

# WORKMAGAZINE

Career Life in the Greater Richmond Region

SUMMER  
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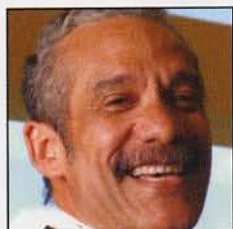
Is it time to

## MORPH YOUR JOB?

**Susan Greenbaum did!**

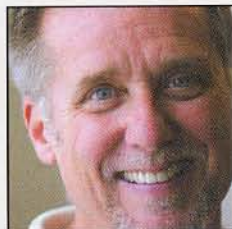
She gave up a six-figure paycheck to strum six strings as a singer-songwriter.

Now she's got her CDs, a ten-city tour with Jewel and regional acclaim to add to her résumé.



As president of the American Bar Association, **Robert J. Grey, Jr.** is a very busy man-on-the-go. But fortunately for you, senior writer Dave Clinger manages to catch up to

**Our Dashing Mr. Grey**  
[page 42]



**Rick Boyko** is beaming as he should be. The Managing Director for VCU's Adcenter has the NUMBER ONE program in the nation! Also, Kristin Ewrin keeps tabs on the small but mighty ad agencies: Elevation, Scout, & JHI in

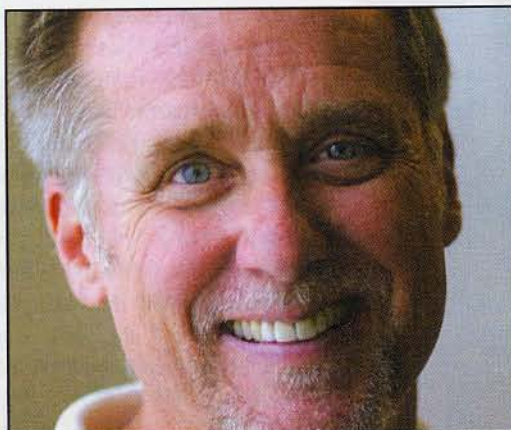
**MEDIAWORKS**  
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### PLUS:

**Nikki Turner**  
NASCAR Hall of Fame  
**Colleen Curran**  
Wachovia Securities  
**World Affairs Council**  
of Greater Richmond  
**Lythos**  
**Fleur Jewelry**  
**Jean Govoni**  
**Bill Beanos**  
Premier Pet Products  
**Gallery 5**  
RVA Magazine

**ALSO:** Corporate Couture 101—CEO clothier, Pearly Gates reigns as "The Grand Don of the Dress Shirt."





Boyko: "The survey is a testament to the innovation of our program and the quality of our students and full-time faculty."



Wintsch: "Richmond, like the Adcenter, is a unique sweet spot—bridging two unlikely worlds together with a result that's greater than the some of its parts."



Minor: "I won't have to sell my first child to have a decent standard of living."

## Clap-clap-clap! Richmond's own VCU Adcenter was recently named the number one advertising program in the U.S. by *Creativity* magazine, one of the advertising creative community's most respected sources for trends, ideas and news for and about the advertising industry.

The rankings, in their first year, were made based on a survey of creative directors and hiring managers at the country's top ad agencies, who rated schools based on innovation, program quality and quality of the graduates.

"Ranking number one in every category of the survey is a testament to the innovation of our program and the quality of our students and full-time faculty," says Rick Boyko, the Adcenter's managing director. Over the years, students of the two-year graduate program have studied art direction, copywriting, strategy and media planning under an increasingly impressive array of professors. They've also racked up armloads of national and international awards.

With the world seemingly their oyster, one might expect Adcenter grads to immediately hit the road for jobs at world-renowned agencies in exotic locations, and never look back. Some do. But for others, the region's quality of life and creative opportunities are so rich that they've chosen to make this their home.

"Richmond, like the Adcenter, is a unique sweet spot—bridging two unlikely worlds together with a result that's greater than the some of its parts. The Adcenter offers creativity along with a master's degree. Richmond offers a plethora of creative heavy-hitters (both individuals and organizations) along with a healthy and relaxing way of life," says Katherine Wintsch, a 2001 strategy graduate who is currently a vice president and senior strategic planner at The Martin Agency.

Wintsch, who had worked at Martin part-time during her Adcenter tenure, moved to Switzerland to work for Y&R Brand Consulting. But while there, she longed to be back here.

**Greater Richmond has a strong advertising business, which [grads] attribute to everything from the flourishing arts community to other strong creative industries like design and music, VCU School of the Arts and the legacy of Harry Jacobs, The Martin Agency's founder.**

Similarly, Bridge Camden, a 1999 art direction graduate, moved to New York for a job at Ogilvy & Mather post-graduation. Last year, she moved back here to her "home turf" where she, like other grads, sees a thriving art community and a lot of support for the arts. As a working artist, that's important to Camden. In her full-time gig as an assistant professor at VCU School of Mass Communications, she puts to use her experience and her valuable

master's degree, a perk that sets the Adcenter apart from other creative-focused graduate advertising programs.

Across the board, graduates in the area feel Greater Richmond has a strong advertising business, which they attribute to everything from the flourishing arts community to other strong creative industries like design and music, VCU School of the Arts and the legacy of Harry Jacobs, The Martin Agency's founder.

They feel that the business here is competitive, but also tight-knit. "You develop a sense of loyalty and of family here. I think that feeling of community sets us apart from the business in bigger, more impersonal cities," explains Sara Grunden, a 2004 copywriting graduate who stayed for a job at The Martin Agency.

