

ANNUAL BEST PRACTICES GUIDE

**More than 100
New Jersey CEOs
Reinvent Their
Businesses Due to
COVID-19**

See Page 8.



**Advances in Treating
Prostate Cancer
and Ovarian Cancer**
See Pages 62, 64.



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COMMERCE (SSN 0745-077X) is published monthly for a subscription price of \$35.00 a year by Commerce and Industry Association of New Jersey, 365 West Passaic Street, Suite 490, Rochelle Park, New Jersey 07662, (201) 368-2100, Website: www.commercemagnj.com. Postage Paid at South Hackensack, New Jersey and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to above address.



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Reinventing CIANJ Post-COVID-19

As we cross the six-month mark in this pandemic, we have embraced a new motto: "A Member Engaged Is A Member Retained."



By Anthony Russo
President, CIANJ

Like all businesses confronting the challenges of our "new normal," CIANJ is constantly adjusting and adapting. Our goal is to bring our members value and earn their support.

When the guidelines imposed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention forced us to cancel our in-person events, we quickly pivoted to virtual programs. These networking and educational forums on Zoom and other platforms provided our members with vital information and an opportunity to connect despite the shutdown. We were pleased to offer these programs free of charge to our members and will continue to do so as an example of our commitment to service.

As we cross the six-month mark in this pandemic, we have embraced a new motto: "A Member Engaged Is A Member Retained." The concept grew from the realization that we are all facing new demands on our time and it's forcing us to make choices. We have found that the members who want to connect, participate and give input

understand the value of CIANJ. They are engaged and they will work with us to keep the association strong and effective.

One of the clearest examples of our strength is the COVID-19 Resource Center on our website. In one easy-to-navigate spot, all the executive orders signed by Governor Murphy are available for review, along with links to many of our members' websites, where businesses can get advice on finances, legal affairs, best practices to reopen, sanitary standards and much more.

Information is key today. We anxiously await news about the virus' spread, therapies to combat it and the status of vaccine development, as well as how COVID-19 is affecting our economy. The business community hangs on every word about what can open, when and how. Whatever information CIANJ learns, we immediately push out to our members through e-mails and social media posts. We have also stepped up the pace of the Capitol Updates from Trenton. Anytime there's news about loan programs, developments in liability protections for employers or the possibility of federal aid, we make certain special e-mails are quickly drafted and sent to our members.

Our *COMMERCE* Magazine has also undergone a rebranding. We hope readers will be impressed with the fresh new look of the magazine, which has always been the flagship publication of

CIANJ. Every CIANJ member is guaranteed a subscription to the hard copy magazine. Now they also have access to a new digital version that is delivered to their e-mail in-boxes. A very timely and convenient feature of the digital issue is that it can be easily shared with clients and colleagues. The digital version is also available on the newly improved *COMMERCE* website. Visitors will find the simple, new format very pleasing to the eyes and easy to use.

Over the past few months, we have had cover stories on East Orange General Hospital President and CEO Paige Dworak; Bayshore Family of Companies President and CEO Valerie Montecalvo; Holy Name Medical Center President and CEO Michael Maron; and Lakeland Bank President and CEO Thomas J. Shara.

They are all CIANJ board members and their stories underscore our commitment to featuring members and New Jersey-centric stories. We believe our new focus and fresh look will expand the reach of *COMMERCE* and make it more attractive for member advertising.

CIANJ is committed to its members. We will continue to brainstorm about how that can be accomplished in our new normal. But we will not give up the hope of having live events again. We want to greet you in person, talk about business face-to-face and determine how we can help. 🍷





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THIS PLACE IS DIFFERENT

New Jersey's Top CEOs and Business Leaders Reinvented Their Firms to Better Serve Clients

COVID-19 has changed how we do business. Here's how to thrive in the new normal using technology, new paradigms and innovations.

Compiled by Miles Z. Epstein
Editor, COMMERCE

ACCOUNTING



Accounting Practice Sales

By Bradley K. Holmes, CPA,
President

Much of our business has not changed in marketing as we are most often working with e-mail, phone, Internet and mail. However, the biggest change has come from technology. We revamped our website to be more user friendly and created a portal for individual users through our CRM on the cloud. We have participated in Zoom meetings versus face-to-face and all of our staff are currently working from home. We also have taken advantage of a new VPN phone system and remote access to our server, so it feels as though we are sitting in offices next to each other.



Citrin Cooperman

By Alex Serrano, CPA
Office Managing Partner

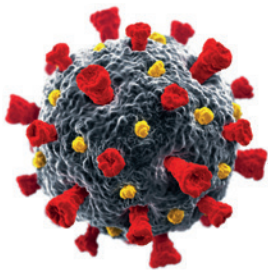
For several years, ideas like disruption, innovation and change were used to describe the business climate. While not wrong, the true meaning behind these ideas were never imagined with the urgency needed for them today. The impact of COVID-19 has hit hard, turning "business as usual" into a foreign concept as business owners were forced to rapidly evolve, transition, and reinvent themselves to ensure their survival. Being evolution ready, Citrin Cooperman was structured to adapt quickly to change. Our clients needed us more than ever, so we created the COVID-19 Response Unit (CRU)—a dedicated team of professionals and resources to address clients' critical needs and deliver timely solutions, from crisis through transition. The CRU works 24/7 to comprehend new guidance and maintains a dedicated resource portal. Additionally, we created the COVID-19 Transition Playbook with key steps and ideas for a business to survive and thrive in any outcome.



CohnReznick LLP

By Steven Schinella, CPA,
Roseland Office
Managing Partner

On March 13, CohnReznick made the decision to stop working from our offices. Within 48 hours, we were all working remotely with minimal disruption to our business and our clients. Our people have been amazingly resilient and resourceful. Our clients have had many questions about managing the impact of COVID-19 on their businesses, so staying in close contact with them has been crucial. Using videoconferencing technology like Microsoft Teams has allowed us to maintain as much face-to-face interaction as possible and continue providing world-class client service. We have also assembled a national SBA Task Force to assist our clients with filing for CARES Act loans and navigating the forgiveness component of the Paycheck Protection Program. Our advisory teams are also helping businesses manage their liquidity and access to capital through more-agile financial forecasting and modeling.



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ACCOUNTING



EisnerAmper New Jersey

By Diane Wasser, CPA,
Partner-in-Charge

In March, as the coronavirus began its ascent, EisnerAmper knew immediately that reinvention was a must and swiftly pivoted to a remote-work model. We felt it critical for our firm to take the lead in providing timely, accurate information and assist clients and our community in digesting the tremendous amount of COVID-related guidance and relief (e.g., PPP, Main Street Lending Program, etc.). Our Coronavirus Knowledge Center contains a wealth of information, including articles, blogs, webcasts, podcasts and more to provide clients actionable information to fully leverage the available stimulus programs. To help our clients with their COVID-19 recovery plans, our business advisors have developed strategies surrounding liquidity, restructuring, disruption insurance, tax issues and more. We've even developed a Workplace Distancing Solution that can generate office floorplans designed to assist companies with social distancing, scheduling and entry/exit protocols.



Friedman LLP

By C. Christopher Smith, CPA,
Partner

Our culture at Friedman has always been and continues to be very relationship driven. The pandemic has of course changed the way we communicate with our clients, but we haven't forgotten that personal touch. Our staff quickly adapted to their new environment and effortlessly transitioned to virtual meetings and connecting with clients via phone. We never lost sight of how valuable our client relationships are. We immediately reassured them that nothing changed about our client service, just our physical locations. We established the Friedman COVID-19 Resource Center, webinars and daily alerts to keep clients informed of the latest accounting and tax updates and guidance. The pandemic has taught us that it's not necessary to physically be under one roof to get the work done.



Goldstein Lieberman & Company, LLC

By Phillip E. Goldstein, CPA,
Managing Partner

While no one predicted the multitude of effects brought on by COVID-19, we were able to guide ourselves and our clients quickly, successfully and with surprising ease. How? The expertise we developed in technology over time enabled us to quickly transition to a virtual workplace. Our staff has the ability to work from home. Our client and team meetings are conducted online through Zoom and other technology. Thanks to our ability to harness the power of technology, many of our clients quickly cut through the clutter of regulations and requirements to apply for and secure critically important grants and loans. We have helped clients reinvent their businesses—our retail clients have discovered new supply lines, our professional clients conduct business online, and construction companies are able to supervise a multitude of sites without visiting the field. Even the smallest companies can now manage accounting, payroll and human resources using online services.

Continued On Page 12

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ACCOUNTING



Levine Jacobs & Co., LLC
By Charles F. Ott, CPA, MBA,
Managing Member

CPA firms are client-centric professional service companies and thrive on maximizing those services while building long-standing relationships. It would be easy to say that our current use of technology is critical to driving the company forward during the pandemic. Although technology provides the tools we need to work from remote locations, the key to our overall success, in this time, is communication. Not only regular and effective communication with our team members internally, but also active communication with our clients. A phone call or e-mail will always be effective, but the need to maintain personal contact with employees via video meetings or workplace chats, along with increasing the frequency of contact and the flow of information to clients is unparalleled. They need to know that we have the ability to assist them through this changing landscape, and effective communication is how we will continue to thrive.



Marcum LLP
By Saran Johnson,
MBA, SHRM-SCP,
Co-Chief, Human Resources

One example of how we engaged in reinvention is the creation of our virtual summer internship. We have historically offered a summer program that generates a pipeline of college graduates to fulfill our annual entry-level needs. This summer, rather than cancel our traditional program, we've pivoted to a meaningful virtual experience. We'll host 50+ interns across the country during the four-week program, which includes a commitment of four hours of screen time each day. Marcum's virtual internship is a mix of interactive essential skills training, individual and team projects and collaboration on client engagements. The orientation will be conducted remotely and IT equipment will be shipped to every intern. Marcum's virtual internship experience is unique as it allows for learning and development opportunities, the chance to participate in client work and collaborate with experienced professionals and industry leaders, while offering the invaluable opportunity to build a professional network with peers.



Mazars USA
By Paula Ferreira, CPA,
NJ Office Managing Partner

Throughout COVID-19, we have focused on making connections and meeting the needs of our team, our clients and our communities. Remaining authentic and openly addressing uncertainties is vitally important in this environment. Constant communication and remaining flexible with our team has been crucial to our success. Together, we have found ways to create a culture that is not only focused on doing our job but also on giving back to the community and each other. Many of our team members were able to volunteer for different organizations, whether it was making sandwiches to donate to food pantries or making masks for those in need. Through our internal Mazars Team channel we encourage employees to connect, whether it's coming up with a summer playlist or sharing favorite recipes. Keeping the communication flowing has been the most important factor in creating an effective work culture.

Continued On Page 14

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ACCOUNTING



Nisivoccia

By Bud Jones, CPA, RMA, PSA, Managing Partner

Although we were deemed essential, for everyone's safety we made the decision to begin working remotely in mid-March. Technology has always been a priority for the firm, so we were able to almost seamlessly transition into a 100 percent remote workforce instantly. We also prioritized frequent client and employee communications. We began weekly video staff meetings and check-in calls to ensure our staff's engagement and help them manage through the new work environment. Our employees used the platform for video meetings with their clients to keep in constant communication during their engagements. Working completely remotely also gave us the opportunity to utilize our existing technology and access clients' systems. Videoconferencing gave us the opportunity to continue to host our client roundtables and seminars on a new, virtual scale with double the attendance. We have forged deeper client relationships and maintained our culture during these turbulent times.



Prager Metis

By Glenn L. Friedman, CPA, CGMA, CEO

The last few months have reaffirmed the importance of building strong relationships. I believe that the human element has always been the most critical component of a sound business strategy, and the environment we're currently operating in hasn't changed that in the least. Our firm has embraced new ways of making and strengthening our connections with clients, friends of the firm and team members alike. Through technology such as video calls, I've had more face-to-face interactions with people than I did before the pandemic; I believe these connections have grown stronger, despite the physical distance. It has helped solidify our roles as trusted advisors to our clients and allowed us to add value in new and innovative ways. I believe every transaction is a P2P (person to person) interaction, and prioritizing these close ties has allowed Prager Metis to thrive despite the challenges of COVID-19.



SobelCo, LLC

By Alan D. Sobel, CPA, CGMA, Managing Member

We have not reinvented ourselves as a result of COVID-19. We are merely applying the same business principles differently. Most obvious is communicating in a virtual world where previously we took for granted the ability to be in the physical presence of our colleagues, clients and centers of influence. While frequent communication was always important, in a world of uncertainty and inconvenient connectivity we have made it a priority to communicate as frequently as we can by using video conferencing, e-mail blasts and "old fashioned" telephone calls. While not perfect, these techniques go a long way toward encouraging people to feel connected and engaged on the topics of the day. Our client communications include daily updates on legislation and other business issues along with weekly webinars on hot topics. With our colleagues internally, we are holding weekly team meetings intended to foster the spirit of community in our firm.

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Traphagen CPAs & Wealth Advisors

By Robert J. Traphagen, CPA, CGMA, Managing Partner

Amid the coronavirus crisis, we have increased our emphasis on adaptability, communication and digital technology to create an efficient team, and a culture where our associates' and clients' safety is our first priority—as we continue to provide our clients with the strategic advisory services they need. We strived to provide our associates with office equipment and technology platforms for effective communication e.g. cloud-based systems, Microsoft Teams, Zoom, etc. With the proper technology in place, our associates had the option of creating their own flexible/remote work arrangements during one of our busiest times of the year—tax season. For those clients who require an in-person appointment, the following safety protocols are in place: contactless check-in; COVID-19 screening questionnaire; mandatory face masks; one-way foot traffic; social distancing graphics; cleaning and disinfecting; protective barriers; and hand sanitizers. Adaptability, communication and technology have helped us navigate through these uncharted waters.



Withum

By Bill Hagaman, CPA, CGMA, CEO and Managing Partner

The coronavirus pandemic forced us all to transform our business models as part of a disaster-recovery response. At Withum, we already had the technology in place for our team members to work productively from home, and for our clients to access their documents and receive services virtually. The shelter-at-home mandates forced us to truly put this to the test, and our workforce has proven themselves more efficient and effective than we could have imagined. We now know for certain that we can be productive in serving our clients while working remotely. Withum is actively assisting clients in adapting to do the same, implementing new technology and establishing secure workplace environments for their own employees.

