture leads to agency growth



*Katie Huang Shin aimed to boost employee engagement and expand business with clients. Her efforts have earned honors in the 'Leader' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Katie Huang Shin joined AxiCom US as president in April during California's shelter-in-place order. She oversees the agency's strategy and operations across North America and is committed to delivering high-impact business results to clients from teams and individuals performing at their best.

To remedy a lack of employee engagement and declining growth, Shin began creating a people-first culture. Working with her newly established leadership team, she formalized annual reviews, set criteria for career development and advancement and created AxiCom's first Axi-Academy, a learning and development program with a fully developed curriculum. To date, more than 90% of AxiCom's staff have attended Axi-Academy's virtual learning sessions.

Shin initiated weekly Friday emails that provide business updates as well as amusing anecdotes. She leads quarterly "Ask me anything" sessions that are held by level, and she has an open-door policy that enables employees to meet with her any time.

Sensing that employees needed something more, particularly during this pandemic period, she also began an informal "random acts of kindness" program to send care packages and notes to let colleagues know she is thinking of them.

Shin's clients appreciate her confident leadership, partnership, astute counsel and dedication to their businesses. As a result, the agency's North American offices and businesses are 67% ahead of the year's new business forecast and have added new clients from fintech unicorn startups to leading technology companies.

## 'Dragon slayer' leads company into the future



*Sharon Tallach Vogelpohl embraces technology, mentorship, and diversity in her career. That's earned her honors in the 'Leader' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Sharon Tallach Vogelpohl joined Mangan Holcomb Partners as an intern in 1994. Ten years later, she was named the first female partner at age 30. Foreseeing the digital future, she forged a partnership with Team SI, a two-person data-driven marketing firm, to form MHP/Team Si. In the last 12 months, Vogelpohl had the foresight to lead the companies into going fully remote at the cusp of the pandemic before any other businesses in the region did so.

With her commitment to investing in cutting-edge technology—like the launch of a new intranet system—this led to a successful transition to a remote workplace and enabled the companies to see exponential growth despite the challenges that the industry faces due to the pandemic.

Vogelpohl has also pioneered mentorship and gender equity efforts at the agency throughout her career, and most recently supported the creation of the agency's first diversity & inclusion committee in 2020. Additionally, her commitment to empowering women has led to a longtime partnership with the Women's Foundation of Arkansas (WFA). Vogelpohl is known as a "dragon slayer" because she has the unique ability to see opportunity and capitalize on it, creating good for her companies, her team members and the community.



## New leader takes global PR and comms team to new heights



*Samantha Stark took the reins at 160over90's team and focused on culture, people and passion, leading to honors in the 'Leader' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Samantha Stark, brought on to lead 160over90's global PR and communications team in 2019, has a vision for the future of marketing which puts culture, people and passions at the center of marketing pursuits in a channel-agnostic way.

Upon joining 160over90, Stark quickly executed a transformation strategy for the PR and communications team. She reorganized the account structures to align team members to their passions, trained the teams on new standards of account service, increased transparency and internal communications, and created Centers of Excellence to ensure professional development.

During COVID-19, Stark gave her teams autonomy to launch brand actions to garner significant press during trying conditions. Efforts included a daily virtual birthday party with Main Event Entertainment for kids across the country, phone calls from football stars to Lowe's associates providing essential services, a TikTok challenge saluting the class of 2020 for T-Mobile and more.

At the onset of the racial justice movement, Stark helped create 160/90's Racial Justice Task Force, focused on evolving the agency through awareness, engagement and activism. She is co-chair of the D&I Working Group focused on recruitment and is on the executive board of the Women of Endeavor, the company's largest employee resource group.

Stark has helped to reimagine the company's creative, strategic planning, financial and new business processes. New communications work over the past 12 months includes Capital One, Coca-Cola, Lowe's and Audi.

**PERSEVERANCE**

**OVER LUCK.**

**RELATIONSHIPS**

**OVER TRANSACTIONS.**

**PASSION**

**OVER EVERYTHING.**



## **SAM STARK**

**AN INSPIRATION TO OUR  
EMPLOYEES ACROSS THE  
GLOBE**

160over90 celebrates Sam Stark on this honor from Ragan, and thanks the selection committee for this recognition. 160over90 is a full-service cultural marketing agency and Sam's leadership pushes the cultural conversation forward every day.



## Communicator leads the pivot to help save lives around the globe



*Amy Wakeham spearheaded her company's response to the pandemic in 140 countries. She's earned honors in the 'Leader' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

ResMed, a global leader in digital health and connected devices—including ventilators—was crucial in the global COVID-19 response, and Amy Wakeham's communication leadership was essential in explaining to investors, customers, employees and other stakeholders why and how ResMed was pivoting its global business to help save lives.

Immediately, Wakeham developed and deployed a global crisis communications program to inform, educate and instill confidence in these vital steps to external and internal stakeholders in 140 countries, while protecting the company's brand in an uncertain environment.

Wakeham and her team also established an agile and proactive media response and management effort, handling nearly 200 media inquiries and interviews in just over two months, including 70 executive interviews, resulting in 110+ features or prominent mentions in top-tier media outlets worldwide, including The Wall Street Journal, BBC, EuroNews, Australian Financial Review, etc.