On the personal side, the ease of getting around and low cost of living are two of the biggest reasons for making the Richmond area home. "I won't have to sell my first child to have a decent standard of living," quips Trevor Minor, a 2000 strategy graduate and account supervisor at Watson.

So what's missing? Local Adcenter grads would like to see more outlets for creativity. Will Sims, a 1998 copywriting grad and VCU Mass Comm assistant professor, also adds, "I wish more clients would bring back the three-martini lunch." Don't we all.

*Kristin Erwin is a partner of FreeRadical, an interactive branding agency. She's also president of the Richmond Ad Club.*



You can't swing a cat in this town, as they say, without hitting an ad agency or design shop. Among the nearly 200 advertising and graphic design firms in the Richmond region, a few of the larger firms with bigger, national accounts may garner name recognition outside ad geek circles. But the heart of the business here truly is the wealth of smaller firms quietly turning out great work for local and regional clients, as evidenced at this spring's local awards shows. Richmond Ad Club's annual Richmond Show honored the top advertising, design and interactive work created in 2004 by about 35 local companies. About 80 companies and freelancers competed in the American Institute of Graphic Artists' (AIGA) Greater Richmond Awards for Design Excellence (GRADE). After the party hats were hung up and the awards laid to rest, just so, on their shelves, we talked to a few of these firms about the work they do, their take on the industry here and why they've chosen to make Greater Richmond their home.



**Elevation's** recent television campaign for Virginia Credit Union, which was recognized as "Best in Advertising" at GRADE, gained a lot of attention for the Credit Union and helped them increase their membership roles and their overall brand awareness. The company also recently launched a new identity and graphic platform for Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden and a River District TV campaign.

"Honestly, it's a heck of a lot more competitive here than in any other city of our size. Most cities of Richmond's size don't have nearly the quantity or quality of agencies to choose from. You end up with a lot of firms chasing a small number of local/regional clients—and unless you really deliver a unique perspective, you won't make it long-term," Aaron Dotson says. "There's lots of great work that gets done here that never even makes the award shows because the competition is so stiff. For every campaign that wins an award here, you can be sure that there were dozens of other campaigns behind it that were nearly that good that were created here, too!"

Dotson believes there is a renewed energy in Richmond around creative work, with initiatives like C3 and continued creative growth in the River District and Manchester. He says, "You really can have it all in Richmond. You have the history, but also the growth. You have an ever-increasing cosmopolitan feel and the advantages that a city offers, yet it's still easy to get around. And no matter where you go—from downtown to the suburbs—you can find a comfortable spot in which to raise a family, no matter what form that family takes. Why wouldn't a creative person be attracted to Richmond?"

**J H I's** work for Philip Morris USA and St. Catherine's School, as well as a self-promotion email, all earned awards at the Richmond Show. They recently designed identities for the National Folk Festival and the Virginia Center for Architecture and completed a campaign for Wausau Paper promoting their Astrobrights line of colored paper. Coming soon: an identity for IQTV, an Atlanta-based multimedia company.

Jo Watson believes our local advertising and design community is more laid-back than those in other cities. "People seem to have a broader perspective on life; you can do great work during the day at the office, and still be home for dinner with your family," she says.

She sees the industry here as more fragmented than it used to be, though. "There used to be more of a sense of camaraderie among creative firms here. People used to hang out together more, and the local chapters of industry organizations were very active." Watson believes that changed possibly as a result of recent bad economic times. "Now that clients are spending again, and creative companies are feeling a bit more flush, maybe we'll see people getting together more, both for industry functions and for fun."

And speaking of clients who are spending again, Watson's seen a resurgence of interest in good design among J H I's clients, who she says are realizing "that good design doesn't have to be more expensive than bad design." Amen.



**Scout's** campaign for the 17th Street Farmers' Market promoting the 2004 Brunswick Stew Festival and their print materials for 1708 Gallery's 'Indulge' Art Auction both took

home Richmond Show awards. So did their website for Plant Zero Arts Center, [www.plantzero.com](http://www.plantzero.com). The approach for the site was to immediately immerse the user into the world of Plant Zero by saturating each page with edge-to-edge photography, immersing site visitors in the experience of this unique studio/café/event space.

"As a business, we're not interested in quantity," Charley Foley explains. "Instead, we design things based on the specific needs of a select number of clients. Working this way requires generous amounts of trust and clear communication. I think Charles and Ray Eames were right when they said that good design is about getting the details right and understanding how everything connects. We've found Richmond's small city/big town mentality fosters the kind of close client relationships that allow us to pay attention to those details and results in successful, effective design."

- Elevation**
- Established: 2001
- Principals: Aaron Dotson, Frank Gilliam
- Team Members: 7
- Services: Full range of branding, advertising and design services
- Clients: Virginia Credit Union, Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Richmond Symphony, River District Alliance, Performance Food Group, Troutman Sanders
- J H I**
- Established: 1995
- Principals: John Homs, Jo Watson
- Team Members: 6 (plus office pooch, Gilbert, who faithfully shows up for work every day)
- Services: Research, strategic planning, identity, advertising, collateral and web design
- Clients: Philip Morris USA, Chesapeake Corporation, Wausau Paper, Ukrop's Super Markets, St. Catherine's School, First Market Bank
- Scout**
- Established: 2001
- Principals: Angeline Robertson, Charley Foley
- Team Members: 4
- Services: Identity systems, print design (such as advertising, publications or packaging), writing and web design
- Clients: 17th Street Farmers' Market, 1708 Art Gallery, Plant Zero Arts Center, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond Renaissance, Play, Wachovia Securities, Zeiss Optics