ASSOCIATIONS



American Hungarian Chamber of Commerce

By Thomas Barat, President

There is no new challenge, only the emphasis of communication tools has changed. Previously, we organized personal meetings and participated in conferences. Now we organize our meetings via the Internet, and we participate in the webinars of other organizations. We are using our newly established “Community” page, which has one public page and two pages for our members only. On one of them, we draw attention to various events and on the other we publish business offers and partner searches. Our best practice—we are publishing business offers first on the members-only “Community” page, and after on our websites, on our social media pages and we are sending e-mails to our contracted partners. As a result of our June webinar, we are now discussing the establishment of a new American-Hungarian joint venture that will organize the sale of Hungarian food products in the U.S.A.

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ASSOCIATIONS



Garden State Wine Growers Association

By Tom Cosentino,
Executive Director

The GSWGGA's focus has been to provide a steady information flow to not only member wineries but non-members on health guidelines, grants and loans available. We continue to hold regular calls with wineries to update them on the situation. We have maintained regular contact with the State ABC and Governor's Office so we could disseminate accurate information on programs available to wineries, as well as provide the state with recommendations on how we could safely reopen for outdoor service and conduct wine festivals. Externally, we put out weekly e-blasts to reach consumers about services available at our wineries and utilized all our social media channels to communicate. We developed a video on the safe practices being employed by wineries for outdoor service and have held regular calls with counterparts in other states to share ideas on best practices during COVID-19.



New Jersey Groundwater Association

By Dermot Dillon,
President

At Summit Drilling, we were fortunate to have our work deemed "essential" by Governor Murphy and the State of New Jersey. With that, we knew we had a huge responsibility and proactively implemented a comprehensive Pandemic Emergency (Continuity) Action Plan, which provided for additional safety measures to reduce the chances of our office and field staffs being exposed to the COVID-19 virus. Safety gear, disinfection chemicals, pre-work temperature checks and questionnaires were implemented to ensure that our employees, which could not work remotely, were safe to go to work each day. The details of our plan are far too numerous to list here, but its success prompted us to share our processes with others in the industry. As the current President of the New Jersey Groundwater Association, I had an opportunity to enhance our industry's ability to perform their work safely for all stakeholders involved. If we all help each other and work together, we'll get through this challenging time.



LSRPA

By Scott Drew,
President

Licensed Site Remediation Professionals (LSRPs) oversee the remediation of contaminated sites. The work was deemed essential, so it continues despite the limitations placed by the pandemic. The LSRPA has surveyed its members four times since the pandemic began, to track the potential issues created by government offices being closed or staff working remotely, limits on travel and the requirements of social distancing. All information has been shared with the NJDEP, so it can determine whether timeframes for remediation should be adjusted. In May, all education shifted to videoconferencing, allowing LSRPs to maintain their continuing education credit requirements. At the first two monthly member regulatory roundtable meetings held online, attendance doubled to 60 attendees. One longer course has been offered online since the shutdown and attendance was the same as it would have been in person. An extensive variety of courses will be offered through the end of 2020.

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ASSOCIATIONS



New Jersey Bankers Association

By John E. McWeeney, Jr.,
President and CEO

NJBankers is all about making connections for our members. We connect them with legislators, regulators, industry service providers and each other. Prior to COVID-19, most of our programs were in-person events so, when the pandemic hit, we had to quickly change our business model in order to keep making connections for our members. In a matter of days, we launched a series of webinars with regulators and service providers on key issues like regulatory lending guidelines, PPP, reopening procedures and more. Attendance was huge with a number of webinars drawing more than 200 attendees and one more than 1,000 attendees. We've since gone virtual for committee and board meetings and a number of conferences, including ones on financial elder abuse and diversity and inclusion. Keeping our members connected was critical and we employed the resources, the team and the courage to go virtual and make it happen.



New Jersey Society of CPAs

By Ralph Albert Thomas,
CPA (DC), CGMA, CEO and
Executive Director

Even before COVID-19, as a membership organization we acknowledged that communication and engagement are key to knowing your membership and understanding what members need to advance their careers. Amid the pandemic, we put that into overdrive. Since everyone has been impacted by this in some way, we instituted Membership+, where NJCPA membership now includes 20 free continuing professional education (CPE) credits, the value of which actually exceeds the cost of membership. This way, NJCPA members can meet their minimum annual CPE requirements for free. We also increased our efforts to be an information resource for members on pandemic-related issues and made it easier to connect with us by offering virtual meetings, seminars, conferences and networking opportunities. Staff also embraced the virtual environment to engage with members and each other.



NJ Warehousemen & Mover's Association and New Jersey Movers Tariff Bureau

By Bob Russo,
Executive Director

NJWMA is a trade association for licensed public movers. When the COVID-19 shutdown began, we joined several business coalitions and participated in webinars on a daily basis to gather information. Then we became the COVID-19 Q&A information source for members by e-mailing them relevant updates on ever-changing rules, clarifying requirements and suggested best practices for movers that choose to provide essential services. We also provided information to consumers about social distancing and sanitizing recommendations during moving. We posted all updates and questions on our website, njmovers.com, and our site visits went up. Our members said they appreciated us since they were unable to get information from official sources. We also e-mailed many comments to regulators, legislators and state agencies regarding issues that were not being addressed and we said we objected to bad decisions that are not business-friendly—advising that companies will move out of New Jersey.

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BANKING



Bank of America
By Alberto Garofalo,
New Jersey Market President

At Bank of America, we remain focused on supporting our clients, local communities and our teammates. Whether it's supporting our clients through convenient and secure digital banking, assisting small businesses experiencing hardships, or committing to no layoffs in 2020 as a result of the coronavirus, we are taking actions to support and to serve. Around the world, government and health officials continue to address the impacts of the coronavirus with Bank of America's full support. We made a \$100 million philanthropic commitment to support communities impacted by coronavirus. In New Jersey, more than \$2.5 million has been deployed to local nonprofits, including Community Food Bank of New Jersey, Fulfill and Millhill Child & Family Development, to ensure they have the resources needed to support the most vulnerable. We've also committed \$1 billion to advance racial equality and create economic opportunity for communities of color disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.



BHI
By John Yoler, *EVP,
Division Executive, Head of
U.S. Representative Offices*

At BHI, despite the challenge of not being able to meet in person, we have been communicating with our clients on a frequent basis with virtual meetings and calls. We are a relationship-oriented bank and customer service is our priority. We work in partnership with our clients, and these relationships have become even more important during the COVID-19 crisis. We are working remotely while still providing smooth and seamless solutions for our clients. I oversee the food and beverage sector at our bank, and food manufacturers, processors and distributors have seen high demand during the pandemic. We understand our clients' challenges and assist them with their financial needs. It is critical that we stay close to our existing clients and help them work through these uncertain times, especially those with companies that are experiencing rapid growth and need additional capital.



Columbia Bank
By Thomas J. Kemly,
President and CEO

Responding to COVID-19, we implemented "convenience" measures designed to assist our customers. For example, to maintain service our entire bank is working from home using enhanced digital work tools. Also, most of our branches remained open, with limited by-appointment hours with exclusive service hours set aside for senior citizens. All facilities were regularly "deep cleaned" and retrofitted with protective measures, including plexiglass partitions, hand sanitizers and the mandatory use of face masks. Our online and mobile banking services were also touted as a safe and convenient way to bank from anywhere, supported by tutorials explaining how to set up and use. For those experiencing financial hardships, we also encouraged customers to reach out, in person or through our hotline, for banking solutions including a residential mortgage deferral initiative. We regularly communicated the special actions we were taking through a series of e-mail blasts, website updates and by personal contact.

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BANKING



Freedom Bank
By Matthew Carcich,
President and
Chief Executive Officer

At Freedom Bank, our employees continue to be available seven days a week to serve the needs of our customers. Our team reaches out to our customers more frequently by phone, texts and e-mails during these uncertain times. The challenges of meeting the increased demands placed upon us by the effects of COVID-19 have affected everyone. Our bank, almost overnight, transitioned to working remotely and we are extremely proud of our staff for their diligence in doing so. Everyone has adapted to juggling the requirements of working from home and Zoom meetings, along with schooling children. What our employees miss the most is the face-to-face interactions with our customers. A customer recently said, "I bank with Freedom because when I call on a Sunday at 9:00 p.m., my loan officer answers my call." That is our culture and that is why we continue to attract new business through word-of-mouth.



Lakeland Bank
By Thomas J. Shara,
President and CEO

We launched our three-year digital strategy in January, and when the coronavirus hit we had to accelerate portions of that strategy to meet the demands of a rapidly changing workplace and enhance our ability to meet the needs of our customers. I liken the reinvention of our remote workplace to an extreme makeover...the transformation happened in about a month and under normal circumstances may have taken months, or even years to accomplish. It was a success in part because a strong culture of respect, trust and collaboration already existed at Lakeland. And while technology played a crucial role in changing how we do business, how our associates work and how we interact with customers, the bottom line is that we relied heavily on the traditional practice of open and frequent communication. This best practice has withstood the test of time and now a modern-day global pandemic.



M&T Bank
By Tom Comiskey,
New Jersey
Regional President

The banking industry was already changing rapidly on the technological front prior to COVID-19. The pandemic only increased consumers' comfort with interacting with their bank online. I think you will likely see that continue. We evolved to interact with customers in new ways, especially as many contend with economic challenges from the pandemic. We moved quickly to identify liquidity issues and implement M&T Bank direct or government stimulus assistance programs. Fortunately, some of our business clients were in a position to provide much-needed products (like PPE) to the market. As their banking partner, we made sure we supported them so they could meet that elevated demand. Culturally, we've relied on digital platforms to connect with colleagues and move projects forward. We make frequent use of WebEx, encourage video participation and hold virtual get-togethers to keep collaboration strong. It's been fun to see kids and pets pop in to say hello.

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BANKING



Peapack-Gladstone Bank
By Douglas L. Kennedy,
President and CEO

We have had to adapt quickly and often to the challenging environment. From the beginning, our focus has been the health and safety of our employees and clients. We quickly shifted to a remote working environment for all back-office staff, and instituted drive-up only banking at our locations. We ensured all online, mobile and ATM banking programs were fully operational. Doing this has allowed us to remain open throughout the pandemic, ensuring that our clients can continue to adapt as well. We've outfitted each location with partitions and require face coverings for all in-person interactions. We've incorporated virtual Zoom meetings into our everyday life, whether it's employee-to-employee or, now, employee-to-client. For example, we realize there is still a need for clients to speak directly with our staff, so we've reinvented how we open accounts, which we can now do quickly and easily through a virtual meeting.



Valley Bank
By Ira Robbins,
President and CEO

COVID-19 impacted local businesses, and we knew that our customers needed to have reliable, remote banking capabilities and their banker available to help them during a challenging business environment. When the SBA rolled out the Paycheck Protection Program, we worked around the clock to stand up an intuitive, online application platform, coupled with the individualized support of a dedicated banking professional. Our lenders provided direct assistance to borrowers throughout the whole process, guiding them through the application and providing support in any capacity to lessen the impact of the economic hardships they're facing. We assisted more than 10,000 businesses, facilitated more than 12,000 PPP loans in excess of \$2.2 billion and saved more than 170,000 jobs. For us, this was an incredible opportunity to support local businesses by combining technological capabilities with the personal relationships our customers have come to know and trust.

COMMUNITY



Care Plus Workforce Solutions
By Brigitte D. Johnson, Esq.,
Executive Director

A provider of integrated primary and behavioral healthcare, Care Plus NJ, Inc. has always understood the importance of social support services. With high unemployment rates, resulting from the economic implications of COVID-19, our Work Incentive Services have been adversely impacted. These programs employ individuals with severe mental illness and economic disadvantages, to establish independent living and improved quality of life. The pandemic further illustrated how this vulnerable population as well as minority populations are disproportionately affected by systematic inequalities and social determinants of health. In response, our staff developed a grassroots "Cultural Diversity Committee," which evaluates policies and procedures related to corporate HR, advocacy communications, staff development and community outreach; and runs a weekly staff support group to discuss personal experiences around race and culture to identify and address patterns that occur on a universal level and transform our work culture to create positive change centered on equality for all.

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COMMUNITY



YWCA Northern NJ
By Helen Archontou,
CEO

Once COVID-19 hit, we could no longer rely on our traditional methods to provide support and had to quickly pivot. Some programs had to be halted, but a core of our work remained intact and we were able to keep our staff and those we serve safe, healthy and informed. Solutions have included remote work tools and processes to continue teamwork; secure platforms for sexual violence survivors to get remote counseling, art therapy and job readiness workshops; and YWTV launched to showcase topics such as skills for women and women-owned businesses, support for parents, wellness activities and voter education. In response to the wave of civil rights violations, we have doubled-down on our racial justice work including anti-racism programming to give black women new channels for sharing their voices, and a town hall with community leaders on dismantling systemic racism.

CONSTRUCTION



Concrete Washout Systems
By Bill McGuire,
Marketing Consultant

Concrete Washout Systems has been fortunate in that the work we do is essential, so we've been busy. We recognize the responsibility we have to our employees, business partners and clients. We provide all our employees with face shields, masks, gloves, sanitizing wipes, paper towels and mandate their use. Our crews take extra precautions in cleaning their equipment before a shift and after each use, and also do a job site audit to determine where employees are touching shared surfaces and make sure those surfaces are disinfected regularly throughout the day. The type of work we do makes it difficult to wear a mask all day, so we use different mask options to best suit worker needs. Our workers may not enjoy wearing gloves and masks in the summer heat, but we can't allow our crews to become complacent and will continue to follow proper guidelines to protect them and others.



Structure Tone
By John White, Jr.,
Regional Chief
Operating Officer

When construction was on hold, we were able to move parts of our projects forward such as estimating and purchasing by working with the project team remotely. And now, we can use technology to virtually walk clients through a site to help with decision-making. Our field teams were already using tools like these before the pandemic. Educating ourselves and planning ahead were crucial. For roughly a three-week period, New Jersey construction was limited to "essential" projects only, which affected roughly 50 percent of our current volume. During that time, we focused on enhancing COVID-related site safety procedures, understanding possible supply chain impacts and developing risk mitigation strategies. We also hosted seminars and identified resources for our subcontractors and suppliers. As a result, we were ready to hit the ground running when our market fully reopened, while staying on top of the latest safety guidance.

