

A woman with braided hair, wearing a white cable-knit sweater, is sitting on a bed with a light-colored quilted blanket. She is smiling and looking down at a laptop computer that is open in front of her. The background shows a simple room with a white door and a light-colored wall.

**Education is opportunity.**

the difference is making one

**martin.**

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# Executive Summary

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this response to your *RFP for Communications and Marketing Services* for Hudson Valley Community College (HVCC). As requested, our proposal is structured to answer your specific questions of **WHY, WHAT, WHO, HOW, HOW MUCH, and WHO ELSE?** Our response is robust, so the Table of Contents on the previous page quickly directs readers to the contents of each section.

The Martin Group is a best-in-class integrated communications agency with offices in Albany, Buffalo, Rochester, and New York City. Our services range from research, strategy, branding, and integrated campaign development to media planning and buying, digital marketing, data analytics, and reporting. We work with clients who value strategic thinking, data-driven solutions, uncompromising service, personal integrity, and breakthrough creative solutions. And we place great value on collaborating with an experienced and talented in-house team like yours to develop customized, end-to-end marketing solutions to meet your enrollment and marketing goals.

The objective of our proposal is to communicate with laser-like focus that we are especially well-suited for a partnership with HVCC based upon our:

- Significant experience in developing effective higher education campaigns
- Innovative media strategy, planning, and buying
- Emphasis on digital marketing

## **Demonstrated Higher Education Experience**

In the WHAT section, we included several relevant case studies, as well as an overview of the numerous higher education clients with whom we have worked. Then, in the HOW section, we provided preliminary research and strategy to assess trends nationally and in the Capital Region – as well as the potential opportunity to position HVCC in the highly competitive landscape of higher education.

## **Effective Media Buying**

Also included in the HOW section is our team's initial assessment of the most effective and efficient tactics to reach your target audiences, followed by a draft recommendation for how to best allocate your budget across these tactics. While this research and media plan are preliminary in nature, they showcase our robust capabilities and experience and how we could bring them to bear for the benefit of HVCC.

## **Digital Marketing Expertise**

The HOW section also includes a road map for evolving your digital marketing efforts to improve targeting/retargeting and reduce your cost per acquisition. To demonstrate another capability, our team also shared a shortlist of potential influencers for more natural, organic content promoting HVCC.

The final pages of our proposal highlight our breakthrough creative solutions across industries and audiences. The Martin Group is "all-in" on a potential partnership with HVCC, and we look forward to the possibility of working with you!

A large, empty lecture hall with rows of wooden chairs. The chairs are arranged in a grid pattern, receding into the distance. The lighting is warm and soft, creating a sense of depth and perspective. In the background, there are wooden doors and a framed picture on the wall.

why

Our passion for partnering with Hudson Valley Community College

# why martin?

Because sometimes, two trails converge to create one amazing path forward.

The Martin Group is grounded in its mission to make a difference for the clients and communities that we serve across New York State and right here in the Capital Region. As an award-winning agency with significant higher education, digital marketing, and branding experience, our capabilities, expertise, and client focus can positively impact Hudson Valley Community College for many years to come. Through insightful research and strategy, breakthrough creative, and seamless service integration, The Martin Group seeks partners that value agility, insight, and innovation. And as evidenced by HVCC's commitment to brand investment, we believe that the college is precisely that kind of partner.

Like The Martin Group, HVCC is committed to making a difference in the lives of individuals and in the greater community. As one of the most sophisticated and comprehensive

community colleges in New York and beyond, HVCC contributes to advancements in cutting-edge technologies and changes the lives of thousands of students each year, particularly those underrepresented in higher education. In doing so, the college is putting their futures on a course for sustained success, increased lifetime earnings, and job stability. At the same time, HVCC is filling workforce pipelines in crucial industries, delivering a powerful economic impact and convincing major companies to invest and build in the area.

Our agency values strong internal marketing departments and approaches this potential relationship with an eye toward being the very best extension of your team possible. Over the more than two decades we have been in business, our associates have been exposed to projects and engagements in relevant programmatic fields of advanced manufacturing,

healthcare and nursing, business and finance, construction and automotive, clean energy, and online learning. These efforts have driven real results across B2B partnerships, heightened staffing and employee retention, increased enrollment, and achieved successful policy and advocacy outcomes, to name but a few.

In the ever-evolving and extremely competitive world of student recruitment and retention, we recognize that cost per acquisition matters. And that a true partner will treat your marketing dollars like their own. The stakes are high, and HVCC's brand is rightfully focused on positioning the institution as the college of choice – for both students and the employers who will hire them.

# why martin?

Why you should select  
The Martin Group is best  
said by one of our clients:

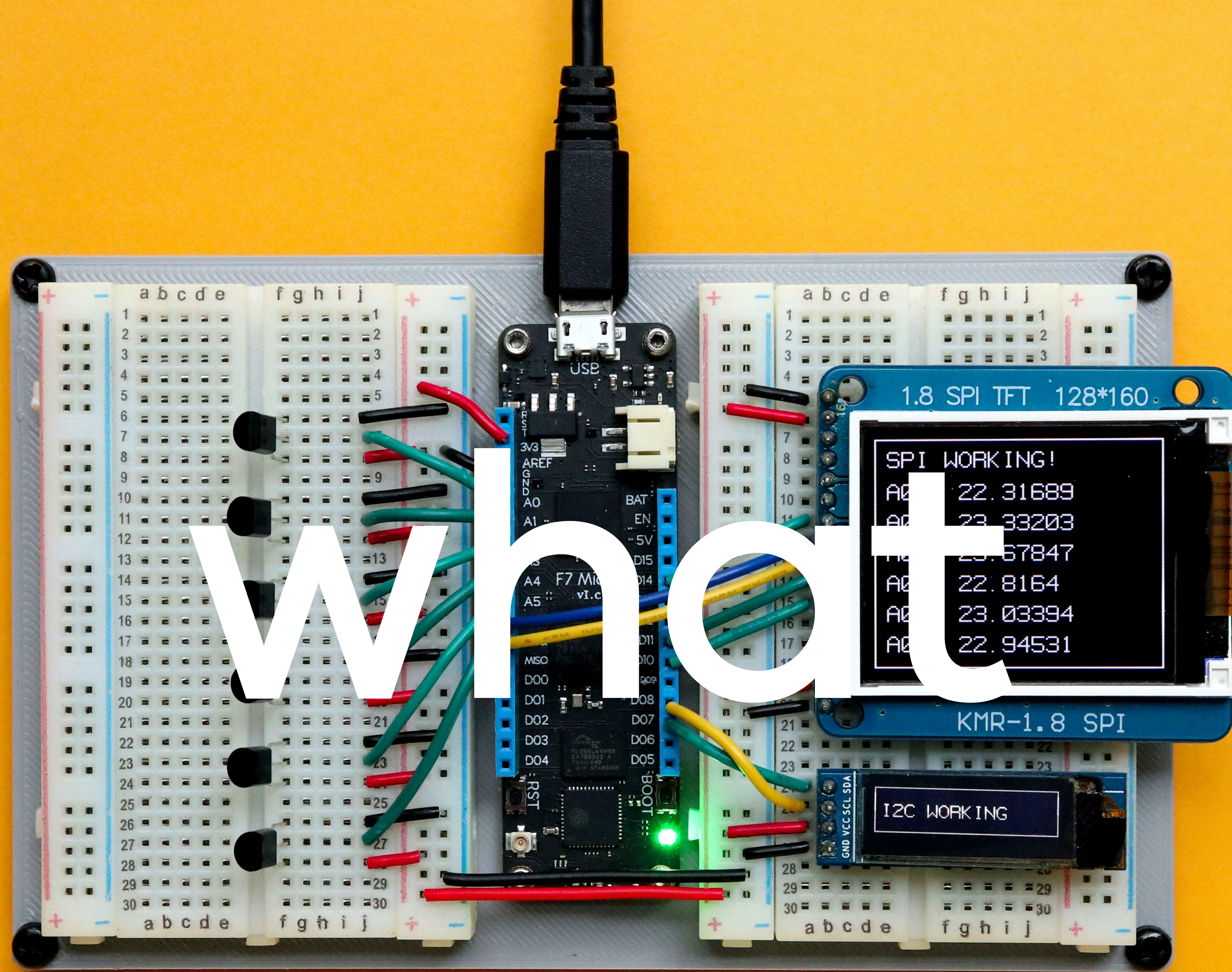
// The Martin Group not only took the time to understand our unique needs, but they also delivered tailored strategies that truly set them apart. Their understanding of digital marketing strategies, meticulous attention to detail, unwavering commitment to our success, and ability to stay focused on tasks were exceptional.

Throughout our partnership, The Martin Group fostered a collaborative and friendly working environment, where our input was valued and incorporated into the execution of collateral and ads. Their creative solutions not only elevated our online presence but also significantly enhanced our brand visibility and engagement with our target audience. Their strategies encompassed a comprehensive range of

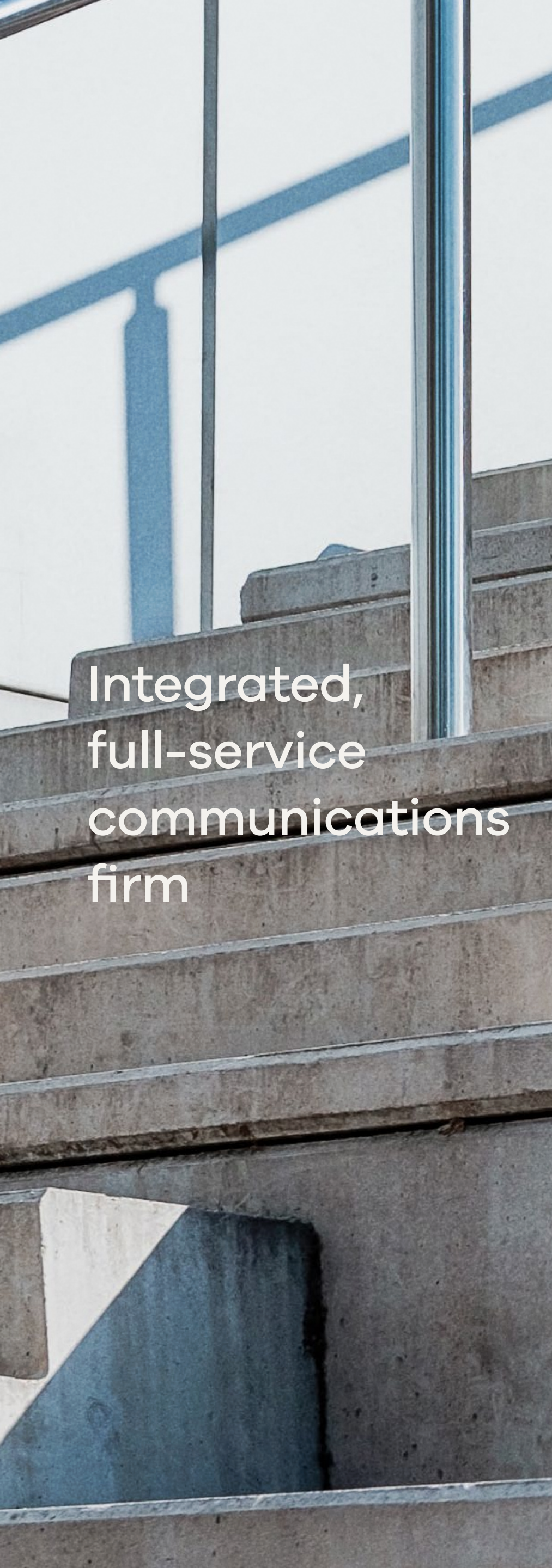
digital channels, employing cutting-edge techniques that ensured optimal results.

Overall, The Martin Group's professionalism, expertise, and dedication to our success were remarkable. They truly went above and beyond to deliver, and I highly recommend their services to any organization seeking to elevate its digital marketing efforts. //

– Evan Pierce,  
Associate Director for Academic Affairs,  
Niagara University



Our differentiators and demonstrated expertise



Integrated,  
full-service  
communications  
firm



Founded  
2001,  
a Hearst  
investment  
2020



Partner to  
regional,  
national, and  
global brands



Recognized  
for industry  
excellence



In-depth  
higher ed  
experience





**Fully  
integrated  
services.**

**95+ associates.  
research. strategy.  
analytics.  
branding. creative.  
digital. media.  
social media.  
videography.  
public relations.  
public affairs.**



NO. 01

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# Custom Solutions

We craft communications strategy that resonates with the target audience

NO. 02

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# One-Stop Shop

We provide integrated marketing solutions and serve as an extension of our clients' teams

NO. 03

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# Creative Chops

Our creative is informed and powerful and will stand out from the rest

NO. 04

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# Trusted Partners

Brands trust us to deliver on their most challenging communications needs



# Our Focus

Strategic brand  
development & positioning

+

Breakthrough creative  
& tactical executions

+

Marketing that delivers  
results & maximizes ROI

mission

we use brand intelligence to define and execute marketing strategy.

vision

we inspire people toward positive action.





# Practice Areas

Education

Food & Beverage

Sports & Lifestyle

Healthcare

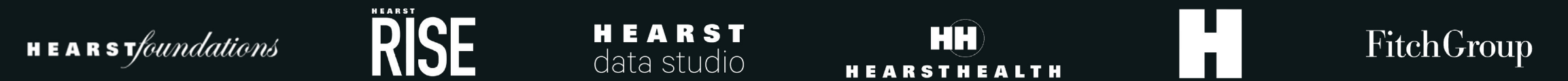
Financial Services

Professional Services

Nonprofit



→ A leading diversified business information and media powerhouse

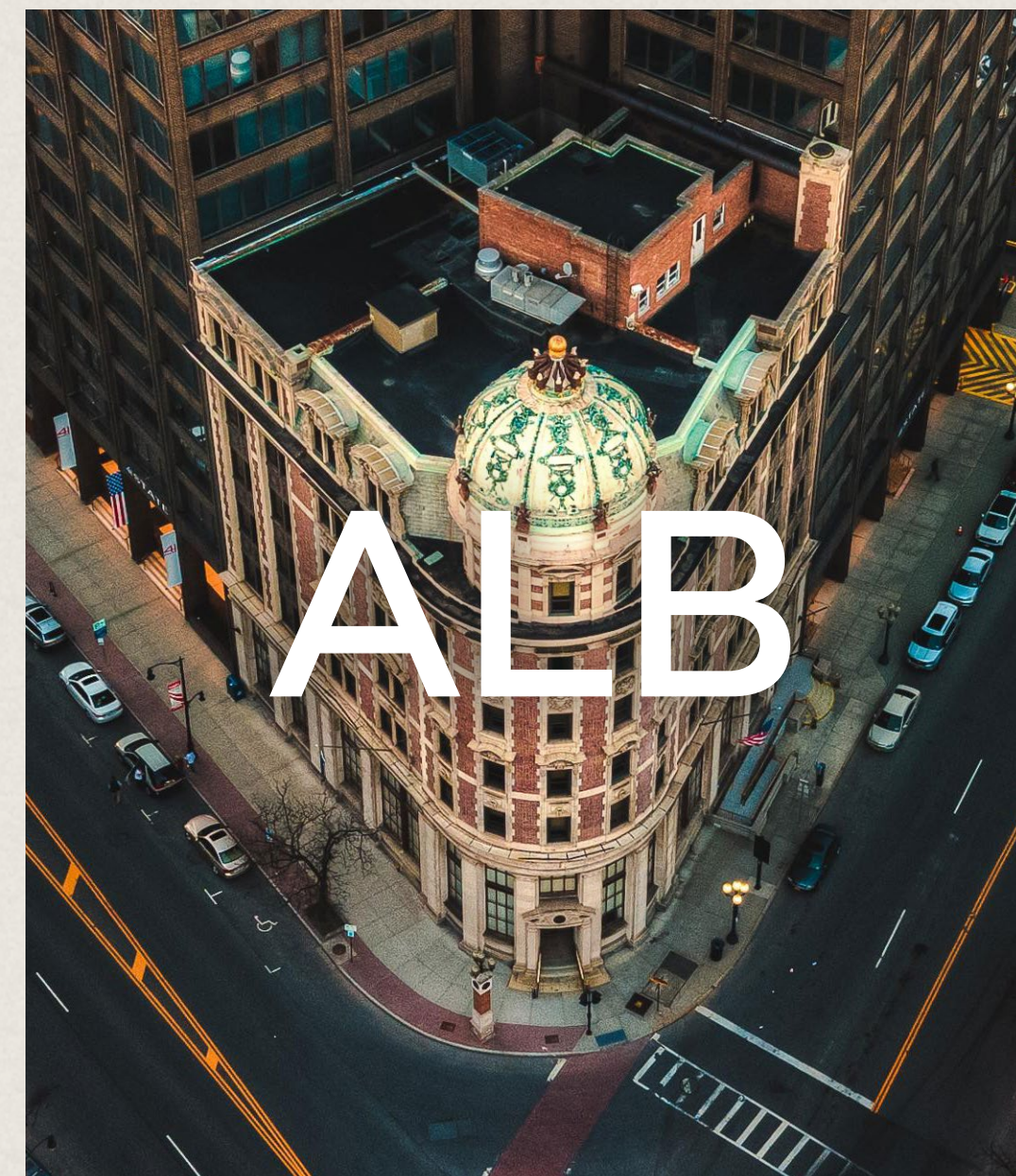
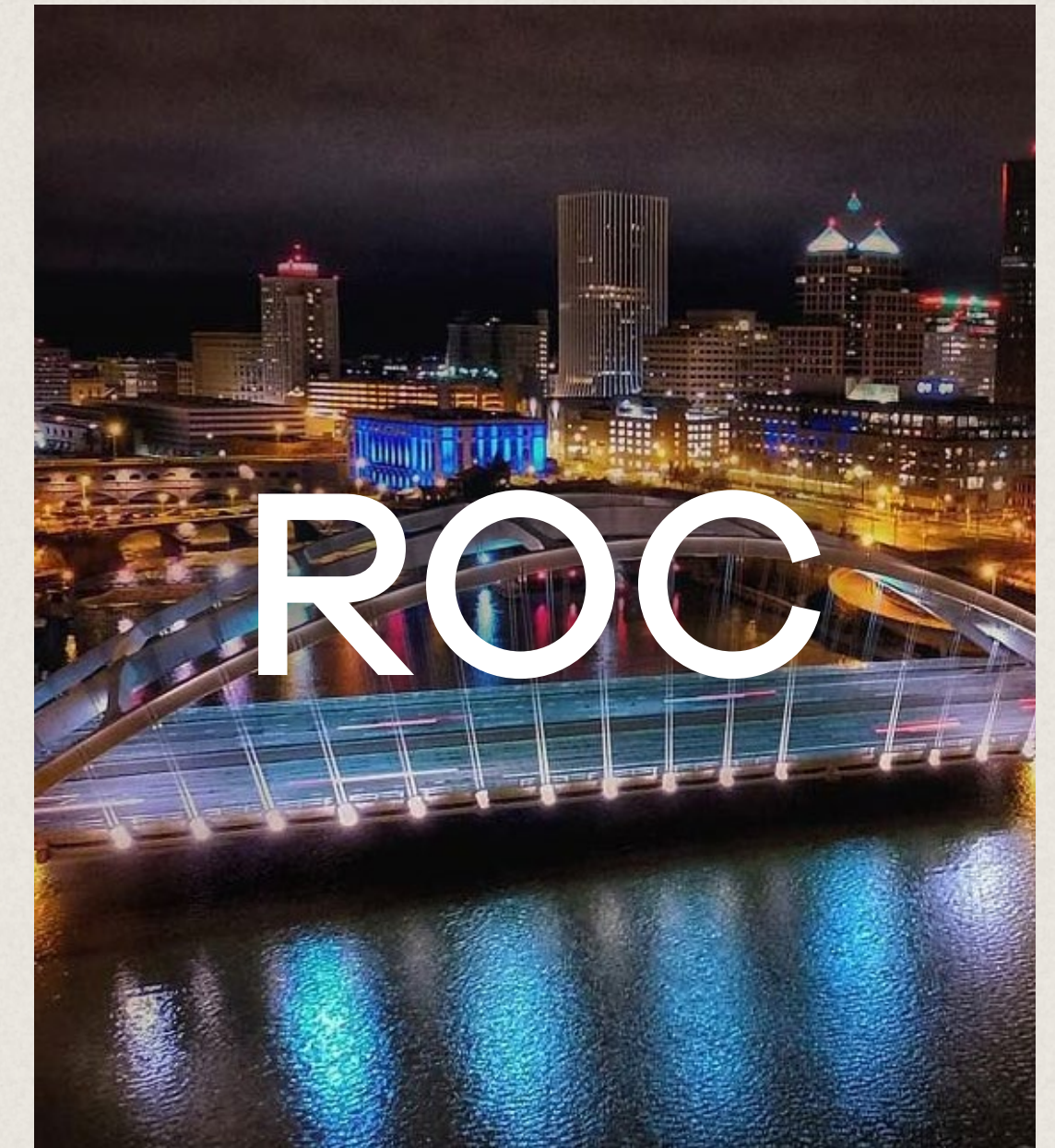


→ Recognized as one of the largest, sophisticated drivers of data alongside brands like Google, Apple, and The Walt Disney Company

→ Premium portfolio of brands



The Martin Group's statewide footprint and keen understanding of the diverse people, communities, and regional nuances that comprise the Empire State position us well to grow brands who call NYS home.





the difference is  
making one



we're here  
to make a  
difference  
in whatever  
we do for  
whomever  
we can.

Passion We love what we do and care greatly about how we do it

Connection We are deeply engaged with our team, our clients, and our community

Creativity We think of solutions differently and execute them with precision

Drive We are committed to professional growth, propelling client success, and supporting causes most important to us



# Our DEI Journey

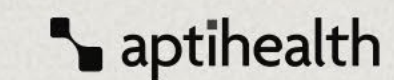
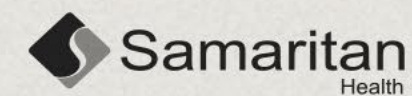
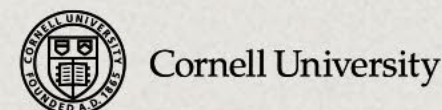
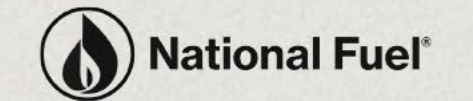
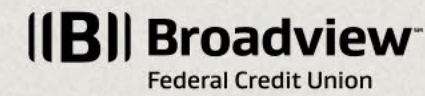
At The Martin Group, the difference is making one. Our DEI initiatives are not guiding us to a set destination, but rather an evolution of our culture on a constantly changing journey. We believe that bringing people together who have different thoughts, backgrounds, experiences, and beliefs will make us a better, stronger, more impactful agency. By actively seeking out diversity in employment hires and client work, ensuring equitable opportunities for all of our associates, and continuing to create and evolve our culture to be inclusive for all, we can make a greater difference in our communities, for our clients and for each other.



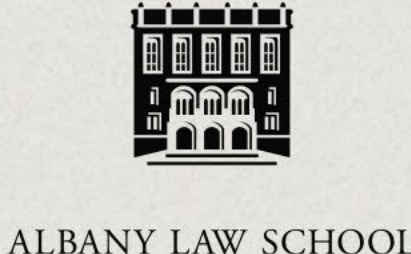
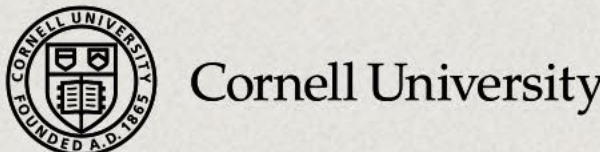
# Our Integrated Approach

- We believe the most powerful communications consider different perspectives, and succeed when they strike the perfect balance between data, experience, imagination, and strategy
- At The Martin Group, you'll have access to experts in all of the integrated communications disciplines under one roof

# Client Experience



# Our Higher Education Experience



# additional experience relevant to HVCC programs

## Advanced Manufacturing, Energy, Technology, & STEM

- ADNET Technologies
- Allied Motion Technologies
- Danskammer Energy
- Empire State Development / NYSTAR
- Exostellar
- FuzeHub / NY MEP
- Greenlight Networks
- M&T Tech
- MTI Instruments
- National Fuel
- Phillips Lytle Energy Consulting Services
- Sensible Solar for Rural New York

## Architecture, Automotive, Building, Economic Development, & Transportation

- Albany Housing Authority
- Albany International Airport
- Albany Parking Authority
- APTS of NY
- Arc Building Partners
- Aurelius Coworks
- Capital District Transportation Authority
- CSArch
- Dawn Homes / Landmark Albany
- LeChase
- Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority
- NRP Group

- The Rosenblum Companies
- SAA EVI
- Student Transportation of America

# additional experience relevant to HVCC programs

## Health Sciences & Community Health

- Circulo Health
- ECMC
- Independent Health
- Kaleida Health
- Mental Health Association in New York State (MHANYS)
- Mohawk Valley Health System
- New York State Association of County Health Officials
- New York State Society of Physician Assistants
- Prescription for Progress
- Samaritan Health
- Trillium Health
- United New York Ambulance Network



capabilities





# Strategy Bringing the path forward into focus.

## RESEARCH

- Primary
- Secondary
- Qualitative: IDIs, focus groups, strategy sessions
- Quantitative: multi-platform

## STRATEGY BRIEFS

- Brand
- Project
- Product

## BRAND POSITIONING

- Persona development
- Brand narrative writing
- Strategic point-of-view writing

## MARKETING PLANNING

- Strategic plan development
- Concept/message testing
- Integrated marketing communications plan development
- SWOT analysis



Creative  
Breaking  
through with  
the most  
impactful  
ideas.

#### ADVERTISING

- Campaign concept development
- Art direction
- Copywriting
- Traditional/digital advertising media
- Social media content creation

#### BRANDING

- Naming
- Logo design
- Tagline
- Brand storytelling/content
- Creative strategy
- Website design
- Packaging design
- Stationery package
- Brand guidelines

#### BRAND PROMOTION

- Retail marketing
- Event marketing
- Trade show design
- Sales collateral
- Annual reports
- Vehicle wraps

#### VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS

- Animation
- Illustration
- Motion graphics animation
- Photography production
- Video/broadcast production



# Digital Marketing Elevating online from every angle.

## DIGITAL CAMPAIGN DEVELOPMENT

- Campaign strategy
- User journey mapping

## SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

- Keyword and competitive research
- On-page and off-page strategy
- Website performance optimization
- Ongoing content development
- SERP ranking and reporting

## INBOUND MARKETING

- Lead generation and nurture
- Landing page development
- Email development
- Marketing automation
- CRM integration

## WEBSITE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

- UX-focused, mobile-centric design
- Full-stack development
- CMS, CRM, and e-commerce integration
- Custom website feature development
- Speed and performance optimization

## ANALYTICS AND OPTIMIZATION

- Custom tracking implementation
- Cross-channel measurement and attribution
- Dashboard development
- Monthly reporting and optimization strategies
- A/B testing

Our digital team has experience and certifications with a wide range of platforms that aid our digital marketing efforts.

Drupal™

facebook



Marketo™

mixpanel



pipedrive™



HubSpot



statamic





# Analytics and Reporting Optimizing information to reach the best outcomes.

## STRATEGY

- Custom tracking implementation
- Cross-channel measurement and attribution
- Key performance indicators
- Quality assurance and testing
- Audience segmentation

## INTEGRATED REPORTS

- Dashboard development
- Monthly reporting and optimization strategies

## CUSTOMIZED MEASUREMENT

- Awareness
- Consideration
- Engagement
- Conversion
- Sentiment
- Audience growth

## ANALYSIS

- Key insights
- Data-driven optimizations
- A/B testing
- Platform performance evaluation
- Spend assessment



# Paid Media Making certain every effort finds its audience.

## **MEDIA RESEARCH**

- Demographics
- Lifestyles and attitudinal data
- Media usage/consumption habits
- Competitive spending analysis

## **STRATEGY/PLANNING**

- Custom audience building and remarketing
- Full-funnel, integrated media plans
- Reach and frequency analysis
- User journey maps

## **DIGITAL ADVERTISING**

- Programmatic display advertising
- Streaming audio
- Paid social media
- Native advertising
- Online video and over-the-top
- Hyperlocal geofencing

## **SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING**

- Keyword research, volume forecasts, and list building
- Ad group segmentation
- Text ad creation
- Conversion/goal implementation and tracking
- Audience and competitive insights

## **TRADITIONAL MEDIA**

- Television
- Radio
- Print
- Out-of-home
- Direct mail

## **ANALYTICS AND OPTIMIZATION**

- Post-buy audit
- Conversion tracking
- Attribution modeling
- Cross-channel measurement

We deploy a full range of contemporary research, planning, and buying tools to effectively and efficiently drive media results.





# Social Media and Content Building trust, loyalty, and engagement across channels.

## CONTENT STRATEGY

- Competitor research
- Content strategy and editorial plans
- Content calendars
- Platform management

## CONTENT MARKETING

- Blogs
- White papers
- Op-eds
- Photography and videography
- Motion graphics
- Long form and episodic content

## COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT

- Customer response playbook
- Live monitoring
- Reputation management

## INFLUENCER MARKETING

- Program development
- Influencer research
- Partnership negotiation
- Influencer guidelines
- Content coordination and scheduling
- Impact measurement

## SOCIAL LISTENING

- Brand, product, and service mentions
- Competitor monitoring
- Trending topics and keywords
- Sentiment analysis
- Crisis management

## ANALYTICS AND OPTIMIZATION

- Content performance
- Audience growth and reach
- Engagement analysis
- Conversions and referrals





# Public Relations Ensuring your message is heard and understood.

## COMMUNITY RELATIONS

- Special event planning
- Corporate philanthropy
- Community sponsorships
- Annual reports

## CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS

- Crisis planning
- Spokesperson training
- Corporate positioning
- Executive change
- Issues management

## EVENT MANAGEMENT

- Location research
- Theme development
- Logistics planning
- Invitation database development
- Event supervision

## INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

- Communications strategy
- Employee relations
- Labor issues counsel
- Quality management

## MEDIA RELATIONS

- News conferences
- News releases
- Media kit production
- Publicity
- Press tours
- Media monitoring
- Editorial board briefings
- Media training

We deploy a full range of contemporary research, planning, and tracking tools to effectively and efficiently drive earned media results.