Through her thoughtful leadership, Wakeham ensured that ResMed's empathy, strategy and guiding principles—preservation of life and employee safety—were infused in all messaging around device production. And she led the communication around ResMed's role helping clinicians provide quality remote care throughout the pandemic.

Wakeham is an empathetic leader who works diligently every day mentoring her team, advising ResMed executives and communicating with investors, while focusing on ResMed's mission to help millions of people breathe and live better lives.

## MENTORS

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### With great experience comes great responsibility for PR CEO



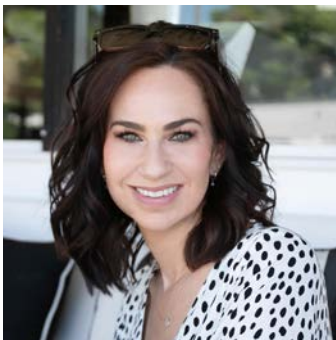
*Victoria Usher's mentorship has helped grow her business in the face of the pandemic. It's also earned her honors in the 'Mentor' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

With the firm belief that experience brings the responsibility of sharing knowledge, Victoria Usher, CEO and founder of GingerMay, invests 10% of her time in mentoring current and future industry leaders. As a mentor in the London Mayor's International Business Programme, London & Partners, Usher regularly counsels upcoming, fast-growth businesses on all topics, including business management, marketing and PR. This year, she supported a number of London & Partners' businesses throughout the COVID-19 lockdown, presenting guidance to companies on how to adapt during economic downturns in a seminar entitled "PR Through a Crisis & Beyond."

Usher regularly contributes to its global community, joining the Women in Tech Forum's first virtual conference in April 2020 to advise businesses on how to leverage PR for global growth.

Usher's dedication to mentoring industry leaders has furthered the acceleration of her own consultancy as well. Following the onset of the pandemic, GingerMay lost 45% of its business, but has since rebounded to operate at 97% capacity by Q4 2020. With 100% of referrals being word-of-mouth, Usher's influence on the communications and technology sectors has ensured the mutual success of both her own business and those she counsels.

## PR founder shares expertise and mentorship with the greater community



*Jen Berson offers free training resources and a road map to success for PR pros. That's earned her honors in the 'Mentor' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

After several years as a civil litigation attorney, Jen Berson founded Jeneration PR in 2005 to establish a business and career that would be personally fulfilling, create financial stability and allow her to be present with her family. Today, she's helping thousands of PR professionals do exactly the same.

Berson runs a free industry group called Profitable PR Pros, which has grown to nearly 2,300 in the past year. She shares her own expertise and mentorship while providing a hub for valuable discussion, resource sharing, peer support and collaboration.

At the onset of COVID-19, Berson saw an immediate need for leadership and a game plan. Within days, she shared an entire hub of high-quality free training resources to help PR professionals navigate the uncertainties ahead. Relying on an extensive network of experts, she provided in-depth training from a crisis communications expert who offered a step-by-step strategy on how to navigate and lead clients through the crisis, as well as an opportunity to collaborate and ask questions.

The most valuable service Berson offers in her own agency is helping others secure amazing results from pitching the media, giving them a path to become sought-after, well-paid experts, too. She provides an A-Z roadmap for offering media relations as a service, monthly execution guides with timely and relevant pitch ideas that simplify the process, and master classes for her members to constantly improve their skills.

## Strong science background reinforces chief strategist's thought leadership role



*Sharon Correia has guided multiple initiatives earning impressive media results. She's also earned honors in the 'Mentor' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

As chief strategy officer at LaVoieHealthScience (LHS), Sharon Correia is a valuable source of guidance and inspiration to staff and her emerging health care clients. With her strong science background, her training in regulatory compliance and her passion for helping companies communicate as they develop treatments to help patients, Correia consistently shares her creativity and new ideas to build recognition and influence for clients through earned media opportunities, thought leadership, conference planning and proactive story development via traditional and social media with staff.

In June 2020, Correia worked with her staff to execute a media relations plan for AsclepiX Therapeutics' corporate launch and \$35M Series A financing. Under her leadership, LHS' efforts resulted in 19 earned media placements with a potential reach of 2.7M+ unique visitors.

Correia also worked with staff to advise on the multinational launch of LianBio, the first company launched by the Perceptive Xontogeny Venture Fund, which resulted in 25 earned pieces of media coverage and placements in publications including Business Insider, STAT News, Endpoints News and BioPharma DIVE.

Correia guides media-focused employees on how to develop pitches that resonate and identify key media to targets for those pitches. Being a thought leader herself, she shares her knowledge with other employees, helping them understand how to position their clients as go-to industry experts through proactive outreach of both media and conference participation opportunities.

## Gerri Johnson embraces individualism



*The senior VP, Innovation at Next PR (formerly SSPR), Johnson seeks to instill confidence in the people around her. Her work has earned her honors in the 'Mentor' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

As a Black, Buddhist, lesbian tech executive with 25+ years in enterprise change management, Gerri Johnson knows what it's like to walk into a room and feel like, "the only one." The Senior Vice President of Innovation at Next PR (formerly SSPR), Johnson embraces her individualism, inspiring those around her in similar situations to celebrate their differences and bring their authentic selves to work and life.