CONSULTING



Abel HR, Inc.
By James W. Bell, Sr.,
President

We did become much more proactive in terms of employee health and wellness, and we increased the intensity of business services to our clients, especially in regard to grants, loans and other incentives to help businesses cope with the emergency. Based on the advice that we gave to our clients, our reaction seemed to be exactly what was needed. Other questions that arose regarding HR, paid time off, what would be paid to employees, when and under what exact circumstances, was again, what we do, but focused on our government's response to COVID-19 and how it impacted those co-employed by us. Abel developed the capabilities to service our co-employees and our clients no matter what, but our focus was mainly on hurricanes, snowstorms and other less-than-national calamities. It was relatively easy for us to expand our work from home capabilities



**Alan Zakin Associates
Community and
Government Relations**
By Alan J. Zakin, Esq.,
Principal

As a community and government relations marketing consultancy, once it was clear that COVID-19 would dramatically affect home and work life, we proactively reached out to clients and associates to listen to their concerns and then tried to help resolve and mitigate their issues. We focused on three elements: broadcast the most-current information on what activity government allowed and prohibited; research and inform regarding what programs and resources the government could provide; and provide crucial assistance in communicating between companies, governments, employees and the public as to the required process for protocols, documentation and outreach. The key was to provide not just education, but peace of mind. Government can certify that you can shop or work in public, but the employee or customer must be truly confident of their and their family's safety in order for commerce to truly return and thrive.



Corporate Ladders
By Bill Taylor,
President

As business coaches and trainers, much of our business involves face-to-face meetings with professionals. When the pandemic arrived, we expected just a short pause before activity would return to normal. As time dragged on, we needed to adapt the way we delivered our services. We were all familiar with attending online webinars but had not fully utilized these options for client delivery. To overcome the challenges of face-to-face training, we began providing our coaching and training to clients via Zoom, Skype and other apps. While it is still a work in process, everyone seems to be more comfortable with this process, and it's working for our clients and working for us.

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CONSULTING



East West Connection, Inc.

By Ralph D. Weaver,
Founder and CEO

East West Connection (EWC) prides itself on the human connection it has with its clients, business partners and employees. The COVID-19 pandemic compelled us to think about our value proposition of how we connect with people. EWC personally contacted clients to listen and discuss their needs, and the same was done with our employees. We listened to their concerns and solicited input on how to move forward. Tough decisions were made, and we faced the changing business environment with determination and optimism. Rather than focusing on obstacles, we implemented a strategic plan to ensure EWC's continued survival and relevance by pivoting to our virtual meetings expertise, creating the EWC Joy Connection: Journey to Well Balance LivingSM. It's a series of free virtual experiences that deliver the human connection to joy, learning and fun during these challenging times. EWC will definitely emerge as stronger and different company post COVID-19.



ICA Risk Management Consultants

By Barron S. Wall, ARM,
PMC, Managing Associate

As professional philomaths that have been working remotely during COVID-19, we have focused on our clients' business issues affected by this pandemic, as we do for all risks affecting their businesses. The challenge of COVID-19 required detailed analysis of insurance coverages that impacted almost every aspect of our clients' operations. The insurance language being different in the various insurance policies or because of differences in insurance carriers' forms required a comparative analysis and drafting of claims language to notify the insurers accordingly and to preserve clients' rights for obligations imposed by their insurance policies or new mandates or laws. The complexity of the above became more challenging and remains influenced by the hard insurance market, defined by rising premiums and reductions or restrictions in coverages, exacerbating the problem of availability of insurance coverage at a time when revenue or sales have been significantly impacted due to closed businesses.



Lead Accelerators

By Adam Wolf,
Principal

In the professional services environment, where I operate, business really has not changed in any core ways. How business may get done has had to adapt to the changed environment, but the same fundamentals continue to drive what clients value and, in turn, how I operate. I try to be a resource. Many clients and prospects are struggling in a myriad of ways. I try to put myself in their shoes. I regularly reach out and ask: "What's your biggest concern right now?" I listen and seek first to understand. If it's a problem related to generating revenue, I explore further to see if I may be able to help them. If not, there's a good chance I know other advisors who are equipped to help the client solve the problem. If I can make that type of connection, I know I've done both parties a tremendous service.

CONSULTING



Leap Consulting Group

By Josh Kramer,
Managing Partner

Leap Consulting Group helps organizations identify digital engagement opportunities and provides implementation services supporting digital solutions catering to consumers and professionals. With a large healthcare practice serving New Jersey healthcare clients, we supported many of the larger COVID-19 popup testing efforts in New Jersey. We have also supported some CDC and FEMA efforts to track PPE across the nation. Our client engagements have shifted to being entirely virtual—video conferences, using online collaboration tools during meetings so everyone can contribute, plenty of creative scheduling and home-life sounds in the background on all sides. Employee engagement has turned virtual, too. Throughout the remote work period, we have held weekly team-wide video get-togethers to wrap up our weeks. On our virtual happy-hours we share personal anecdotes, COVID-related experiences across our global team, big weekend plans and often feature our new office coworkers—family and pets.



Medical Strategic Planning

By Arthur Gasch,
CEO

MSP helps people make their homes, autos, and workplaces safe from COVID-19, limiting the virus spread while people learn, work and recreate. Use latex gloves or spray your hands after washing with Zoono. Use effective masks when less than six feet from someone. Disinfect and then use Zoono. Do this at home, in your car and at work to create virus-hostile (safe) areas. Zoono works by impaling microorganisms, rendering them harmless for up to 30 days. Spray it on latex gloves, and it does the same thing, rendering any organisms your gloves touch—harmless. Simple measures can safely disinfect door-knobs, control panels, CC terminals, mice, keyboards, touch pads, scanners, printers, copiers cups, phones—the entire office environment that workers share.



Northeast Professional Planning Group, Inc.

By Sam Christopher,
Executive Vice President

NPPG is a national employee benefits, retirement planning, actuarial consulting and 3(16) fiduciary services group. The challenges of COVID-19 forced our firm to quickly reassess our service model and leverage the technology infrastructure we built to properly service our client base. Employee benefits and retirement plan administration are critical health and welfare benefits that employers and their employees are depending on heavily during this crisis. NPPG transitioned to a work-from-home model to ensure uninterrupted service to our clients. We proactively communicated to clients, government updates affecting their benefit plans. We were able to immediately assist with an increase in health benefit inquiries and process retirement plan loans as a result of The CARES Act. As we return to the office, employee safety is of utmost importance. Following the published safety protocols has provided a safe and productive work environment for our employees and consistent ability to service clients.

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CONSULTING



Protiviti

By Frederick Umbach,
Managing Director, Head,
New Jersey Office

Protiviti developed a unified strategy to transition to a fully remote workforce, while still serving clients from New Jersey to Tokyo, all the while helping many of our clients transition their operations to work remotely, too. Our consultants shifted from in-person client meetings to video conference calls and all our business travel was halted in mid-March. We quickly produced an ongoing complimentary “Enterprise Resilience” webinar series, which aims to help clients and the business community manage the challenges of operating during—and planning for after—the disruption of the pandemic. Our employees have been given additional flexibility in their work schedules and extra paid time off to care for family members affected by COVID-19, plus an increased “crisis care” stipend for caregivers. We keep our people informed in a variety of ways, including using tools such as Microsoft Teams, and with regular updates from our CEO and parent company.



Talent Chaser

By Dr. Carl Aylen,
CEO

COVID-19 has been a challenge for most organizations because they do not have a management system in place that can accommodate the critical task of holding staff accountable while ensuring they meet their targets, remain productive and enhance their skills—especially the Work From Home (WFH) staff. Fortunately, we have been providing an online tool to empower companies to do just that with our user-friendly application for the last 20 years. Managers can measure, monitor, engage and give their direct reports the ability to perform at the highest level during these challenging times. This tool has both helped alleviate the management burden of the WFH oversight and strengthen the relationship of team members. As we continue to support each other during these times, we remain positive that we will all grow and learn how to live in a world where we should look out for each other.



U Have My Word LLC

By Janet Werner,
President

For over 30 years, I’ve applied a best practice framework called “Rethinking How We Think,” which involves three simple best practices: STOP-Pause, Check Assumptions, Inquire with Curiosity. Taking my queue from MIT’s Dialogue Project, which demonstrates the scientific power of these three best practices, I apply their simplicity to the complexity of business and societal challenges we face today. This positions our team and clients to continuously reinvent themselves identifying new solutions to old recurring problems. We serve business leaders with agility, fresh thinking and change management navigation tools that simplify the process of continuous reinvention. Don’t underestimate the value of simple practices in complex times. How do we streamline training programs? We shorten the time invested and increase behavioral shifts by applying STOP-Pause, Assumption Checking, and Inquiring with Curiosity tools such as Business Table Talk placemats and Napkin Notes to reinforce learning in “Just a Moment.”

CONTRACTORS



A.J. Perri

By Christian Dunning,
General Manager

We are committed to maintaining the well-being of all employees. Customers have peace of mind and confidence that we value their trust in us to provide safe working conditions. With the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, safety precautions were swiftly implemented and diligently observed. All employees are provided masks, gloves, disinfectant sprays and wipes, with shoe covers for technicians. Employees take their temperature prior to the workday and acceptable readings are prominently displayed on uniforms and clothing. A comprehensive social distancing policy includes new teleconference methods, enhanced cubicle separations, remote working, and generous leave policies. Air scrubbers were installed in office environments to improve air quality on a consistent and ongoing basis. In the field, technicians possess state-of-the-art diagnostic tools to minimize indoor customer contact. This includes increased camera use, accessing customer equipment under the residence or via a window or the basement, and other remote tools.



Castle Windows

By Nick Cardillo,
Co-Owner and Vice President

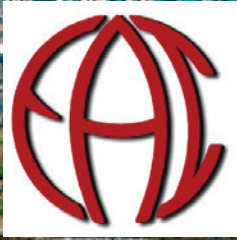
Within one week, we quickly adapted by having our employees working effectively and safely from home. For those who didn’t have sufficient computers or proper workstations at home, we went to their homes and helped them set up new equipment. Within that same week, our sales team put together a virtual sales deck to swiftly transition to all-virtual client meetings. The most challenging part of our business during this time was compliance. As the governor announced the guidelines, rules, changes and laws, we had to work diligently to come up with a contingency plan for scenarios. We had to review all procedures and protocols on how to reopen. The irony is, we’ve been busier than ever, our new virtual approach has improved our business and allows us to meet with more customers. We are finding that the more people stayed home, the more they want to renovate their homes.



York Building Services, Inc.

By Robert Rivadeneira,
President and CEO

As an established commercial cleaning contractor in northern New Jersey, we have had to rediscover who we are and the essential function that our services provide in keeping society safe and healthy every day. We are entrusted to maintain workplaces, schools and residential facilities. We have had to reclaim our own value for what we do and re-energize our team to be willing and prepared to answer this calling during the pandemic, to keep our fellow New Jersey residents safe. As essential workers, we have risen to the challenge of being on the front lines of disinfection cleaning and following CDC protocols and best practices. Our team ensures the safety of both the communities we serve and those we employ. Throughout the pandemic, we’ve been doubling down on our commitment to training, third-party certification for disinfecting and cleaning protocols, and an adherence to science, technology and data to guide the way.



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ENVIRONMENTAL BUSINESS AND ENGINEERING



Boswell Engineering

By Stephen T. Boswell, Ph.D., PE, SECB, LSRP, President and CEO

Unlike many other businesses, Boswell Engineering was deemed an essential business so we continued to work throughout the crisis. As a high-tech company, the overwhelming majority of our staff was able to work remotely, while we still maintained a minimum cadre in the office. Office space was modified in order to assure proper social distancing and temperature checks were required for everyone entering the building. Employees were also required to wear a mask when moving throughout the office, and entry into the building was banned to all non-employees. All of this was done to protect the health and safety of our valued employees. Daily department head conference calls were instituted and hundreds of meetings were conducted by video conference. Our dedicated employees proved to be up to the challenge by doing an outstanding job and maintaining a high degree of efficiency during this crisis.



Brilliant Environmental Services, LLC

By Philip I. Brilliant, CHMM, LSRP, Owner, Principal Environmental Scientist

COVID-19 just added to the challenges of a small business owner dealing with the struggles of doing business in our current business climate. I am always reinventing ways of improving or maintaining our work culture at Brilliant and making sure clients and staff are equally #1. Over the past six months, we held virtual staff meetings every Friday and on one occasion I surprised the staff with home delivery of a pizza lunch. I did the same with a prospective client in the Chicago area and several clients. I wanted to bring the feeling of business as usual, when we know it is very unusual. Thinking out of the box daily has helped Brilliant satisfy clients and helped me retain staff.



EAI, Inc.

By Robert Carvalho, PG, President and CEO

EAI's best practice continues to be superior service. What is new is the additional use of cell phones and texts that all customers now have for staff in addition to office lines. Our staff has been working remotely for many years, and this requires the latest technology—which EAI has and will continue to invest in. In an overwhelming news cycle and political climate that thrives on fear tactics, level heads must prevail. We live and work in the best country and state. We have very strong businesses, healthcare facilities and higher education institutions. New Jersey became one of the first states and will continue on as we have throughout history—a success story. The best practice is to use dependable, reliable and trustworthy sources when evaluating the COVID-19 situation.

ENVIRONMENTAL BUSINESS AND ENGINEERING



Envision Environmental, Inc.

By Mark Roman, President

We have helped our individual clients and the wider business community respond to the COVID-19 crisis in several ways. Because many clients have been short-staffed, we have provided support for required reporting and monitoring that they used to do in-house so they can meet regulatory deadlines and maintain an uncheckered compliance history. As a complimentary service, we've helped clients understand what various federal, state and local regulators expect during this pandemic in terms of environmental requirements and regulatory deadlines. Many are surprised to find out that many regulators have not loosened the reins at all, and we help them stay in compliance. We've provided help in modifying workspaces and processes to maintain social distancing and incorporating necessary PPE. Our team released a podcast offering tips for working from home effectively and followed up personally with listeners who had specific challenges and questions.



GEI Consultants, Inc.

By Ron Palmieri, PE, CEO

Responding compassionately and effectively to COVID-19 has been one of the most difficult and daunting challenges faced by our employees and management team. During the pandemic, our principal focus has been the safety of our colleagues, clients, subcontractors and vendors. We acted quickly and proactively to close our offices and implement social distancing and medical monitoring policies that closely align with CDC and local government guidelines. Additionally, our staff remained fully engaged with their clients and continued to provide the types of cost-effective and creative levels of engineering and environmental services for which GEI is well known. As the country struggles through this ongoing crisis, GEI is constantly adapting, modifying and improving our project delivery methods so as to help clients move forward with accomplishing their goals within this new, more restrictive business paradigm.