# Public Affairs Influencing change across business and government.

## ISSUE ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS

- Message development and strategy
- Media relations
- Coalition building
- Government affairs support
- Campaign branding
- Social media
- Event management

## COMMUNITY RELATIONS

- Stakeholder outreach
- Grassroots mobilization
- Energy siting communications
- Economic development communications
- Labor relations

## ASSOCIATION SUPPORT

- Message development and strategy
- Media relations
- Member recruitment
- Advocacy and activation

## BALLOT INITIATIVES

- Communications support
- Political strategy
- Campaign branding
- Social media content and management
- Direct mail and advertising support



case studies

# Excelsior College. Driving leads in a crowded landscape.

National college enrollments are shrinking, and an increasing number of online education programs are entering the market. Excelsior College – a pioneer in distance education and leader in online learning – sought to differentiate themselves from their competitors, clearly communicating their value to become the school of choice for their target student population. The Martin Group was brought in to expand brand awareness, grow alumni engagement, and increase qualified leads through targeted digital advertising, conversion rate optimization tactics, cohesive media planning, content marketing, and strategic branding initiatives.

Measuring the existing positioning of the college and exploring internal culture were key to solidifying a strategic foundation from which to launch a cohesive brand awareness and enrollment campaign. Internal and external perception research studies, creative concept testing, and digital marketing audits were

performed in collaboration with Excelsior key stakeholders and marketing teams. Our efforts indicated that a significant population of adults who seek college degrees aren't served well by a traditional higher education experience. This group wants to earn their degrees as efficiently as possible amid their full-time commitments, with a drive to capture advancement and opportunities in a new or current field.

The Martin Group translated these insights into a new brand position: Life Happens, Keep Learning. This tagline highlights Excelsior's key offering of college credit for past experience and training, in addition to its core component of flexible, student-centered online learning. Targeted messaging and a fresh creative look were developed and refined across multiple communication platforms to support Excelsior's lead generation and enrollment campaigns while seeding brand throughout.

This included improvements in digital marketing, digital user experience, and content development that would support lead generation from new inquiries (focusing on a sales funnel of awareness, consideration, and conversion). After a thorough advertising and audience analysis, national target audiences were narrowed and aligned with key program initiatives to optimize overall digital campaign performance monthly and yearly.

Following elevated targeting and lead generation tactics, Excelsior budgets were maximized, and waste eliminated. Deliverables included SEM, display, social media advertising, organic social media, retargeting, marketing automation, email nurture campaigns, landing pages, content marketing, SEO, ad creative, and direct mail – all of which contributed to the most important campaign result: 3,700 enrollments.

YOU CAN COMPLETE YOUR DEGREE—WHILE YOU KEEP UP WITH LIFE.

Learn more at [excelsior.edu](http://excelsior.edu).

30+ ONLINE PROGRAMS  
MAXIMUM TRANSFER CREDIT  
REGIONALLY ACCREDITED  
NOT-FOR-PROFIT

**EXCELSIOR COLLEGE**  
Life Happens. Keep Learning.™

**EXCELSIOR COLLEGE**

LIFE HAPPENS. KEEP LEARNING.™

Transfer more credit | Complete your degree sooner | Lower your total cost

YOU'VE GOT THIS.

Program Level:

Area of Study:

EXPLORE ONLINE PROGRAMS

# GET MAXIMUM CREDIT FOR YOUR NAVY TRAINING

Choose from 50+ online degree programs

**GET STARTED**

**EXCELSIOR COLLEGE**

## YOUR WHOLE FAMILY IS IN THE MILITARY

That Means Shared Sacrifice—and Benefits

When your spouse is in the military, it's busy around the clock. You are, too. Excelsior College makes it easy and affordable for you to pursue your degree while your spouse serves. You'll receive all the military support and benefits you're entitled to. We'll help you complete your degree so you can get back to work with your family in military service.

**EXCELSIOR COLLEGE**

# LIFE HAPPENS. KEEP LEARNING.

More transfer credit for faster degree completion

**EXCELSIOR COLLEGE**  
excelsior.edu

Excelsior College  
January 18, 2018

Excelsior College Degrees at Work: See how Terry Evans, Cybersecurity graduate is putting his four degrees to work running his own business and see the advice he has for his fellow Excelsior students.

**DEGREES AT WORK**

CEO of Cybersleuth Investigations, Inc.  
**TERRY EVANS**

Degrees At Work: How Terry Evans Turned Four Excelsior Degrees Into a Career Fighting International Cybercriminals

3 Shares

THE BUFFALO NEWS

LIFE HAPPENS. KEEP LEARNING.™

With credit for post-education and professional training

**MIKE HARRINGTON: IN DISMISSING PHIL HOUSLEY, JASON BOTTERILL PUT HIMSELF ON THE CLOCK**

Know It Now

1. Howard added in his death from stroke today.
2. Who will replace Housley as the next local coach of the Buffalo Sabres?
3. Will Tiger Creek eventually pass from hand to hand?
4. Sullivent plans expansion, but will include a new stadium?
5. Before TV ratings may up down last year's struggle which covering all...

**EXCELSIOR COLLEGE**

## 10 Tips to Get More Out of Your Online MBA Program

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Start with more credit

Our MBA requires 36-45 credits. Waive up to 18 approved credits. Transfer up to 24 approved credits.

Work around your schedule

Complete courses online when it's convenient for you. Designed for working adults and non-traditional students. Maintain your busy life and gain real-world experience.

**Program Outcomes**

Upon completion of an Excelsior College Master of Business Administration, you will be able to:

- Prepare and deliver effective written and oral communications to create organizational culture, resolve conflict, and create momentum for diverse audiences.
- Apply quantitative and qualitative business analysis techniques to solve problems and support management and strategic-level decisions.
- Develop an action plan to continuously improve and include new knowledge and skills to rethink leadership.
- Recognize problems in business settings and propose solutions to a team of colleagues.
- Analyze complex organizational structure, and opportunities for organizations, including staffing, direction, strategy, and building momentum.
- Apply role and develop innovative solutions for sustainable business that address economic and social needs.
- Evaluate how global environments impact ongoing business practice.
- Analyze culture differences and how those differences affect business practice or management.
- Integrate empirical research and management theories to the process of strategic planning for profitability, including the use of academic research.

**Program Educational Objectives**

Upon completion of an Excelsior College Master of Business Administration, within a few years of graduation, you will be able to:

- Design, implement, and evaluate the efficacy of solutions for complex business problems.
- Engage in ongoing learning for professional, career, and personal development.
- Lead and work effectively and efficiently in diverse team settings and maintain a high level of performance in a professional business environment.
- Communicate effectively and efficiently to various audiences in a clear and professional manner.
- Demonstrate leadership and initiative to effectively achieve organizational goals and objectives.
- Demonstrate adaptability, leadership, mentoring skills, and management in work-related settings.

### Master of Business Administration 36-45 CREDITS

FOUNDATION COMPONENT (Required)	Credit Hours	CONCENTRATION COMPONENT	Credit Hours
Economics	3	Accounting	3
Organizational Behavior	3	Financial Planning/Analysis	3
Quantitative Analysis	3	Corporate Finance/Budgeting and Decision-Making/Accounting Basics	3
<b>TOTAL CREDITS FOR FOUNDATION</b>	<b>9-12</b>	Human Resource Management	3
		Business Law and Legal Studies/Contract Law/Business Law/Dispute Resolution	3
		Staffing and Development	3
		Top-Down Strategic Planning/English Performance	3
		Leadership	3
<b>CORE COMPONENT (Required)</b>	<b>Credit Hours</b>	Leading Teams/On-Target Planning/Approach to Leadership/Change	3
Accounting for Managers	3	General Business Communication	3
Global Business Environment	3	How to Succeed in Business	3
Information Technology	3	<b>TOTAL CREDITS FOR CONCENTRATION COMPONENT</b>	<b>12</b>
Leadership	3		
Managerial Finance	3		
Marketing	3		
Operations Management	3		
Project Management/Principles and Applications	3		
Strategy and Policy Capstone	3		
<b>TOTAL CREDITS FOR CORE COMPONENT</b>	<b>27</b>		

# Excelsior College results

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2.2M+

impressions from brand awareness campaign

---

56%

conversion increase year over year

---

80%

CPL decrease year over year

---

3.7K

new enrollments

---

50+

media campaigns

---

56.6K

clicks

# Western Governors University. WGU's eyes, ears, and biggest advocate in the Empire State.

The accredited, nonprofit Western Governors University was looking to build name recognition – and increase engagement with potential partners – in New York State when it established a Northeast regional office in 2020. WGU tasked The Martin Group with elevating awareness of both the university and its innovative, competency-based approach to education – a challenge due to the number of well-established, traditional educational options in communities across the state.

We set out to meet those goals by introducing WGU's regional vice president to key community stakeholders and leveraging the university's thought leadership in the form of op-eds, earned

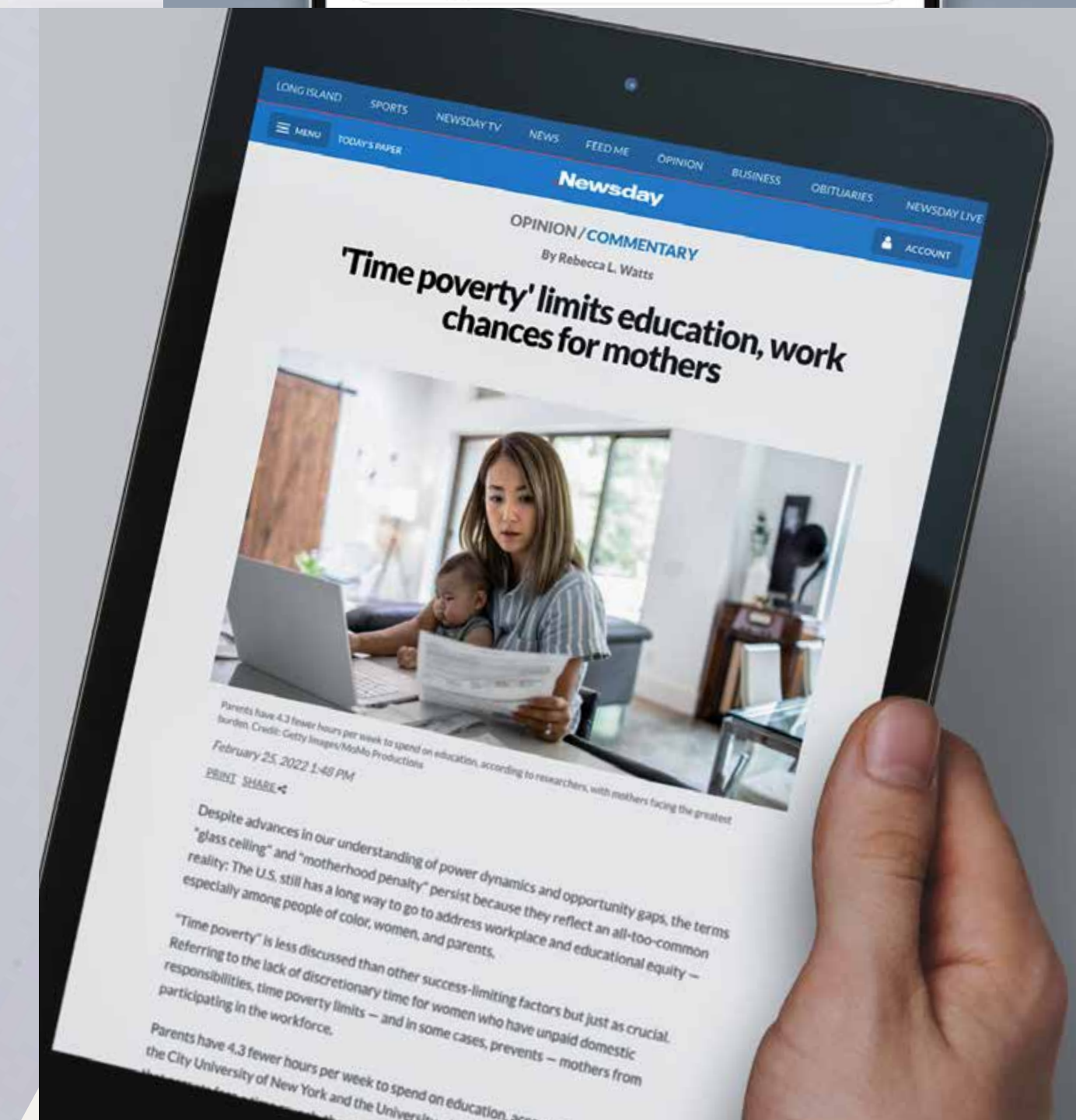
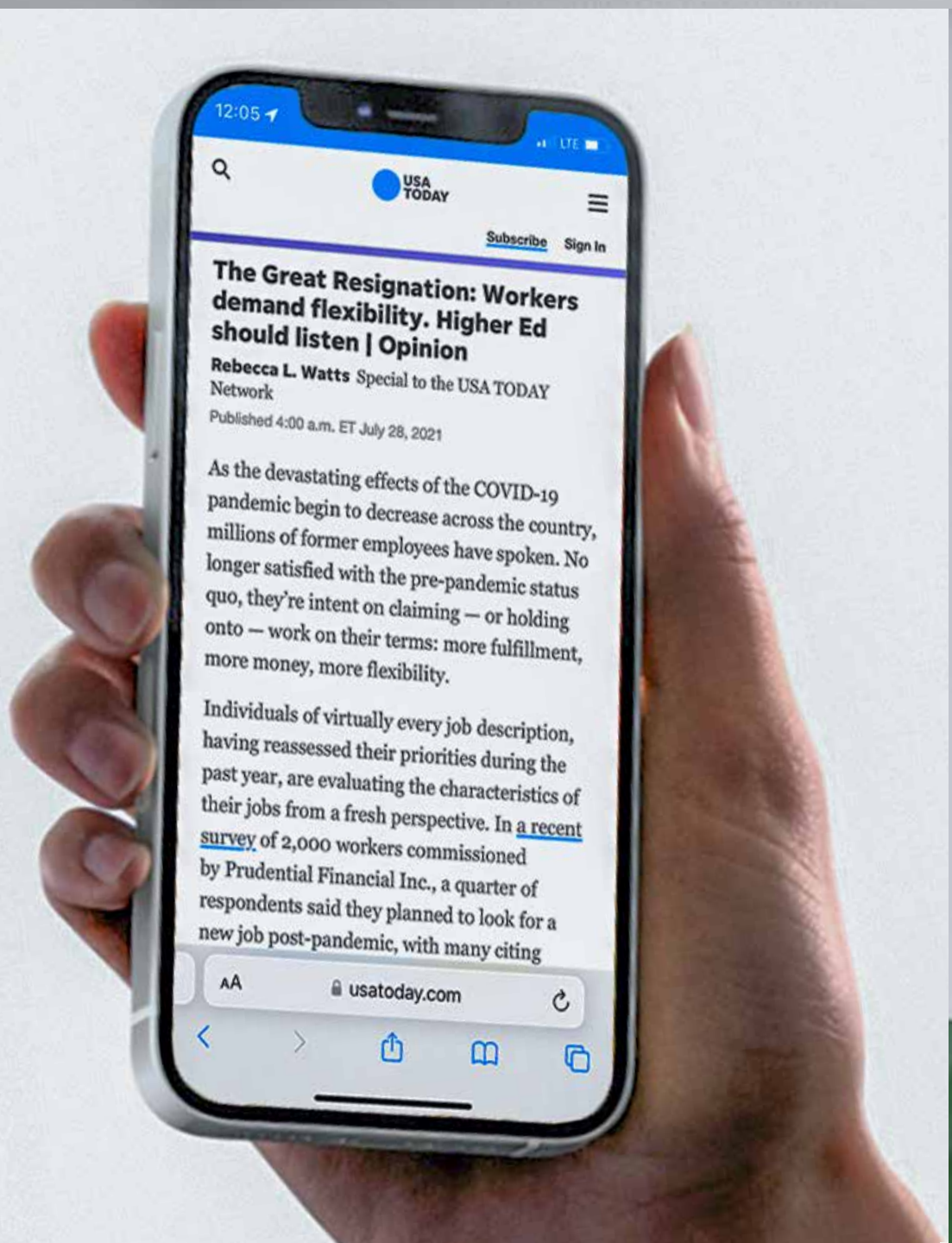
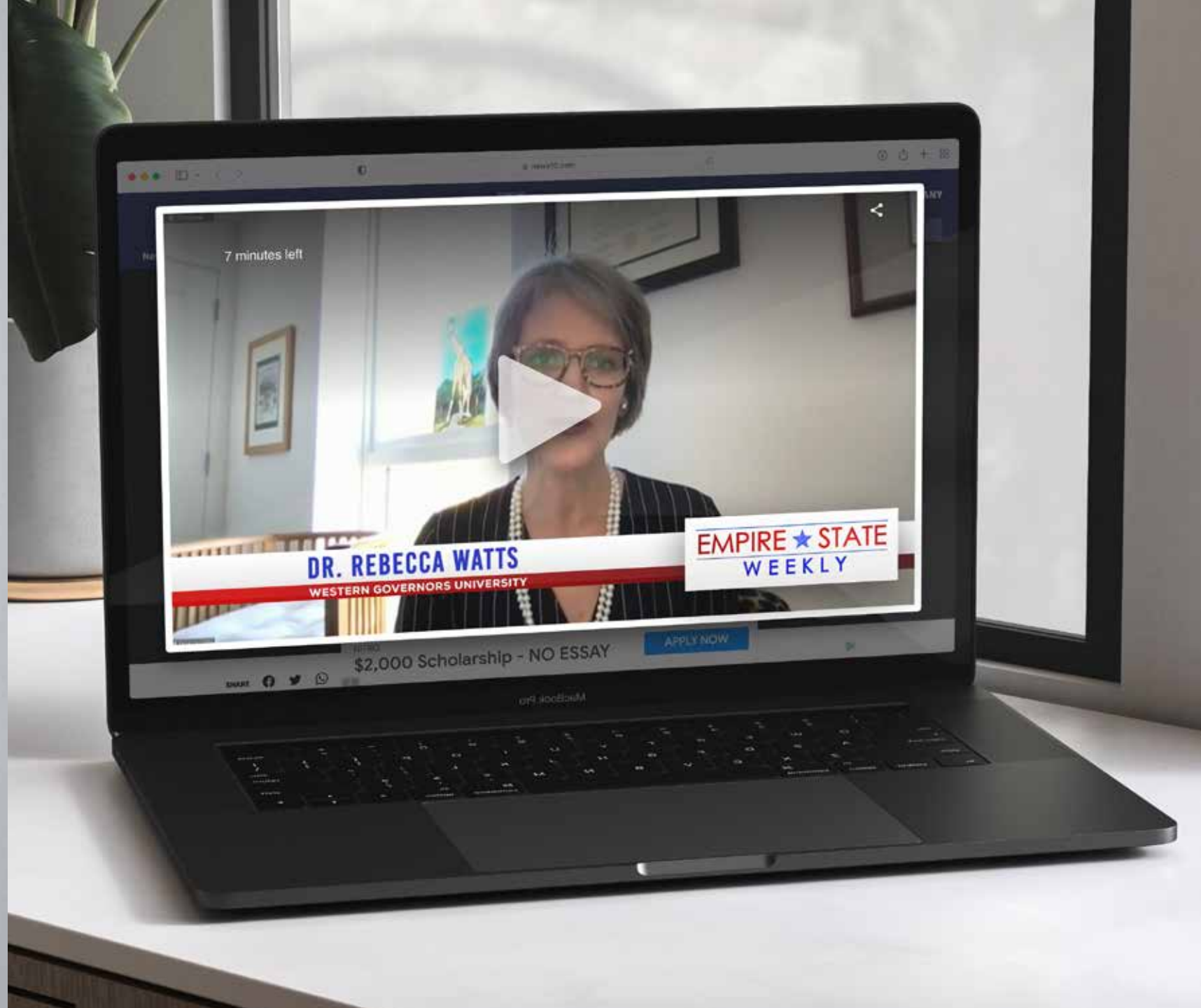
media, and webinars. The Martin Group also pursued creative ways to position WGU as a credible, effective, forward-thinking alternative within the state's higher education landscape. As one example, we led an effort to nominate WGU for The Business Council of New York State's inaugural Higher Education Workforce Innovation Award.

Within two and a half years, our team placed more than 60 op-eds in key markets such as New York City, Albany, Buffalo, and Rochester; generated 87 regional and national earned media placements; facilitated 21 strategic introductions to regional or statewide leaders in media, business, and economic development; and supported 15 events that exposed new audiences to WGU and its programs.

In spring 2022, WGU was named a finalist for the Business Council's Higher Education Workforce Innovation Award. The honor came with statewide publicity and put WGU in good company with the SUNY system and Clarkson University, two of the state's highest-regarded institutions of higher education.

Our team continues to increase WGU's brand awareness through public relations activities and plays a key advisory role in the university's overall efforts in New York. We're not just WGU's partner. We're its greatest advocate in the Empire State.





# Western Governors University results

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63

op-eds and letters to the editor across NYS and the Tri-state area

---

87

regional and national earned media placements

---

230%

agency performance across all KPIs

---

15

events organized

---

17%

enrollment increase in New York State

---

21

strategic introductions facilitated to regional or statewide leaders in media, business, and economic development

\*Reflects results in first two and a half years of engagement.

# Niagara University.

## Taking graduate enrollment to a higher degree.

In Spring 2021, for the first time in its history, Niagara University needed to create a campaign aimed specifically at graduate students. Facing factors such as a renewed interest in remote learning and the pandemic-era mindsets that led professionals to consider new paths, Niagara had – and needed to react to – opportunities to raise both awareness of and inquiries into enrolling within selected graduate degree programs, which ranged from business administration to education to cybersecurity.

Building off of an established and longstanding relationship with Niagara University, The Martin Group team began by hosting a strategy session with the University's leadership, marketing team, and program deans. This yielded a host of insights, including the type of prospective graduate student who would be most sought after in enrollment goals: working professionals

with a wealth of experience looking to take their next step. These lifelong learners had unique challenges (family responsibilities, full-time careers, higher standards for ROI, and more), and would be best served by the flexible environment and breadth of programs belied by Niagara University's intimate size. With reaching these individuals at its core, our team next developed a brand brief and comprehensive paid media plan ahead of creative exploration. Our creative team developed the concept of "To a Higher Degree," speaking to prospective students for whom experience and eventual advancement are highly valued. The campaign saw us enrich the meaning of a "higher degree" to point to the tangible yet aspirational benefits of choosing Niagara University, and came to life in a robust, full funnel of tactics, including: social media advertising, native advertising, digital streaming and video

ads, search engine marketing, custom landing pages, retargeting ads, and more.

Through working with The Martin Group, Niagara University has been able to reach a wide swath of prospective graduate students located across New York State, Northwestern Pennsylvania, and Northern Ohio. Final results from the one-year campaign include 40.5 million ad impressions, over 131,000 website sessions, a wealth of phone calls to admissions offices, and thousands of qualified leads. Our enrollment conversion rate improved from 15% to 18% by the end of the campaign, meaning nearly 1 in 5 leads gained during this timeframe ended up enrolling in the university. This important campaign laid a solid foundation and benchmark for NU to continue to build upon their graduate program marketing and advertising.

**THIS IS A**  
**higher degree**  
**OF LEARNING**

**Take your career higher**  
Request more information about our graduate programs.

**The graduate programs of Niagara University**

At Niagara University, our graduate programs bring new meaning to the idea of a higher degree.

By combining exceptional resources and education with a

First Name\*  
Last Name\*  
Telephone\*  
Email\*

YouTube

**A HIGHER DEGREE OF influence**

Why Niagara?  
33 views · Jan 28, 2022

Niagara University  
1,17K subscribers

Becoming a member of the Niagara family instills in students a heightened sense of purpose through robust student life, service-learning, and study abroad experiences. That's The Power Niagara.

DISLIKE SHARE SAVE SUBSCRIBE

12:41

**NU** Niagara University  
Sponsored ·

Earn a Master's in Finance from Niagara University— with supportive faculty to guide you.

**A HIGHER DEGREE OF success**

NIAGARA-UNIVERSITY.COM  
**A Higher Degree of Success**  
Find out what sets NU apart. [Learn More](#)

76

Like Comment Share

1:15

Search

Heather Argus and 23 others

**NU** Niagara University  
28.9K followers

Stay a step ahead with an M.S. in Information Security & Digital Forensics from Niagara University ...see more

**A HIGHER DEGREE OF potential**

M.S. INFORMATION SECURITY & DIGITAL FORENSICS [Learn more](#)

Explore a career in cybersecurity.  
niagara-university.com

51

Like Comment Share Send

John Mackowiak likes this

12:10

Not Secure — niagara-university.com

**NIAGARA UNIVERSITY**

**ALL THE PATHS TO a higher degree OF ACHIEVEMENT**

Whether you're looking to take the next step as an educator or make the leap into this influential field, our graduate programs can help you get there:

[REQUEST MORE INFO](#)

11:21

**NU** Niagara University  
Sponsored

**IMPACT thrives**

[Learn More](#)

YouTube

**CAREERS grow**

SHOW IN

# Niagara University results

---

40.5M+

impressions

---

18%

enrollment conversion rate

---

32%

application conversion rate

---

3K+

leads

---

131K+

website sessions



thought  
leadership  
examples



## Fresh Thinking Can Help 700K New Yorkers Finally Earn Their Degrees

*The Bronx Times* | February 1, 2023

It's great news when 14,000 students go back to college to finish their studies. This piece acknowledges CUNY's accomplishment while urging New York City leaders not to forget the 680,000 other residents with some college credit but no degree – and the barriers they may face as adult learners.

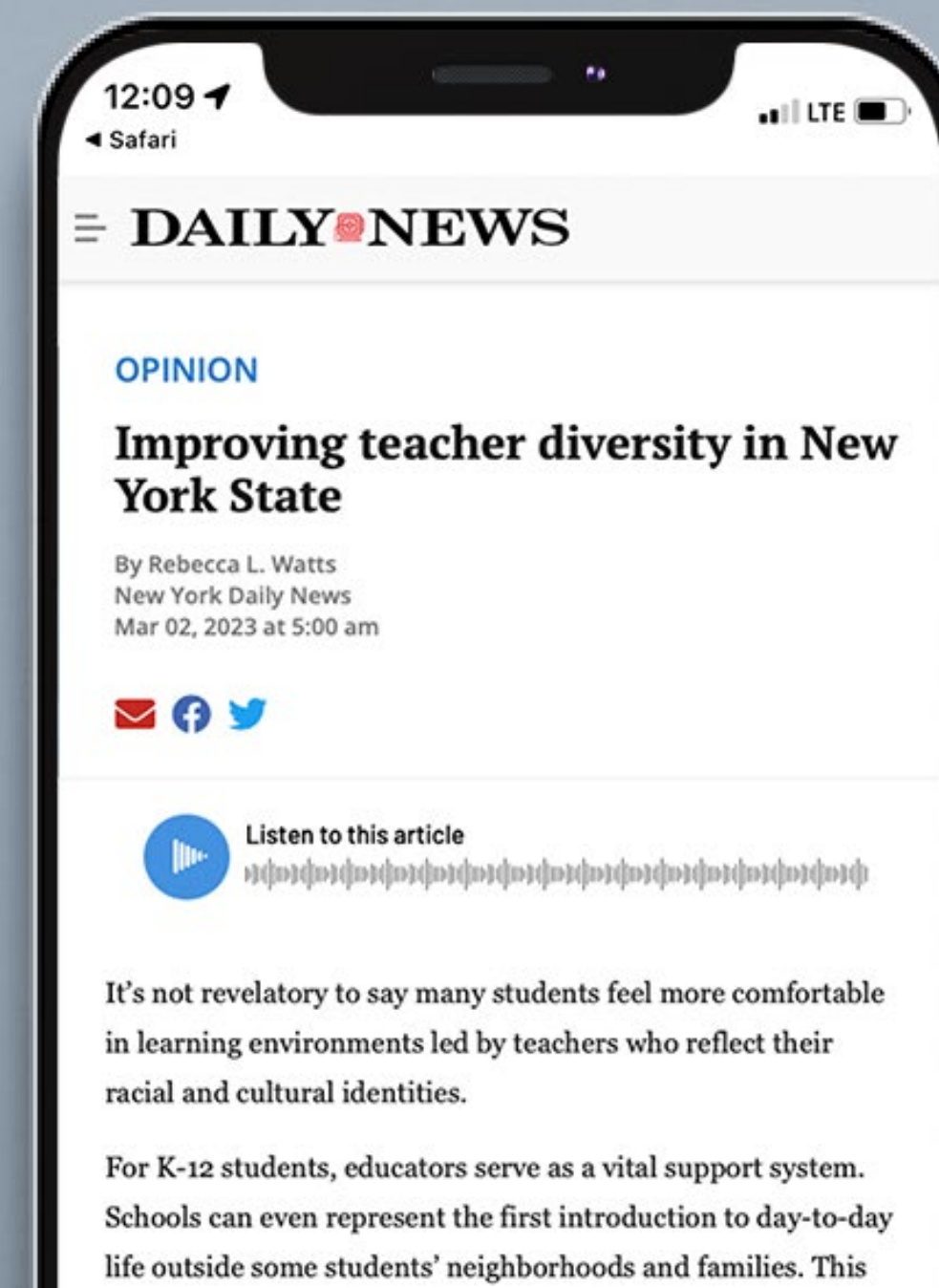
**“Re-enrollment initiatives and the growth of innovative online degree programs ... represent important steps in bringing higher education to more New Yorkers. All options should be on the table for working-age adults seeking to improve their lives through education.”**

## Improving Teacher Diversity in New York State

*New York Daily News* | March 2, 2023

Colleges and universities have a role to play in improving New York State's teacher diversity. Western Governors University regional VP Rebecca Watts argues that outside-the-box thinking, such as competency-based programs and funding to upskill teachers' aides, will help make the path to the profession more accessible for future teachers of color.