When the Black Lives Matter movement (BLM) became more prominent, Johnson's 2020 staff development calendar already included speakers and programs in diversity, implicit bias, LGBTQ+, ability bias and microaggression awareness. She kicked off a "Courageous Conversations" program, posting 2-3-minute topical videos on the agency's internal communication feed and hosting candid discussions around serious issues.

Johnson knows how to instill confidence that inspires the entire team to be bold. Through her focused one-on-one conversations, incentive programs for embodying agency principles and transparent communication, she's an engaged leader who invests heavily in building the individual, not just the agency.

"My role is to keep us all kicking ass and doing great work," Johnson says. "When that happens, it creates a snowball effect. We're happy, our clients are happy, and that's apparent in the awards and accolades we've brought home over the last year."

## This PR pro is dedicated to mentoring as many college students as possible



*Jenna Oltersdorf's 'PR Finishing School' allows students to gain experience during the pandemic. Her commitment has earned Oltersdorf honors in the 'Mentor' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Jenna Oltersdorf is the mastermind behind Snackbox, a creative PR laboratory based in Austin, Texas that combines design thinking and the art of storytelling. With her vision of escaping the big agency way of doing things, she has been able to mentor many PR professionals and students since founding the company in 2006.

With the development of a PR apprenticeship program, Oltersdorf offers her expertise to college students in the form of a two-part internship designed to challenge and teach college students the real-world, hands-on version of public relations.

In light of the pandemic, Oltersdorf was faced with the challenge of reimagining Snackbox's mentorship program. This led her to develop and launch a unique virtual mentorship program called "PR Finishing School" that would allow college seniors who were missing out on "real world" opportunities the same educational experience.

The 13-week course takes students through a range of lesson plans, touching on every aspect of a career in PR. Areas of focus include media relations, crisis management, media training, content creation, social media and research and analytics.

Oltersdorf is committed to being a strong mentor for these students. She believes that being able to pass down what she's learned throughout her own career will give these students an incredible advantage entering the job market, and she is dedicated to mentoring as many college seniors as possible.



## Not just robots: Julie Shafiki promotes women in the male-dominated tech industry



*The chief marketing officer of Kryon Systems LTD vowed to bring more diversity to the company and industry. Her efforts have earned honors in the 'Mentor' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Julie Shafiki is the chief marketing officer of Kryon, an innovator in the robotic process automation industry. Throughout her career, Shafiki often found that she was one of only a few women seated at the table in strategic meetings with senior management.

When she joined Kryon, Shafiki vowed to bring in more diversity to the company. Over the past year, she strategically built out an all-female marketing team that has been shaping Kryon's brand image and helping build the customer pipeline growth at Kryon.

Shafiki noticed a growing number of women entering the RPA (robotic process automation) industry, leading digital transformation and automation initiatives. A member of her marketing team came to her with an idea to highlight these women.

As a result, Kryon kicked off the Kryon Women in RPA initiative in March 2020 to coincide with Women's History Month and International Women's Day. The campaign included a series of Q&A profiles highlighting female RPA developers. Shafiki was the first woman profiled on the Kryon corporate blog, sharing her experience as a tech marketer coming into the RPA field. Soon after her story was published, more women stepped forward to share.

In addition to supporting her team at Kryon, Julie also mentors women who are looking to advance their careers or make a career change to marketing.

# BE YOUR FUTURE



**Kryon congratulates its Chief Marketing Officer, Julie Shafiki,** for being recognized as one of the Top Women in Communications 2021. This award highlights the amazing mentorship you provide your team and your leadership in spotlighting women's contributions to the tech space.

**KRYON™**

## TRAILBLAZERS

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### Tonya Chin kept the emphasis positive during the pandemic



*Chin focused on empathy and morale, and also managed a first-ever virtual earnings call. It's earned her honors in the 'Trailblazer' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Over the past year, Tonya Chin, SVP, corporate marketing, IR and chief communications officer for Nutanix, has not only played a crucial role in thinking about how the pandemic has altered all forms of communication, but also foresaw the importance of paving new pathways for the organization to make it stronger prior to COVID-19.

When COVID-19 hit, Chin began implementing better remote collaboration and processes across teams through fresh avenues. A few highlights include:

- Keeping empathy at the forefront. Chin emphasized that empathy must come from the top. She worked with Nutanix's CEO to send out communication explaining why Nutanix was operating differently during this pandemic and the importance of compassion.
- Placing emphasis on the good. Chin kept a focus on the positive to boost employee morale, including building out an entire segment of SGN (Some Good News) for employees to maintain a confident focus. This also included highlighting customers doing good work (i.e. a brewery that pivoted its business to make hand sanitizer) across meetings, the Nutanix Intranet and Slack channels daily.
- Shifting earnings to virtual. Preparing and executing earnings virtually for the first time in May 2020 added an entirely new dimension to the process. While in-person meetings used to be a must for earnings calls, Chin embraced flexibility to communicate clearly with employees, customers and investors, and ensure business continuity. She also had to nail day-of execution and set a new press approach while remaining logistically nimble.

Chin's communications team and Nutanix as an organization are stronger as a result of her forward-thinking mindset to position the company as an innovator during one of the most challenging years.