J.S. Held LLC

By John M. Brennan, Senior Vice President

Prior to COVID-19, our firm joined J.S. Held, transitioning from a Northeast regional environmental consulting firm to a global consulting firm. J.S. Held has thrived during this difficult time using industry-leading technology and complementary areas of expertise including COVID-related services supported by our industrial hygienists and Ph.D. epidemiologists. Although the entire company has been working remotely since March, we've continued to provide enhanced data through virtual walkthroughs on projects using our 360-inspection tool. We can document sites—from residential properties to commercial buildings on different properties with multiple floors—in one report, and add follow-up inspection images with time-lapse capability to show progress on projects. This capability has allowed our staff to work remotely, to safely serve clients, and to continue to deliver the news, one of our core values. Our company also created special teams' channels so all employees can connect with each other.

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Contact: Mark P. Roman
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ALEX SERRANO, Office Managing Partner
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ENVIRONMENTAL BUSINESS AND ENGINEERING



LAN Associates

By Kenneth H. Karle, AIA, PE, PP, LEED®, AP, President

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted LAN's biggest strength: a work culture defined by dedication and innovation. Our technological proficiency has allowed us to quickly adapt to remote work, while seamlessly providing our clients and projects with the diligence they have come to expect. Consistent communication with clients has been key to this success. As architects and engineers responsible for designing the built environment, we have had to reinvent the way we think about the spaces we design and, in some cases, tackle COVID-19 head on. For firms in our line of work, I would say the best practice is to embrace the new reality and search for ways your company can help clients meet the challenges presented by the pandemic. LAN has been studying the guidelines and has begun providing data-driven solutions for a safer reentry to schools, offices and buildings forced to shut down for prolonged periods.



T&M Associates

By Gary Dahms, PE, PP, President and CEO

In this tumultuous time, in addition to stringent requirements for health and safety, at T&M Associates we have found clients are in dire need of clear, regular communication on COVID-19 policy and regulatory updates and corresponding expert analysis. We have implemented a variety of programs to help clients navigate the ever-changing coronavirus landscape, including a series of informational and educational pieces regarding safety and hygiene policies, relevant regulatory updates from the State of New Jersey, and customized "return to work" plans and services managed and directed by our in-house Certified Industrial Hygienists and safety professionals. Universal safety protocols are useful, but many clients struggle to adapt them to their unique challenges, so personalized COVID news analysis and re-opening strategies can make the difference between a client merely surviving and succeeding during the coronavirus crisis.



The TBLS Group, LLC

By Frances Schlosstein, President

As a boutique environmental advisory, The TBLS Group relies on a cohort model, where we employ world class experts, but on a contract basis. This best practice enables us to synch our work-flow and cash-flow while cost-effectively providing thought leadership and customized project management for clients. During the COVID crisis, we remain financially stable, while expanding our business cohort and adding two interns to help launch a new website. TBLS reinvented itself by focusing on an emerging environmental crisis—PFAS—which will continue long after the pandemic. PFAS compounds, or forever chemicals, impact drinking water quality in New Jersey and around the country. TBLS serves as an expert witness on a major PFAS case. Building on this expertise, we began supporting an investor in solving infrastructure and remediation issues that emerge as part of our core business—valuing and monetizing environmental liabilities.

ENVIRONMENTAL BUSINESS AND ENGINEERING



Whitestone Associates, Inc.

By Thomas K. Uzzo, LSRP, President

Rather than reinvent our business, Whitestone has embarked on an in-depth staff re-training, cross-training and continuing education program during the COVID-19 crisis to better utilize nonbillable employee time in a manner that will leave the firm poised for continued success as market conditions improve. By combining remote, online educational opportunities with interdepartmental on-the-job cross-training, Whitestone has created a better-educated and more diversely proficient team of professionals capable of working remotely (yet collaboratively) to better serve our site remediation and development clients.



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FINANCIAL SERVICES



First Capital Advisors Group
By James D. Hiles,
ChFC, Partner

We challenged ourselves to seek opportunities and picked up the pace of decision-making. Our philosophy of challenging the status quo was put to the test. We changed over technology for 100 percent remote working in two days and established an online procedure that mimicked the work week. Operationally, we cut expenses such as marketing outside of e-commerce, travel, and entertainment and projected our P&L to find funds to retain people and services. Service had time to reach out and talk to customers and they did so, which helped solidify relationships. We are preparing new marketing campaigns using more social media and follow-up to target markets. We have also used this time to assess acquisitions and moved on several proposals.



Lincoln Equities Group
By Joel Bergstein,
President

Amid medical and supply chain challenges associated with COVID-19, our firm, Lincoln Equities Group, has created a Life Sciences division dedicated to acquiring bio-pharma manufacturing sites in the Northeast. This June, we announced the acquisition of a 1.2 million-square-foot, 433-acre life sciences campus in Hopewell, New Jersey, formerly owned by Bristol-Myers Squibb. The sprawling site is located along the Boston-Washington, D.C., life sciences corridor in central New Jersey's research technology region. The campus will cater to U.S. pharma manufacturers looking to re-shore or expand in the United States—as the pandemic rages on and U.S. officials look to bring manufacturing back onshore. With the recent transaction, our Life Sciences division has expanded to nearly 2 million square feet. We expect to see an influx of investment across the state, given the current public health and political climate.



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FINANCIAL SERVICES



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Morgan Stanley Wealth Management
By Sandra L. Richards,
Managing Director,
Head of Global Sports &
Entertainment and Segment
Sales & Engagement

Over the last few months, I have embraced flexibility. Now more than ever is a time to be open, resourceful, and creative. My team and I are strategic thinkers, so it has been exciting to find new ways to connect and engage with Financial Advisors (FAs) and their clients in a virtual world. We are in the midst of a pandemic and relationship management is still crucial to the Wealth Management business. How can we continue to manage existing and acquire new relationships virtually? At Morgan Stanley Wealth Management, I lead Global Sports & Entertainment and Segment Sales & Engagement. My team and I have pivoted and prioritized virtual engagement with FAs and their clients. This means Zoom meetings and client webinars, as well as enhanced social media and marketing initiatives. By embracing flexibility and thinking strategically, we have thrived and pursued growth opportunities despite the current environment.



The DAK Group
By Alan Scharfstein,
President and CEO

We guide business owners through the process of selling their middle-market companies—getting the right value and finding the perfect buyer. Typically, this involves presenting the business, its economics, its strategic positioning and its management to potential acquirers. Face-to-Face meetings allow buyers to better understand the business culture and strategic fit. The pandemic has moved us to use technology—video and multi-media presentations—to “bring the business to life”, showing facilities, manufacturing processes etc. to parties interested in a company that they cannot physically visit. We had built out a robust visual communication platform prior to the pandemic, which has proven invaluable in our internal and client communications. We are keeping all our employees engaged with daily meetings to discuss client activities and often bring in outside experts to provide information on the state-of-the-market and other specific topics.



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HEALTHCARE



AmeriHealth New Jersey

By Mike Munoz,
Market President

At the heart of AmeriHealth New Jersey is an unwavering, collaborative spirit among associates that extends outward to our members, customers, providers, brokers and community partners. Together, we remain fiercely committed to protecting the health and well-being of our community during this unprecedented time. Several years ago, we began the necessary steps to prepare should we need to operate in a remote environment and the transition has been seamless. We've changed policies to ensure our members have affordable access to COVID-19 testing and treatment, and expanded telemedicine coverage to promote social distancing and access to care. We've also created a comprehensive website that provides up-to-date information and resources for members, customers, providers and brokers. As we continue to serve our members at the highest level, we are committed to responding and adjusting to the needs of those that rely on us as the pandemic evolves.



Atlantic Health System

By Brian Gragnolati, FACHE,
President and CEO

Atlantic Health System's commitment to caring for our communities never wavered throughout the pandemic. When patients were unable or unwilling to leave their homes to pursue care, we reinvented the methods and locations we use to interact with them. We harnessed innovation to meet patients on their terms and at home. Telehealth visits (including phone and video visits) have skyrocketed to more than 50,000 per month across the system. Educational videos and helpful tips made our website and YouTube channel essential viewing, while our COVID Hotline was staffed by experts seven days a week. Combined with state-of-the-art safety tools at our medical centers and drive-through testing, Atlantic Health reinvented care delivery by staying true to our mission—building healthier communities.



Bergen New Bridge Medical Center

By Deborah Visconi,
President and CEO

We have reinvented our business by bringing care into our communities, particularly those areas heavily impacted by COVID-19 and traditionally underserved as identified in our recent community health needs assessment. We developed a robust testing program, including on-site drive-up testing and telehealth COVID-19 screening. We were among the first to offer antibody and saliva testing and, working with the County of Bergen, established mobile community testing and have tested more than 40,000 Bergen County residents for the virus. We became the COVID-19 resource for vulnerable populations, assuring access to this vital testing. Additionally, we were also early adopters of long-lasting microbial suppression systems for heightened disinfection. Testing, telehealth and tenacious deep cleaning and disinfection have helped us reimagine our medical center to safely care for our community.

HEALTHCARE



Delta Dental of New Jersey

By Dennis G. Wilson,
President and CEO

Within hours of closing our office, 80 percent of Delta Dental employees were working remotely and, within days, we were at 100 percent business functionality. We've provided our fully insured group and individual policy holders with premium credits for three months, supported our dentists with no-interest loans and PPE supplies reimbursement, worked with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services to ensure dentists were included in federal COVID-19 relief funds and created an online emergency dental care directory for consumers. We continue to support our Foundation grantees, many of which are on the front lines of this pandemic, offering grant period extensions and donations. We are also redesigning our office space, which will allow for social distancing and other COVID-19 safety precautions. Our "power of one" culture continues to thrive with each of us doing our part to help keep our associates safe, meet the service needs of our customers and support our local communities.



East Orange General Hospital

By Paige Dworak, FACHE,
President and CEO

Due to COVID-19, our industry was forced overnight to deliver more-modern methods of accessing care, including virtual visits via telehealth—reinventing patient care. These changes also represented an opportunity for us to reinvent and transform how we do business and serve our community. As a best practice and in response to the world around us, we have created a new strategic plan that advances us forward into the modern age, allows us to serve our patients more effectively, eliminates the baggage of the past such as forcing patients to come "in" for medial ailments such as a common cold and positions us to be fully prepared for the future. The plan includes methodologies such as engaging our patients through text message platforms, utilizing telehealth and even re-establishes how we use the properties on our campus. We are small, nimble and, most important, we are ready.



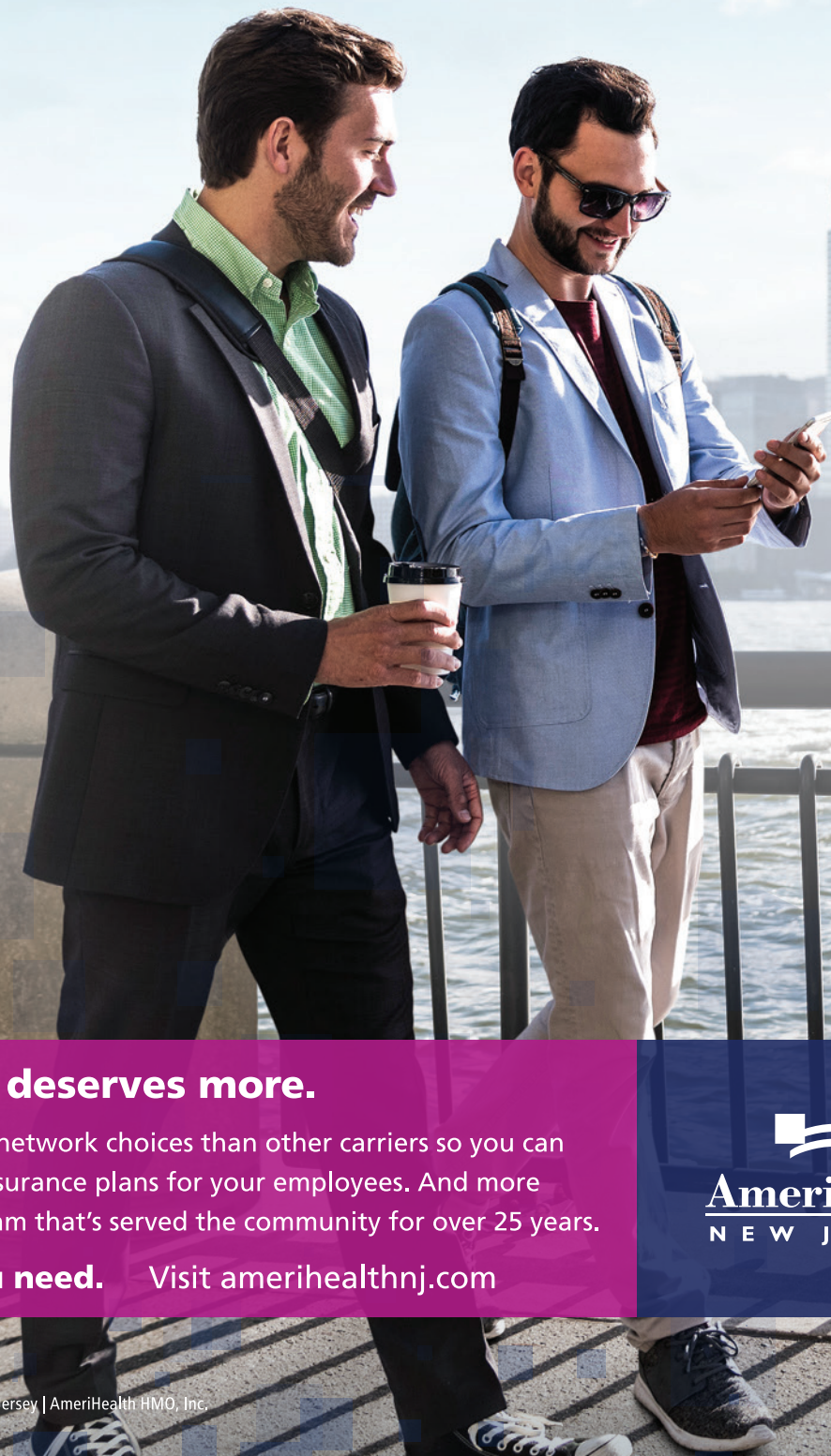
Englewood Health

By Kathleen Kaminsky,
MS, RN, NE-BC,
Senior Vice President,
Patient Care Services and
Chief Nursing Officer

We have made our registration and check-in/check-out process virtual so that, prior to appointments, the office will reach out to patients to gather all the information needed to ensure that patients can be seen immediately upon arrival. After the appointment, any follow-up instructions are sent digitally via an online patient portal. We have also extended our care options for the community to include a walk-in, urgent care center for non-emergent needs, and telemedicine visits for patients who are unable to visit one of our office locations. For patients who are hospitalized, our team understands the need and importance of personal connection so, during the height of the pandemic, we began to provide daily wellness checks to ensure that all needs were met and that connections were maintained with loved ones. Additionally, a team of multidisciplinary, multilingual teams connected with family members to provide clinical updates.