**“We can start [increasing educator diversity] by eliminating barriers to recruitment and retention for teachers of color. ... It's imperative that schools and educator preparation programs in colleges and universities work together to reimagine professional preparation possibilities in an inclusive, accessible way.”**

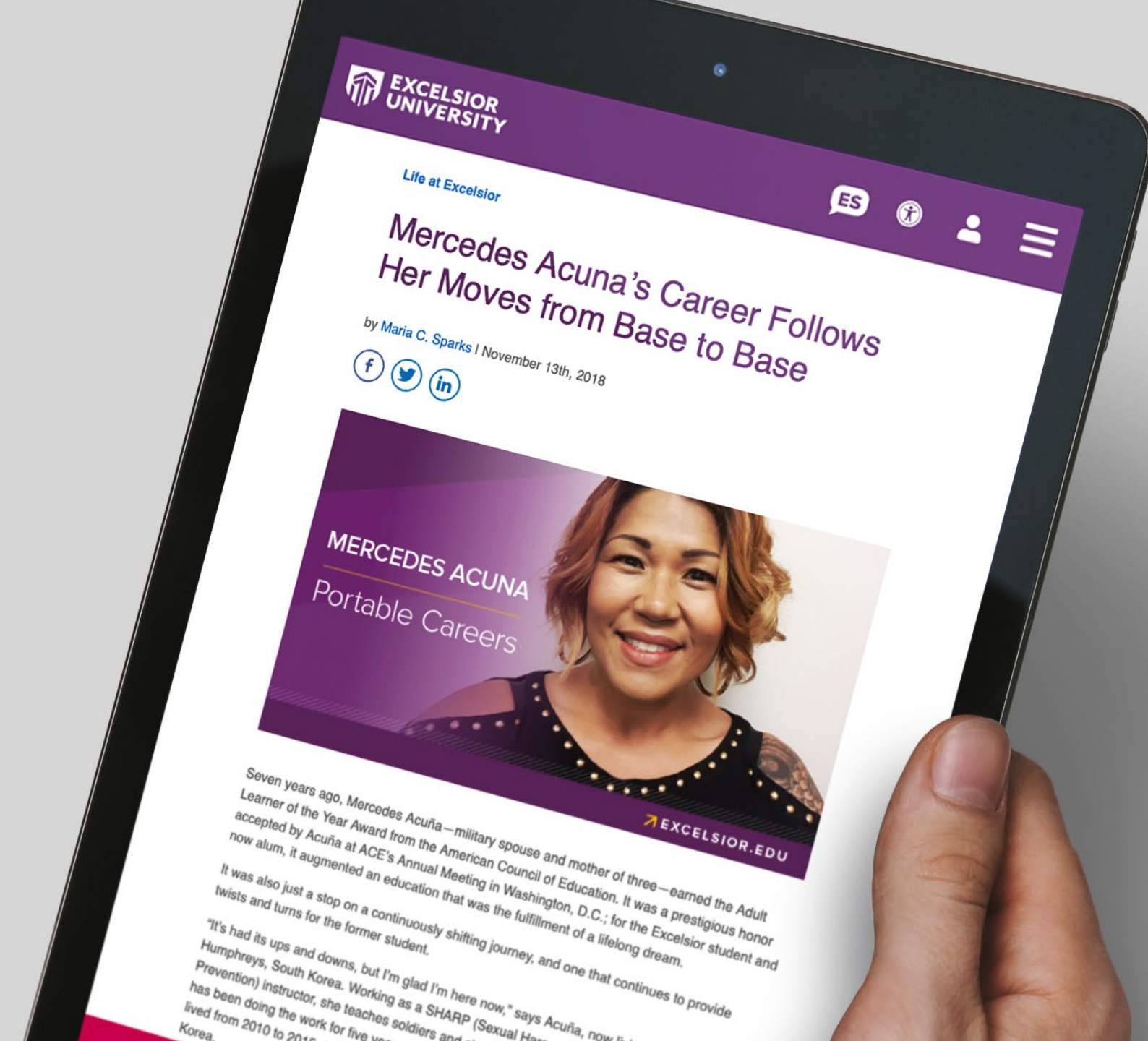
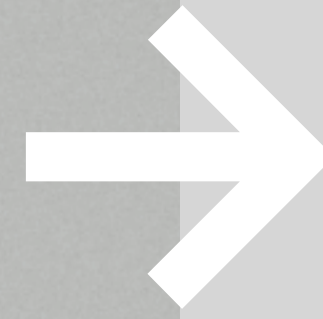


## Mercedes Acuna's Career Follows Her Moves from Base to Base

excelsior.edu | November 13, 2018

Earning a degree can be challenging for members of the military and their spouses. Relocating is part of military life; and while numerous resources are available, navigating those opportunities can be overwhelming. In this blog, a military spouse tells her story of attaining success and gives her peers who may be in a similar situation some tips for their own journeys.

**"Seven years ago, Mercedes Acuna – military spouse and mother of three – earned the Adult Learner of the Year Award from the American Council of Education. ... 'As a military spouse, we have to reinvent ourselves every time [we relocate]. If you continue on with your education, it will open doors.'"**

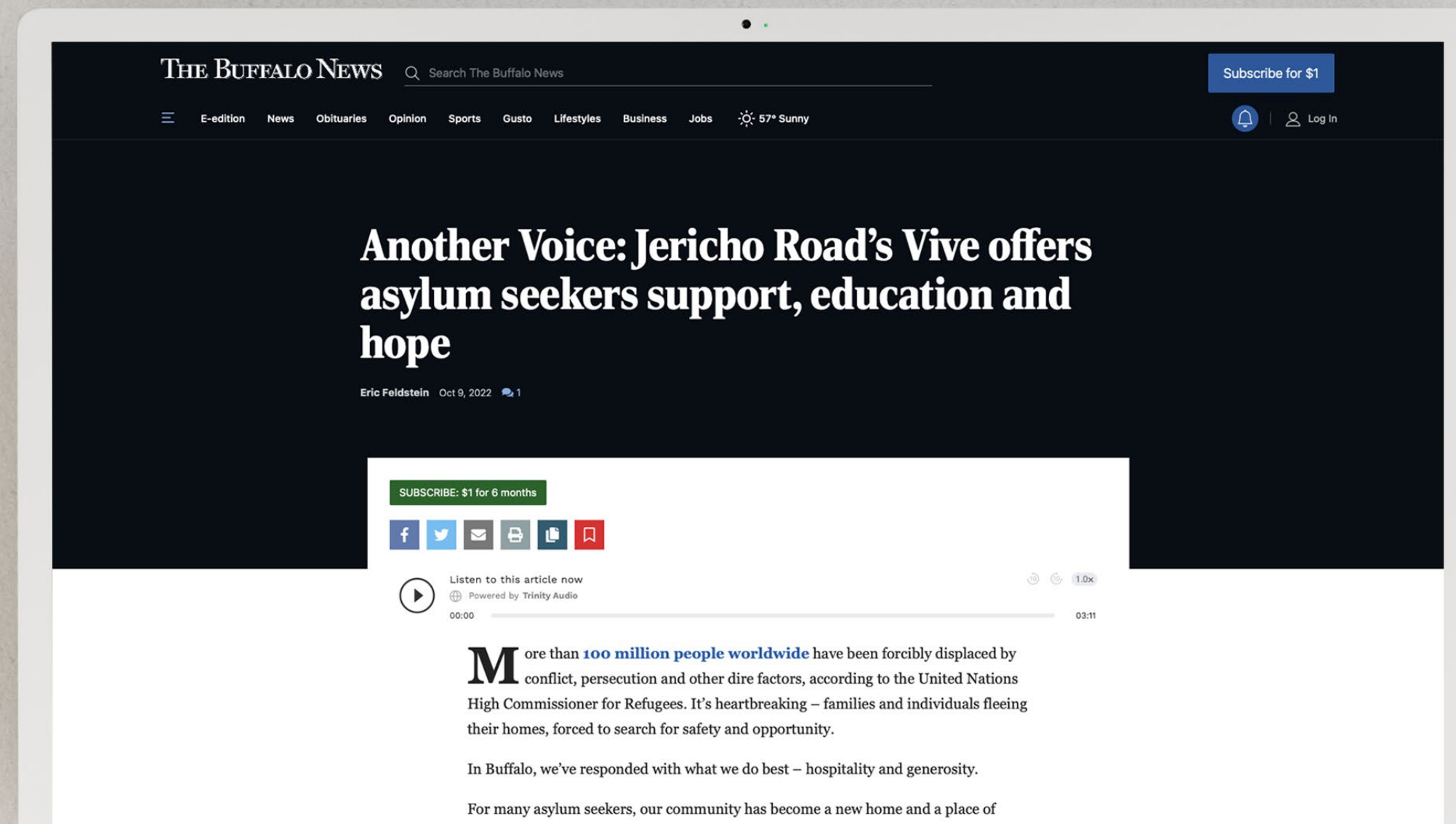


## Jericho Road's Vive Offers Asylum Seekers Support, Education and Hope

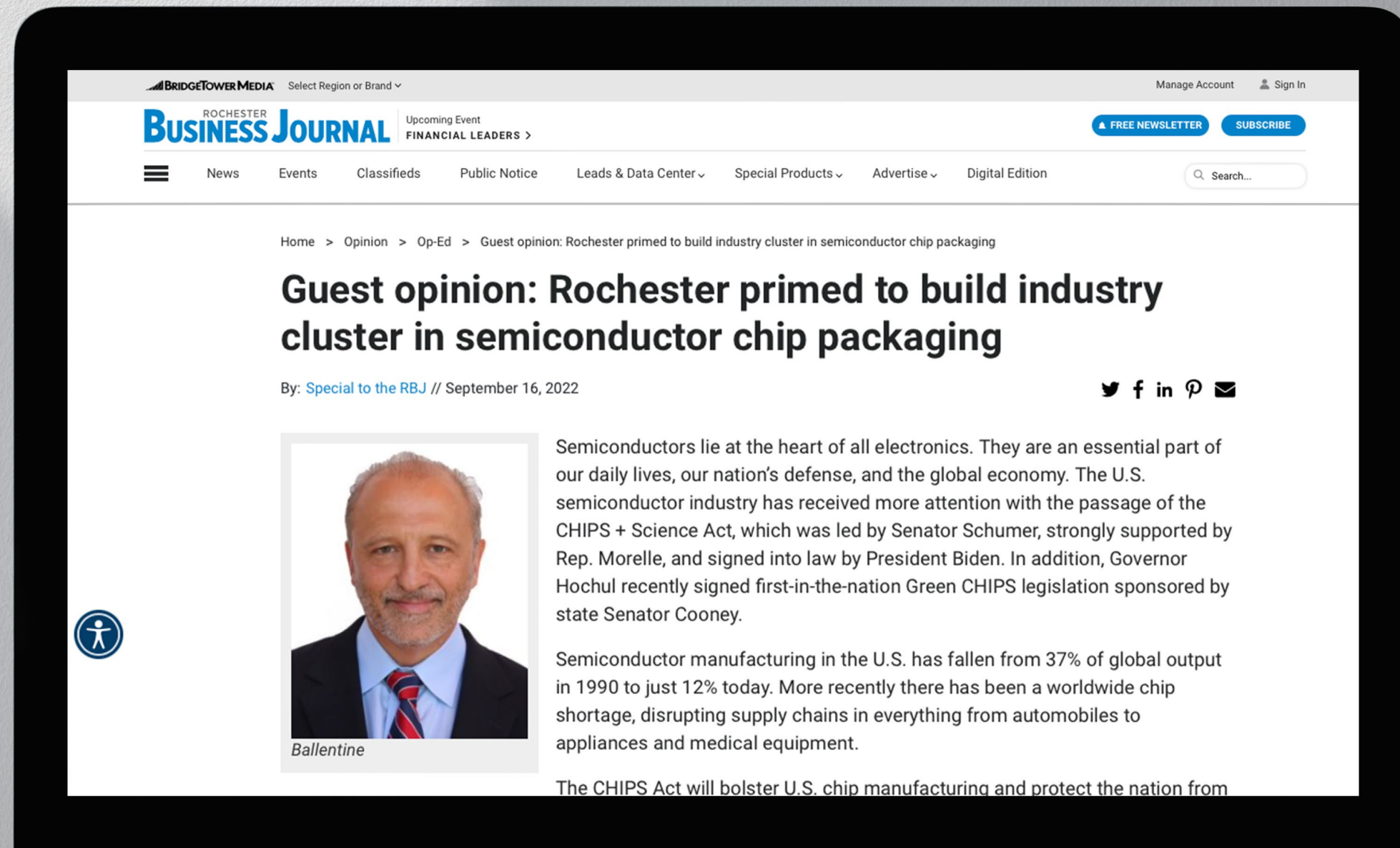
The Buffalo News | October 9, 2022

The Buffalo community – including Vive, a locally based yet globally known shelter program – has long considered asylum seekers and refugees part of the region's fabric. Eric Feldstein, M&T Bank's regional president for Western New York, highlights the importance of investing in services such as education, which can help displaced or resettled people rebuild their lives while uplifting the local economy.

**"[M]any business leaders today are concerned about talent recruiting and retention. Buffalo's asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants have become a big part of the solution. ... They've also helped grow our creative economy and reinvigorate Buffalo's multicultural identity – which are critical in the global competition to attract and retain innovators, entrepreneurs and problem-solvers."**







## Rochester Primed to Build Industry Cluster in Semiconductor Chip Packaging

*Rochester Business Journal* | February 1, 2023

The U.S. semiconductor industry is primed for liftoff. Nanotech research and chip manufacturing are widely understood as areas of massive opportunity in New York. But what about chip packaging? This op-ed shines a light on an under-the-radar industry that holds just as much potential – and could be transformative for the Rochester region.

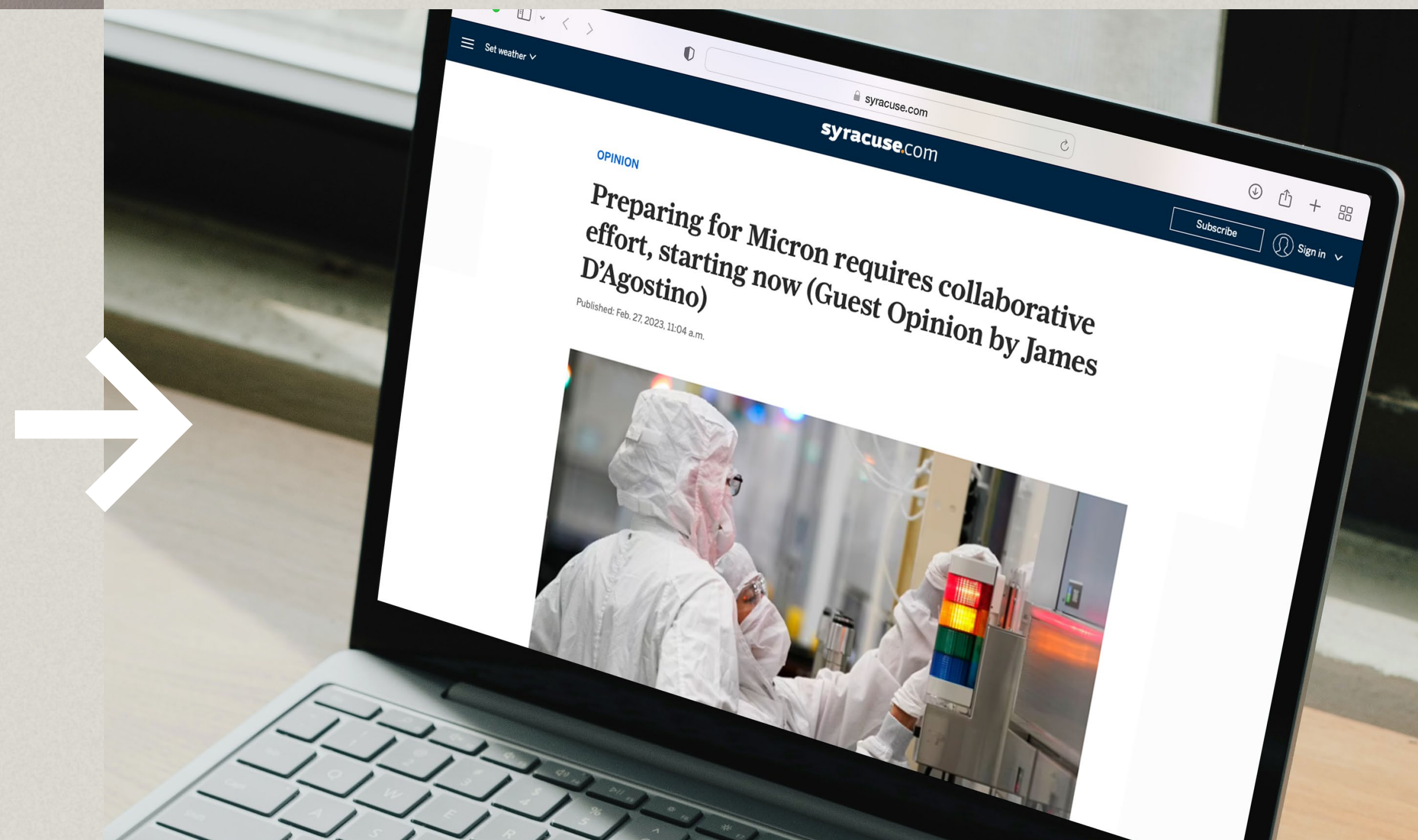
**“Fabrication of integrated circuits (ICs) themselves, such as what takes place in the GlobalFoundries plant in Malta, is only part of the process for complete semiconductor devices. To be used, the IC must be packaged. ... Rochester has many of the resources essential to chips packaging – a skilled workforce trained in advanced manufacturing; workforce training programs at Monroe Community College, Finger Lakes Community College, and Genesee Community College; education and leading research programs at the University of Rochester, RIT, and our other four-year colleges; and the AIM Photonics Test, Assembly, and Packaging (TAP) facility.”**

## Preparing for Micron Requires Collaborative Effort, Starting Now

*Syracuse Post-Standard* | February 27, 2023

Micron plans to build a multi-billion-dollar semiconductor megafab near Syracuse, and Central New York is buzzing about the potential economic impact. James D’Agostino, director at TDO, the regional New York Manufacturing Extension Partnership (NY MEP) center, implores the business and academic communities to commit to the hard work ahead – training the local workforce, expanding the supply chain, and bolstering infrastructure so the area is fully prepared to capitalize on Micron’s arrival.

**“[W]elcoming a global company – and the 9,000 jobs that come with it – isn’t as easy as cutting a ribbon. We must commit to the work ahead, before the first microchip is manufactured in our backyard, to ensure we’re ready for Micron’s generational investment into our regional economy.”**





long-term client  
relationships



## Deep Partnership with an In-house Marketing Team

Excelsior University (formerly College) had an in-house team comprised of a creative director, a social media manager, and multiple marketing managers – each overseeing a particular audience or program group (i.e., military/veteran). Depending on the bandwidth and expertise internally, we customized our support – providing strategic advisement for brand or media, handling a crisis scenario, fully concepting and executing their campaigns, or offering isolated tactical support. Our firm aimed for efficiency by equipping the Excelsior team with tools to build their marketing internally, most notably generating a robust landing page template to promote its various programs and campaigns, which they recently shared is still used five years later! Regular full-team status meetings kept all parties aligned, and we worked inside Excelsior’s project management system to ensure our deliverables were factored into their workflow. In staying flexible and adaptive, The Martin Group achieved award-winning enrollment and efficiency results through a true collaborative partnership with their team.



## More Than a Decade of Teamwork

The Martin Group has enjoyed a long-standing partnership with Kaleida Health since 2011, serving as their agency of record. Over the years, The Martin Group has gained an intimate knowledge of Kaleida’s breadth of services, community partnerships, unique differentiators, and pain points, enabling us to work intuitively by their side through various successes and challenges. As Kaleida’s trusted partner, we’ve developed campaign strategies and creative assets, production management, media planning and stewardship, environmental branding, and much more. This partnership has resulted in over 1,200 projects and 80 campaigns, with notable achievements including the pivotal “Children’s is Moving” campaign and the impactful COVID response campaigns.



## Digital Marketing Collaboration

The Martin Group's partnership with Rich Products (Rich's) is focused on supporting their digital strategy. We work closely with various teams across Rich's, including Performance Marketing, Product Marketing, Global Marketing and Corporate Communications. Through this partnership, we support the client by enhancing their digital footprint and forming a nurturing relationship with their customers. Our digital work includes both organic strategy support and paid digital campaigns. We support in developing comprehensive social media strategies, creative services, community/response management and analytic reporting for all of Rich's USA platforms including Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter. In addition to organic social services, our team manages all paid digital advertising campaigns, which are comprised of multi-funnel tactical campaigns supporting product growth initiatives. We work with Rich's team to strategize various campaigns across multiple channels, providing strategy, creative, and reporting services.



## Managing a Significant Volume

One of the world's best headwear brands, New Era Cap needed help leveraging their world-class reputation to take their business and brand to new heights. For nearly 20 years, the New Era team has relied on The Martin Group to support the execution of each of their product-specific campaigns. We support high-volume, quick turn asset execution, resulting in the release of thousands of assets per campaign, the largest being MLB's Opening Day. In 2023, we supported this by creating and releasing more than 2,000 assets over a six-week span. We continuously evolve and adapt to meet New Era Cap's ever-changing needs, whether managing an intricate production shoot, creating a multitude of finished assets, pitching national media around signature product drops, or collaborating on high-level campaigns viewed by millions of people.

references



# client references

## Dulcey Antonucci

MANAGER, REGIONAL COMMUNICATIONS  
AND OUTREACH – NORTHEAST

Western Governors University  
dulcey.antonucci@wgu.edu  
717-490-1110

Since October 2020, The Martin Group has delivered strategic public relations (PR) services for Western Governors University to help raise brand awareness in New York State. Our PR strategies and tactics help to educate New Yorkers on the benefits of online competency-based education – a model that was pioneered by WGU. The Martin Group is proud to have exceeded all our KPIs in every bucket for every quarter since working with the client.

## Mike Barone

COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTANT,  
AND FORMER INTERIM VICE PRESIDENT  
OF MARCOM AT SUNY ERIE

SUNY Erie  
mike@str84wrd.com  
716-830-7139

Mike Barone has engaged with The Martin Group through various roles, including as a client and project partner. A former director of marketing communications for SUNY Fredonia, he actively supports various SUNYCUAD (Council for University Advancement) membership and event initiatives. Mike also recently undertook a temporary assignment as interim vice president of marketing and Communications for SUNY Erie Community College – where he assisted the institution with day-to-day needs and vetted/hired The Martin Group to handle paid media services following a competitive bid process.

## Evan Pierce

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS,  
GRADUATE STUDIES

Niagara University  
epierce@niagara.edu  
716-425-5382

From 2021 to 2022, The Martin Group worked with Niagara University to grow awareness and enrollments into their core graduate programs. Services included brand strategy and positioning, media planning, buying, and placement, reporting and analytics, campaign optimizations, campaign thematic and concept development, tactical campaign execution, and account service. The Graduate Studies campaign was differentiated from other school campaigns, deepening the value and differentiation Niagara University brings to Western New York.



who

What it's like to work with us

# account management structure

Account service and project management are crucial components of our services here at The Martin Group. Our approach is twofold: it provides a solid foundation and backbone to accomplish any size project; and it is accommodating and flexible, so each client has an optimal experience that builds trust, alignment, and collaboration.

From stewarding the workflow of our integrated efforts to making sure projects are completed on time, on strategy, and on budget, our account service team oversees all communications (both internal and external), budgeting, meeting arrangements, project status reporting, project management, scheduling, and other account and operational management-related activities that are pertinent to the success of any initiative.

Your team will be comprised of at least one dedicated account manager, who is not only a steward of your brand and your objectives, but an extension of your team – providing both our agency's expertise and amplifying your needs to our internal team.



# account management structure

We organize a dedicated team best suited for the work at hand; they will become deeply familiar with your brand, offerings, and preferences. We are small enough that our clients receive the service levels one would expect of a boutique agency, and at the same time have access to a deep bench of talent so that support for their objectives does not waver and any need can be met. Based on the project and need, one or more subject matter experts will interface with your team on a regular basis, with your account manager operating as the consistent contact and connecting thread for you and your team.

Because The Martin Group embraces the benefits of an expansive, hybrid workforce, your team would be both in-person in Albany and virtually based across the state and nation. All work on Eastern Standard Time, and there will be account management support in the immediate Albany area. Our regionally focused clients find this valuable because we provide both a comprehensive knowledge of the Capital Region, and an expanded vantage point gleaned from working with brands across New York and beyond.

While we are a hybrid team, we understand the importance of face-to-face connection and seeing the HVCC campus firsthand. Your account managers will work with you to identify opportunities where our team can travel to campus throughout the year to build connection and inform projects, while minimizing impact to the budget.

# plans for coordination with college administrators

As your partner, we understand our activity reflects the Office of Communications and Marketing. Building internal consensus and buy-in among President Ramsammy, the deans, chairs, admissions, and other offices and departments is as important as reaching your awareness, enrollment, and partnership objectives. To that end, your account manager would seek to be both inclusive of all necessary stakeholders while also being judicious in how and

whose time we are requesting. We would structure recurrent project check-ins appropriately to ensure all important parties are kept abreast of progress, while ensuring projects proceed on schedule and budget. These activities would be performed in consultation and lockstep with your team to capture your expectations, priorities, and vision, and providing you with the information necessary to manage your various constituencies.

your team





## Jen Hunold

**GENERAL MANAGER, ALBANY I  
ACCOUNT SUPERVISOR  
LENGTH OF SERVICE: 5 YEARS  
STATUS: FULL-TIME**

Cheerful, collaborative, and creative, Jen is an outgoing communicator who brings contagious enthusiasm and organizational expertise to our Albany office. The Iowa native has been a Capital Region resident for 17 years and has been working in marketing and business development for more than a decade within multiple verticals, including education and manufacturing. Her educational clients have included Excelsior College, Canisius College, Niagara University, Concordia University – Portland, Concordia University, Nebraska, and Wilkes University. Previously an Instructor of Record, she has a BFA from the University of Iowa and an MFA from University at Albany (SUNY). Currently, Jen leads the Albany office, fosters business relationships – both within the region and beyond – and oversees numerous clients and award-winning projects.



## Paul Hook

**CONSULTANT  
STATUS: PART-TIME**

An agency veteran and decorated marketer, Paul has led business development and marketing efforts for four regional companies. Playing an integral role in growing internal teams and ensuring client retention, he has worked with some of the state's top technology, economic development, and higher education organizations. He has been heavily involved in promoting the region for technology and semiconductor development, including working with numerous economic development agencies to help recruit a chip fabrication plant to Tech Valley. In the field of higher education, Paul has worked on a variety of initiatives for regional institutions including Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, The College of Saint Rose, Hudson Valley Community College (original Alumni Association logo design), Maria College, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Russell Sage College, Siena College, and University at Albany, SUNY.



## Alexa Christopher

SENIOR ADVISOR, STRATEGY |  
EDUCATION VERTICAL LEAD  
LENGTH OF SERVICE: 12 YEARS  
STATUS: PART-TIME

With a well-honed intellect for business strategy and in-depth marketing communications experience, Alexa's industry tenure enables her to consistently deliver astute insights and lead sophisticated strategy initiatives. After spending time raising her family and expanding her professional experience, Alexa returned to the firm in 2017, where she serves as senior advisor, strategy, across the agency's client portfolio, providing strategic counsel and direction on high-level, complex client relationships and initiatives. She also leads the agency's education practice, including experience with Albany Law School, Buffalo State College, Canisius College, Daemen University, Excelsior College, Niagara University, University at Buffalo, and Villa Maria College. Alexa holds a B.A. in English language and literature from the University of Michigan and an Ed.M. in secondary education for English from the University at Buffalo.



## Bayley Ward

ACCOUNT MANAGER  
LENGTH OF SERVICE: 2 YEARS  
STATUS: FULL-TIME

As one of The Martin Group's talented account managers, Bayley supports her team and her clients with a laser focus on building relationships and solving problems. Her trademark can-do attitude and collaborative nature have made her the perfect fit for clients such as the Rochester Museum & Science Center, Jewish Senior Life, BISON Fund, and CooperVision. Before joining our ranks, Bayley worked at CGI Communications as their managing website coordinator. Bayley has also assisted a number of mom-and-pop operations with their marketing efforts over the years, focusing primarily on the performance of their websites and overall online presence.



## Jim Lynch

**VICE PRESIDENT, MEDIA**  
**LENGTH OF SERVICE: 12 YEARS**  
**STATUS: FULL-TIME**

Jim's 30+ years of experience in media, media research, planning and buying allow him to provide clients with educated, strategic media solutions that consistently deliver results. An energetic, enthusiastic operator known for his steadfast dedication to clients, he takes every assignment head-on with a positive attitude. Jim's vertical industry experience is vast, having worked on a number of education clients such as Canisius College, Excelsior College, Niagara University, and others. His fast-paced personality isn't limited to his work ethic; this running enthusiast has completed numerous triathlons, and he's twice ran in the Boston Marathon.



## Lisa Aiello

**ASSOCIATE MEDIA DIRECTOR**  
**LENGTH OF SERVICE: 2 YEARS**  
**STATUS: FULL-TIME**

**Lisa lives nearby in the Hudson Valley area. Her daughter recently applied to HVCC!**

A leader on our media team, Lisa helps to create winning digital marketing campaigns for clients such as Rich Products, Adnet, and Grow-NY. Her digital experience for education clients includes Fordham University, Niagara University, and Russell Sage College. She's an expert in full-funnel strategies, paid digital, and analytics; however, it was a love of art and design that gave Lisa her start in the industry. After earning her BFA from Pratt Institute, she held creative roles at several agencies in NYC, including Vox Advertising & Design, which she co-founded. She then transitioned into digital, co-founding digital media company, Clickit Digital. Her experience spans healthcare, higher education, entertainment, destination marketing, and other verticals. Outside of work, Lisa is an accomplished dancer, focusing on belly dance and flamenco. She also keeps busy as a dance and art mom to her two daughters.