## Maura FitzGerald strives to get the culture just right



*A career in journalism and PR fed her success at founding a boutique agency that champions work/life balance, diversity and mentoring. It's won her honors in the 'Trailblazer' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Over her career, Maura FitzGerald has strived to empower PR professionals to redefine what's possible in the industry, and is committed to achieving unmatched results for clients.

FitzGerald started her career as a journalist, having her work published in the Miami Herald, Miami Magazine, the Boston Globe and more. Advancing into the world of communications, she became the first woman VP of Cunningham Communications, and then founded FitzGerald Communications in 1987. It transformed from a regional boutique to a national brand in less than three years and was named to the Inc. 500. After 15 years of growth and success, FitzGerald sold the company to Omnicom Group Inc.

In 2008 FitzGerald and partner Jean Serra founded V2 Communications, a boutique PR and digital communications agency focused on disruptive brands. At both V2 and FitzGerald Communications, getting the internal culture just right has been integral for the firms' larger successes. Along with Serra and the management team, FitzGerald has created environments that epitomize work/life balance, gave back to the community and advocated for diversity and inclusion.

V2's mentorship program—in which members of the leadership team are paired with neophytes—is a cornerstone of the agency's model. And FitzGerald's commitment to building an enduring and empowering corporate culture hasn't gone unnoticed—V2 has won numerous awards in recognition of its culture.

## PR pro finds success striking out on her own



*Alyssa Garnick founded Agean Public Relations after 25 years in the PR business, and found big opportunities during 2020. She's earned honors in the 'Trailblazer' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

After 25 years at large agencies, Alyssa Garnick decided it was time to turn her expertise and work ethic into a business shaped for a specific need in the marketplace. To ensure a successful and sustainable new agency launch, Garnick spent nights and weekends working on three initiatives: naming and positioning the agency and its offering, getting new clients and lining up agency partners and staff to scale quickly.

In September Garnick launched Agean Public Relations. She specializes in high-stakes assignments for the most high-profile brands, and 2020 produced unique opportunities.

Her first project under the banner of Agean was for Ryan Serhant. The most-followed real estate broker in the world was starting a new real estate brokerage. Garnick landed both Ryan and the new company, SERHANT., as clients as part of her launch plan for Agean.

She worked with Serhant and the SERHANT. team on a brand-building PR plan and press strategy for launch, which resulted in a two-page feature in The Wall Street Journal, among many other articles and TV interviews featuring the new, modern brokerage and introducing Serhant as a CEO and business leader.

Garnick has distinguished herself by creating a vision for some of the most high-profile brand launches of the year, spanning big agency leadership and PR industry leadership by launching her own agency, and creating a business in a pandemic with three clients at its start.

## CEO of Colombia's first PR agency is an agent of change



*Fabiola Morera's firm works for cultural transformation and social cohesion. Her work has earned honors in the 'Trailblazer' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Fabiola Morera started her career in communications as a young intern at an advertising firm, then became a successful journalist, columnist and correspondent, and finally a PR practitioner breaking new ground. In 1981 she created Fabiola Morera Comunicaciones, the first PR agency in her home country of Colombia.

The firm became an active agent of change, promoting optimism, creating opportunities and generating positive messaging for multinationals, local companies, business associations, governments and NGOs.

Ten years ago, the agency undertook an organizational transformation which led to an award-winning leapfrog advancement in innovation. Morera developed a purpose-driven service in communications for behavioral impact, cultural transformation and social cohesion. Her work has substantially contributed to creating social and economic inclusion opportunities for vulnerable populations, ethnic communities, women's empowerment and more.

Morera's positive messaging approach in Colombia influenced media studies, reputation strategies and PR narratives all over the country and beyond its clients lists.

With her positive and resilient mindset and relevant experience in digital communications, Morera created a custom rapid-response strategy for each of her clients. She also served as PR strategist for Covid Hospital, promoted 50+ digital events in the cultural, fashion, logistics, vehicle and banking industries, and now is helping restore trust in tourism and personal trade, advising airlines and trade shows to reopen operations.



## Cheryl Gilberg kept communications flowing during the pandemic



*The comms veteran employed multiple channels, including signage and livestreams, to keep audiences informed during COVID-19. It's earned her honors in the 'Trailblazer' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

In many ways, Cheryl Gilberg, chief communications and marketing officer at Mizuho Americas, was uniquely prepared to lead through the disruptive change of 2020.

Gilberg joined Mizuho at the end of 2015 with a mandate to transform the department in support of a company in transition. She instituted a brand strategy in 2016 that strengthened the corporate image and established a model to raise awareness for its growing presence in the Americas region.

As Mizuho Americas entered 2020, it was primed to realize further synergies when the virus sent 98% of staff remote. The company needed a massive and urgent internal communications response to help keep the firm connected, supported and productive. Gilberg used the tools and talent she'd amassed over the previous years to lead a comprehensive, multimedia staff engagement campaign.

Gilberg's team opened multiple channels of communication for employees, producing bulletins, brochures, informational videos, on-site signage, an intranet-based COVID-19 dashboard and client-facing material. She created and moderated Office Hours, a weekly livestream program hosted by the firm's two chief executives that featured company updates, guest speakers and employee Q&A. The program, which recently moved to a monthly schedule, remains hugely popular with employees.