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HEALTHCARE



Hackensack Meridian Health

By Robert C. Garrett,
FACHE, CEO

Hackensack Meridian Health treated more than 10,000 COVID-19 patients, more than any other health network in New Jersey and we honor our healthcare heroes on the front lines who worked under difficult circumstances. We created many best practices from a clinical, safety and patient experience perspective. For example, we quickly learned to prone patients—place them on their stomachs to expand lung capacity. We are also conducting more than a dozen clinical trials to produce life-saving therapies, including convalescent plasma therapy in which we have infused approximately 1,000 patients. Additionally, we will soon enroll patients in clinical trials for a COVID vaccine. To enhance safety, we conduct temperature scans at the entrance of every hospital and provide non-COVID and COVID areas in hospitals. And we have drastically expanded telehealth to provide high-quality convenient care for patients from their homes, yet another best practice that emerged from this unprecedented pandemic.



Holy Name Medical Center

By Michael Maron,
President and CEO

Our mission to provide personalized, compassionate care never suffered, despite the challenges we faced from COVID-19. An enormous effort among our clinical and non-clinical teams to protect patients and employees—providing PPE, devising new ways to construct additional ICUs, cleaning rigorously and using advanced treatments—resulted in a remarkable safety record, with less than 10 percent of staff testing positive for the virus. Tragically, we lost four members of our Holy Name family, who contracted the virus outside the medical center. Our best practice is listening to our employees' innovative ideas and then taking action that validates their expertise. Their insights allowed us to retrofit our facility so that non-COVID patients remain isolated from COVID-positive patients. Adhering to public health guidelines enabled us to welcome back patients for non-emergency procedures and—by taking a transparent approach—we strengthened our position as a trusted resource and partner.



Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of NJ

By Gary St. Hilaire,
President and CEO

One of the many challenges presented by COVID-19 has been access to necessary health-care—with the lockdown came unexpected barriers to seeking necessary care. To solve for this issue, we immediately expanded access via telemedicine. While we have been promoting telemedicine for some time, its use had been previously limited. The pandemic created an opportunity for us to accelerate adoption and immediately improve access to affordable, quality and extremely convenient healthcare. In short, Horizon BCBSNJ spurred quick adoption of this innovation through waiver of co-pays and cost sharing; expansion to use in most services, including mental health; assistance to providers with technology support; and enhanced collaboration with our established telemedicine partners and early adopters. As a result, telemedicine claims have increased roughly 23 times during this time. While the pandemic has posed many challenges—some of which are yet to come—we will continue to address them with innovative solutions.

HEALTHCARE



Jefferson Health New Jersey

By Brian Sweeney, RN, MBA,
President and COO

The COVID-19 pandemic mandated that healthcare organizations make healthcare easily accessible for our community members, while ensuring their sense of safety. Prior to the pandemic, telehealth visits at Jefferson accounted for only about 3 percent of our patient encounters; at the peak of New Jersey's surge in April, some 85 percent of our patient visits were conducted virtually. Firmly entrenched in the consumer mix, about 50 percent of our patient visits are still being conducted through telehealth visits, easily enabling patients to connect with their care provider from the convenience of their home or office. Jefferson also offers on-demand virtual visits for urgent needs, as well as telehealth behavioral health counseling. Our JeffConnect telemedicine platform makes scheduling these appointments easy and convenient. While not all visits can be conducted virtually, many can, and this user-friendly, ultra-safe method of care has proven to be a true win-win for patients and providers.



MYOS RENS Technology, Inc.

By Joe Mannello,
CEO

MYOS, a nutritional company addressing muscle health in humans and canines, automated their supply chain to streamline processes and allow the business to continue with their team working remotely. Bi-weekly calls were initiated and I used these calls to bring levity, optimism and structure—understanding each individual was dealing with the pandemic through their own lens. MYOS set an early plan of continuing to serve existing and potential customers through education and training, offering webinars and a CE course for veterinarians. Expanding on education on both the human and animal side, MYOS has seen major benefits and growth as a resource for the vet and anti-aging medical communities. The company also focused on product development and clinical research to help fill the void in products backed by science around muscle health in the 55+ population and will be launching a new product line to benefit that age group.



ProCure Proton Therapy Center

By Tom Wang,
President, Managing
Director at BDO USA, LLP

As an essential cancer care facility, our mission is to improve the lives of our patients during some of the most demanding and difficult times, including the unprecedented times that we are living in. Our center remains open and accessible to cancer patients in need of treatment; and through the expansion of our new telemedicine service, we continue to assist our existing and potential patients from the comfort and safety of their home. Our experienced team of leaders is committed to ensuring a safe, diverse and inclusive environment for everyone and we are dedicated to restoring the health of our patients with the highest levels of personalized care. Additionally, we are strong advocates for timely cancer treatment and will make all necessary and appropriate accommodations to ensure our patients' treatment isn't delayed. Nothing is more important to us than the health, care and well-being of our patients, staff and community.

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IMAGING SERVICES

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HEALTHCARE



RWJBarnabas Health Medical Group

By Andy Anderson, M.D.,
President and CEO

The safety and health of our patients, providers and staff remained our highest priority. RWJBarnabas Health Medical Group providers offered in-office visits when best suited to the patient's healthcare needs and held telemedicine appointments as much as possible and when medically appropriate. Transitioning to telemedicine as a best practice for access provided an innovative and effective way to treat patients, allowing us to deliver efficient, convenient and safe access to healthcare, while limiting exposure to the virus. RWJBarnabas Health Medical Group providers and staff worked tirelessly throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Their incredible contributions made a tremendous impact, saving lives and improving the health of our patients and our communities. We joined colleagues throughout RWJBarnabas Health in acknowledging their acts of selflessness through the "Heroes Work Here" campaign. We also continue to share resources with providers and staff to enhance their health and overall well-being during this stressful time.



Saint Peter's Healthcare System

By Leslie D. Hirsch, FACHE,
President and CEO

Saint Peter's financial outlook was very strong going into the pandemic; however, unanticipated costs and revenue loss due to the crisis have been significant. This is now a major issue for hospitals across the country. As a regional leader in maternity care, expectant mothers continued their care at Saint Peter's during the crisis with stringent safety measures in place. Patient volume in other services is growing steadily as normal operations have resumed with heightened safety and patient care precautions. Patients can be assured that we are emerging from this phase of the pandemic—cautiously, carefully and safely—and providing the level of care to which they are accustomed. Our culture remains guided by our Catholic mission—caring for all who seek care, especially the most vulnerable—and I believe Saint Peter's will again be on a sound financial footing so that we may continue this sacred mission.



St. Joseph's Health

By Kevin J. Slavin, FACHE,
President and CEO

To continue to care effectively for patients, healthcare leaders must reimagine the idea of a hospital. Our challenge is to reconfigure our physical hospitals for the highest-acuity patients while shifting many other services beyond hospital walls. This transformation has already begun in the Emergency Department, which has served as the front door to the hospital. We are evolving to a "virtual front door" that uses technology (telemedicine, video conferencing, text messaging, online health trackers, etc.) to appropriately triage patients in need of care—whether the complaint is chronic, acute, or an exacerbation due to deferred care. With this in place, we can shift from episodic care providers to proactive health navigators, helping patients make informed decisions and receive the right care in the right setting. As more health systems continue to make the transition, we will likely see accelerated adoption of artificial intelligence and remote care technology.

HEALTHCARE



Trinitas Regional Medical Center

By Gary S. Horan, FACHE,
President and CEO

The COVID pandemic appears to be easing, however the anxiety people feel about coming to a hospital has not. People are putting off needed healthcare over fear of encountering lingering COVID germs. We redirected our marketing to address this concern head on, and to reassure the public that hospitals are among the safest of places due to the many steps taken to sanitize their facilities. We outlined 20 steps, such as having separate treatment areas in the ER, OR and patient floors for COVID patients (which thankfully are very few in number), to our sanitizing stations, patient testing, PPE usage, infection control training, use of disinfectant on all surfaces, and finally, treating all patient care locations with Surfaced Ultraviolet light. The key message is that at Trinitas, we are doing everything in our power to keep healthcare as safe as it can possibly be.



UnitedHealthcare of New Jersey

By Paul O. Marden,
CEO

At UnitedHealthcare of New Jersey, we have worked during this challenging time to meet the health and safety needs of our local communities. Since the start of the pandemic, we've expanded access to care through telehealth, allowing people to safely connect with healthcare providers from home. We've seen a tenfold increase in telehealth visits this year compared to last and believe that, as re-opening continues, telehealth will remain an important avenue for care. We are working to continue improving our telehealth resources for those we serve. We also partnered with Microsoft to launch the ProtectWell™ protocol and app to help employers in New Jersey and across the nation bring employees back to the workplace. The app features a framework backed by CDC guidelines and the latest clinical research that helps screen employees for symptoms and establishes guidelines to support the health and safety of the workforce and workplace.



Valley Health System

By Robert W. Brenner, M.D.,
MMM, President,
Clinical Integration &
Physician Enterprise

We are reflecting on lessons learned, and planning for a potential COVID-19 resurgence. During the past four months, our medical team and staff have shown us how creative they can be in changing processes and preparing our hospital to care for our community. They demonstrated incredible dedication and resilience in the face of this pandemic. Specific steps we are taking include daily updates on the status and the number of coronavirus patients admitted to Valley; aggressive sourcing of personal protective equipment with a goal to have more than a 90-day supply on hand; monitoring daily the number of ventilators on hand and in use; continuing to work closely with infection control and public health professionals to share information; and revising procedures and protocols as needed.

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HIGHER EDUCATION



Berkeley College
By Michael J. Smith,
President

It was essential to maintain our culture of high-touch, visibility, collaboration and connectedness with our communities.

The hyper-accelerated use of web-conferencing technology such as Zoom has been a standard, but not enough. While web-conferencing makes it easier for faculty, students and staff to come together, we still needed to do more. So, we increased our communications methods and frequency including more written communications and e-mails—I periodically send associates a 60-second video update and we have virtual town hall meetings. The annual tradition of my all-college, one-day campus tour, where I visit each campus in New Jersey, New York and online at the beginning of the summer was conducted remotely through Zoom, allowing for greater involvement across the institution, but still personalized to each location. Throughout COVID-19, frequent communication over alternative platforms have been effective in maintaining our collaborative, high-touch, response and personalized work culture.



New Jersey City University
By Dr. Sue Henderson,
President

To thrive under the challenges of COVID-19, we have learned to be nimble and creative in providing our students with a high-quality educational experience. We stayed focused on our core mission and made necessary adjustments as needed. I am grateful to the committed members of our university community who immediately stepped forward and demonstrated leadership in serving others. That leadership emerged in March when we moved to remote delivery and our faculty deftly adjusted their teaching. Now, we are working diligently to ensure we have a safe, secure and robust learning environment this fall that includes experiential learning and student development activities. This may well be our new normal for a while. The ability to adjust and be forward-thinking will determine the organizations who will thrive and those who won't.



NJIT
By Dr. Joel S. Bloom,
President

I am proud of the manner in which NJIT has adapted to the circumstances created by COVID-19. We are deploying a converged-learning model this fall that will, so long as state guidelines allow, enable students to work collaboratively and learn synchronously in-person or remotely in many courses, depending on which mode of learning they prefer. We also have made changes to Makerspace at NJIT in order to move from a facility that is used for prototyping to one that has been manufacturing thousands of face shields for healthcare workers who are on the front lines battling this pandemic. Additionally, we recently announced a collaboration with University Hospital and the Tuchman Foundation to develop modular, mobile medical care facilities to be deployed to areas of surging disease outbreak or other disasters. NJIT is meeting this moment by serving its students and also contributing to the broader fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

HIGHER EDUCATION



Stockton University
By Dr. Harvey Kesselman,
President

As a university, part of our mission is to create a community of learning. That community transitioned online almost overnight in March. While technology has been crucial to maintaining our connection to students and making new connections with potential students, our most successful asset has been our people. Even while working remotely, the faculty and staff have been dedicated and creative in meeting with and serving students, families and the public. For example, student admission ambassadors held live social media events to connect with new freshmen and answer their questions. Special events that moved online were livestreamed and recorded, reaching hundreds and, in some cases, even thousands of people who might never have been able to attend on campus. As we move forward, we will continue to offer in-person and remote courses, activities and events to continue to serve our community.



Thomas Edison State University
By Dr. Merodie Hancock,
President

As the entire TESU community continues to come to terms with COVID-19's evolving impact, we will carry on doing what we have always done so well—deliver high-quality courses and support in modalities that fit our students' lives, unique needs, location and learning styles. While the health and livelihood of our adult learners and staff continues to be a priority, we are adhering to state and federal distancing protocols and have put measures into place to mitigate potential health concerns while providing continuity for our applicants and students. As of July 1, TESU announced a 10 percent tuition discount for in-state students, bringing our already cost-effective tuition structure within reach for more New Jersey residents. We also expect to serve many in- and out-of-state students on hiatus from brick-and-mortar colleges by offering access to accredited, fully transferrable courses, 12 terms a year with 24/7 support.



William Paterson University
By Dr. Richard J. Helldobler,
President

Clear, consistent communication is fundamental to effective leadership, but like everything else during this pandemic, best practices for communicating with diverse constituencies have had to evolve rapidly to ensure that our students, faculty and staff are well informed of—and committed to—our course of action. Communication plans that typically account for crises with impacts over days or weeks must now accommodate a pandemic affecting every area of operations, which will likely be measured in years. Since the pandemic's start, we have kept students, faculty and staff updated on its rapidly changing impacts on our budget and operating plans by applying the protocols of consistent, comprehensive communications at scheduled, predictable intervals. It can be challenging to address various complex topics when so much often remains unknown, but we are more effective when all our people know the latest facts about the impacts to their education, livelihoods, health and safety.