## Susan Ziegler

**ASSOCIATE MEDIA DIRECTOR  
LENGTH OF SERVICE: 2 YEARS  
STATUS: FULL-TIME**

Susan joined The Martin Group already possessing a depth of media knowledge and expertise from her previous roles with TMX Finance, Push, and Kidd Group, where she provided top-tier media services to such organizations as TitleMax, Daytona Beach CVB, Smokey Bones BBQ, Tijuana Flats, Arnold Palmer Invitational, Orlando Health, and Palm Beach Cultural Council. Her experience spans the financial, healthcare, travel & tourism, restaurant, and education verticals, with two of her noteworthy education clients including Valencia College and Wright State University. Susan's organized, analytical nature and passion for all things media have been an unstoppable pairing. She is Google Ads and Analytics certified and has managed a team overseeing buys in 50+ markets.



## Kori Walek

**SENIOR MEDIA PLANNER  
LENGTH OF SERVICE: 5 YEARS  
STATUS: FULL-TIME**

Kori is an experienced media professional who has worked with some of Western New York's most prominent advertising agencies over the course of her career. Her previous client list includes BlueCross BlueShield of WNY, WNY Ford Dealers, Hospice Buffalo, Maid of the Mist, and Daimler Trucks North America. Now she provides media buying services for The Martin Group's valued clientele, including a number of education clients, such as Canisius College, Excelsior College, Niagara University, SUNY Erie Community College, and Western Governors University. She's also active with the agency's healthcare and transportation clients. An East Aurora native and dedicated vegetarian, Kori finds inspiration perusing fashion magazines and sifting through thrift stores for the less expensive version.



## Michael Tsanis

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, CREATIVE  
LENGTH OF SERVICE: 7 YEARS  
STATUS: FULL-TIME

Michael is an award-winning, dynamic visionary who oversees the conceptual and visual output of our art directors, designers, writers, and creative supervisors. His passion and insightful leadership bring brands to life with distinguished style and distinctive results, whether they are for local concerns or international industries. Brands he has designed and/or directed for almost two decades include ASICS, the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation, New Era Cap, Under Armour, Kaleida Health, BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York, Fisher-Price, Ford Dealers of WNY, General Electric, KeyBank, and National Fuel. Additionally, Michael has extensive educational marketing experience, partnering with many of The Martin Group's higher ed clients, including Syracuse University, University at Buffalo, Cornell University, and Canisius College.



## Jillian Gallagher

ASSOCIATE CREATIVE DIRECTOR  
LENGTH OF SERVICE: 9 YEARS  
STATUS: FULL-TIME

Jillian's confidence in her copywriting abilities allows her to develop and enhance the creative concepts that make The Martin Group's work consistently exceed expectations. Bringing keenly sharpened skills from her experience at New York agencies FutureBrand, Siegel+Gale and the Brand Union where she worked with national and international brands like Oculus VR, [yellowtail], Cadillac, Dockers and AB InBev, Jillian works on a variety of agency clients including Rich Products, Under Armour, and Kaleida Health. A graduate of Fordham University, Jillian spends her time exploring her rediscovered hometown of Buffalo and reading the works of authors like Margaret Atwood, Marilynne Robinson and Flannery O'Connor.





## Frank Conjerti

**CREATIVE DIRECTOR**  
**LENGTH OF SERVICE: 4 YEARS**  
**STATUS: FULL-TIME**

Frank offers over a decade's worth of diverse industry experience and creative insight and oversight. With roots in video production and digital design, the University at Buffalo graduate also worked as a video editor and motion graphics artist and served a short stint as a front-end developer. His client list spans all types of industries, working on global brands including World Aquatics, PUMA, Under Armour, ECMC, M&T Bank, and Sodexo Live!. Frank serves a diverse array of clients with his singular aesthetic sensibilities and considerable copywriting skills. Constantly creative outside of work as well, Frank writes screenplays and sketch comedy in his free time.



## Darwin McPherson

**COPY EDITOR/PROOFREADER**  
**LENGTH OF SERVICE: 9 YEARS**  
**STATUS: FULL-TIME**

Darwin's 30 years of professional communications experience include positions as a marketing freelancer for DC Comics, contributing writer for Buffalo Spree and Artvoice, and director of corporate communications at Buffalo television station WNED, all of which helped cultivate his interest in creative, well-executed projects. He has worked with several education clients during his career including D'Youville College and University at Buffalo. As proofreader and copy editor, Darwin's keen eye for detail and understanding of client style and brand standards allow him to ensure our clients' work is executed to the best of our ability.



how

A window into our approach and conceptual framework for HVCC

# Brand

# Fuel

A proprietary process that powers breakthrough marketing campaigns and exceptional results

---

-  research
-  strategy
-  integrated communication plan
-  creative development
-  execution/data measurement



preliminary  
research / strategy

A graduate in a black cap and gown with long dark hair, standing outdoors with trees in the background.

the higher  
education  
landscape  
in 2023

# higher education enrollment cliff

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Institutions across the country are experiencing sustained enrollment decline of traditional college-age students. This “enrollment cliff” coupled with economic strain from the pandemic and endowment values plunging, has spurred the closure of scores of colleges and universities.

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Typically, higher education’s life cycle lags the economy’s life cycle by about 18–24 years. The last enrollment peak was in the early 2000s, and experts suggest we will see continued declines in enrollment with another “trough” beginning in 2038, which is about 18–24 years post-pandemic.

---

Many factors impact enrollment, such as shifts in demographics based on population growth or decline, economic forces, immigration, demands of the labor force and social mores regarding who can and should attend college.

# increased need for student support services

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Two universal forces – the COVID pandemic and technology – have changed the way young adults engage with the world. They are less prepared socially, emotionally, and psychologically to navigate the transition to college than ever before.

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Colleges and universities need to ramp up the range and accessibility of student support services to facilitate student success and persistence in earning a degree. From expanded mental health services to integrated career, social, and academic advisement, students entering college today require more support.

# politicization across higher education

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Campuses of all stripes are seeing a rise in politicization and divisiveness, reflecting the macro environment of American society.

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Issues ranging from the instability of tenure to academic freedom, protecting the rights of LGBTQ+ students to students' access to reproductive healthcare services, are influencing the way in which prospective students evaluate their higher education choices.



# questioning ROI

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As of February 2023, the federal student loan portfolio totals more than \$1.9 trillion, owed by about 43 million borrowers. Political polarization about the future of debt forgiveness complicates the issue.

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Cost for a degree often outweighs perceived ROI, as wages have not kept pace with rise in tuition/fees at four-year colleges and universities.

---

Many would-be college students realize they may need a graduate degree to earn a decent living, potentially adding to their overall student debt load.

---

Technology, coupled with a paradigm shift in our view of work, alters the ROI of obtaining a degree.

# the case for community college

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A bachelor's degree is worth \$2.8M on average, over a lifetime, compared with less than \$1M for those with a high school diploma. Community college is an ideal conduit for students who seek an advanced degree but for various reasons do not see themselves accessing a four-year institution/degree directly out of high school.

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Colleges and universities have not done a good job communicating the ROI and selling the value proposition, but community colleges have an opportunity to leverage the benefit of a lower cost-per-credit hour value vs. a four-year institution, which can help address concerns over accruing student loan debt.

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Community colleges should lean into their unique offering and strong value proposition, leading to many possible successful outcomes, including entering the workforce, transferring to a four-year institution to complete a bachelor's degree, or gaining the necessary credentials to advance in one's chosen field.

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Because community colleges have already been serving non-traditional students as well as students who may be less prepared for college than some of their peers enrolled at four-year institutions, they are better positioned to answer the need of today's post-pandemic students.



higher  
education  
in the  
capital region

# friendly competition in a crowded field

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The Capital Region is home to more than 20 colleges and universities, including five community colleges. However, despite all that competition for enrollment, the region's institutions have largely articulated a "rising tide lifts all boats" perspective to the public.

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The region's five community colleges strengthened this public-facing perception in 2018 by signing the "Contract for 21st Century Career Training" and launching the Capital Community College Career Coalition (C5) in the first months of HVCC President Roger Ramsammy's tenure.

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The "rising tides" perspective is also bolstered by an incredibly wide array of articulation partnerships and MOUs between the Capital Region's colleges and universities. Opportunities are innumerable, and local institutions continue to strike creative partnerships, such as the three-way Legal Studies Pathway Program between HVCC, University at Albany, and Albany Law School.

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In recent years, local college and university presidents have been meeting quarterly to discuss challenges and opportunities, indicating they've adopted the "rising tides" approach privately as well.

# enrollment declines, hot-spot population growth

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Total enrollment for the Capital Region's colleges and universities has declined over the past five years – the area had nearly 10,000 fewer enrolled students in fall 2022 compared to 2018. Local community colleges were among the hardest hit by the pandemic, mirroring national trends. There are reasons for optimism, however. HVCC has reported enrollment growth in successive terms, and both SUNY Schenectady and SUNY Adirondack have shown signs that their enrollments may be stabilizing. Other institutions are still trying to stem the tide, including the more rural community colleges serving the southern and western edges of the region.

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The Capital Region's population increased more than some expected, though not as much as the state and national averages. Saratoga County was a hot spot for population growth according to the 2020 Census, with the towns of Ballston (21%), Halfmoon (19.2%), and Malta (16%) seeing an influx of residents – perhaps due to the continued investment into private-sector semiconductor R&D and manufacturing in the northern parts of the region. A relocation northward from New York City amid the pandemic is also thought to be a contributor to the Capital Region's population gains.

# contractions and expansions

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Enrollment declines and financial strains have forced institutions to cut programs, faculty, or staff, most notably at the College of Saint Rose.

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Meanwhile, some have tried to bolster their institutions by launching programs – creating additional revenue streams in the process – and undertaking capital campaigns.

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Schools such as Albany Law now offering non-law degree and certificate programs, entirely online, have contributed to even more crowding in the remote-education space. The healthcare professions, particularly nursing, have been another hot area for new programming; the University at Albany recently expanded into bachelor's- and graduate-level nursing programs, which could be a boon to transfer partners at local community colleges.

# new leaders, new approaches

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The late 2000s and early 2010s were generally a time of stability for college and university presidents in the region. That's changed since 2017 – at least nine colleges have seen at least one change in leadership at the top, including Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI), University at Albany, HVCC, Siena, Union, and soon Albany Law School.

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New presidents have put their own stamps on their institutions, and by doing so, are influencing conversations about the future of the area. Most recently, new RPI President Martin Schmidt challenged the Capital Region to “think in a less parochial way” and stop looking at “small ball” opportunities.

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As an agency, we have heard similar sentiments from friends and partners in the business community – that the Capital Region can and should think bigger.

# all-in on semiconductors

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The Capital Region is fortunate to have a long list of organizations and employer partners engaged with higher education. That includes major employers in the semiconductor industry, including GlobalFoundries in Malta.

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Local leaders – including those in higher education – view semiconductor research and manufacturing as one of the region’s greatest growth opportunities.

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Their excitement is justified. The area already has a sizable semiconductor workforce, plus it hosts the most advanced, publicly owned 300mm semiconductor R&D facility in the country at the College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering, which is in the process of reunifying with the University at Albany. HVCC’s expansion at its Saratoga County campus, near GlobalFoundries’ headquarters in Malta, is a significant part of the regional infrastructure as well.



# all-in on semiconductors

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There's also momentum around Albany landing the National Semiconductor Technology Center (NSTC), which would be a massive workforce driver as the hub of America's nanotech and semiconductor research and advanced manufacturing industries. U.S. Sen. Majority Leader Chuck Schumer had the region "specifically in mind for the NSTC headquarters" when he wrote the \$52 billion CHIPS Act.

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This high-tech sector has already made its mark; if the NSTC comes to Albany, it'll be a game-changer for industry-academia partnerships and workforce training programs.

potential  
opportunity and  
positioning in  
the market



# upstate's community college

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There's a reason that legislators, state governors, international delegations, and even a sitting U.S. president have visited Hudson Valley Community College. HVCC's programs feed into the most important sectors of our economy: semiconductors and advanced manufacturing, STEM, healthcare, and teaching among them.

These are the industries that need skilled professionals today, to ease statewide workforce shortages, and tomorrow, to position New York's communities for success in a high-tech world.

- HVCC doesn't just have academic programs that align with key industries. It has a campus that looks the part – especially for students drawn to the STEM fields.

- With the second-highest enrollment in the region, and the most by far among area community colleges, HVCC is a market mover. The region pays close attention to developments on campus; name recognition is strong among residents – a population that includes the governor, some federal lawmakers, and journalists serving the state's other major metro areas. The college has cachet to influence the public discourse on higher education and workforce training.

# well-positioned for the NSTC

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HVCC has made a series of strategic investments that put the college in an enviable position should the U.S. government choose Albany for the NSTC headquarters.

- First, creating certificate and associate degree programs in advanced manufacturing and semiconductor technology.
- Second, developing a decade-plus-long relationship with GlobalFoundries, solidifying HVCC as a big-time player, and industry partner, in semiconductor workforce training.
- Third, renovating the TEC-SMART facility in Malta and expanding the Saratoga County campus to include a new STEM Education Center.
- Fourth, engaging with the Capital Region Chamber board and collaborating with the Chamber-affiliated Center for Economic Growth (CEG) on programmatic offerings. These activities keep the college plugged into the New York Manufacturing Extension Partnership (CEG serving as the regional NY MEP center), which is funded by Empire State Development's NYSTAR division.

# the careers college

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HVCC owns workforce development in the Capital Region in two major ways:

- Residents – whether coming out of high school or seeking to upskill later in life – know that HVCC offers programs aligning to local career pathways with high ROI.
- At the same time, numerous regional employers depend on HVCC to feed their pipelines; hiring managers know they can invest in a candidate with an HVCC degree because that person comes with the right skills for the job.

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Thanks to the work of college leadership and the Office of Workforce Development, HVCC has earned a reputation for being ahead of all other regional educational institutions in job training and real-world preparation. This is an impression that we've heard firsthand from our colleagues who pay close attention to the workforce development landscape.

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The college's relationship with Simmons Machine Tool Corporation is just one example. Simmons has been a reliable employer of HVCC graduates; these workers have made such an impression over time that the organization invested \$125,000 in the college's newly constructed Gene F. Haas Center for Advanced Manufacturing Skills. Simmons and the NSH Group view HVCC as integral to their workforce development efforts, describing their organization's support as "the single most transformative investment we have made."

# the careers college

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HVCC's reputation as "The Careers College" isn't limited to semiconductors and advanced manufacturing. It runs the gamut: clean technology, skilled trades, healthcare, teaching, and other key sectors in our region.

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And students entering the workforce from HVCC are equally wide-ranging, as evidenced by the college's prestigious Strategic Leadership Award from the World Federation of Colleges and Polytechnics. The award recognized HVCC for creating a STEM high school, the Veteran's Resource and Outreach Center, and the Gene F. Haas Center for Advanced Manufacturing Skills – three facilities that serve varied populations, young and seasoned alike.

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The award also illustrates the global impact of HVCC. The international community is well-represented in the college's workforce efforts: international students and educational institutions, as well as corporate partners doing business worldwide, are in the mix.

# the experienced option for online students

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HVCC was among the early adopters of remote education and offers nearly two dozen programs, not to mention hundreds of courses, completely online.

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Online education has been proven to be an attractive option for nontraditional learners with family and career responsibilities who are looking to advance their education and careers – one of HVCC's priority audiences.

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But traditional students are showing a preference for online education in surging numbers. "[A] national survey conducted in 2022 suggests that the number of high school juniors and seniors planning to attend fully online colleges has more than doubled since before the pandemic," *Inside Higher Ed* reported in October. Affordability was cited as one reason for the shift.

# the experienced option for online students

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HVCC has a strong case as an option for these traditional and adult learners. It has a long track record of delivering rigorous, affordable, workforce-relevant online programs.

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The college continues to find ways to make college more accessible – and attractive – to online learners. Just this year, it announced a partnership with Western Governors University, the nation’s largest accredited online institution. These guaranteed transfer pathways to WGU will make it more seamless for HVCC’s online students to continue their studies en route to a four-year degree.





preliminary  
media analysis

# our strategic media planning process

The Martin Group media team will thoroughly examine all relevant media options for delivering this campaign to your target audience based on specific planning criteria provided by the team at Hudson Valley Community College. All tactics will be considered and then selected based upon budget and the ability to reach your target audiences most effectively and efficiently.

The final deliverable will be a detailed media recommendation to obtain an optimal reach and frequency to ensure an effective communication campaign within your designated media budget.

Added value opportunities will also be considered and can be in the form of bonus spots/impressions, discounted pricing, etc., depending upon tactics recommended. Final added value is negotiated at the time we place our media buys with our vendors.

Periodically throughout the campaign and then again at the completion of the campaign, we will work with you to evaluate and determine the effectiveness of our media flights. Along with your internal evaluation, this will aid in reporting campaign measurability.

# initial target audience research

To gain a better understanding of the desired target audiences, local consumer data was considered to:

- Profile the primary target audience
- Gauge media usage habits
- Gain insights from attitudinal data

Proprietary Source

We use the proprietary *Scarborough Research* database to select the most relevant media to reach a particular

audience. This unique source captures local and national consumer insights across 2,000+ categories including leisure activities, shopping behaviors, purchasing patterns, and media consumption. The following information is for the Albany DMA (Designated Marketing Area) and is defined by age (18–24 years) and behavior (planning to go to school for a degree or certification).

Indexes are shown in parentheses, which is the relative composition of a target audience consuming a particular media type as compared to the average audience size. (An index of 100 is considered to be average.) We generally select media tactics with an index close to or above 100.

Source: Scarborough Albany, NY 2022 Release 2 & 2021 Release 2 Total (August 2020 – July 2022)

Please note: Our consumer research is Adults 18+ only. Our recommendation for the actual media plan would be to include a high school target audience of 14- to 17-year-olds.

# initial primary target audience research

## Primary Target Audience: Traditional Aged Student

- “Adults 18- to 24-years of age planning to go to school for a degree/certification”
- Geography includes the following counties in the Albany DMA:
  - Albany
  - Bennington (VT)
  - Berkshire (MA)
  - Columbia
  - Fulton
  - Greene

- Hamilton
- Montgomery
- Rensselaer
- Saratoga
- Schenectady
- Schoharie
- Warren
- Washington

## Target Audience Population:

- 27,375
- Full audience population aged 18–24 is 136,236

## Gender:

- Male - 57.8%
- Female - 42.2%

## Race Composition:

- White - 81.1%
- Black - 9.3%
- Asian - 3.0%
- Other - 6.5%

## Ethnic:

- Hispanic - 7.7%

## Top Occupation Category:

- Service - 22.9%

Source: Scarborough Albany, NY 2022 Release 2 & 2021 Release 2 Total (August 2020 – July 2022)

Please note: Our consumer research is Adults 18+ only. Our recommendation for the actual media plan would be to include a high school target audience of 14- to 17-year-olds.

# primary audience media consumption

## Media Consumption - Two Highest Indexes

- Newspaper - lightest (193 index) & average (142 index)
- TV - light (182 index) & average (158 index)
- Outdoor - lightest (142 index) & light (107 index)
- Radio - lightest (265 index) & light (76 index)
- Internet - average (149 index) & heaviest (136 index)

## Top Online/Social Media Platforms Used in Last 30 Days:

- Google - 86.9% (108 index)
- Facebook - 78.3% (110 index)
- Instagram - 65.3% (161 index)
- Twitter - 40.8% (161 index)
- TikTok - 35.3% (155 index)
- Snapchat - 30.8% (209 index)
- LinkedIn - 26.6% (115 index)

# primary audience media consumption

## Top Audio/TV Streaming Services Used in the Last 30 Days:

- Netflix - 71.7% (124 index)
- Hulu - 60.4% (77 index)
- YouTube - 59.6% (144 index)
- Spotify - 51.0% (236 index)
- Pandora - 9.8% (59 index)

## Attitudinal

- Ways used the internet on any kind of device in the last 30 days:
  - Takes online classes – 27.3% (183 index)
  - Education: research schools, applications, financing – 26% (209 index)

# secondary target audience: adult learners

## Target Audience Definition: Adult Learners

- “Adults 25–49 planning to go to school for a degree/certification or attend adult continuing education classes”
- Geography includes:
  - Albany
  - Bennington (VT)
  - Berkshire (MA)
  - Columbia
  - Fulton
  - Greene
  - Hamilton

- Montgomery
- Rensselaer
- Saratoga
- Schenectady
- Schoharie
- Warren
- Washington

## Target Audience Population:

- 61,708

## Gender:

- Male - 30.2%
- Female - 69.8%

## Race Composition:

- White - 77.4%
- Black - 10.3%
- Asian - 2.0%
- Other - 10.2%

## Ethnic:

- Hispanic - 14.6%

## Top Occupation Categories:

- Professional and related occupations – 27.4%
- Sales and Office - 16.0%
- Management, business and financial operations – 10.8%

# secondary audience media consumption

## Media Consumption - Two Highest Indexes

- Newspaper - average (128 index) & heavy (127 index)
- TV - lightest (202 index) & light (115 index)
- Outdoor - heavy (142 index) & light (108 index)
- Radio - lightest (121 index) & heaviest (118 index)
- Internet - heaviest (144 index) & heavy (114 index)

## Top Online/Social Media Platforms Used in Last 30 Days:

- Facebook - 88.4% (124 index)
- Google - 81.8% (101 index)
- Instagram - 52.5% (129 index)
- TikTok - 41.3% (181 index)
- LinkedIn - 30.8% (133 index)
- Twitter - 23.4% (92 index)
- Snapchat - 22.0% (149 index)

## Top Audio/TV Streaming Services Used in the Last 30 Days:

- Netflix - 83.1% (143 index)

- YouTube - 67.6% (163 index)
- Hulu - 52.5% (154 index)
- Spotify - 46.9% (217 index)
- Pandora - 29.1% (175 index)

## Attitudinal/Misc.:

- Ways used the internet on any kind of device in the last 30 days:
  - Education: research schools, application, financing – 35.5% (285 index)
  - Career development - 31.9% (228 index)
  - Takes online classes – 21.7% (145 index)



# layering with census data

Our strategy team recommends pairing the previous audience information with census data in order to:

- Define areas/counties that are growing
- Track population trends
- Consider where to market to students under the age of 18 (as well as their parents, school counselors, other influencers, etc.)

Here is the most recent U.S. census data available for the same counties:

## Albany

- Population: 315,811

- Population change 2020-2022: 0.3%
- Persons under 18: 18.2%
- Households: 130,754
- Persons per household: 2.27
- Median household income: \$73,810
- Persons in poverty: 11.9%

## Bennington, VT

- Population: 37,392
- Population change 2020-2022: 0.1%
- Persons under 18: 18.7%
- Households: 14,513
- Persons per household: 2.47

- Median household income: \$63,448
- Persons in poverty: 12.5%

## Berkshire, MA

- Population: 127,859
- Population change 2020-2022: -0.9%
- Persons under 18: 16.3%
- Households: 55,525
- Persons per household: 2.2
- Median household income: \$63,159
- Persons in poverty: 10.9%

# layering with census data

## Columbia

- Population: 61,286
- Population change 2020-2022: -0.5%
- Persons under 18: 16.3%
- Households: 25,167
- Persons per household: 2.35
- Median household income: \$73,065
- Persons in poverty: 10.5%

## Fulton

- Population: 52,669
- Population change 2020-2022: -1.2%
- Persons under 18: 20.1%
- Households: 21,712

- Persons per household: 2.41
- Median household income: \$55,240
- Persons in poverty: 13.6%

## Greene

- Population: 48,061
- Population change 2020-2022: 0.3%
- Persons under 18: 15.9%
- Households: 17,451
- Persons per household: 2.56
- Median household income: \$62,810
- Persons in poverty: 11.7%

## Hamilton

- Population: 5,118
- Population change 2020-2022: 0.3%
- Persons under 18: 13.2%
- Households: 1,457
- Persons per household: 3.37
- Median household income: \$62,841
- Persons in poverty: 9.6%

# layering with census data

## Montgomery

- Population: 49,623
- Population change 2020-2022: 0.2%
- Persons under 18: 23.3%
- Households: 18,907
- Persons per household: 2.57
- Median household income: \$53,533
- Persons in poverty: 15%

## Rensselaer

- Population: 159,853
- Population change 2020-2022: -0.8%
- Persons under 18: 19.2%

- Households: 66,341
- Persons per household: 2.34
- Median household income: \$76,731
- Persons in poverty: 12.3%

## Saratoga

- Population: 238,797
- Population change 2020-2022: 1.4%
- Persons under 18: 19.3%
- Households: 97,829
- Persons per household: 2.36
- Median household income: \$90,800
- Persons in poverty: 7.7%

## Schenectady

- Population: 160,093
- Population change 2020-2022: 1.3%
- Persons under 18: 21.6%
- Households: 61,038
- Persons per household: 2.5
- Median household income: \$69,891
- Persons in poverty: 12.9%

# layering with census data

## Schoharie

- Population: 30,063
- Population change 2020-2022: 1.2%
- Persons under 18: 17.6%
- Households: 12,110
- Persons per household: 2.36
- Median household income: \$64,220
- Persons in poverty: 12.9%

## Warren

- Population: 65,599
- Population change 2020-2022: -0.2%
- Persons under 18: 17.8%
- Households: 29,261
- Persons per household: 2.21
- Median household income: \$68,765
- Persons in poverty: 10.2%

## Washington

- Population: 60,841
- Population change 2020-2022: -0.8%
- Persons under 18: 18.4%
- Households: 24,073
- Persons per household: 2.42
- Median household income: \$63,869
- Persons in poverty: 12.3%

# preliminary media recommendation

## Primary and Secondary Target Audiences:

- Traditional Age Learners
- Adult Learners

## Tertiary Target Audiences:

- High School Aged Students 14-17 years old
- Parents/Guardians/Caretakers

## Flighting:

- During key periods of the year when higher/continuing education interest is high
- Prior to new semester starts
- New student registration events
- School open houses
- Timed with other key college initiatives

# preliminary media recommendation

## Potential Media Tactics/Media Mix:

We would consider the following tactics for media mix based on our initial target audience research with estimated media budget percentage allocations:

- Search - 10%
- Digital - 5%
- Paid social - 10%
- Outdoor (for broad awareness and frequency) - 10%
- Streaming audio/video - 15%
- TV (broadcast or cable for broad awareness) - 25%

- Radio (for key demographic targeting with short term frequency) - 20%
- Newspaper (use sparingly to reach adult learners) - 5%

Once a final media budget and objectives are approved, a more thorough media research & planning process will be conducted to determine a final media mix and timing for this campaign.

## Deliverables for a Paid Media Plan Include:

- Initial strategic media plan(s) reaching the desired target audience(s)

- Includes media department/client meeting time
- Final, detailed media plans, showing recommended media placements, flighting, suggested campaign duration relative to budget, estimated costs and timing
- Media plans will be presented in gross dollars
- The placement and stewardship of the buy will be covered by the agency commission on all placed media



# digital marketing evolution

# digital marketing evolution

HVCC and existing partners have been actively focused on brand building, lead generation, and admissions. That foundational work can be leveraged by taking a step back and assessing ways to expand and improve your integrated marketing efforts. Our goal is to provide a comprehensive approach to increase your enrollments, reduce cost per lead, and provide greater visibility into the data that motivates your success.

Based on our current understanding of your communications efforts and your publicly available platforms, we believe there are some key areas that would be a primary focus as we begin our partnership.

## Discovery & Audit

- Assess the state of your current campaigns, historical reporting, and messaging strategy
- Identify which components can continue running, need optimization, or potentially need to be overhauled
- Deeper insights into your prospective students to better understand both your active students, and those who passed on HVCC or who applied and did not enroll
- Leverage your in-house knowledge and expertise – how can we use more of your insights in improving ongoing and future campaigns?