The firm's popular livestream Speaker Series chats, often sponsored by the company's employee resource groups, also bore Gilberg' imprint. She co-founded the firm's first such group, M-WIN (Women's Network), and helped launch the PRIDE and MADE (African Descent) Networks.



## Mizuho Americas Congratulates Cheryl Gilberg

At Mizuho, we're committed to developing and supporting a diverse team of professionals whose fresh perspectives foster creativity and drive excellence.

We congratulate **Cheryl Gilberg**, Chief Communications & Marketing Officer, on being named to Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications. She is a true *trailblazer* whose innovative stewardship of our brand has helped shape our culture and create our distinctive presence in the marketplace.



**MIZUHO**

[mizuhoamericas.com](https://www.mizuhoamericas.com)

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## Shira Miller shares personal struggles, lifts others up from theirs



*Comms officer for Dunkin' has done TED talks about business failure and a podcast for employees. She's earned honors in the 'Trailblazer' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

As chief communications officer of National DCP, the \$2 billion supply chain management company serving the franchisees of Dunkin', Shira Miller oversees all aspects of NDCP's brand reputation, corporate communications and public relations. She has modeled authentic leadership in her professional and personal life for more than 30 years.

Miller openly shared her struggles with a business failure and Crohn's Disease in her "5 Ways to Let Go of a Dream" talk at TEDxBoggyCreek in Orlando, Fla., in September 2019. Recognizing that many women have sabotaged themselves professionally or personally by apologizing for no reason, she discussed ways to break that bad habit in her "Stop the Apology Speak" talk at TEDxBay-RidgeWomen in Brooklyn, New York in December 2019.

Between the pandemic, economic turmoil, violence related to systemic racism, civil unrest and political divisiveness at an all-time high, more individuals feel overwhelmed and stressed worldwide than ever before. But instead of slowing Miller down, these fueled her passion to lift others up.

Miller launched and co-hosts a podcast for employees called "Driving What Matters" that openly discusses subjects like avoiding burnout, COVID-19-related challenges and feeling optimistic when times are hard. She is currently working on a book project called *DISLODGED: Get Unstuck, Master Self-Doubt and Thrive in our Post-Pandemic World* which will be published in 2021.





# Congratulations, **SHIRA MILLER**

**Trailblazer Honoree**  
in Ragan's Top Women in  
Communications Awards,  
Class of 2021



**Shira Miller is the Chief Communications Officer of National DCP,** the \$2 billion supply chain management company serving the franchisees of Dunkin'. A two-time TEDx speaker, Certified Executive Coach and author of the upcoming book *Dislodged: Get Unstuck, Master Self-Doubt and Thrive in our Post-Pandemic World*. Shira has role modeled authentic leadership in her professional and personal life for more than 30 years.

Actively promoting well-being, vulnerability and authenticity in the workplace, Shira believes that being transparent about overcoming challenges and blending a corporate career with a purpose-driven life offers hope and practical steps for others facing similar obstacles.

[www.nationaldcp.com](http://www.nationaldcp.com)

## Amanda Phraner amplifies the voices of those suffering from rare diseases



*Her campaigns for Horizon Therapeutics have made a lasting impact on patient communities. She's earned honors in the 'Trailblazer' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

For Amanda Phraner, working in health care communications means more than creating communications campaigns for an audience. She puts the patient at the center of her work as she maximizes campaigns that help make a lasting impact on the patient communities she serves.

As the director of public relations and social media on the brand communications team at Horizon Therapeutics, Phraner has led campaigns that amplify the voices of the rare disease community and has been integral in moving the needle in digital health. In late 2019, Phraner launched the Gout Revealed campaign to elevate the experiences of those living with uncontrolled gout—a rare disease where gout sufferers don't respond to multiple therapies—and shape the dialogue about the disease's impact. The campaign, which expanded to Facebook, has seen over 250,000 engagements and is one of the only Facebook pages available to patients living with uncontrolled gout.

Phraner is also an active part of the digital health community, speaking for Digital Pharma West and East, as well as helping shape programming as a part of the planning committees for these conferences. In addition, for the past three years, she has co-hosted Digital Innovation Day, driving conversation around leading technologies and their implications for the industry.

## Cancer diagnosis doesn't slow down this PR pro



*KayAnn Schoeneman survived colon cancer and went on to lead COVID and diversity initiatives for a boutique PR agency. She's earned honors in the 'Trailblazer' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

A stage three colon cancer survivor, KayAnn Schoeneman fought through multiple surgeries and debilitating chemotherapy without skipping a beat in running a large PR agency's public affairs practice and shepherding its D.C. office.

Since the pandemic began, colorectal cancer screenings dropped 90% and diagnoses fell 32%—putting 18,000 people at risk for delayed/missed diagnoses and leading to additional deaths from this preventable disease. Schoeneman is helping the Colorectal Cancer Alliance raise awareness about not delaying life-saving cancer screening/treatment—even during a pandemic.

In January 2020, Curley Company brought Schoeneman on to bolster the boutique agency's public affairs and corporate communications practice areas. Schoeneman helped lead diversification of the firm's client base, accounting for nearly 50% of the firm's total new business growth for 2020 (nearly 30% overall revenue).