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HOSPITALITY AND ENTERTAINMENT



Blue Moon Mexican Cafés, Englewood and Wyckoff, and Bronxville, New York
By Howard Felixbrod,
Owner and Founder

COVID-19 has been a challenging time for the restaurant business. Thankfully, we have a robust delivery and take-out business at all of our Blue Moon restaurants. We quickly adapted and created family meals for four and for six with an approachable price. To me, it was more important to be a resource of assistance for our customers. Our motto is “Life is a Fiesta,” and we knew the importance of keeping the fun going for the kids and came up with a “Birthday Party to Go,” which includes food, party hats and everything fun for the family to celebrate. During the crisis, we made it our mission to feed those on the front lines and donated many free meals and then created a “Go Fund Me Page” specifically for Meals for Heroes—those who are on the front lines dealing with the pandemic, feeding firemen, police, EMTs and healthcare workers.



New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC)
By Dave Rodriguez,
Executive Producer

We’ve chosen to delay reopening, as necessary, to ensure the safety of our audiences, artists and staff. While the Arts Center’s physical campus remains closed, our virtual offerings continue to excite audiences at home with our diverse, virtual online programming featuring performances by Savion Glover, Alvin Ailey, American Song, Chick Corea and more. We even have a weekly DJ Dance party in addition to free live dance workshops, yoga classes, community conversations and performer interviews. We’ve also been working with agents in being one of the first performing arts centers to offer paid virtual programming. We recently presented Max Major, Virtual Game Night and comedian Piff-The Magic Dragon: Live From Las Vegas. NJPAC has always been community-driven and we continue to be so through the pandemic by welcoming hundreds virtually to our Business Partners Roundtable events, where leaders and business executives discuss the issues most important to them.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



Decusoft
By Bob Laurenzo,
CEO

COVID-19 has forced us to reinvent the proven customer onboarding process we have used for 18 years. We had to modify our long-standing implementation methodologies because our employees and customers are working remotely. We took simple steps by extending our collaboration tools (web conferencing and chat), modified our project methodology from two to three day, full day, in-person meetings to smaller more “agile” type virtual meetings, while providing a central repository to our customers to review and track documentation and data. Initial customer feedback indicates the process is more streamlined and enables them to be more focused on shorter, more productive, easily scheduled sessions. These modifications have saved us time and allowed us to achieve greater efficiencies for both our customers and employees—ultimately leading to a better user experience for everyone.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



eMazzanti Technologies
By Carl Mazzanti,
President and Co-Founder

COVID-19 presented an opportunity to hone eMazzanti Technologies services and use the leadership time to add a technology practice for Enterprise Resource Planning. Our customers recognize the need for the increased agility that ERP provides, required by the current business environment, and thus are responding well to the offering. The combination of better service and the addition of this new offering to our customers not only kept us going but put us back on target for near triple-digit growth for the second half of 2020. The referrals, positive online reviews and customer case study submissions from our customers are at an all-time high. During these times, your ability to help those you service achieve their goals will help you achieve your own.



Integrated Business Systems
By Michael Mullin,
President

For IBS, as a managed IT service provider, the COVID-19 shutdown meant helping our clients transition more than 750 employees to remote work status—abruptly and rapidly. This included ensuring their team members had proper devices, systems and security to do their jobs. Today, companies continue to prioritize keeping their people safe and healthy with fully or partially remote operations and virtual teams—and many also are seeing the possibility that the pandemic has forever changed the nature of the workplace. Regardless of time and circumstance, employees, contractors and partners who have the right tools to work from home—or anywhere else—can operate efficiently and effectively. And with everyone staying connected, working remotely does not mean working in isolation. The takeaway? Providing business management solutions that support secure and seamless mobile and telework scenarios is an IBS best practice that will far outlast this challenging moment in time.



IT Radix
By Cathy Coloff,
Founder and Owner

IT Radix has grown by putting clients first. As we’ve grown, keeping everyone in sync has been vital. COVID-19 has made this more challenging and even more critical. Prior to March, we enjoyed weekly internal team huddles in person—since then they have been virtual and have increased to twice weekly. We have used Microsoft Teams for instant messaging communications for years, but now we leverage Teams for not only ourselves but also our clients, taking advantage of the face-to-face benefits of video, voice calls and quick check-ins. Fostering our ever-present positive outlook and staff morale has been augmented by internal “improvisational” meeting groups that include those with overlapping or interlinking job responsibilities. Allocating the time and space for staff to discuss “anything at all” in this way has proven to be a big win for IT Radix and our clients.

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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



Safari Solutions

By David Baron,
CEO

Our executive leadership team updates the staff with weekly e-mails about our corporate position, both financially and operationally. These updates include multiple industry news briefs and adjustments—specifically within our events division. Both our event division and solutions advisor division deliver technology to many clients in the country and required help with developing a new strategic plan. Our strategy pivoted to use the pause in professional sports as a time to train, plan and revisit many aspects of our business to allow us to come out of the momentary pause with new operational approaches to once again support clients in the new normal. Many internal projects and ideas that we have wanted to implement over time became fast-paced and were executed quickly during the pandemic. Numerous projects, such as software updates, deployment of new project management tools, procurement of improved hardware, inventory assessments and workflow decisions were all executed while the professional sports re-opening was defined.



SPHERE Technology Solutions

By Rita Gurevich,
President and Founder

Driving cross-team collaboration has been an ongoing priority, especially in this new normal of remote work. From a workforce perspective that has meant getting creative with employee engagement, we've implemented regularly scheduled virtual happy hours, fun fact welcome sessions (introducing new hires) and curated WFH newsletters made by and for our staff, complete with polls, recipes and Spotify recommendations. Organizational shifts have also been collaborative—we've placed increased focus on customer success and continuity via a dedicated team to ensure uninterrupted engagements and long-term satisfaction. This cross-department effort has enabled us to recognize gaps and implement a QA/UAT first approach to operate deployments successfully across our customer base.



United Network Associates, SMLR Group, Inc.

By Alan Heyman,
CEO

How have we prospered during COVID-19? By asking our clients what they were doing. We uncovered the fact that small accounting firms were getting requests from Fortune 500 companies to conduct outside accounting projects but were running into IT and compliance challenges. The big companies were streamlining and needed expert help in accounting, IT and compliance—our specialty since Ed Eisenstein and I have been a practicing outsourced CISO for years. Our accounting clients could handle the accounting questions, but when they got the 20-page compliance questions, they were lost. We worked with our clients to set up all their IT systems to comply with National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) standards. United Network Associates is trained and certified as a NIST-compliant organization. The accounting client got the project and was so happy with the turnaround time, they started recommending us to other accounting firms.

LAW



Archer

By Christopher R. Gibson, Esq.,
President

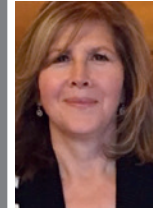
As we face the uncertainty created by COVID-19, protecting the health and well-being of our firm members and clients is a top priority. In March, we tested full firm bandwidth and transitioned Archer employees to work with remote access, allowing us to continue our normal client service functions without interruption. We embraced technologies that help us to effectively serve our clients no matter what the task. We handle virtual mediations, depositions, court appearances, bench trials and public land use meetings—many with extensive documents and exhibits. Our Litigation Support team works directly with counsel, clients and witnesses to ensure access and comfort. Regardless of how long this pandemic is part of our lives, we are prepared to continue to fulfill clients' needs to the highest level of expectation, which has long been the hallmark of our firm.



Bertone Piccini LLP

By Grace Bertone, Esq.,
Managing Partner

Our lawyers reinvented themselves by becoming experts in everything COVID-related very quickly, ranging from client guidance on workplace requirements, state shutdown orders and PPP loan application and forgiveness, as well as force majeure provisions and other contract-breach-related claims. Today, 99 percent of what we do is electronic, including billing, meetings and work-product transmission. We now communicate more frequently internally both on business and client matters, creating more transparency. This has led to a workplace that seems happier, more informed and more efficient. We've also increased our types of communication (e.g., calls, e-mails, texts and video conference platforms). After just a few months, we believe we may never go back to required 'in-person' meetings. Our firm has always been partially on a remote and temporary work-from-home basis to accommodate our part-time lawyers and unique schedules; at this point, there's a possibility that this way of life is here to stay.



Brandt Law & Mediation, LLC

By Jennifer Brandt, Esq.,
J.D., MA

I am an attorney and mediator and one of the founders of the Global Mediation Exchange Center in Jersey City, New Jersey. The way I have reinvented my business to meet the challenges of COVID-19 is through increased communication. I contact my clients, including prospective ones, and colleagues with whom I work. I send e-mails and updates. I even share thoughtful, heart-warming videos. Instead of a regular telephone call, I opt for a video conference so we can see each other face-to-face for a more personal interaction. At a time of growing isolation and uncertainty, the human touch goes a long way. It lets the clients know you are there and that you care for them.

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LAW



Chiesa Shahinian & Giantomasi PC

By Daniel A. Schwartz, Esq.,
Managing Member

Adapting activities and initiatives that were central to our business practices prior to the pandemic into this new normal has been critical to ensuring our continuity. Since March, when employees were promptly dispatched from the office and into a remote work environment for their safety, we have gathered weekly for informative, lighthearted and reassuring virtual firmwide town hall meetings led by me and other members of CSG's Executive Committee. These discussions are supplemented by regular, virtual meetings at the leadership, practice group, committee and administrative levels. This continuous communication helps keep all personnel connected, informed and in collaboration. Additionally, CSG and its employees have continued focusing on giving back to our community by creating successful fundraisers in support of the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice and RWJBarnabas Health's Healthcare Heroes—a testament to the continuity of our shared values, vision and engagement despite the physical distance from each other.



Cole Schotz P.C.

By Warren A. Usatine, Esq.,
Co-Managing Shareholder

Our culture and technology have enabled us to acclimate very well. Before COVID-19, we invested heavily in technology, allowing quick transition into a virtual law firm as the pandemic took root. To some extent, we've become even more efficient and connected. Our departments "meet" more regularly to share lessons learned in this challenging environment. Our people have elevated their game. Attorneys have provided volumes of timely and relevant educational content, and all personnel have worked tirelessly to guide and comfort clients during these uncertain times. Additionally, we have leveraged firm relationships to assist clients with business needs whenever possible. Our collaborative culture and multi-disciplinary expertise has led to opportunities that may escape other firms. For example, we have an exceptionally robust restructuring practice and, with COVID-19's negative economic impact, this practice has seen matter intake skyrocket. We have seamlessly integrated talent from other practices to absorb the additional caseload.



Gibbons P.C.

By Patrick C. Dunican Jr., Esq.,
Chairman and
Managing Director

Gibbons has thrived through this initial phase of the COVID-19 crisis—so far avoiding layoffs and pay cuts, providing seamless client service, even hiring—because we foresaw the wisdom of comprehensive emergency planning, resulting in a well-prepared firm smoothly managing unprecedented business conditions. After a fire damaged the firm's brand-new headquarters in 2007, I strategized an organization-wide reinforcement of emergency procedures and invested in facilities, technologies and programs to prepare for future crises—for example, expanding the purchase, testing and updating of laptops and remote access software licenses and ensuring all personnel responsible for critical operations had access to one or the other. Combined with my longstanding support of custom, flexible schedules and self-starting, independent work habits, this strategy eased the way to an entirely remote workforce. While COVID-19 remains an active hazard, we are now well-positioned to withstand this and future crises with minimal interruption to stellar client service.

LAW



Harwood Lloyd, LLC

By David M. Repetto, Esq.,
Co-Managing Partner

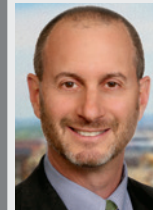
In February, before the impact of COVID-19 was felt in New Jersey, a friend and trusted advisor said that we would soon face a crisis and "we should not waste the opportunities that will come with it." That is not to say that things have been easy or that managing Harwood Lloyd presented fewer challenges than usual. As every manager of a professional services firm knows, we had our share of challenges, starting with insuring the health and safety of our employees. Our practice was impacted in almost every way, and to meet the challenges we looked at every aspect of how we provide legal services. The changes made will be lasting ones, and we will constantly examine how to best deliver quality legal services whether working remotely, utilizing our technology or embracing video depositions, meetings and conferences—all of which created greater efficiencies and savings for our clients.



McCarter & English, LLP

By Joe Boccassini, Esq.,
Firmwide Managing Partner

Collaboration and innovation are among the hallmarks of our culture and were integral to our ability to transition to working remotely. Our primary objectives were protecting the health and well-being of our colleagues, while ensuring that we continued to serve our clients without disruption, and to the standard of excellence they expect from our firm. We again relied on our collaboration and innovation to hold a historic summer associate program. We understood early on that frequent and effective communication is central to our ability to overcome the current challenges, and so we have been proactive—in the way we have reached out to our clients, and in the manner in which we have maintained open lines of communication across the firm. I am proud of how the McCarter family has come together and done what we do best—supporting our clients and each other throughout these incredibly challenging times.



Meyner and Landis LLP

By David B. Grantz, Esq.,
Partner

Meyner and Landis implemented remote working protocols for all employees, effective March 18. M&L provided all attorneys and staff with computers, printers, scanners and necessary supplies to conduct business operations remotely. To their credit, our attorneys and staff transitioned seamlessly and client services have met our usual high standards. Our attorneys pride themselves on remaining highly responsive to client needs and even more so while working remotely. M&L has begun its gradual, yet measured transition back to the office, with a significantly reduced number of attorneys and staff working from the office daily, with the goal of an eventual return to the office at least one day per week, rotating small groups of attorneys and staff that began August 17. The firm has implemented COVID-19 safety protocols and has been providing all employees with appropriate PPE to maintain a safe and healthy work environment.

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LAW



Norris McLaughlin, P.A.
By John N. Vanarthos, Esq.,
Chairman

The thing that has worked most effectively for us is demonstrating for our clients and prospects alike that we empathize with their situation. It's a frightening world for all of us and being able to show the kind of empathy that people need to feel comfortable and reassured is so important. We ended up going fully remote the weekend of March 19, but what was key in the following week and subsequent weeks was connecting with clients. That personal outreach was the difference between a paid invoice and a client gone silent. It also helped keep our attorneys top-of-mind as our clients grappled with the constantly shifting policies and executive orders, not to mention the legislative piece. Because we made the effort to show our clients that we're here to help them figure this out, we took on work related to pandemic business operations that nobody could have predicted.