## Expanding Reach & Decreasing CPA

- Deeper strategy around media placement to reduce cost per acquisition (CPA)
- Improved targeting and retargeting to reach necessary frequency for brand recall
- Leverage influencers to expand visibility of HVCC brand with built-in social proof

## Improve Customer Journey

- Measure the journey using third party UX monitoring tools
- Identify areas of friction that should be smoothed out to reduce bounce



# digital marketing evolution

- Leverage historical data to anticipate prospect's next actions
- Leverage continuous testing to adjust key messaging and CTAs to motivate them forward
- Provide support to your in-house teams to help provide a natural transition from external marketing efforts and your admissions process

## More Strongly Nurture Prospects

- Leverage the time between inquiry and enrollment more effectively
- Map out possible journeys based on starting month to first date of potential enrollment

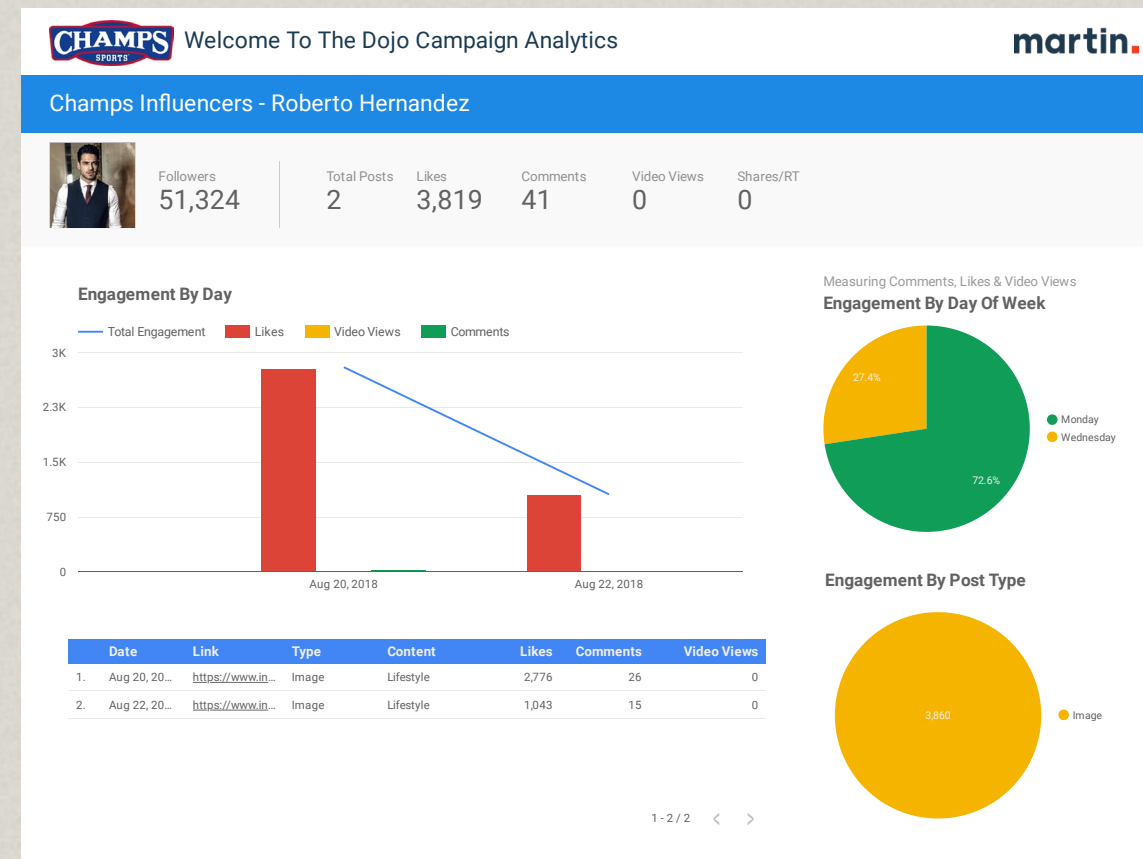
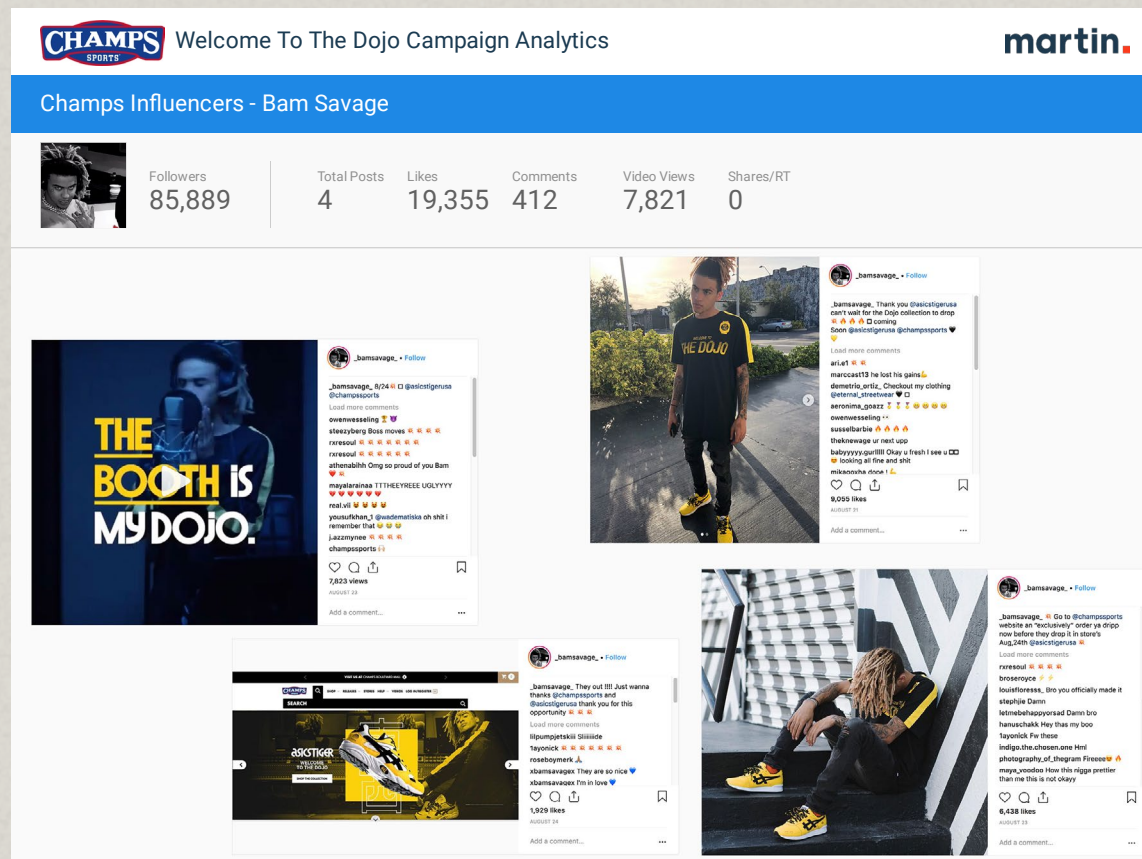
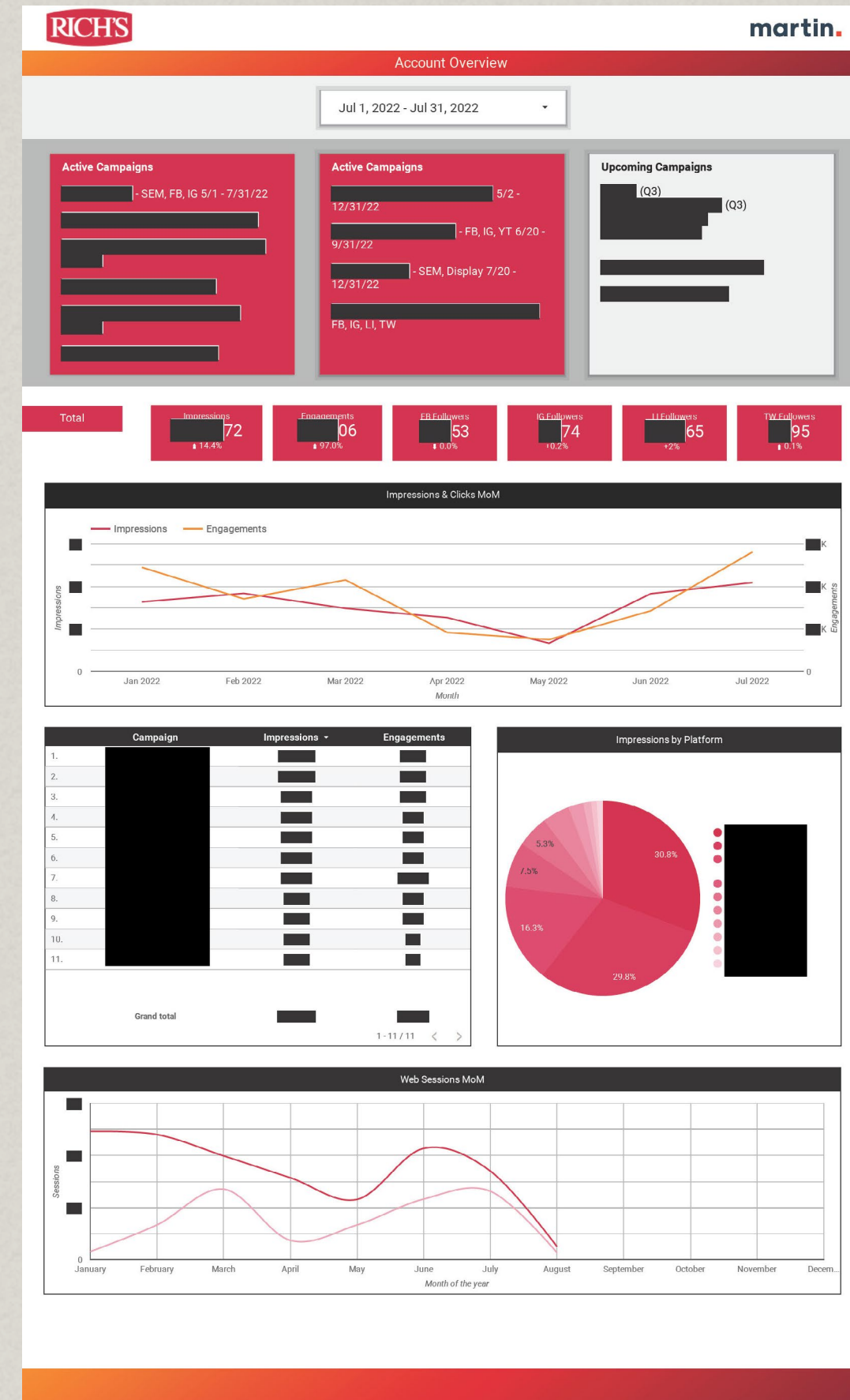
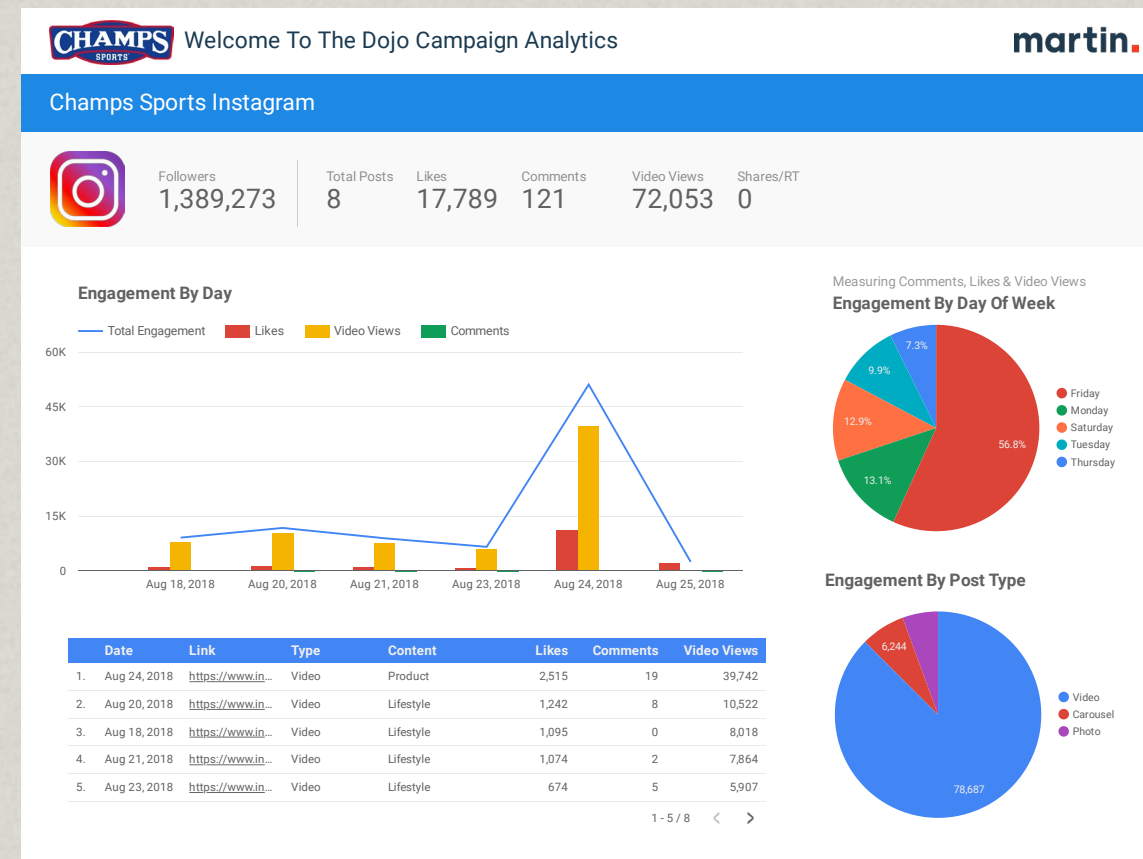
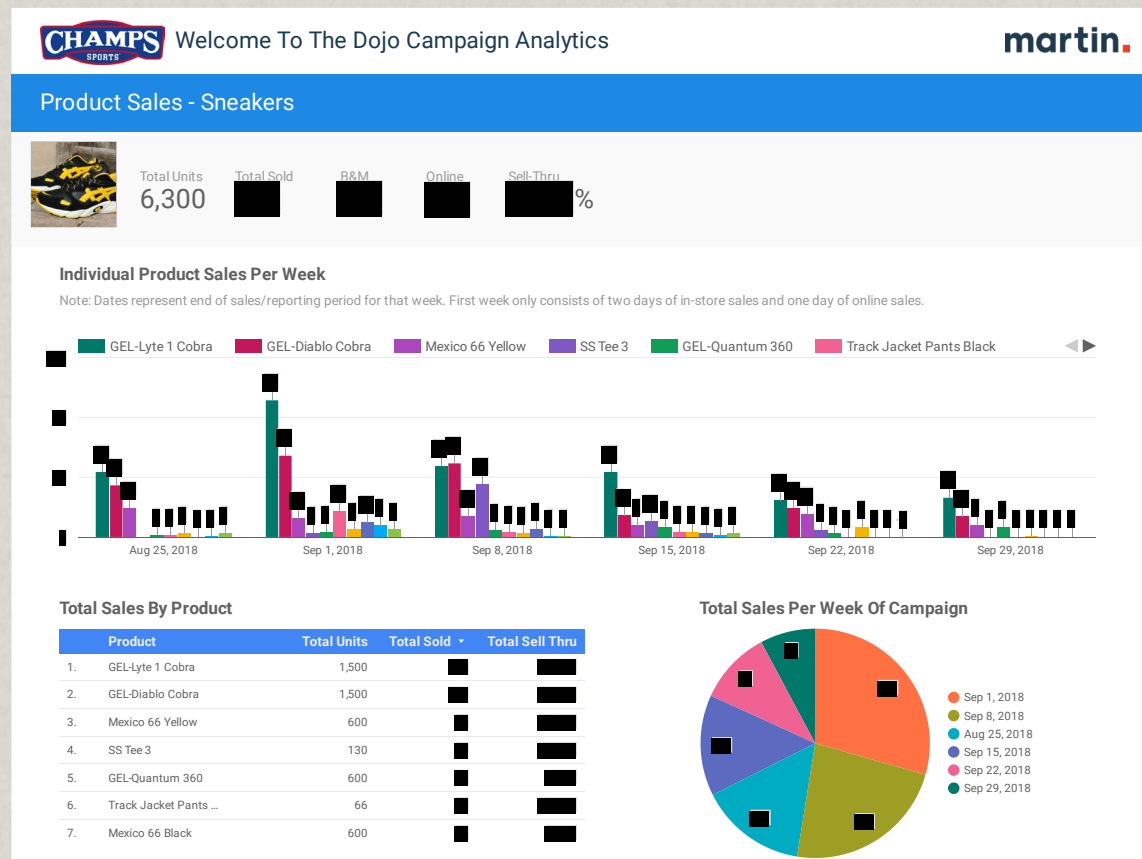
- Establish a communication cadence that helps keep the HVCC brand top of mind and your prospect motivated
- Leverage a variety of communication methods to keep messaging fresh – email, SMS, webinar, on-campus events

## Deep Knowledge of Channel and Tactic Performance

- Identify avenues to provide stronger attribution and data collection around KPIs
- Close any data gaps or uncertainty around tactics or channels that are not providing value

- Establish a unified reporting dashboard with as much data as possible in real-time
- Provide executive-level summaries of month-over-month performance and deeper dives into specific channels

# reporting example





influencer  
suggestions

# influencer shortlist

Influencers provide an opportunity to expand the reach of the HVCC brand to new audiences with built-in social proof. We've identified an initial list of possible influencers that provides an idea of the types of partnership that are available to help produce and promote more natural, organic-feeling content on behalf of HVCC.

## STUDENTS AGES 18-22



**CJ JOHNSON**  
Reach: n/a  
Category: Athletics, Lifestyle  
Region: Cortland



**KAMRI NOEL MCKNIGHT**  
Reach: 4m  
Category: Lifestyle, College, Photography  
Region: Brooklyn



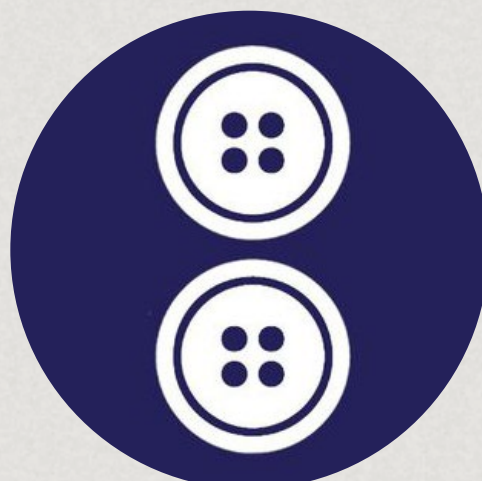
**PETER DEWITT**  
Reach: n/a  
Category: Lifestyle, Fitness, Outdoors  
Region: Albany



**DAN CURRIER**  
Reach: 89k  
Category: Finance, Entrepreneur  
Region: NYC

## ADULT LEARNERS

## BROAD REACH – INFORMATIVE CONCEPT



**TWO BUTTONS DEEP**  
Reach: 30K  
Category: Lifestyle  
Region: Albany

## PARENTS



**A NATION OF MOMS**  
Reach: 11.5K  
Category: Parenthood, Upstate Lifestyle  
Region: Upstate NY

## BUSINESS/ MEDIA CHANNELS



**HVNY**  
Reach: 27k  
Category: Lifestyle, Everything Hudson Valley  
Region: Hudson Valley



# how much

Suggested budget allocation and compensation structure

# budget allocation

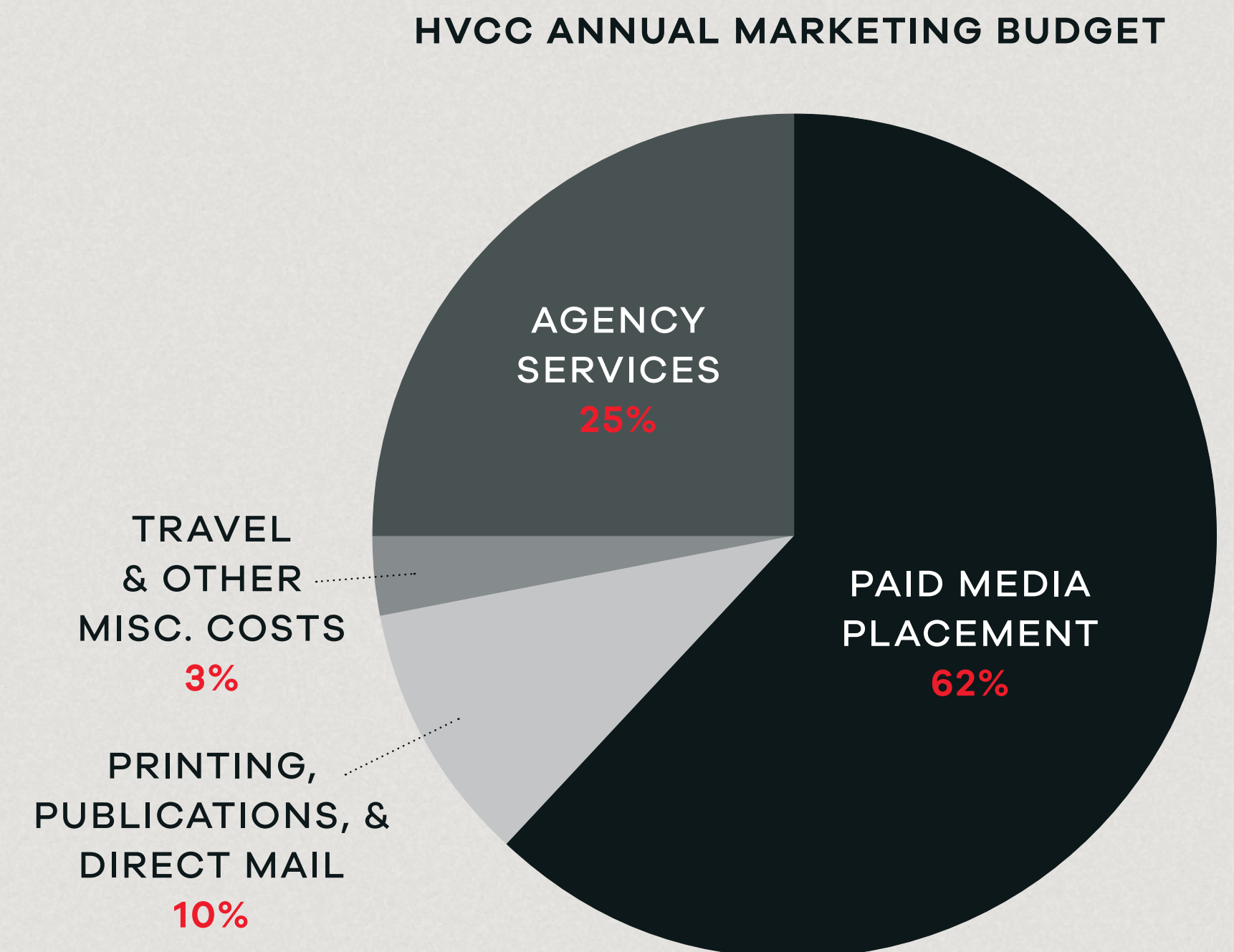
We understand that the expected annual budget for communications and marketing services at HVCC is approximately \$750,000.

Using best practices from across the marketing communications industry, we recommend 75% of the budget be used for Paid Media/Outside Production and 25% be allocated for Agency Services.

The specific tactics for your annual integrated marketing communications plan will be developed in collaboration with the HVCC Office of Communications and Marketing. For purposes of

discussion, however, we anticipate the following:

- 75% of the budget be used for Paid Media/Outside Production:
  - 62% for Paid Media Placements
  - 10% for printing, publications, & direct mail
  - 3% reserved for travel and other miscellaneous costs
- 25% of the budget be used for Agency Services



# agency compensation

## Blended Hourly Rate

To benefit our clients, we use a blended \$160/hour rate for all agency services. This provides a consistent billing structure and a high level of attention from our associates – including our most senior level experts. We take a number of steps to ensure our rates are market competitive and fair to our clients and to us. We regularly measure our rates against those of similar size and type agencies – both within the Upstate New York market and outside our geography – and use benchmarking data from the 4A's and other industry resources for further

comparison. Our clients and prospects often provide the unsolicited feedback that our rates are more than warranted for the exceptional product we deliver.

## Monthly Retainer

Based upon the scope of services requested, we recommend a monthly retainer of \$15,625 for Agency Services. For paid media strategy, planning, and placement, we charge the industry standard 15% commission for traditional media, 30% for digital media, and 20% markup on outside production costs. As requested in the RFP, the term of this

pricing structure would be September 1, 2023, through August 31, 2026 – with the option to extend the contract annually for up to three (3) years.

# agency compensation

## Agency Services

- Account Service
- Research and Strategy
- Integrated Marketing Communications Planning
- Creative Concepting, Copywriting, and Design Services
- Public Relations
- Public Affairs
- Digital Marketing
- Social Media
- Production Supervision and Management
- Web Design and Development Services
- Analytics and Reporting

**As our investment in a long-term partnership with HVCC, we would like to make an annual \$12,500 in-kind donation of services to support the advancement/fundraising efforts of HVCC.**



A low-angle, silhouette photograph of a utility worker climbing a wooden power pole. The worker is positioned in the center, surrounded by a complex network of power lines and insulators. The background is a clear, light blue sky. The overall mood is industrial and focused.

# who else

We have no current conflicts of interest with HVCC

# our active higher education & related education clients

## Higher education:

- Chautauqua Institution
- SUNY Erie
- Syracuse University
- University at Buffalo
- Western Governors University

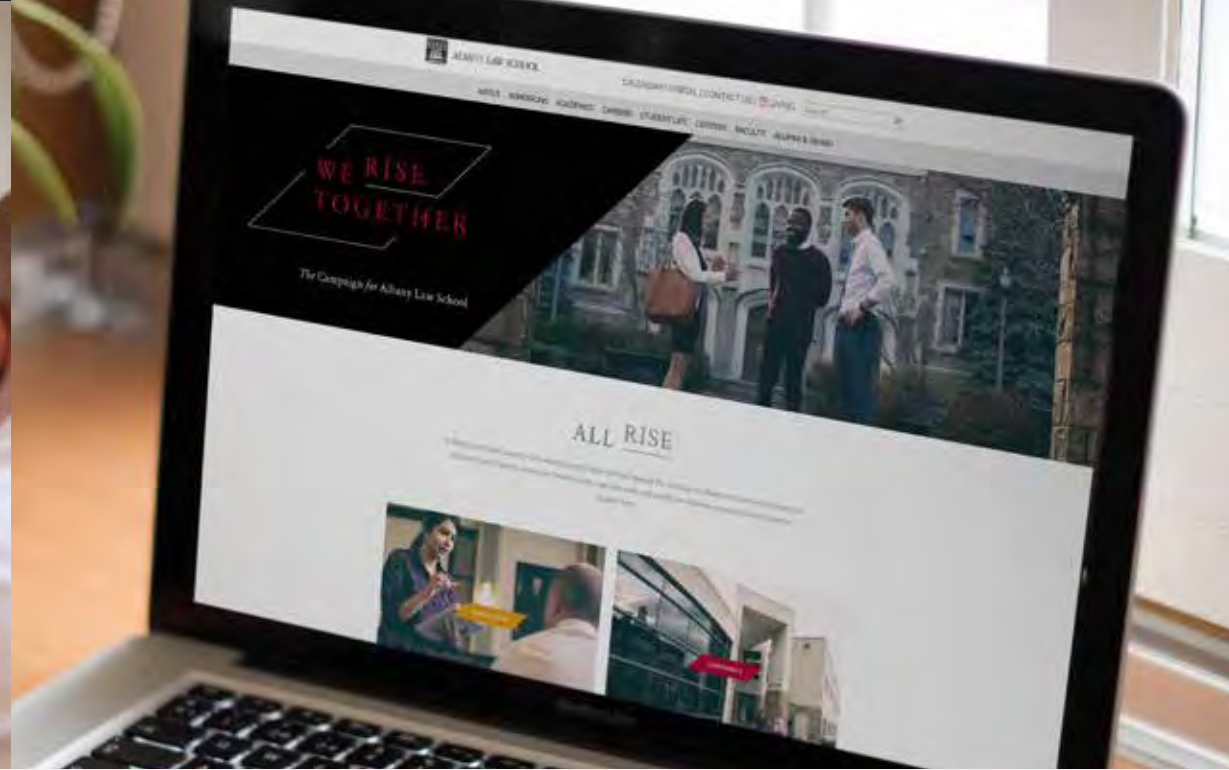
## Secondary education:

- Bison Scholarship Fund
- Nichols School
- Our Lady of Mercy School for Young Women