Schoeneman worked with the CEO to evolve Curley's HR programs—crucial when dealing with issues surrounding COVID-19, working from home, the emotional dialogue on systemic racism and election year anxiety. She helped lead rapid implementation of a new pay equity policy.

Schoeneman was also instrumental in Curley's new Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Task Force, training staff and developing/implementing a long-term plan to support inclusivity. She holds weekly "office hours," a safe environment where staff can have tough conversations about politics, race and gender.



## Leslie Tullio rebuilds a top law firm's brand identity



*She saw an opportunity to shift McDermott Will & Emery's strategy and make it stand out. Her efforts have earned honors in the 'Trailblazer' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

When she started at McDermott Will & Emery in 2017, Leslie Tullio recognized the firm's unique specialties and culture, and saw an opportunity to break away from the pack. Since then, not only has she rebuilt the firm's brand strategy and identity, she has also rebuilt the marketing and communications team to be a recognized team of innovators.

Since November 2019 alone, Tullio has:

- Refocused the internal communications function to build stronger internal connection to the brand.
- Introduced the firm's first-ever employment branding strategy and messaging.
- Ran the first-ever brand awareness advertising campaign (complete with industry-differentiated imagery and copy), which outperformed outlet benchmarks.
- Rebuilt the PR team and doubled media coverage year-on-year.
- Deployed best-in-class marketing automation software to enhance innovative demand-generation strategies.
- Pivoted strategy when COVID hit, creating an industry-leading resource center overnight and leading the firm's team to generate more thought leadership and internal communications than ever before, and in new ways (client video series, podcasts, webinars).

Clients, the market and McDermott's people have responded favorably to the changes. In the last year, prospective clients demonstrated 95.6% awareness of the firm's brand just one year after launch. The new website, where traffic has significantly outperformed 2019 benchmarks, topped Content Pilot's 2020 list of the best websites of the AmLaw 50. And hundreds of McDermott lawyers have been recognized for their expertise and thought leadership by industry publications.

## Tiph Turpin shines a spotlight on her employer's racial issues



*She convened a discussion between Black associates and corporate leaders, leading to a shift in perspective toward long-term change. It's earned her honors in the 'Trailblazer' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

During a year marked by a pandemic, increased racial tensions and economic instability, Dr. Tiph Turpin has been a behind-the-scenes changemaker helping Mars, Inc. navigate the complexity and conquer unprecedented challenges.

In her five years as a member of the Mars family, she has earned a stellar reputation as a trusted advisor to senior leaders. Her recent actions have made an impact through three key initiatives:

- Navigated the restructuring of the global services support segment.
- Steered the critical evolution of a billion-dollar global food brand.
- Spearheaded a necessary shift in company culture toward a more inclusive workplace.

As corporate America tried to find its role in the fight for racial justice, Turpin stepped up and played a crucial role that tested the Mars Purpose—"The world we want tomorrow starts with how we do business today."

Turpin convened the first-ever discussion on this topic among Black associates and leadership, providing a safe forum to share experiences, which led to a perceptible shift in leaders championing diverse voices and taking meaningful action toward achieving long-term change. Additionally, she challenged leaders to look extensively into the problematic history behind the name of a top-performing product, ultimately steering the evolution and narrative of a major brand.

## Marketing powerhouse also mentors the next generation of female leaders



*Jeannie Walden made DailyPay the gold standard in the on-demand pay industry. She's earned honors in the 'Trailblazer' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Jeannie Walden of DailyPay has been disrupting the HR technology space and payroll industry since 2017, when she was the CMO at Mercer. Her forward-thinking, dynamic leadership and innovative marketing campaigns have played a crucial role in molding DailyPay to be the gold standard on-demand pay ecosystem.

Walden devised and executed a multifaceted PR campaign and marketing drive around the message of hope and reconstruction through technological innovation and a dynamic change in the pay experience. She built this narrative through powerful storytelling and strategically-timed announcements focusing on research and data that reaffirm Americans' right to on-demand pay.

Walden's efforts have helped drive DailyPay's revenue up +300% during her tenure while helping to secure partnerships with 80% of the Fortune 100 companies that offer an on-demand pay benefit. Her strategic communication plan increased DailyPay's press coverage by over 175% in one year and has positioned DailyPay to be the on-demand pay industry's leading voice on business trends. DailyPay has been featured in notable media brands from The New York Times, Forbes, Business Insider and many more.

Aside from being a marketing powerhouse, Walden takes pride in inspiring and mentoring the next generation of female fintech and business leaders. She is heavily involved in fostering an inclusive, diverse culture and is an active member of DailyWomen, a DailyPay Employee Resource Group for women.

## Influencer marketing expert connects with brands



*Danielle Wiley's The Sway network engages with more than 25,000 creators. It's one reason she's earned honors in the 'Trailblazer' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

With nearly 25 years of industry experience, Danielle Wiley is widely recognized as a pioneer in influencer marketing, having previously led social strategy for Edelman's Chicago-based digital group, designing social campaigns for household-name brands.

Since 2011, when she founded Sway Group as a way to professionalize, streamline and scale the way influencers connect with brands, Wiley set her own course for innovation and growth. Today, Sway Group is a full-scale/full-service influencer marketing agency powered by The Sway, a highly engaged network comprised of more than 25,000 creators focused on such key verticals as parenting, food, beauty and CPG.