NPZ Law Group, P.C.
By David H. Nachman, Esq.,
U.S. Managing Attorney

NPZ Law Group, like many of our clients, reinvented our business models during the COVID-19 pandemic. The practice of law is an "essential business" so a small number of protected workers remained on-site. Our staff turned to remote work from home and traveled to our offices (when necessary) to send U.S. and Canadian immigration filings to USCIS and DOL. Advanced "softphone" technology allowed NPZ staff to return calls to clients from personal cellphones with office caller-ID as opposed to personal numbers. Nominal fees paid for "softphone" technology were less than purchasing additional desktop phones or new work cell phones. NPZ staff dug in and continued to deliver the highest level of service. Our staff remained flexible with scheduling virtual meetings with clients using Zoom, WEBEX, etc. Partnering with our clients, we worked hard to help them through unprecedented times.



**Offit Kurman,
Attorneys At Law**
By Timothy Lynch, Esq.,
Managing Principal

Regular communication, solid business planning and our entrepreneurial business structure is what helped us thrive despite the economic challenges and uncertainty brought on by COVID-19. Firm management, with guidance from federal agencies and local governments, implemented new policies on an as-needed basis to promote compliance and safety for all attorneys and staff in every office. Externally, our internal operating changes were irrelevant to our clients as our ability to deliver the services that they needed were not impeded in any material way because we adapted and evolved our technology platform and prioritized our efforts to connect with our clients virtually. By sticking to our entrepreneurial business model, we were able to operate almost entirely as business as usual. The firm has added lawyers and hired more people since the middle of April and expects to continue to grow as more attorneys are looking for firms that offer stability and growth.

LAW



**Pashman Stein
Walder Hayden, P.C.**
By Michael Stein, Esq.,
Managing Partner

We have adapted to meet the changing needs of our clients through increased use of technology and alternative fee arrangements. We continue to work remotely throughout the pandemic, with rotating in-office staff to provide our clients the same excellent service they have come to expect. We participated in one of the first, if not the first, Zoom trials in New Jersey and appeared before the New Jersey Supreme Court, and routinely conduct meetings, depositions and mediations via video conference. Our Pashman Stein Walder Hayden attorneys continue to think outside the box to find novel and creative solutions to clients' business and legal problems. Now more than ever, the collaboration with our clients and among our attorneys, and the trust and camaraderie necessary for positive brainstorming, ensures that our clients have the benefit of our collective legal advice and insights, with many different perspectives considered.



**Riker Danzig Scherer
Hyland & Perretti LLP**
By Michael R. O'Donnell, Esq.,
Co-Managing Partner

Riker Danzig has always enjoyed a very collaborative culture, routinely engaging with colleagues on client matters informally throughout the day. So, this has been our biggest cultural adjustment, connecting with each other via teleconference and web conference in place of the preferred face-to-face interactions. We were already accustomed to meeting with clients via teleconference to some degree when it was determined to be an efficient and effective option for our clients. We now have found that we can effectively conduct internal meetings via web conferencing and have prioritized regular communication within our practice groups to keep our attorneys and staff connected and engaged with each other. We have also found that, generally speaking, location does not matter as much as everyone thought. Riker Danzig's attorneys and staff have worked remotely and securely throughout the pandemic, remaining available to assist our clients without disruption.



Rivkin Radler LLP
Gregory D. Miller, Esq.,
Managing Partner, NJ Office

Like the rest of the world, Rivkin Radler LLP has faced many challenges as a result of COVID-19. Due to the circumstances, nearly all of the attorneys and staff have been working remotely for the last several months. However, our dedication to our clients and to the other members of our firm has remained unchanged. We have been addressing these challenges by adapting and taking advantage of our remote IT platform, and being flexible, and communicative has allowed us to continue to produce the work product our clients expect from us. Simply put, the reason the firm continues to thrive during these difficult times is because of open communication with clients, coworkers and the courts. As commerce and industry begin to return to some sense of normalcy, we anticipate that the challenges of the pandemic and the lessons learned will keep the firm strong and thriving in the future.

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LAW



Sills Cummis & Gross P.C.

By Max Crane, Esq.,
Managing Partner

Putting our clients' needs first has been a guiding principle at Sills Cummis & Gross since the law firm was founded nearly 50 years ago. During 2020, our attorneys are continuing to focus on individualized client service. In many instances, our clients are under even more pressure and putting in more hours due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This added pressure makes it even more important that we engage with our clients by their preferred means of communication and on their preferred schedule, and afford them consistently updated, multiple technological options to achieve their goals. Whether working remotely or in the office, our attorneys continue to make it a priority to understand each client's business goals and objectives—something we have been striving to do since our inception in 1971.



Watkins Legal

By Kurt M. Watkins, Esq.,
Founder

For prestige reasons, transactional law has had far more overhead than necessary. Because of COVID, I dropped my physical office with no intention of resuming one and geared my whole practice to be digital and remote. I leveraged multiple SaaS's and technology hardware investments as well as hiring people I trusted who live nowhere close to me to do this. As a result, I have been able to share this cost savings and increased productivity with my clients without taking a hit to my bottom line. Moreover, due to the inherent flexibility of remote work, I intend to weave work and life more seamlessly together and, hopefully, create a better, more efficient way to render sophisticated legal services.

MANUFACTURING



Dream On Me

By Mark Srour,
CEO

As an essential business, the DOM Family (Dream On Me) has been operational throughout these unpredictable times, providing baby care products and baby safety items for parents across the country. While we have adopted all safety measures as recommended by the state, federal and CDC health-care departments such as wearing masks, taking regular temperature checks of staff, maintaining social distance and sanitizing the workplace at regular intervals, we have also implemented practices that ensure the welfare of our employees while making sure that business processes run smoothly and customer needs are met. Dream On Me has adopted a digital software that allows for contactless attendance. The company has also implemented a multiple shift and alternate day attendance policy, and work from home where possible. Within the office premises, Dream On Me has installed plexiglass dividers between cubicles and workspace and enforced virtual tele-meetings, including in-house meetings.

MANUFACTURING



New Jersey Manufacturing Extension Program, Inc.

By John W. Kennedy,
CEO

Remaining flexible was key in reinventing NJMEP to better suit the COVID-19 environment. NJMEP increased communication with state and federal governments to better access up-to-date information as it pertained to manufacturers' businesses at the start of the pandemic. Working with partnered attorneys, NJMEP distributed pertinent information found in executive orders and CDC guidelines to provide business leaders with actionable best practices daily to keep their employees safe and businesses open. Our workforce shifted from actively selling services to gathering critical client information to identify the key constraints and concerns of our client base. Additionally, we created a supply chain database to create additional local manufacturing and distribution connections to create business for New Jersey manufacturers and ensure the supply chain would not be compromised. These complementary efforts provided the information needed for our clients to remain in business. As a result, new business and new relationships formed.



Sandvik Coromant, Sales Area Americas

By Sean Holt,
President

Public health crises are unsettling, disruptive and confusing for everyone. With COVID-19 cases still on the rise, this virus has certainly tested how ready we all are for workforce disruptions. My best practice is that business leaders should take this opportunity to positively lead their companies forward as the primary crisis communicator. While you will always rely on the expertise, guidance and knowledge of your cross-functional teams of Environment, Health and Safety (EHS), IT, HR, communications and facilities to plan for different scenarios and optimize execution, take this opportunity to share COVID-19 updates with your employees yourself. This significant touchpoint shows your genuine concern for employee well-being and helps to build trust in your organization. During that communication, always make it clear that your number one priority is the health and safety of your employees and their families.



The Knotts Company

By Rick Howe,
President

The essential needs of our customers were our major concern in this challenging time. These customers had two urgent needs: safety equipment to allow their on-site employees to work through the pandemic; and automation tools such as remote monitoring systems and robots so they could continue production with fewer workers on the premises. In our 68 years as a distributor of automation and robotic technology, we historically conducted product demonstrations in a customer's factory or warehouse. Fortunately, a recent, major investment in new servers and computer systems left us well-positioned to work virtually. Our customers urgently needed to keep production going, especially those making PPE and packaging food, so they could protect workers, feed people and keep the economy moving. We conducted webinars and product demonstrations from home via Zoom to give them crucial, time-sensitive information and support.



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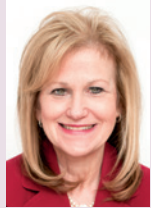
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MARKETING, ADVERTISING, PR AND PRINT/DIGITAL PUBLISHING



Amy Delman Public Relations LLC

By Amy Delman,
President

This pandemic has afforded me the opportunity to speak more frequently with both clients and media contacts since everyone is at home. These virtual or phone meetings, although business-related in nature, do delve into the human aspect of how we are all dealing with this crisis. For me, it has truly deepened and strengthened a universal need for connection beyond the business realm. Moving forward, I feel this time has opened a door into how my services can branch into areas that would not have been discovered if business had not changed so significantly. My best practice will be to continue to use virtual technology as a frequent way to stay in touch and, when the world opens up, weave it in with on-site and in-person meetings.



Clear Tunnels

By Richard Waltman,
President

A digital magazine distribution partner with a remote workforce, Clear Tunnels recognized our business model would be an effective solution for clients decentralizing their operations. Unfortunately, COVID-19 caused the furlough of essential employees, accelerated the decentralization and created opportunities for outsource partners. To address this, we increased our design and production capabilities, added web design, network development, production services and advertising sales to our suite of services. Using our Virtual Private Network, clients collaborate wherever they are, whenever they want. A natural extension of our expanded service offerings is consulting. We work with clients to optimize processes and reduce costs. We also began to offer mail list management for both conventional and e-mail lists. Understanding that the best way to stay viable during this crisis and beyond was to expand rather than contract our business, Clear Tunnels now offers solutions for the new normal.



Coyne PR

By Tom Coyne,
CEO

Our secret is purposeful connectivity. We have been able to recast our strategies to reinvent every aspect of our business, from media tours to influencer events to creating commercials to achieve client objectives in a virtual world. We extended this approach to maintaining our strong sense of culture while working remotely. Our weekly schedule features virtual staff meetings, cooking classes, meditation sessions, story times, nutrition bootcamps and Weekly Wisdom Lives (where our teams share industry best practices with each other). We do as much video conferencing as we can via Microsoft Teams and Zoom; seeing each other won't ever replace being together, but it really helps as we know the eyes are the windows to the soul.

MARKETING, ADVERTISING, PR AND PRINT/DIGITAL PUBLISHING



Marketsmith, Inc.

By Rob Bochicchio,
President

At Marketsmith, being prepared, solution-oriented and innovative is in our DNA. When the effects of COVID began to unfold, our team quickly analyzed the roadblocks our clients could be facing and identified two key issues—the immediate switch from live events to virtual experiences, and major budget reallocations or cutbacks. To address the former concern, we developed and launched TravelStill, a fully turnkey remote-produced digital video solution. More than a “toolkit,” TravelStill deployed with complete concierge-level service. Shortly thereafter, we launched BrandAmplify, an affordable way to engage a large, loyal audience through mainstream media channels. This strategic combination of broadcast and digital retargeting pays immediate dividends without the upfront investment of traditional television advertising. Our agency's ability to quickly pivot and provide these new resources that can meet our clients where they are has helped them keep their business goals on target.



Results Advertising

By David I. Green,
President and CEO

An ad agency is all about collaboration—creatives and management working together to maintain client expectations. With the pandemic reshaping this traditional work strategy, Results Advertising has had to add a new dimension to our agency's business model. Pre-pandemic, we had already taken steps towards integrating videoconferencing and other forms of digital collaboration—a move we further explored to keep the team unified regardless of locations. We've also designed our office in such a way that it encourages creative freedom by offering team members ample workspace, private offices, and wide-open areas for ideation. While this type of setting does foster creativity, in the era of social distancing it has been instrumental in cultivating a healthy and safe work environment. For us, the key to adapting to this reimagined workplace will be keeping true to what has kept the doors open for 30-plus years: flexibility, proactivity and resourcefulness.



Splendor Design Group

By Adam Taylor,
Founder and
Creative Director

There are three main components in our tech stack that enabled us to migrate and adjust very quickly to the COVID work environment. The first: file storage. Years ago, we made the switch to 100 percent cloud-based storage of all of our files. Our people can securely access any file at any time. Second: multiple devices. Everyone on our team is connected across a multitude of devices: smartphone, tablet, laptop and desktop. We've got access. Third: communications and management software. We leverage multiple platforms to communicate internally and with clients: Zoom, GoToMeeting, WhatsApp, e-mail, Apple Messages, text and Slack. And for project and client management: Google Docs, Asana, Slack, Trello, Agile and Outlook. But these are all just tools. The quality of our work is also greatly influenced by our levels of motivation. We feel it's critical to check in with each other and keep people positive and inspired.

Continued On Page 60

There's one thing experience has taught us... tenants come first.

With more than 30 years of ownership and management experience, we've learned a thing or two about keeping our tenants happy and feeling secure.



Bergman Cares Program
Implementing safety guidelines to promote healthy work environments.

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MARKETING, ADVERTISING, PR AND PRINT/DIGITAL PUBLISHING



Stuyvesant Press
By Michael Roesch,
President

Despite the decline of the printing and graphics industries in a tough economy, Stuyvesant Press was surviving—then COVID-19 hit at one of our busiest times of the year. We print for the hospitality and entertainment industries, hard hit by the pandemic. Being named an essential manufacturer, we started disseminating information for our township and other local governments. We also developed a complete line of COVID-19 safety signs, floor decals, display signs and more through our wide-format department to help educate and guide our clients. Additionally, we received contracts for making a large order of lawn signs for high schools, military academies and first responders. This reshaping has and continues to carry us through the pandemic and has given us a new direction for our company. We are expanding our services to include a new website to allow people to search and order promotional items, custom clothing and more.



Violet PR
By April Mason,
President

As a public relations firm with clients across the country, we shifted to 100 percent remote work in early March. We were initially concerned about getting news coverage for clients, which are primarily economic development, real estate and AEC firms. We were also challenged because suddenly all in-person conferences and events were shut down—an important source of revenue and leads for us. We identified creative ways to help tell newsworthy stories, working closely with media to secure hundreds of positive news placements for clients. Topics have included virtual site approvals, acquisition of a biotech park for vaccine research, deployment of autonomous cleaning robots, airport and hospital redesigns, and new supply chain strategies. We've also been holding webinars to increase our visibility, and added new clients including a virtual wedding planner, two U.S. cities paying workers to relocate there and an initiative to lobby for grants supporting New Jersey arts.