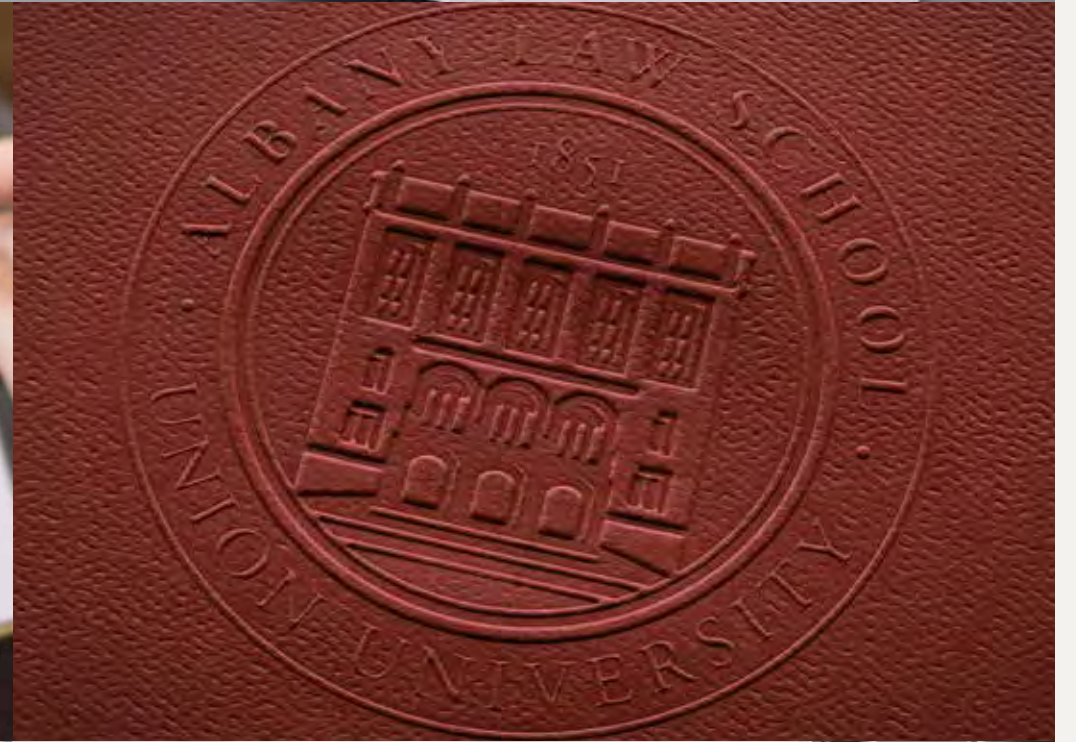
# creative samples

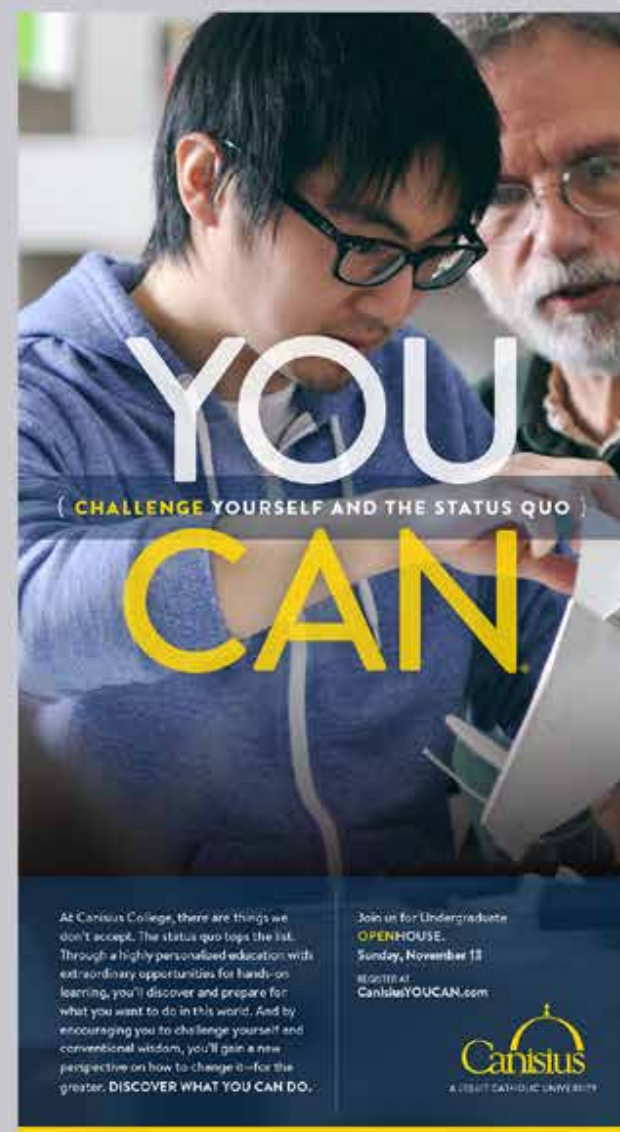
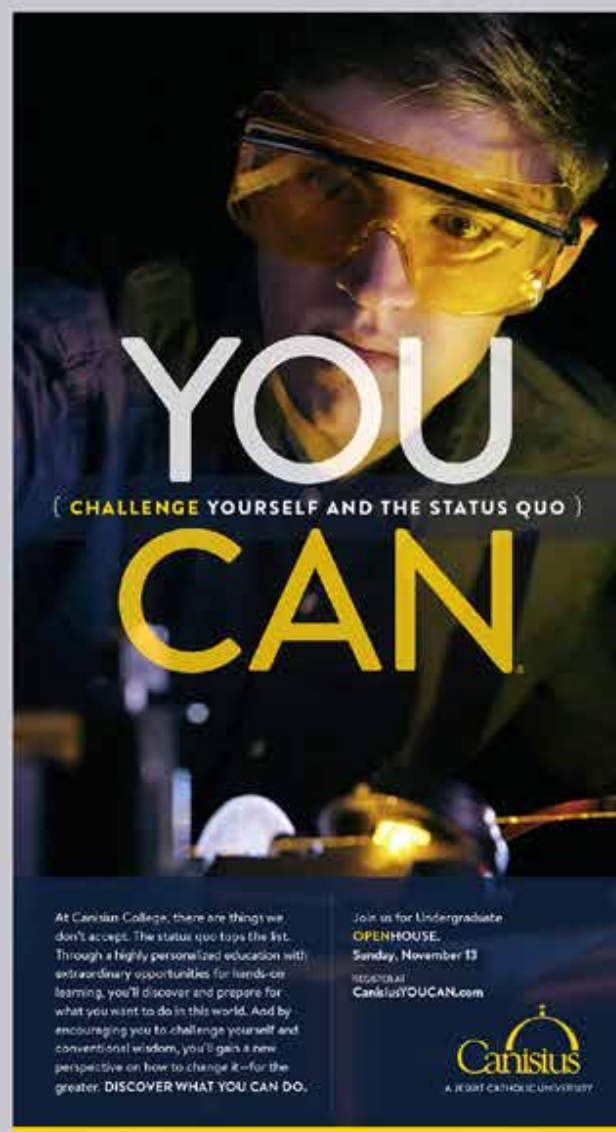
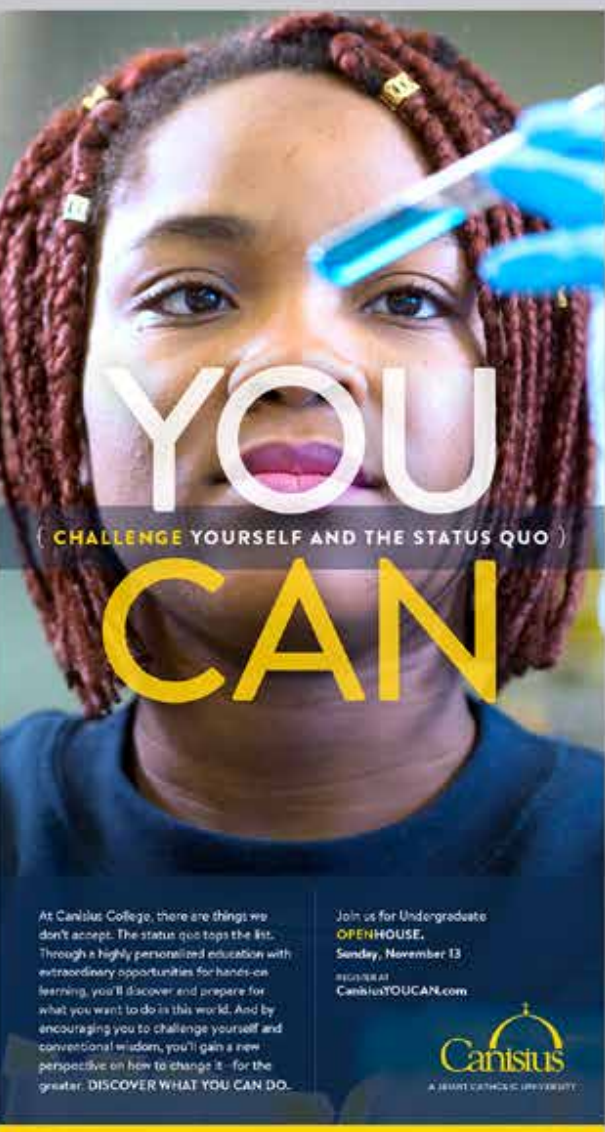


ALBANY LAW SCHOOL // DEVELOPMENT CAMPAIGN



ALBANY LAW SCHOOL // DEVELOPMENT CAMPAIGN





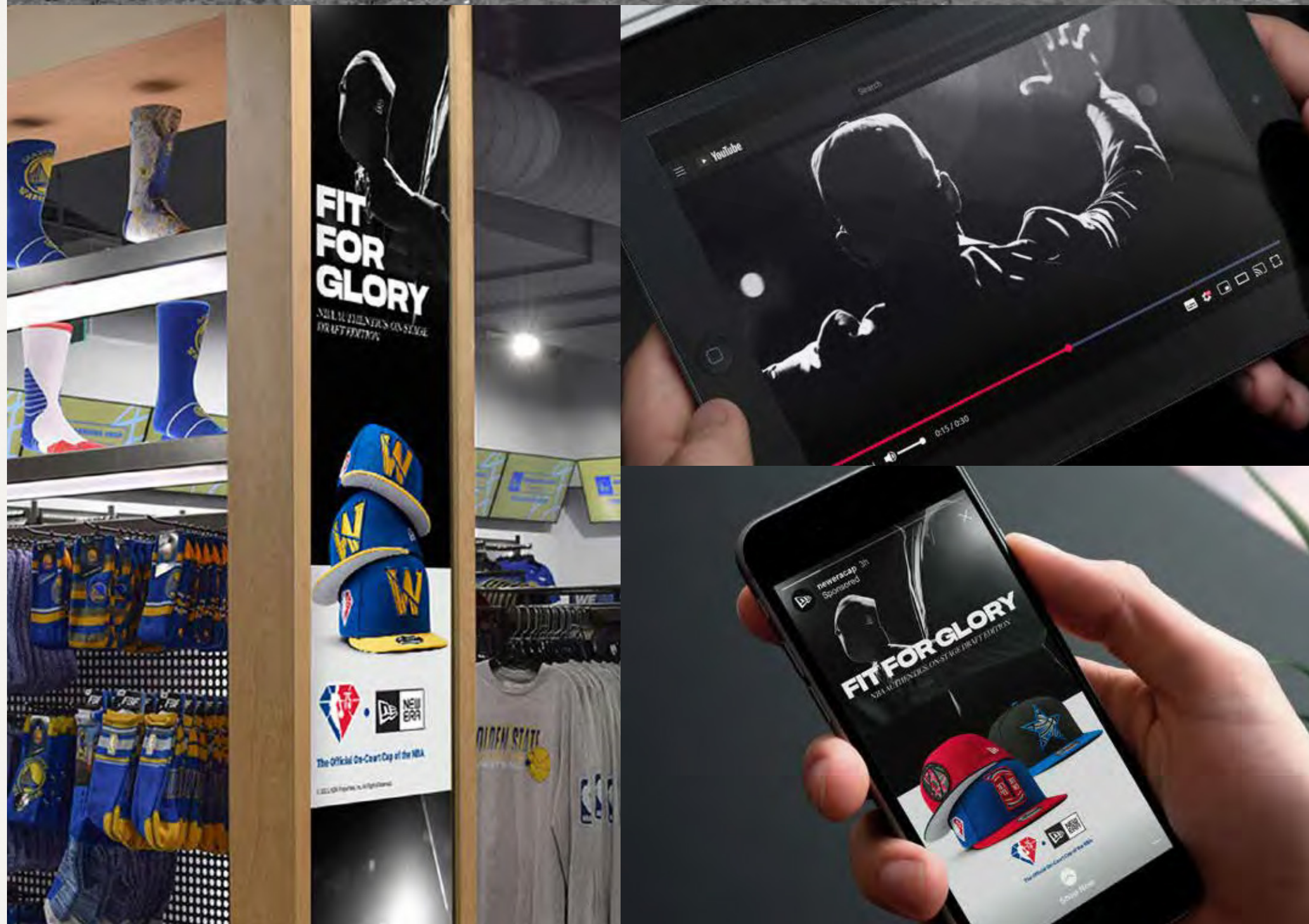
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY // 150 YEAR ANNIVERSARY CAMPAIGN



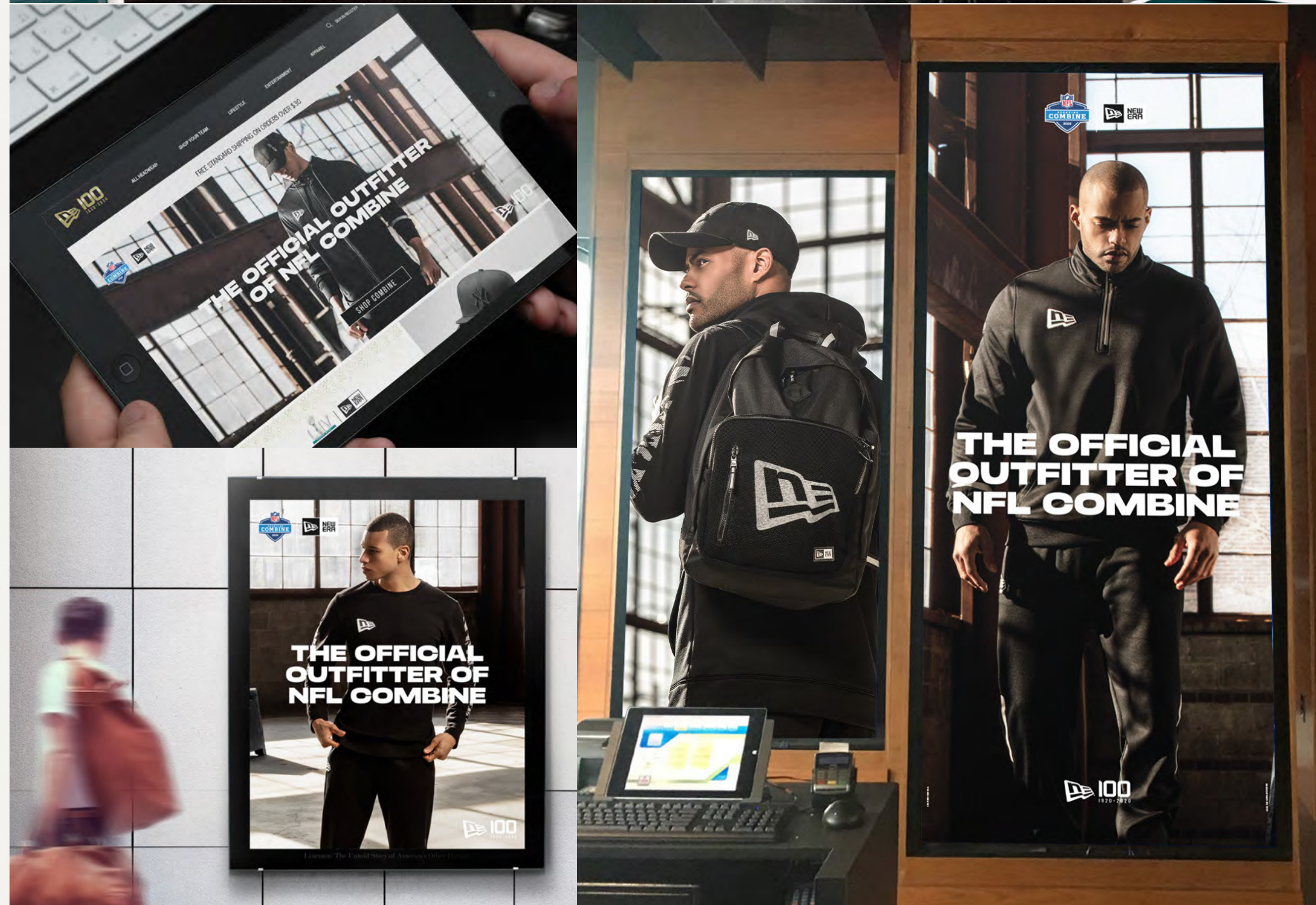
UNIVERSITY AT BUFFALO // INNOVATION HUB CAMPAIGN



NEW ERA CAP // NBA DRAFT 2021 ACTIVATION



NEW ERA CAP // NFL COMBINE CAMPAIGN



NEW ERA CAP // MLB ACTIVATION



NEW ERA CAP // MLB ACTIVATION

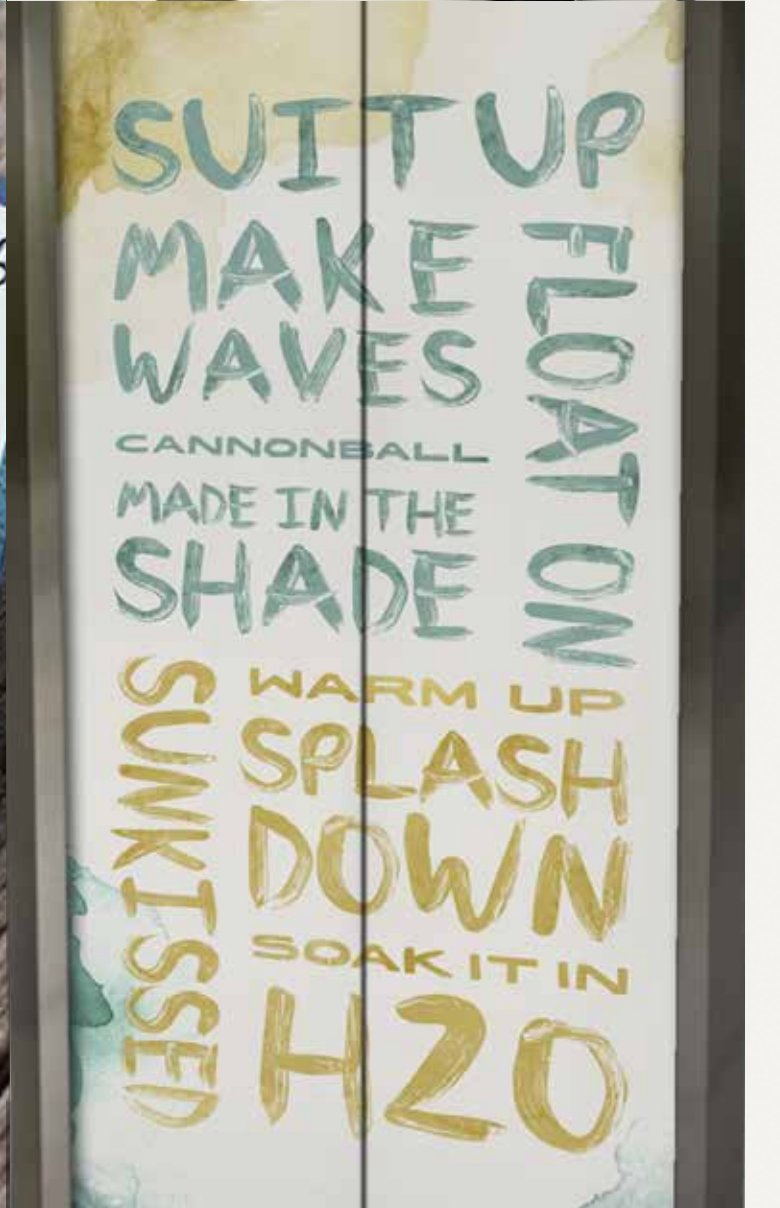




NEW ERA CAP // SUPER BOWL 50 GOLD RUSH EVENT ACTIVATION



NEW ERA CAP // MLB ALL-STAR POOL HOUSE ACTIVATION



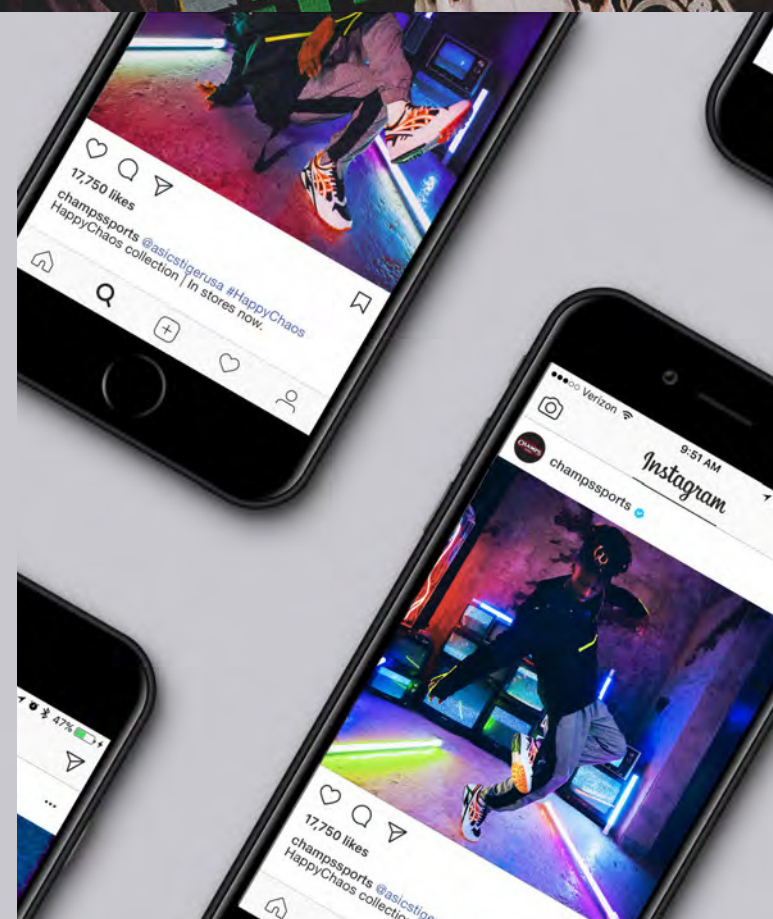
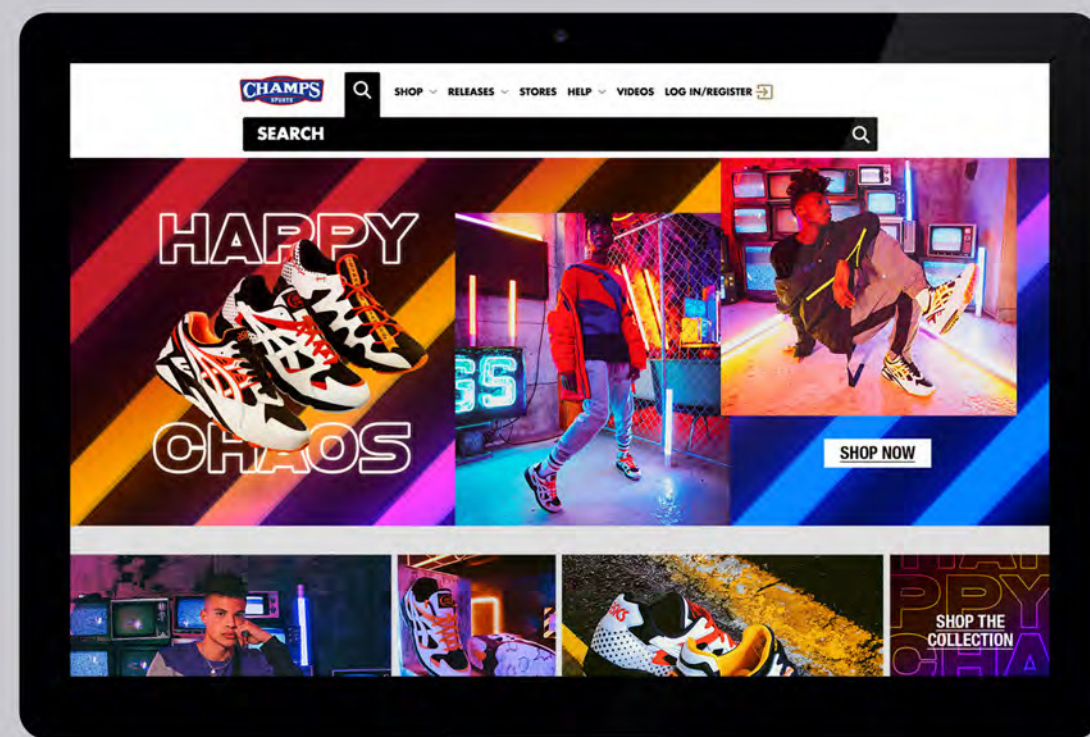
NEW ERA CAP // NBA ALL-STAR ACTIVATION



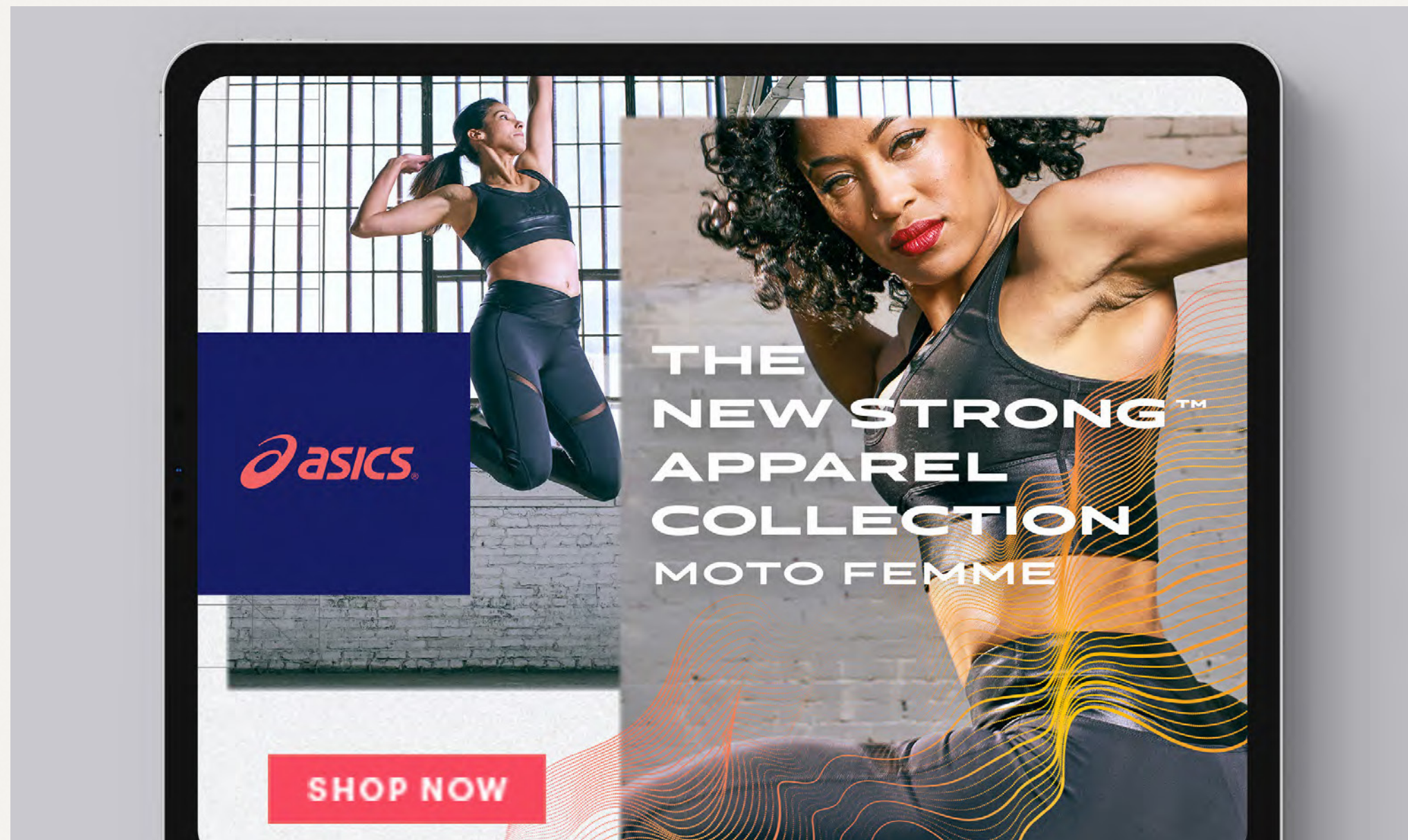
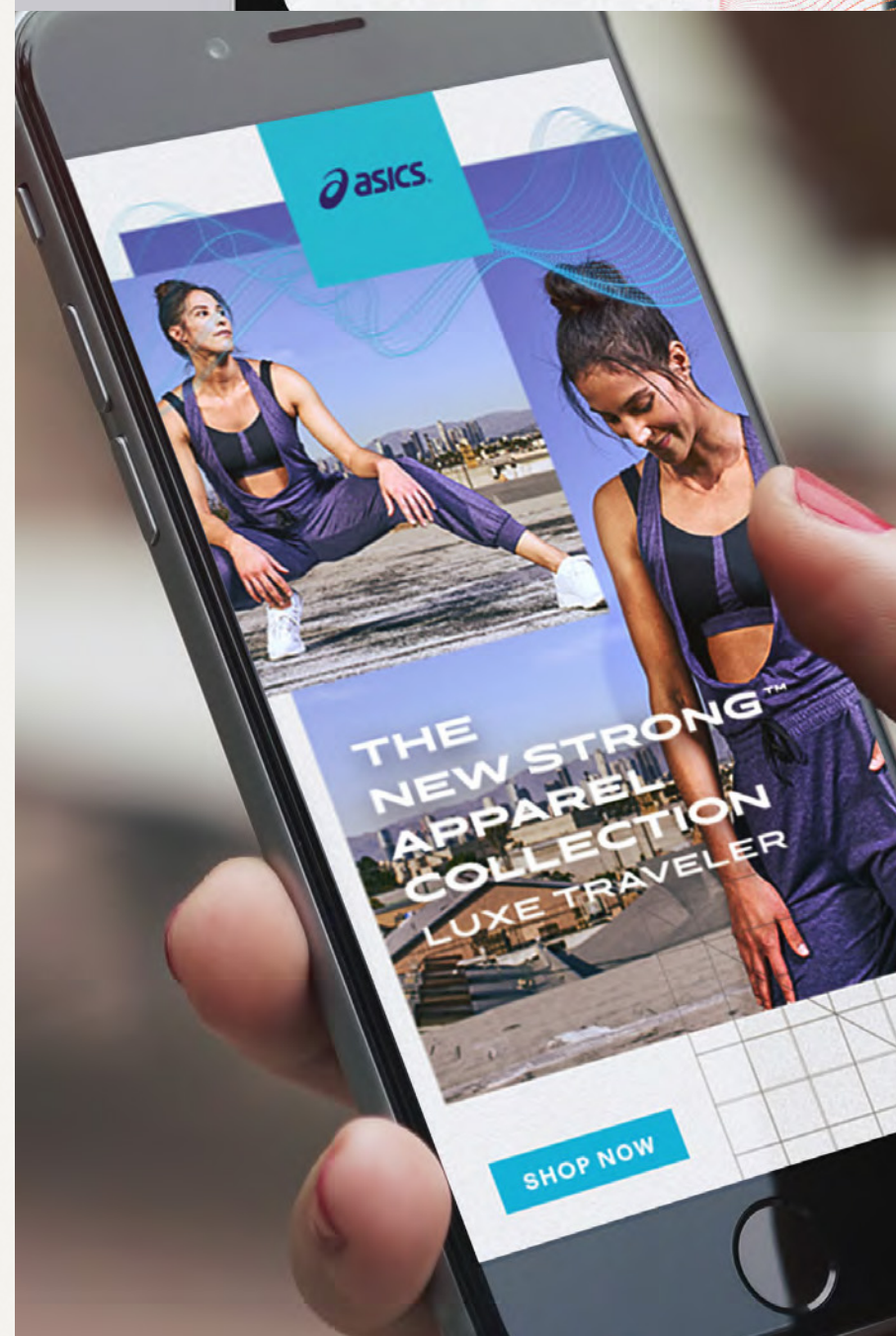
NEW ERA CAP // NBA ALL-STAR ACTIVATION