Wiley has become a strong voice for brand activism through influencer outreach, helping her clients tap the trust and credibility created by her industry to share corporate initiatives designed to serve social, environmental and political issues. She hosts an informative webinar series to share perspectives with clients and colleagues on current marketing challenges and opportunities.

Through such efforts, as well as her own Forbes column, Wiley has urged brands to create meaningful change. Recently named among the 2020 Influencer Top 50 by Talking Influence, Wiley is a frequent speaker on the art and science of influencer marketing at notable conferences such as the Association of National Advertisers and the American Marketing Association.

## VISIONARIES

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### Elizabeth Edwards launches new, science-based approach to comms



*The PR pro has traveled the globe sharing lessons in how to apply behavioral science and neuroscience to communications. It's earned her honors in the 'Visionary' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

In 2020 Elizabeth Edwards of Volume PR made a bold industry move. After two decades applying neuroscience and behavioral science to professional communication, Edwards proposed the development of an entirely new communication field and launched the world's first science-directed system for creating communication with sensitivity and awareness to its non-conscious and behavioral impact: the "Neuropsychological Engagement" (NPE) method and the field of "Behavioral Communication."

Through her research and work with Fortune 500 companies, Edwards launched Engagement Science Lab in the summer of 2020 to support more communications professionals with the power of an evidence-based model, as well as to support corporate communication teams with custom non-conscious communication research labs to continue to further the field of evidence-based marketing.

In the last 12 months she has circled the globe sharing NPE at conferences and with communication professionals from Delhi to Alaska. Twice in 2020 Edwards shared the science of engagement at Ragan conferences, and in November, Edwards was one of the few communication professionals to ever speak at the Global Meeting on Neurology & Neuroscience, showing neuroscience audiences how NPE activates the mind differently than traditional communication.

## Victoria Gillespie spears advertising, website redesign and diversity



*She keeps the National Association of Realtors® focused on priorities, earning honors in the 'Visionary' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Following a two decade-year career as a banking executive and 12 years as a Realtor® in northwest Maryland, Victoria Gillespie today works tirelessly as chief marketing and communications officer for the National Association of Realtors® to communicate the Realtor® brand and the Realtor® difference to the American public.

In just over two years on the job, she has overseen development of the most successful consumer advertising campaign in NAR's history, a full redesign of the association's website and its seamless pivot to a fully virtual events operation.

Her management of NAR's "That's Who We Are" campaign has been Gillespie's most impressive and inspiring achievement. Launched in early 2019, "That's Who We Are" has registered more than 2.8 billion worldwide impressions and was employed in 2020 to help reaffirm Realtors®' commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Continuing her push to revamp NAR's creative development, Gillespie's team later launched an eight-episode television series offering viewers a more genuine and comprehensive portrayal of the American home buying process. "First-Time Buyer by the National Association of REALTORS®" was broadcast to more than 40 million households on Roku TV, a top streaming platform in the U.S.

Gillespie's team remains committed to its work positioning Realtors® as leaders on the issues of racial equality, fair housing and even on the progress toward technological innovation that will drive our field forward.



## From leading a rebrand to dealing with COVID-19, this leader kept priorities straight



*Kelly Jansen reinforced work/life balance as her organization struggled with the pandemic. Her acumen has won honors in the 'Visionary' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Behind every good story is a visionary storyteller. For Horizon Therapeutics' story, that's Kelly Jansen, senior director, corporate communications and content strategy.

Throughout 2019 and into 2020, Jansen led the corporate rebrand of Horizon, playing a key role in the development of a refreshed corporate values, vision and mission statement. Then, when COVID-19 and expanded accountabilities threatened her team's work/life balance, Jansen modeled a healthy approach by sticking to her own rule barring team members from emailing each other after hours or on weekends. Although difficult at times, the guidelines helped the team be more strategic and purposeful in setting daily priorities and allowed them vital time to recharge each day.

Jansen's visionary approach also provided thoughtful and strategic communications counsel to position Horizon's leaders to proactively respond to important issues that affected the company. She was a quick adapter, especially when virtual all-employee meetings demanded high quality and reliable communications support.

Jansen is seen as a crucial leader, resource and visionary at Horizon. Her ability to meld her expertise as a storyteller with her keen business acumen creates a unique strength for the company, which will reap the benefits of her contributions for years to come.

## V2's vision empowered both its team and its clients



*Jean Serra sought to disrupt her clients' industries and redefine what an agency can do. She's taken honors in the 'Visionary' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

When Jean Serra co-founded V2 Communications 14 years ago, she had a vision of creating a PR agency that not only disrupted the industries of the B2B clients she would be working with, but also empowered its team of communications pros to redefine what an agency was capable of.

Serra's team sprang into action when global events (COVID-19, racial injustice, politics, etc.) broke, proactively communicating with clients about how these issues would affect their businesses.

Serra rallied the senior leadership team to develop a suite of agency offerings that enabled clients to meet their evolving communications goals in new ways. This suite included a podcast service for clients who needed a new vehicle for connecting with prospects and sharing their stories when traditional outlets were overwhelmed with coronavirus news.