Alfred Sanzari Enterprises
By Ryan Sanzari,
Chief Operating Officer

Since the beginning of COVID-19, our number one priority has been ensuring frequent and transparent communication with our commercial tenants to promote their safety and well-being. Along with regular e-mail updates, we created a resource hub on our website which provided details on pertinent federal and state relief programs. We later used the hub to share comprehensive tenant re-entry information, including enhanced cleaning procedures and social distancing measures that were implemented. Additionally, to keep tenants engaged and foster a sense of community at Glenpointe, our flagship 670,000-square-foot office campus, we leveraged our partnership with Better Spaces, a flexible tenant engagement service, to transition our existing on-site programming to a virtual format to ensure classes were accessible to all tenants—no matter where they were working. A range of free digital wellness programming was made available to all tenants, including meditation, yoga, Zumba and other stress-relieving activities.

REAL ESTATE



Bergman Real Estate Group
By Michael Bergman,
President and Chief
Operating Officer

As New Jersey continues its re-opening phase, our team has taken a proactive approach with the creation of “Bergman Cares”—a comprehensive program containing our new safety policies and upgrades. These protocols include safety signage posted throughout our buildings, sanitizing stations in common areas and regular cleaning of high-touch surfaces by the janitorial staff. All building personnel have also been trained in best safety practices and are provided with personal protective equipment, such as face masks and gloves. Essentially, we want this workplace safety strategy to help our tenants return to day-to-day business with peace of mind. Our team is also closely monitoring the guidelines set by the CDC, OSHA and state and local authorities to ensure all of our commercial properties remain in constant compliance. We've even opened a dialogue with tenants to help add to our buildings' mitigation measures by developing their own safety programs.



Charity Realty International
By James F. Costanzo,
President, Broker of Record

During the pandemic, we have remained busy with pharmaceutical, general service and national defense clients that are deemed essential. They require our commercial real estate services for the procurement of additional office, manufacturing and warehouse space. As self-proclaimed germophobes, high-level hygiene has always been part of our best practices. We wash our hands whenever possible and carry hand sanitizer when soap and sinks are scarce. After a showing of our listings, we wipe down doorknobs and light switches. For occupied space, we schedule property tours after business hours. When touring a property, our clients are required to don a mask and provide a wide berth. We film our listings and offer virtual property tours. Closings and planning board meetings have moved to online platforms. Hopefully, someday soon, we can drop the masks, but some of the other adjustments to our services will carry on—and that is for the better.



Terrie O'Connor Realtors
By Terrie O'Connor,
President

As COVID-19 continues to affect real estate, it is clear our industry needs to make changes. New technologies have increasingly allowed business to be conducted remotely. However, the industry has been slow to adopt. The pandemic has forced us to pivot and offer clients the ability to look for and purchase properties while remaining safe. Matthew O'Connor, COO, has expertise in technology and employed many new technologies long before the pandemic as part of our standard marketing package, making the transition for our company seamless. These systems include Matterport 3D tours and floor plans; Zillow 3D tours; drone photography; virtual open houses and showings; electronic document signing; virtual staging; property videos; Real Scout visual property experiences; and online training for associates. We have continually advanced our offerings and can help our clients accomplish their dreams by marketing in a whole new way.

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TECHNOLOGY



BrainLit North America
By Oliver Moorhouse,
President

BrainLit, in scale-up mode in the United States, has maintained a flexible, digital and efficient work environment from the beginning of the pandemic. To the market, we have simply doubled-down on our message of delivering healthy, sustainable technology in business environments.



Konica Minolta
By Rick Taylor,
President and CEO

Konica Minolta focused on using innovation and technology to solve customers' business challenges. We reimagined, repackaged and repurposed existing technologies to create new offerings to help companies maintain business continuity. In June, when business offices reopened and needed to control facility entry, we leveraged our expertise in technology, products and workflow services to bring to market our "Return to Work" program. This comprehensive, end-to-end solution combines our proprietary software and ECM workflow solutions with our MOBOTIX Thermal TR cameras to support employees' safe return to offices. With remote work expected to continue, we again responded to changing market needs with the July launch of "Remote Work" and "Home Assurance," two platforms designed to equip organizations with the resources, security and processes required to enable a permanent remote workforce. I am proud of our agility to meet customers' needs, and we will continue to pivot as the world of work evolves.



LG Electronics North America
By Thomas Yoon,
President and CEO

At LG, I established what we're calling our "New Way of Working." This goes beyond home offices, remote meetings and virtual conferences. It's a new mindset that redefines how LG will exceed customer expectations during the pandemic, into the new normal and beyond. We focused on three areas: keeping our employees (and by extension their families and our communities) safe; assuring business continuity, optimizing our supply chain and supporting our customers; and giving back to our neighbors in need. Building on that foundation, we streamlined certain functions, identified product growth opportunities and implemented new processes—all to be more responsive to the rapidly changing market dynamics. Unprecedented times require unprecedented actions, and I am very proud of our employees in New Jersey and around the country who are embracing LG's New Way of Working, which I believe will make us even more nimble and more competitive.

UTILITIES



JCP&L
By James V. Fakult,
President and CEO

Throughout this health emergency, the goal of our front-line workers has been to complete every job safely and keep the power flowing to our 1.1 million customers. Our utility workers have adapted to new national safety requirements, while responding to customer outages with minimal impact to operations. To safeguard the health and safety of our employees, contractors and customers, JCP&L has implemented daily precautions, including alternating shifts and relocating job briefings conducive to social distancing; splitting into smaller work units to support distance between employees; and working from home when possible. In addition, effective March 13, JCP&L temporarily discontinued service shutoffs for past-due customers.

We understand many customers are in a difficult financial situation because of the pandemic, and we encourage JCP&L customers to explore some of our customer assistance programs to help work through these challenging times before overdue balances become unmanageable.

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Combining Tests More Accurately Diagnoses Prostate Cancer

Compiled by the
National Cancer Institute,
National Institutes of Health

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer among men in the United States and the second leading cause of male cancer deaths. But prostate cancer can vary widely in severity and its potential to spread.

Low-grade prostate cancer is associated with a very low risk of cancer-specific death and often doesn't require treatment. High-grade cancers are much more likely to spread and are responsible for most prostate cancer deaths. This makes the correct assessment of the cancer grade very important for treatment decisions. Finding and treating cancers before symptoms occur may improve men's health or help them live longer.

Systematic biopsy is often used to diagnose prostate cancer. This is a non-targeted method of taking systematically spaced samples across the prostate gland to find a cancer. Because this method can potentially miss areas of cancer, doctors may then overtreat a patient with low-grade disease, fearing there is high-grade disease they

missed. Or, if an aggressive cancer is missed, a patient may be undertreated.

MRI-targeted biopsies, which combine MRI images of suspected cancer with real-time ultrasound technology to target areas for biopsy, are better able to detect more high-grade cancers than systematic biopsies. A team led by Dr. Peter A. Pinto at the National Institutes of Health's (NIH's) National Cancer Institute (NCI) carried out a study to determine whether it would be better to replace systematic biopsy with MRI-targeted biopsies or use both tests together. They compared these methods on more than 2,100 men who had MRI-visible lesions. The study was funded in part by NCI and NIH's Clinical Center. Results were published on March 5, 2020, in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Participants underwent both MRI-targeted and systematic biopsies. More than 1,300 were diagnosed with cancer and 404 underwent prostatectomy, a full removal of the prostate. By comparing diagnoses from systematic biopsy alone to systematic biopsy plus MRI-targeted biopsy, the researchers found that combining the methods led to 208 more cancer diagnoses than systematic biopsy alone. The addition of MRI-targeted

biopsy also led to 458 upgrades—changes in diagnosis to a more-aggressive cancer, based on analysis of the biopsy tissue.

The combined biopsy provided more accurate diagnoses. Among the men who underwent prostatectomy, systematic biopsy alone underdiagnosed about 40 percent of the cancers. MRI-targeted biopsy alone underdiagnosed about 30 percent. The combined biopsy underdiagnosed only 14.4 percent. For the most aggressive cancers, systematic biopsy underdiagnosed 16.8 percent and MRI-targeted biopsy 8.7 percent, but combined biopsy underdiagnosed only 3.5 percent.

"Prostate cancer has been one of the only solid tumors diagnosed by performing systematic biopsies 'blind' to the cancer's location," said Pinto. "For decades this has led to the overdiagnosis and subsequent unnecessary treatment of non-lethal cancers, as well as to missing aggressive high-grade cancers and their opportunity for cure. With the addition of MRI-targeted biopsy to systematic biopsy, we can now identify the most lethal cancers within the prostate earlier, providing patients the potential for better treatment before the cancers spread." ❦



Adding MRI-targeted biopsies to the traditional prostate biopsy created a more accurate diagnosis and prediction of the course of prostate cancer.

CAR T-CELL THERAPY
HYPERTHERMIC INTRAPERITONEAL CHEMOTHERAPY
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IMMUNOTHERAPY
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HIGH RISK SURVEILLANCE

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WE'VE GOT CANCER SURROUNDED

ACCELERATED ACCESS
TO BREAKTHROUGH
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Atlantic Health System

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Providing safe and extraordinary care to patients with cancer has always been our priority – and that has never been more true than now. As a recognized leader in patient safety, our rigorous, enhanced safety standards ensure the care you receive is evolving for today's needs. In both new and familiar ways, Atlantic Health System stands ready to deliver the outstanding cancer care and access to breakthrough clinical trials you have come to expect from us. Nothing will ever stop us from caring for you.



atlantichealth.org/cancer



The Connection Between Ovarian Cancer and MicroRNA

Although ovarian cancer is the fifth-leading cause of death from cancer in women, scientists don't have a good handle on how it forms.

Compiled by the
National Cancer Institute,
National Institutes of Health

A new study suggests that a microRNA—a molecule made by cells to turn genes on and off—may help kick-start a type of ovarian cancer called high-grade serous ovarian cancer.

Cells with high levels of the microRNA, called miR-181a, were pushed to become ovarian cancer by turning off two important genes, scientists who led the study found. These and other findings from the National Cancer Institute-funded study were published June 26 in *Nature Communications*.

“One of the defining features of ovarian tumors is a large degree of genomic instability,” said the study’s lead investigator, Analisa DiFeo, Ph.D., of the University of Michigan. That means chromosomes are destroyed, copied or stitched together with other chromosomes, she explained.

Dr. DiFeo’s team has been hunting for a substance made by early-stage ovarian cancer cells that might help catch the disease earlier. But to find a biomarker, they first needed a better understanding of how the disease starts.

The current thinking is that ovarian cancer starts in fallopian tube cells that have a few gene mutations. Those abnormal cells eventually turn into a precursor of cancer, or precancer. Years later, the precancer becomes full-blown ovarian cancer.

But scientists don’t know what drives the transition from mutated fallopian tube cells to precancer to ovarian cancer. There is some evidence that genome instability drives the transition, Dr. DiFeo explained. She and her team wondered whether a microRNA might be the cause of genome instability.

MicroRNAs turn genes down by grabbing onto messenger RNA—the middleman between genes

and proteins—and stopping protein production. In so doing, microRNAs help fine-tune the activity of genes. In fact, a single microRNA can regulate a thousand different genes.

Several microRNAs have been linked to the development, growth and spread of different types of cancer.

For instance, in 2014, Dr. DiFeo’s team found that women with ovarian cancer whose tumors had low levels of miR-181a lived more than four years longer without their cancer coming back than women whose tumors had high levels of the microRNA.

In the new study, the team saw that, across 10,000 patients with 38 different types of cancer, those with tumors that had low levels of miR-181a lived several years longer.

Given their earlier work with miR-181a, the researchers decided to start there. First, they took human fallopian tube cells with certain mutations (those that are found in cells that turn into ovarian cancer) and engineered them to have high levels of miR-181a.

These cells grew on top of one another, formed tumor-like structures and had genome instability—all typical hallmarks of ovarian cancer.

Cells carrying a nonworking microRNA didn’t form tumors in mice. But cells with excess miR-181a formed tumors that acted like human ovarian cancer. The tumors spread to the mice’s intestines, for example.

It’s rare to “transform a normal cell to a cancer cell with just expression of one microRNA. Typically, you need multiple [genetic changes] for transformation,” Dr. DiFeo explained. That goes to show that microRNAs are “small but mighty,” she added.

So how does a little piece of RNA turn cells to the dark side? The answer turned out to be miR-181a’s effects on protein production.



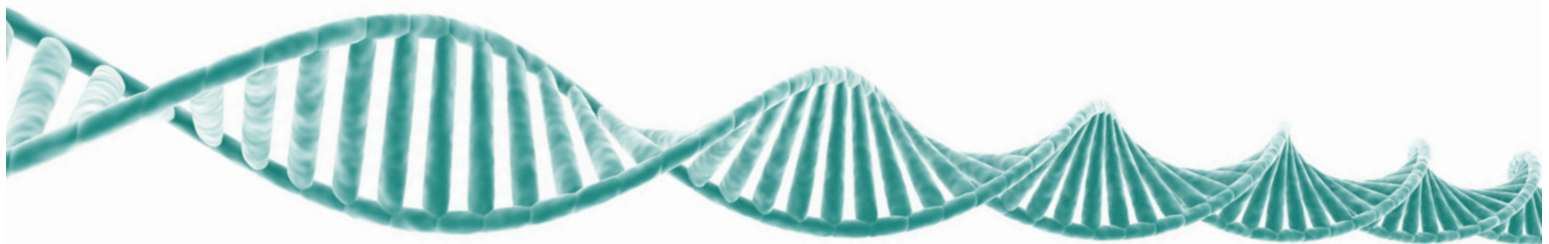
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The levels of more than 400 proteins differed between cells with the nonworking microRNA and cells with excess miR-181a, the researchers found. One protein in particular, called RB1, caught their attention because it controls cell division and protects cells from genome instability. Low levels of RB1 are thought to help ovarian and other cancers grow.

Additional experiments confirmed that excess miR-181a lowered levels of RB1 in the fallopian tube cells. As a result, the cells had unstable genomes, grew out of control and formed tumors.

But another question remained: How do cells with excess miR-181a survive with such unstable genomes? Cells normally self-destruct if their DNA is damaged beyond repair.

The answer, the researchers learned, is miR-181a’s effect on another protein, known as STING. STING’s job is to push the self-destruct button if it finds broken DNA floating around. But because excess miR-181a lowered levels of STING in fallopian tube cells, the cells avoided that fate. 📌



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