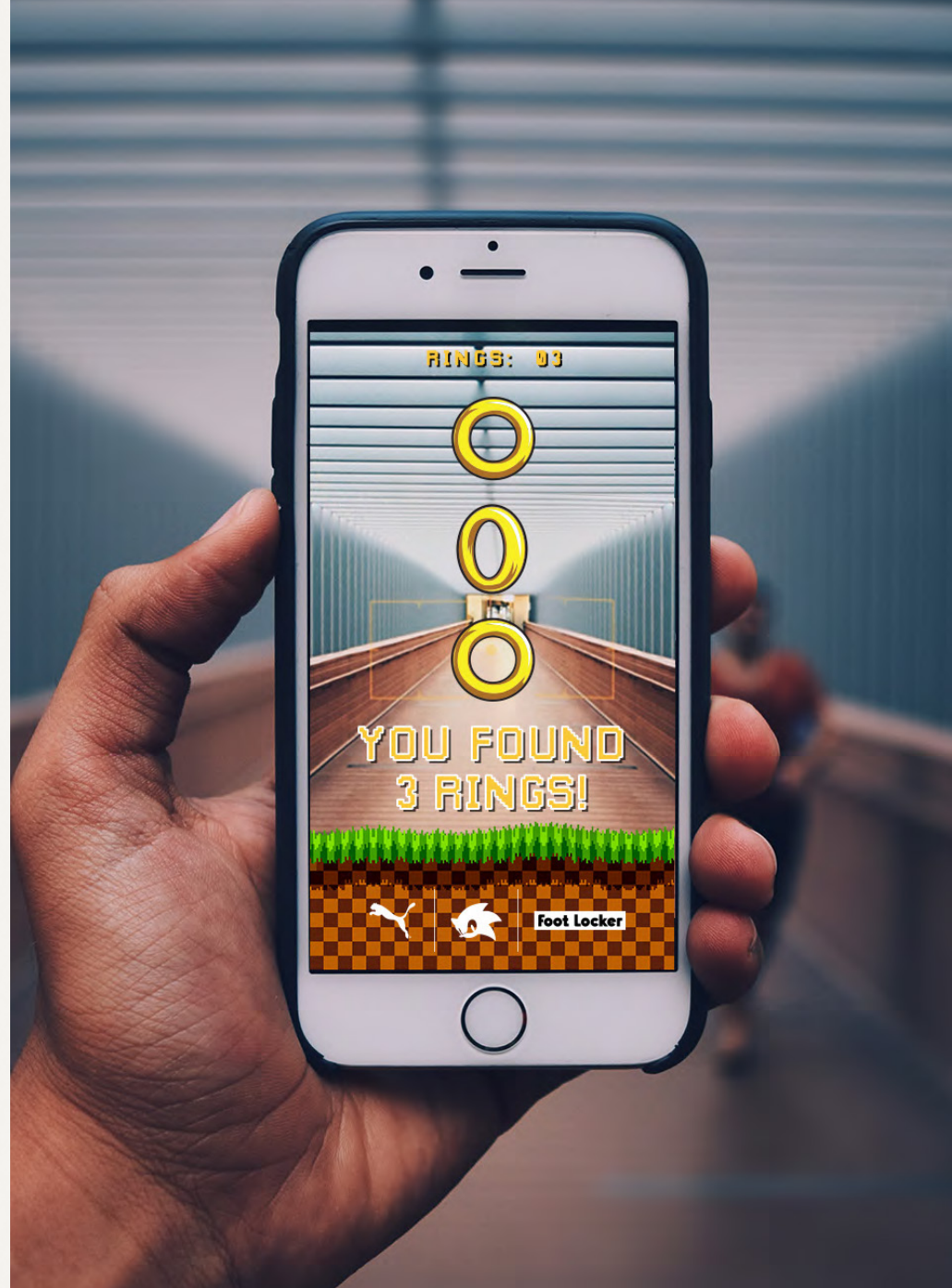


ASICS // HAPPY CHAOS PRODUCT LAUNCH



ASICS // THE NEW STRONG ACTIVATION

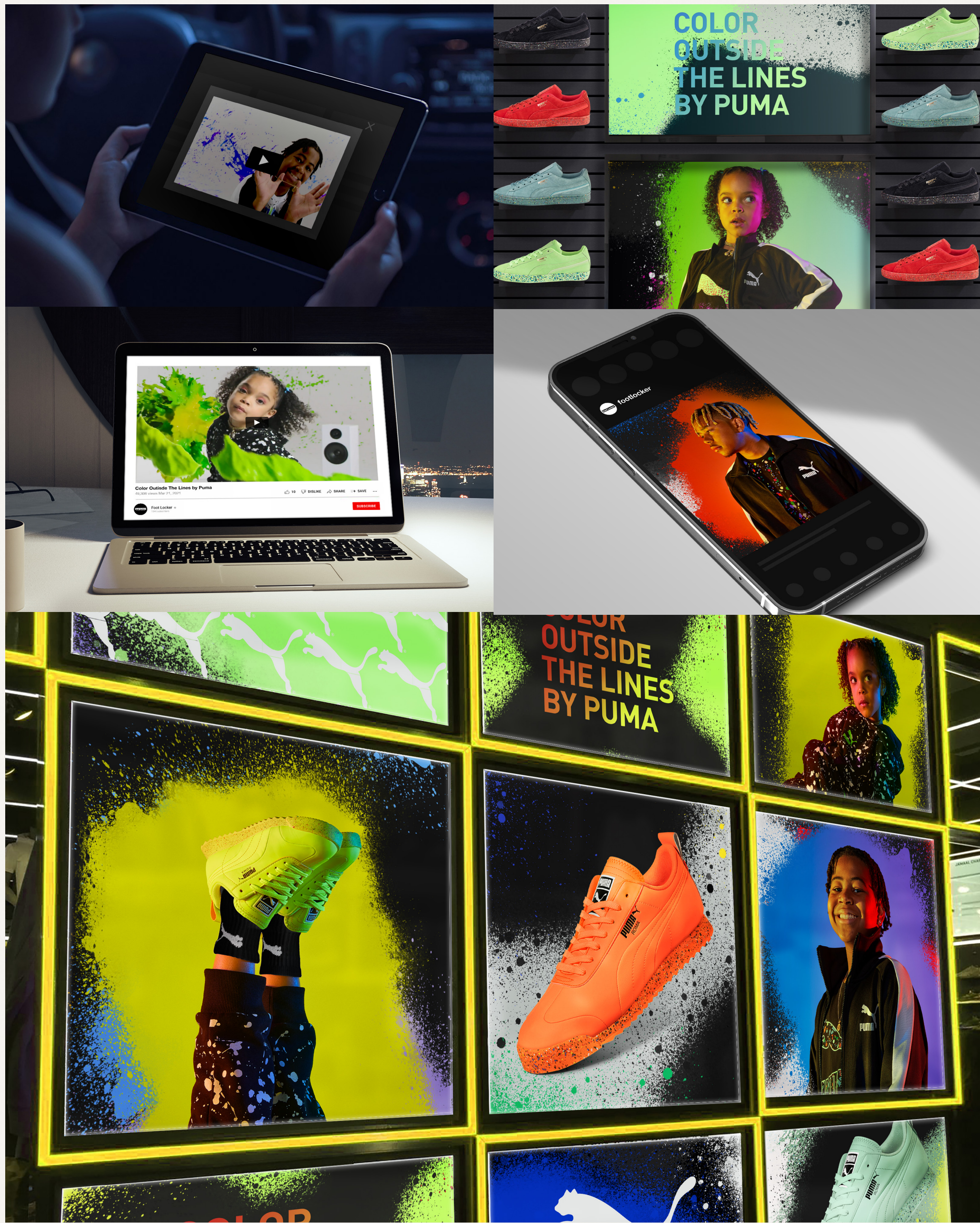




PUMA // FOOTLOCKER COLOR OUTSIDE THE LINES S:S 22

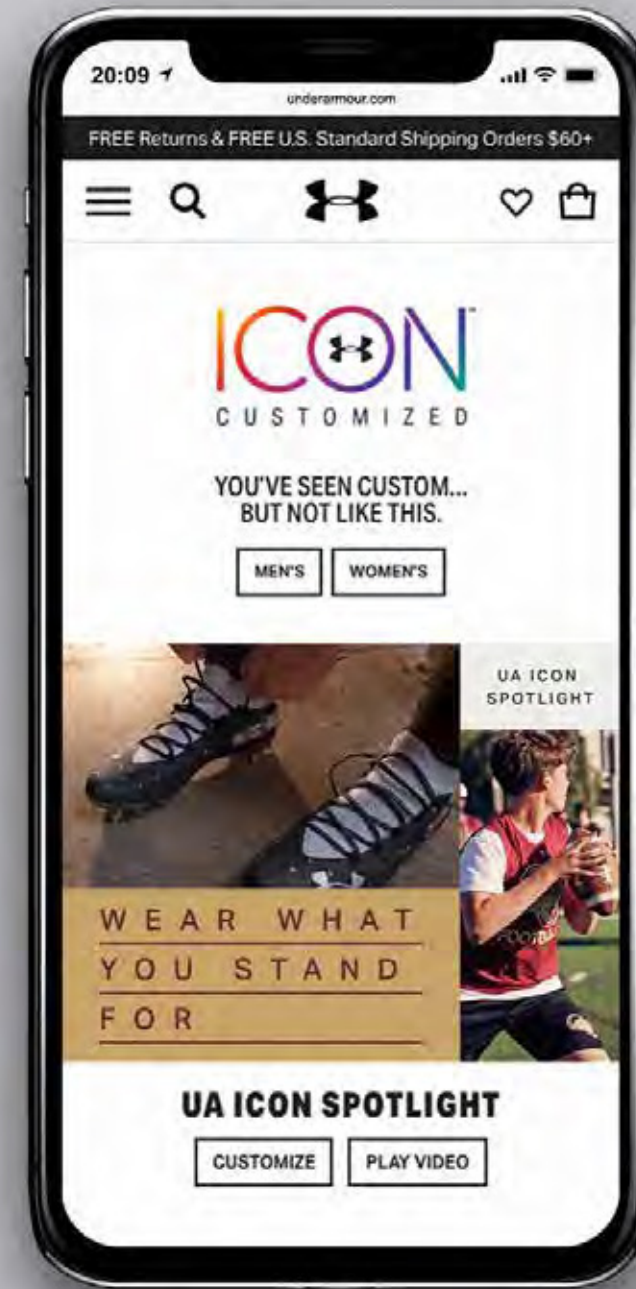


PUMA // FOOTLOCKER COLOR OUTSIDE THE LINES S:S 22





UNDER ARMOUR // ICON CAMPAIGN



UNDER ARMOUR // ICON CAMPAIGN

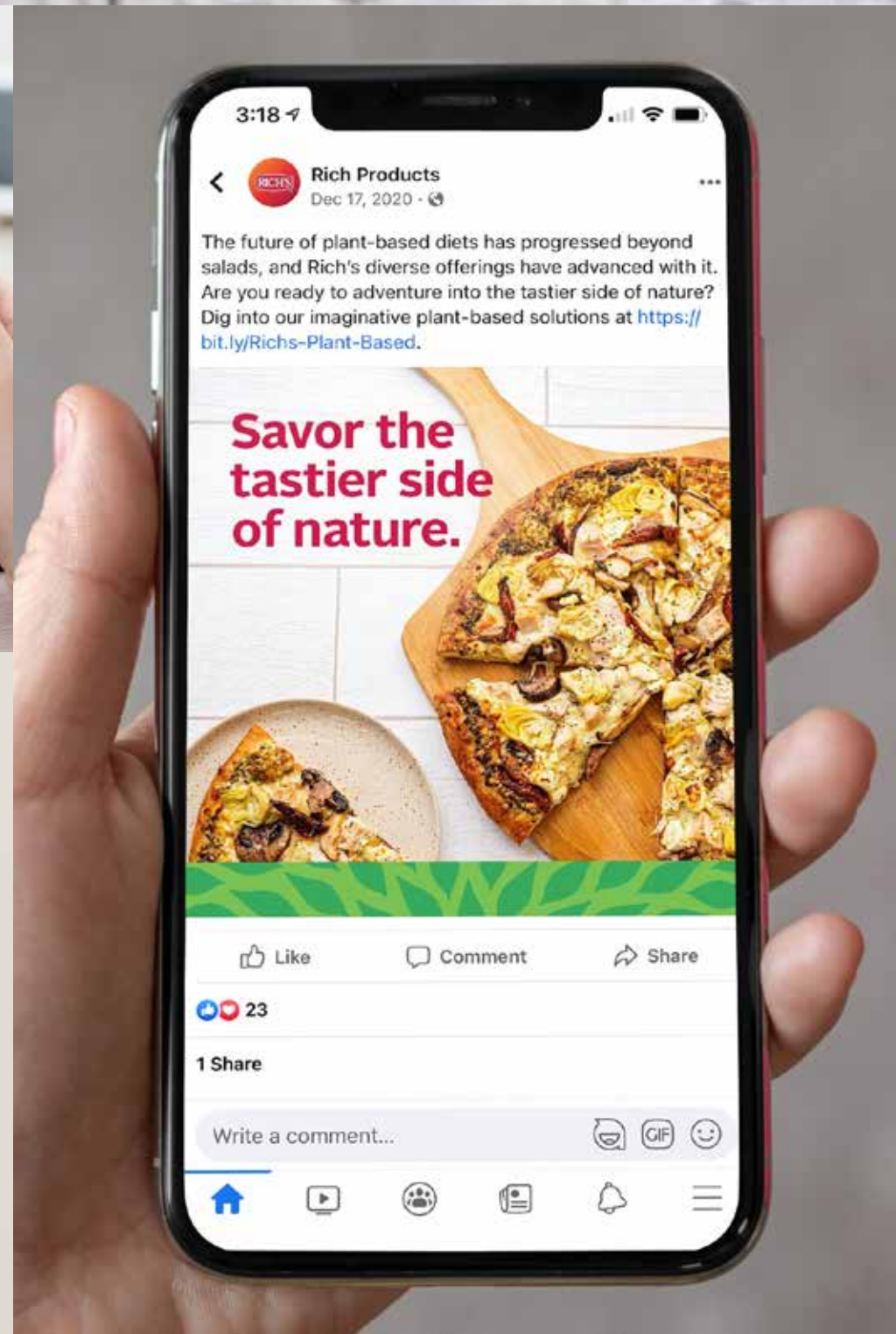
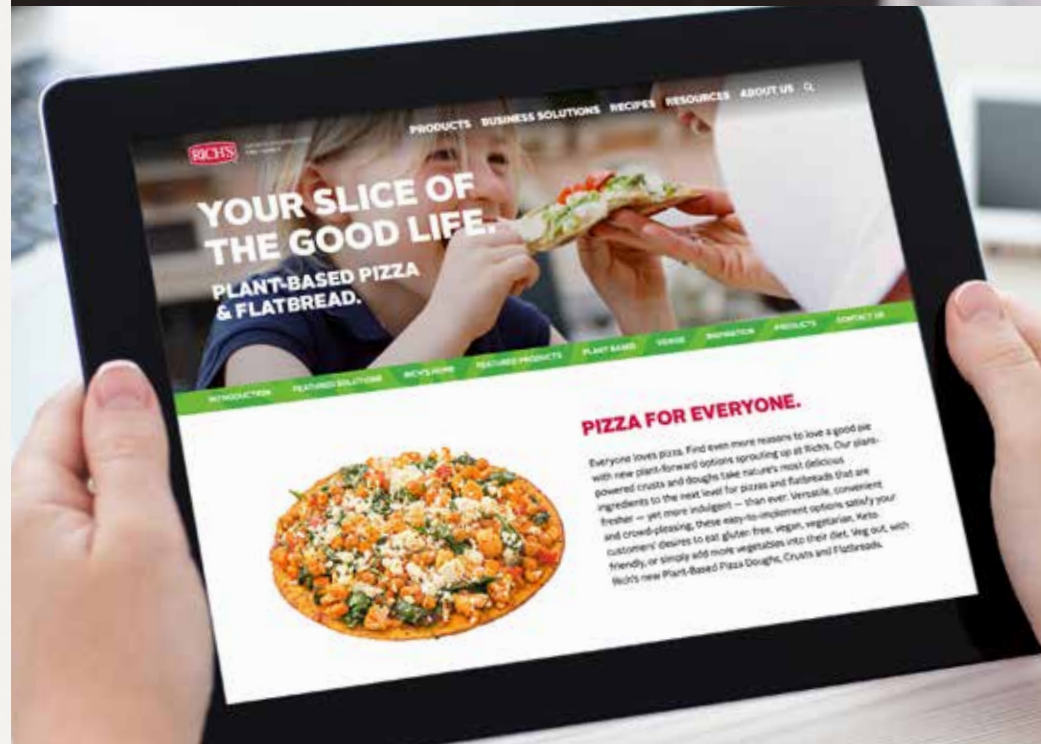
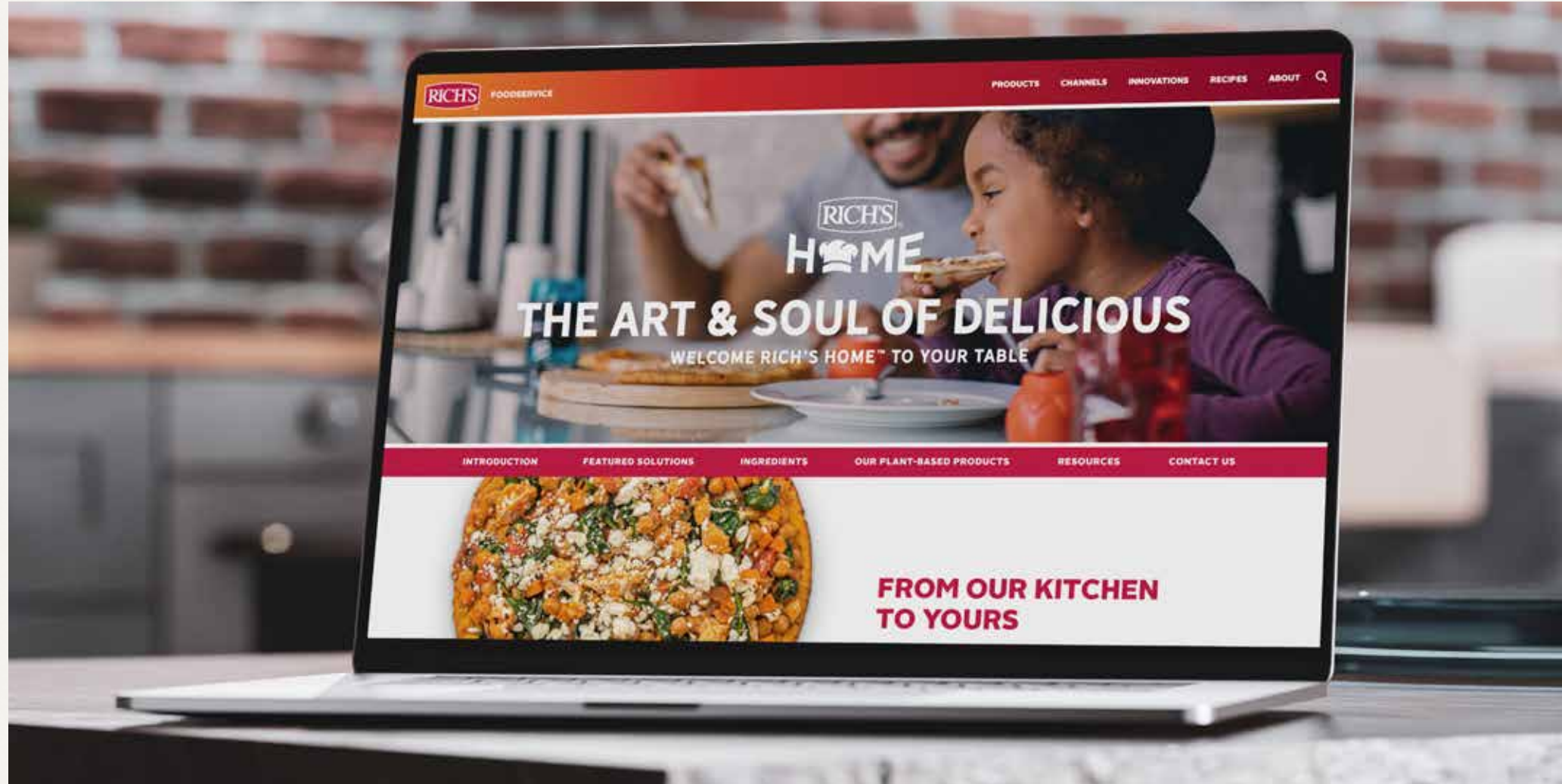
WEGMANS // PACKAGING WORK



WEGMANS // IN-STORE



RICH PRODUCTS // PLANT-BASED AND AT HOME CAMPAIGNS

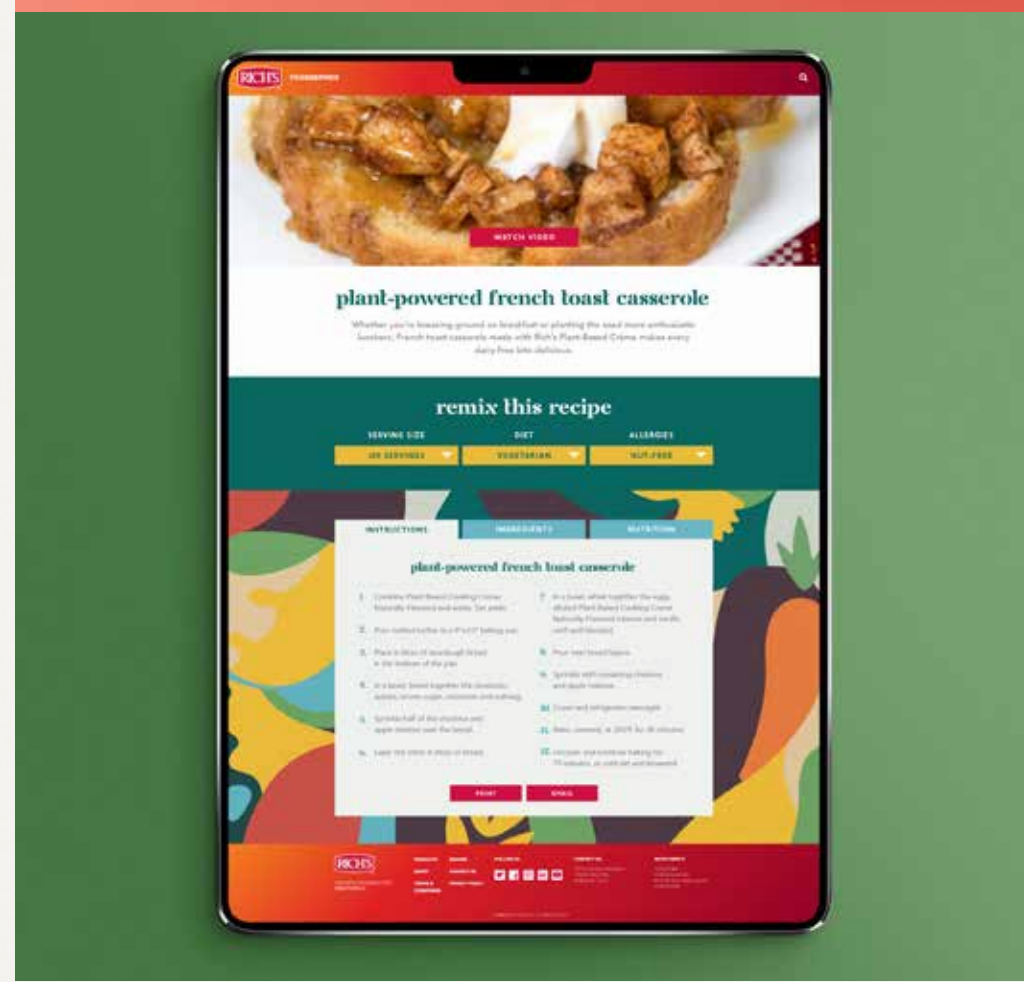


RICH PRODUCTS // PLANT-BASED AND AT HOME PACKAGING

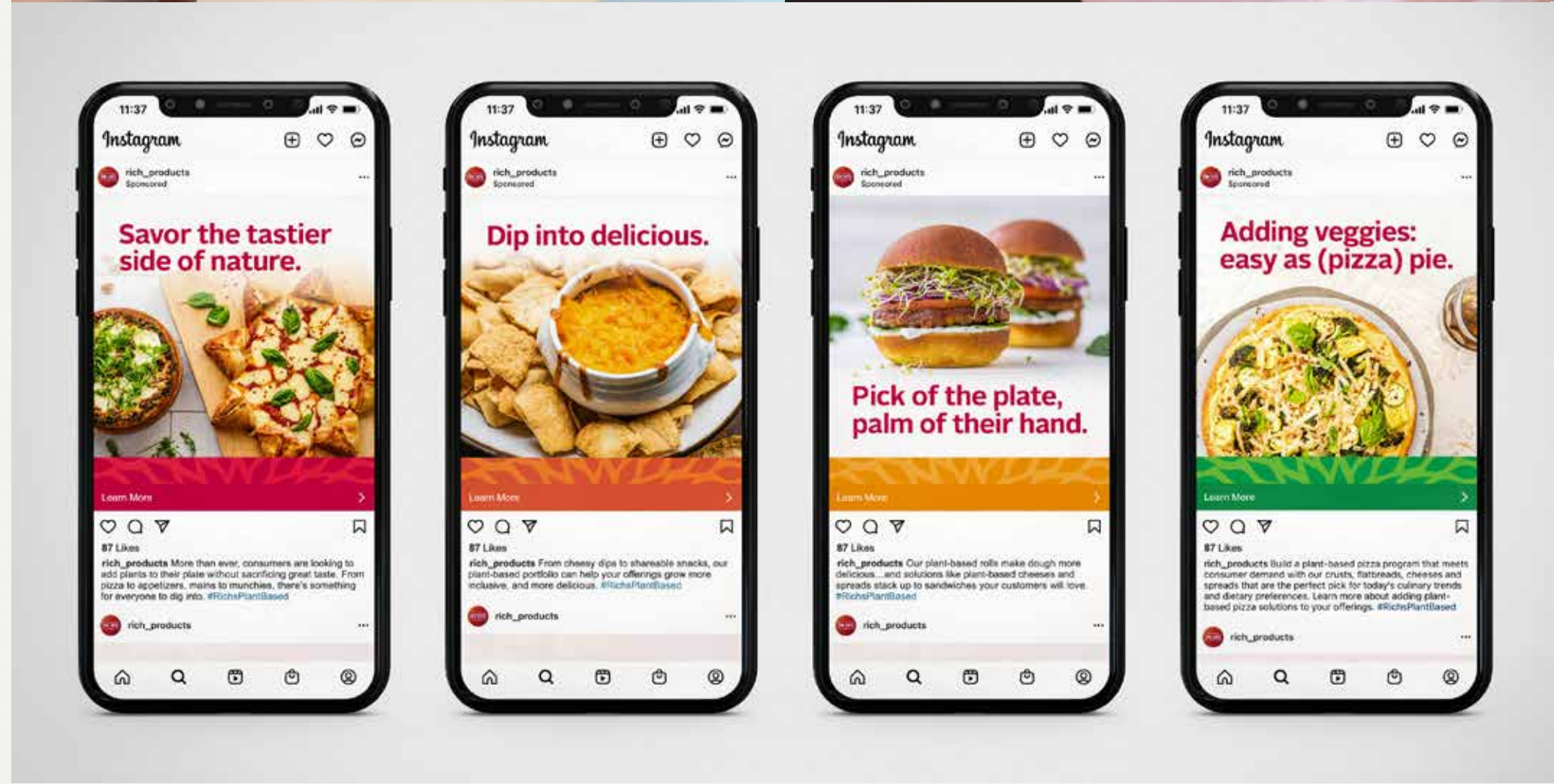
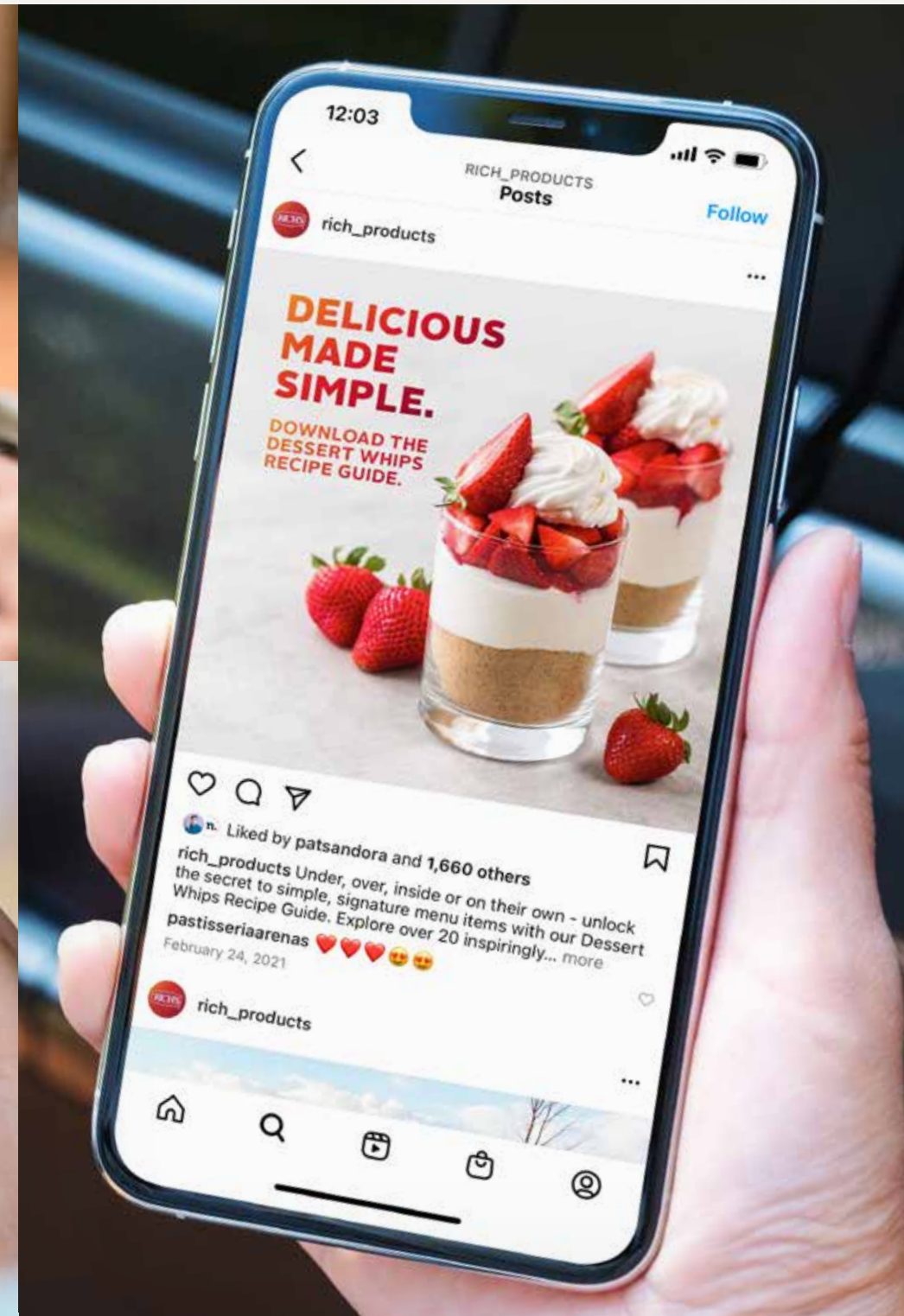
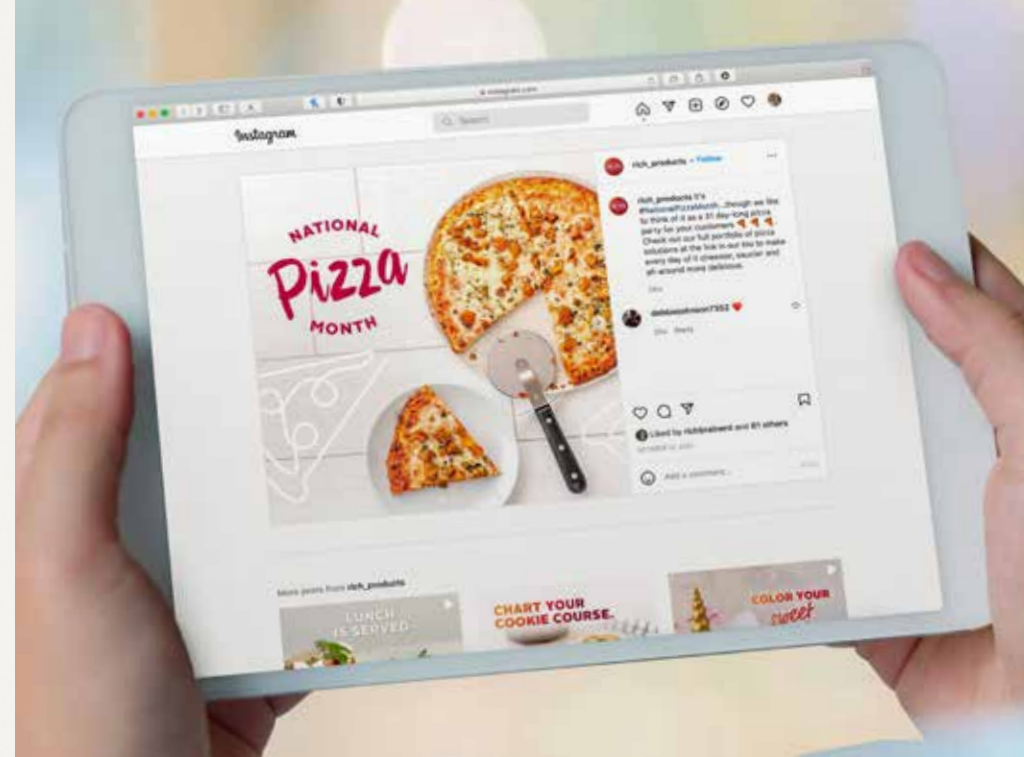