To supplement this guidance, Serra collaborated with her team to publish V2's Media Landscape Report, a resource to PR professionals and clients alike. The report has received hundreds of downloads and has since published a second edition to capture how rapidly media changed in a matter of months.

In 2020, V2 has added 12 new clients—expanding its health tech practice further since the coronavirus outbreak—increased revenue by 13%, and was named to Forbes' list of America's Best PR Agencies. Internally, V2 has grown its staff by 11% and been named to Boston Business Journal's Largest Public Relations Firms in Massachusetts list.

## Sharon Wechsler brings a wealth of experience to Honeywell



*The marketing communications pro has earned awards and increased her company's credibility in the market. She's also earned honors in the 'Visionary' category of Ragan's 2021 Top Women in Communications Awards.*

Sharon Wechsler is a marketing communications professional at Honeywell, with strengths in international cross-functional team leadership, program management and new product and service introduction. She has experience developing collaborative relationships, marketing communication strategies, and processing change.

Wechsler has experience across various industries, including environmental investigation and remediation, oil and gas, aerospace, archaeology and more. Her most defining strength is her ability to collaborate with experts to tell the compelling stories that explain the importance and benefits of highly technical and often complicated, innovative technologies

She's earned 10 company awards within Honeywell for her work in analyzing business initiatives, launching new offerings and linking cross-business and cross-functional teams to support mutually valuable collaborations. Wechsler has also influenced five industry awards for Honeywell products in the automation control and life sciences industries.

Wechsler's efforts have increased Honeywell's credibility in the life sciences market space and resulted in achieving hundreds of marketing qualified leads. She achieved a 10:1 return on marketing investment during the first year of the Life Sciences Break-Through Initiative, with \$2.6M in marketing-tracked revenue, and managed a global budget of \$300K including digital nurturing, events, PR, paid promotion and social media.

Congratulations to Ragan's

**TOP WOMEN**  
**IN COMMUNICATIONS**

Class of 2021!



## About Us

For more than 50 years, Ragan Communications has been delivering trusted news, training and intelligence for internal and external communicators, HR professionals and business executives via its conferences, webinars, training, awards, subscriptions and membership divisions. Its daily news sites—[PRDaily.com](http://PRDaily.com) and [Ragan.com](http://Ragan.com)—are read by more than 600,000 internal and external communicators monthly. Its Communications Leadership Council is one of the fastest-growing membership groups for communications executives.

## Ragan Products:



Through our world-renowned newsletters, conferences, research reports and guides, [Ragan Communications, Inc.](http://Ragan Communications, Inc.), delivers practical advice, real-world solutions and field-tested strategies for today's corporate communicator.

## PR Daily

[PR Daily](http://PR Daily) is the preeminent brand for public relations professionals, delivering news, advice, opinions and benchmarking via [PRDaily.com](http://PRDaily.com), awards, conferences, newsletters and more.



[Ragan's Communications Leadership Council](http://Ragan's Communications Leadership Council) is an exclusive membership organization for senior-level corporate and internal communicators. Comprised of the most innovative companies in the world, the membership provides benefits for both senior leaders and their teams, including premier networking, extensive industry training and benchmarking reports.



[Ragan Training](http://Ragan Training) is an online membership portal providing access to video training courses in communications, public relations and digital marketing. The video library provides sessions and courses covering new practices and required skill sets for various specialties—as well as panel discussions and perspectives on the changing nature of our industry.



[Workplace Wellness Insider](http://Workplace Wellness Insider) gives leaders in HR, wellness and communications the insights, ideas and strategies to align employee health and engagement with organizational goals. Through its subscription service and training programs, [Workplace Wellness Insider](http://Workplace Wellness Insider) provide managers with the tools, strategies and ideas on employees' mental, physical and financial health, social wellbeing, and work-life balance.



Ragan  
Social Media  
— COUNCIL —

[Ragan's Social Media Council](#) is an exclusive membership organization for senior-level social media leaders. The membership offers benefits for both senior leaders and their teams that are tailored to companies' social media needs, including monthly webinars, networking opportunities and in-person training.



Ragan  
Crisis  
LEADERSHIP NETWORK

[Ragan's Crisis Leadership Network](#) is the resource you need before, during and post-crisis. As a member, you have access to an online members-only portal, all-access pass to the annual Crisis Management Conference, subscription to the Crisis Communications Daily, access to research, data, case studies, checklists, tipsheets, articles and other resources, plus a peer to peer discussion board to interact with other members. You and your team will also have unlimited use of online training via webinars and virtual conferences on crisis management topics.



COMMUNICATIONS WEEK™  
A property of Ragan

[Communications Week 2021](#) is designed to celebrate and accelerate the role of the communicator. Join us the week of November 15-19 for a series of educational, networking and inspirational events hosted by Ragan and our industry partners that will shine a clarifying light on the key issues and trends for brand leaders and storytellers far and wide.



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FIRST DRAFT  
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[Ragan's Crisis Communications Briefing](#) is a weekly newsletter delivering the latest news and insights around brand crises and reputation management. Curated by Ragan editors, the Briefing provides you with a quick read on the most important crises of the week and how communicators are leading their organizations through various levels of disruption and transformation.





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