RICH PRODUCTS // PLANT-BASED CAMPAIGN CONCEPTS

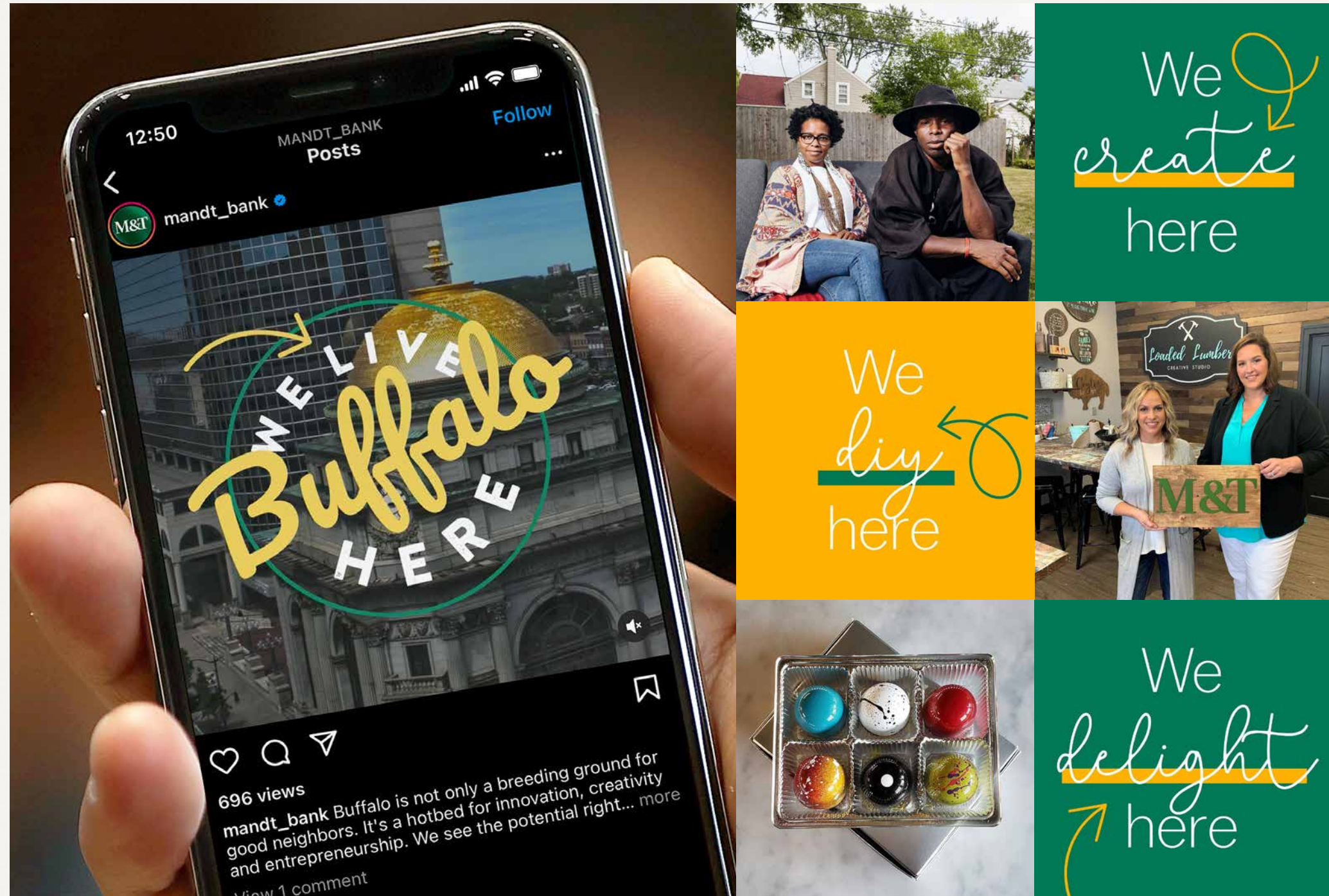


RICH PRODUCTS // SOCIAL MEDIA

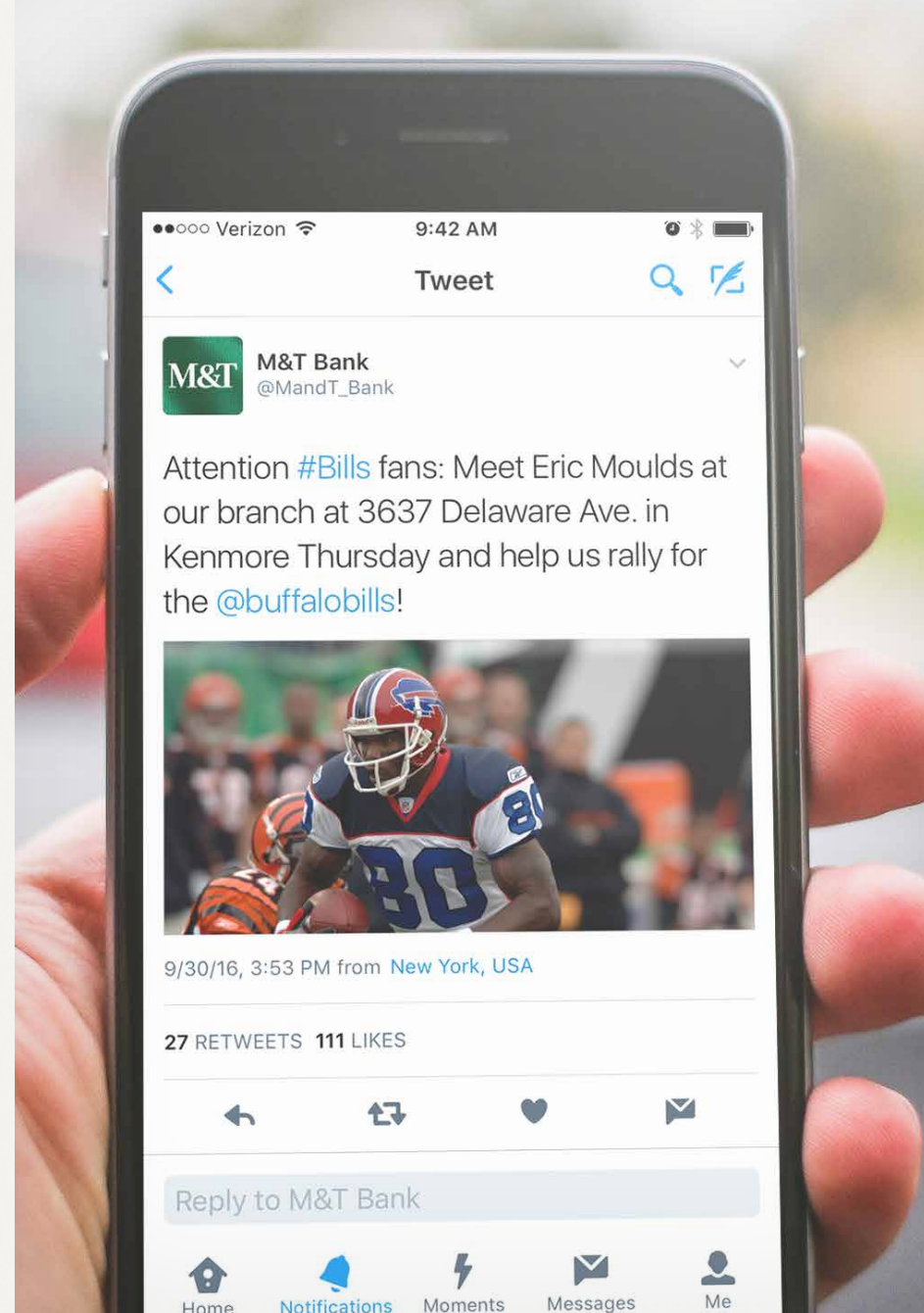




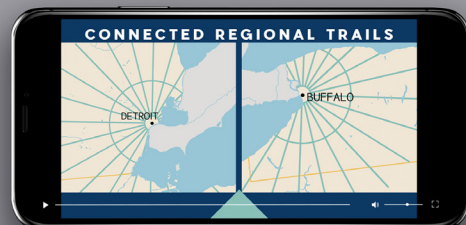
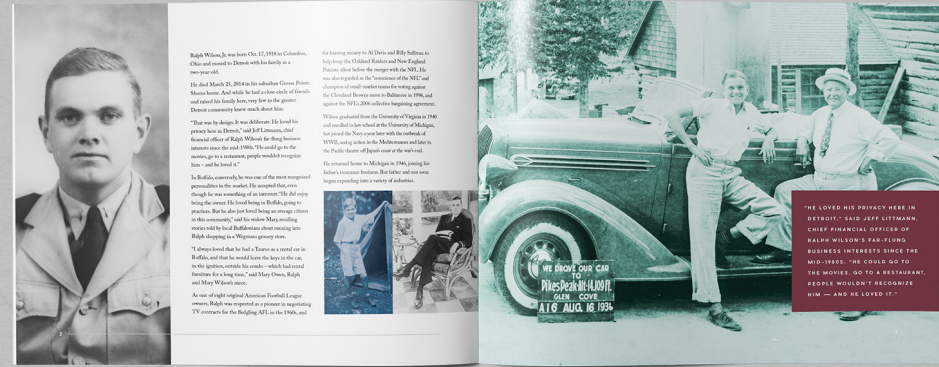
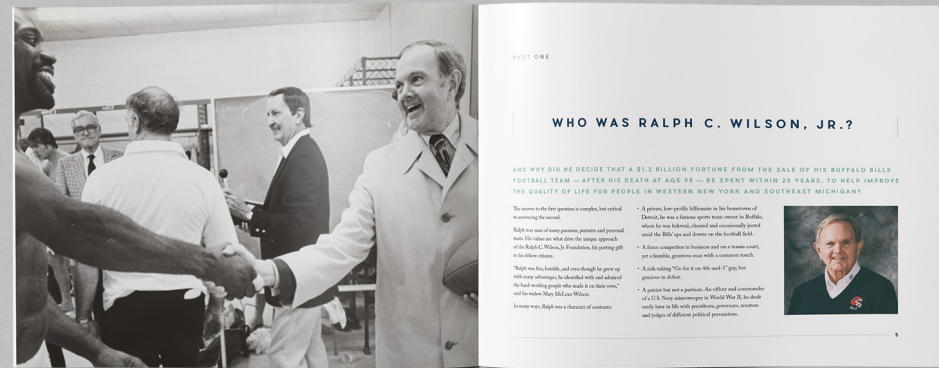
M&T BANK // GO LOCAL CAMPAIGN



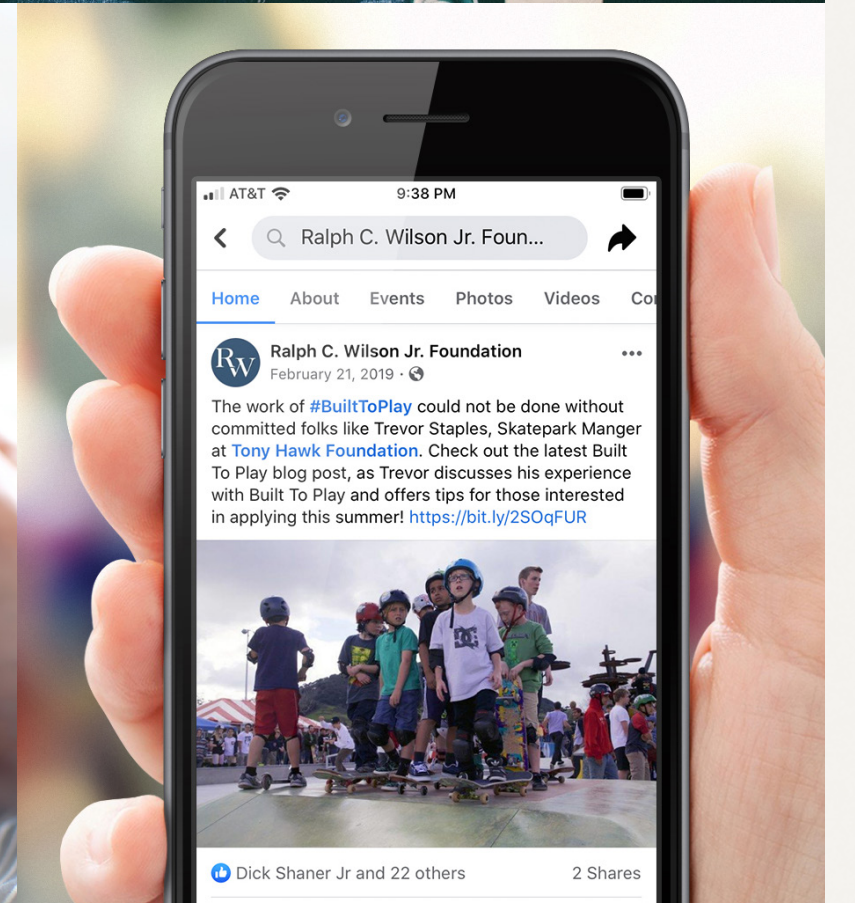
M&T BANK // PUBLIC RELATIONS



RALPH C. WILSON, JR. FOUNDATION // EVENT BRANDING AND COLLATERAL

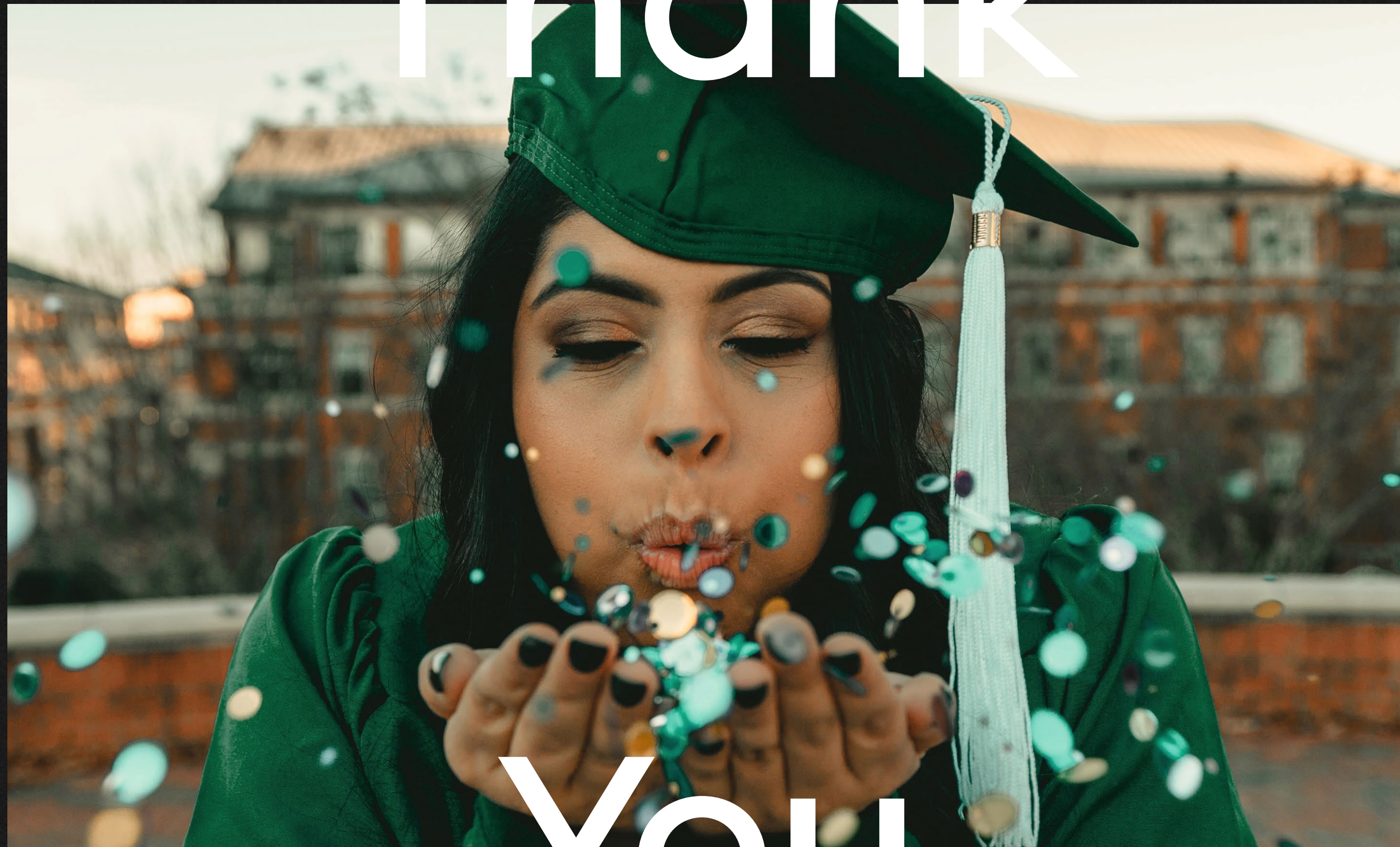


RALPH C. WILSON, JR. FOUNDATION // BUILT TO PLAY CAMPAIGN





# Thank



# You

## GENERAL MUNICIPAL LAW

### S. 103.a Ground for cancellation of contract by municipal corporation and fire districts.

A clause shall be inserted in all specifications or contracts made or awarded by a municipal corporation or any public department, agency or official thereof on or after the first day of July, nineteen hundred fifty-nine or by a fire district or any agency or official thereof on or after the first day of September, nineteen hundred sixty, for work or services performed or to be performed, or goods sold or to be sold, to provide that upon the refusal of a person, when called before a grand jury to testify concerning any transaction or contract had with the state, and any political subdivision thereof, a public authority or with any public department, agency or official of the state or of any political subdivision thereof or a public authority, to sign a waiver of immunity against subsequent criminal prosecution or to answer any relevant question concerning such transaction or contract.

(a) Such person, and any firm, partnership or corporation of which he is a member, partner, director or officer shall be disqualified from thereafter selling to or submitting bids to or receiving awards from or entering into any contracts with any municipal corporation or fire district, or any public department, agency or official thereof, for goods, work or services, for a period of five years after such refusal, and to provide also that

(b) Any and all contracts made with any municipal corporation or any public department, agency or official thereof on or after the first day of July, nineteen hundred fifty-nine or with any fire district or any agency or official thereof on or after the first day of September, nineteen hundred sixty, by such person, and by any firm, partnership or corporation of which he is a member, partner, director or officer may be canceled or terminated by the municipal corporation or fire district without incurring any penalty or damages on account of such cancellation or termination, but any monies owing by the municipal corporation or fire district for goods delivered or work done prior to the cancellation or termination shall be paid.

The provisions of this section as in force and effect prior to the first day of September, nineteen hundred sixty, shall apply to specifications or contracts made or awarded by a municipal corporation on or after the first day of July, nineteen hundred fifty-nine, but prior to the first day of September, nineteen hundred sixty.

### S. 103.b Disqualification to contract with municipal corporations and fire districts.

Any person who, when called before a grand jury to testify concerning any transaction or contract had with the state, any political subdivision thereof, a public authority, or with a public department, agency or official of the state or of any political subdivision thereof or of a public authority, refuses to sign a waiver of immunity against subsequent criminal prosecution or to answer any relevant question concerning such transaction or contract, and any firm, partnership or corporation of which he is a member, partner, director or officer shall be disqualified from thereafter selling to or submitting bids to or receiving awards from thereafter selling to or submitting bids to or receiving awards from or entering into any contracts with any municipal corporation or fire district, or with any public department, agency or official thereof, for goods, work or services, for a period of five years after such refusal or until a disqualification shall be removed pursuant to the provisions of section one hundred three-c of this article.

It shall be the duty of the officer conducting the investigation before the grand jury before which the refusal occurs to send notice of such refusal, together with the names of any firm, partnership or corporation of which the person so refusing is known to be a member, partner, officer or director, to the superintendent of public works of the State of New York, and the appropriate departments, agencies and officials of the state, political subdivisions thereof or public authorities with whom the person so refusing and any firm, partnership or corporation of which he is a member, partner, director or officer, is known to have a contract.

### S. 103.c Statement of non-collusion in contract with municipal corporation or fire districts.

Every contract hereafter made or awarded by a municipal corporation or any public department, agency or official thereof or by a fire district or any agency or official thereof, pursuant to bid, for work or services following statement by the bidder, under penalty of perjury: Non-collusive bidding certification. The bidder certifies that: (a) the bid has been arrived at the bidder independently and has been submitted without collusion with any other vendor of materials, supplies, or equipment of the type described in the invitation for bids, and (b) the contents of the bid have not been communicated by the bidder, nor, to its best knowledge and belief, by any of its employees or agents, to any person not an employee or agent of the bidder or its surety of any bond furnished herewith prior to the official opening of the bid.

**ART. 8**

**LABOR LAW**

S. 220.a

Statements showing amounts due for wages and supplements to be filed-verification. Before payment is made by or on behalf of the state of any city, county, town, village or other civil division of the state of any sum or sums due on account of a contract for a public improvement it shall be the duty of the comptroller of the state or the financial officer of the municipal corporation or other officer or person charged with the custody and disbursement of the state or corporate funds applicable to the contract under and pursuant to which payment is made to require the contractor to file a statement in writing in form satisfactory to such officer certifying to the amounts then due and owing from such contractor or subcontractor filing such statement to or on behalf of any and all laborers for daily or weekly wages or supplements on account of labor performed upon the work under the contract, setting forth therein the names of the persons whose wages or supplements are unpaid and the amount due to each or on behalf of each respectively, which statement so to be filed shall be verified by the oath of the contractor or subcontractor as the case may be that he has read such statement subscribed by him and knows the contents thereof, and that the same is true of his own knowledge.

220.a as last amended by L1956, C750, eff. April 1, 1956.

S. 103.d Statement of non-collusion in bids and proposals to political subdivision of the state or fire district.

Every bid or proposal hereafter made to a political subdivision of the state or any public department, agency or official thereof or by a fire district or any agency or official thereof, for work or services performed or to be performed or goods sold or to be sold, shall contain the following statement subscribed by the bidder and affirmed by such bidder as true under the penalties of perjury: Non-collusive bidding certification. By submission of this bid or proposal, the bidder certified that: (a) this bid or proposal has been independently arrived at without collusion with any other bidder or with any competitor or potential competitor; (b) this bid or proposal has not been knowingly disclosed and will not be knowingly disclosed, prior to the opening of bids or proposals for this project, to any other bidder, competitor or potential competitor; (c) no attempt has been or will be made to induce any other person, partnership or corporation to submit or not to submit a bid or proposal; (d) the person signing this accuracy of the statements contained in this certification, and under the penalties of perjury, affirms the truth thereof, such penalties being applicable to the bidder as well as to the person signing in its behalf; (e) that attached hereto (if a corporate bidder) is a certified copy of resolution authorizing the execution of this certificate by the signator of this bid or proposal in behalf of the corporate bidder.

IN THE CASE OF CORPORATE BIDDERS A RESOLUTION IN THE FOLLOWING FORM MUST ACCOMPANY THE BIDS.

Resolved that The Martin Group, LLC be (Name of Corporation) authorized to sign and submit the bid or proposal of this corporation for the following project Hudson Valley Community College RFP for Communications and Marketing Services (Describe Project) and to include with such bid or proposal the certificate as to non-collusion required by section one hundred three-d of the General Municipal Law as the act and deed of such corporation, and for any inaccuracies or misstatements in such certificate this corporate bidder shall be liable under the penalties of perjury.

The foregoing is a true and correct copy of the resolution adopted by The Martin Group, LLC corporation at a meeting of its board of directors held on the 2nd day of May 2023.

(SEAL OF CORPORATION)



**NON-COLLUSIVE BIDDING CERTIFICATION**

- (a) By submission of this bid, each bidder and each person signing on behalf of any bidder certifies, and in the case of a joint bid each party thereto certifies as to its own organization, under penalty of perjury, that to the best of knowledge and belief:
- (1) The prices in this bid have been arrived at independently without collusion, consultation, communication, or agreement, for the purpose of restricting competition, as to any matter relating to such prices with any other bidder or with any competitor;
  - (2) Unless otherwise required by law, the prices which have been quoted in this bid have not been knowingly disclosed by the bidder and will not knowingly be disclosed by the bidder prior to opening, directly or indirectly, to any other bidder or to any competitor; and
  - (3) No attempt has been made or will be made by the bidder to induce any other person, partnership or corporation to submit or not to submit a bid for the purpose of restricting competition.

Sarah Warner  
\_\_\_\_\_  
PRINT NAME  
*Sarah Warner*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE  
New Business Advisor  
\_\_\_\_\_  
TITLE  
The Martin Group, LLC  
\_\_\_\_\_  
NAME OF CORPORATION  
16-1606293  
\_\_\_\_\_  
FEDERAL ID#

DATE: May 31, 2023

New York State  
Department of Taxation and Finance  
OTPA Sales Tax Exempt Organizations Unit  
Building 8, Room 425  
W.A. Harriman Campus  
Albany, NY 12227

Hudson Valley Community College  
80 Vandenberg Avenue  
Troy, NY 12180-6096

Gentlemen:

The Tax Law exempts New York State governmental entities, such as your organization, from the payment of sales and use taxes on their purchases.

**Tax exemption numbers and the Exempt Organization Certification, Form ST-119.1 are not issued to governmental entities.** In order to make tax-free purchases, your organization must present vendors with its official purchase order or other documentation which indicates that the purchase is made by and paid from the funds of a governmental entity. You may instead present a copy of this letter along to any vendor who requests a tax exemption number or an Exempt Organization Certification, Form ST- 119.1.

**NOTICE TO VENDOR**

**This letter is not an exemption document.** You are not required to collect tax from the above organization, if they present you with their purchase order or other documentation which indicates that the purchase is made by and paid from the funds of a governmental entity.

New York State Department of Tax and Finance  
OTPA - Technical Services Bureau  
Sales Tax - Exemption Organizations Unit  
Building 8, Room 425  
W. A. Harriman Campus  
Albany, NY 12227  
(518) 457-2782

**NO REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL RESPONSE**  
**WHETHER OR NOT YOU SUBMIT A PROPOSAL FOR THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL,**  
**CHECK AND RETURN IF YOU WISH TO BE MAINTAINED ON OUR RESPONDEE'S LIST:**

1. /\_\_/ We are unable to bid at this time.
2. // Keep us on your RESPONDEE's list.
3. /\_\_/ Remove us from your RESPONDEE's list.
4. /\_\_/ Our additional areas of interest are:
5. /\_\_/ Comments:

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The Martin Group, LLC

Responder's Name

620 Main St. Buffalo, NY 14202

Address

Sarah Warner

Representative

*Sarah Warner*

Representative's Signature

New Business Advisor

Title

To: Board of Directors  
From: Matt Davison, Chief Business Officer  
Date: May 2, 2023  
Re: Board Resolution

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*Official Resolution  
Adopted by The Martin Group  
May 2, 2023*

Approval to provide a communications and marketing services proposal to Hudson Valley Community College.

**Whereas**, The Martin Group is a qualified and premier integrated communications agency with offices located across New York State; and

**Whereas**, Hudson Valley Community College is seeking responses to its request for proposals for communications and marketing services.

**Now, be it therefore resolved that The Martin Group board of directors** (Tod Martin, George Hearst, Matt Davison, alt. Lisa Bellacicco) approves the submission of a communications and marketing services proposal to Hudson Valley Community College.

*Board Action: Approved*

###