

# **PROGRAM AND PROCEEDINGS WESTERN CASEWRITERS ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE**

Held on March 23, 2023  
Whitney Peak Hotel, Reno, Nevada

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Edited by Kathryn Aten

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# PRESIDENT'S WELCOME

Dear Colleagues,

With open arms and the hearts full of excitement, my fellow WCA officers and I welcome you to our 2023 conference in Reno, Nevada. We are eager to meet and mingle and, most importantly, benefit from the mutual input into our emerging work on the fascinating cases you each brought to the table. It is your resilience and dedication as scholars and practitioners passionate about teaching that keeps WCA's light bright.

As we emerge from the pandemic's grip and face the fears of inflationary and societal pressures on our livelihoods and the future of education, we remain very confident in the future of case writing and its role in teaching and experiential learning. No chatbot could do all you do in the first-hand field research and positioning of the case for specific student learning outcomes. Same goes for the in-person magic and the "aha!" moments organically generated by case teaching. It is no wonder that most prominent business schools stick to the case methods in delivering their programs.

Kathryn Aten did so much to advance the mission of case writing through her tireless work in putting this year's program together. As my head was in the clouds of war in Ukraine, Melanie Reed, our 2022 President, helped cheer me on and keep on top of the knowledge transfer required for WCA to thrive. I am also grateful to Arun Aryal who agreed to be our new Webmaster, and to Jyoti Bachani for making WCA web presence happen over the years. Special thanks go to our WAM partners, to our dedicated WCA Treasurer Teresa Martinelli, as well as to Steve McGuire as he continues leading WCA's peer-reviewed journal – JCRI – with the increasingly exciting sets of published cases for the world to use in teaching and learning. Finally, I look forward to Julian Vogel's work as he accepts the baton of Program Chair for 2024 from Kathryn, and I wholeheartedly thank all the amazing case authors and reviewers this year!

With a bright professional outlook for case writers, we are still humans embedded in a set of challenges ranging from the economic and social inequities to procedural and academic injustice to the upheavals in wellbeing caused by authoritarianism and greed. We each have a story to tell about the past year's ups and downs, and I encourage you to tell it as you find yourself among friends and kindred spirits in Reno. WCA is a unique place of warmth and reflection, and we eagerly look forward to bringing our whole selves to the fore as colleagues, case writers, and people.

Cheers, and safe travels to Reno!

Andre S. Avramchuk  
President, Western Casewriters Association

# WCA 2023 SCHEDULE

## ***Pacific Time***

- 7:00-8:00**      **Breakfast** (Whitney Peak 1 & 2)
- 8:15-8:30**      **Welcome & President's Remarks** (Whitney Peak 3)
- 8:30-9:15**      **Keynote Address**  
Professor Raymond Paquin, Concordia University  
Director John Molson Case Publications
- 9:15-9:30**      Roundtable Etiquette & Feedback Process
- 9:30-9:45**      **Break**
- 9:45-10:45**     **Roundtable (Case 1)**
- 10:45-11:45**   **Roundtable (Case 2)**
- 11:45-12:45**   **Lunch**
- 12:45-1:45**     **Roundtable (Case 3)**
- 1:45-2:45**      **Case Publishing and Reviewing**  
Professor Steve McGuire, California State University, Los Angeles  
Editor, *Journal of Case Research and Inquiry*
- Professor Julian Vogel, San Jose State University  
WCA 2022 best reviewer
- 2:45-3:00**      **Awards Presentation and Closing**  
Best Case  
Best Mentored Case
- 3:00-3:45**      **WCA Business Meeting**  
*Treasurer's Report*  
*Journal of Case Research and Inquiry*  
*Select Program Chair-Elect 2025*  
*Other New Business*
- 3:45-4:00**      **Break**

Participants are invited to attend the WAM opening session and fireside chat beginning at 4:00 pm and the joint reception from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm.

# WCA 2023 TABLE ASSIGNMENTS

## Table 1

- Edan Epstein
- Issam A. Ghazzawi
- Karen Gallagher
- Pradip Shukla
- *Air Product Sales* - Edan Epstein
- *Motivo Engineering: Staying Hungry and Independent* - Edan Epstein
- *At the Helm of Twitter: The Leadership Style of Elon Musk* - Issam A. Ghazzawi

## Table 2

- Prescott Ensign
- Muhammad Shakeel Sadiq Jajja
- Manya Wren
- Yvette Bendeck
- *African Penguins in a Maui Resort: The Fate of an Endangered Bird* - Danielle Duffhues & Prescott C. Ensign
- *Fyre Fest – An Influencer Marketing Failure* - Varshini Gnanavasagan & Prescott C. Ensign
- *H&M’s Conscious Choice Inconsistent Efforts Towards Sustainability in an Unsustainable Industry* - Rahma Soliman & Prescott C. Ensign
- *Dollar Pricing, Offshore Markets, EV Charging: Reon Energy at the Crossroads in Volatility* - Muhammad Shakeel Sadiq Jajja & Ahmad Ammar

## Table 3

- Yang Zhang
- Stephen McGuire
- Franziska Renz
- Julian Vogel
- *Understaffing Issues at Jeffersonville Animal Shelter: How to Manage in Addition to Love* - Yang Zhang and James Cooper
- *Global Animal Partnership: Does Anyone Care about the Chickens?* - Yang Zhang and Steve McGuire
- *This Land is Your Land, This Land Is My Land? Real Estate and Reparation Consideration of Indigenous Land* - Franziska M. Renz and Julian U. N. Vogel

## Table 4

- Andre Avramchuk
- Heather Ranson
- Teresa Martinelli
- *Ionomr Innovations: Leading Canada's Renewable Energy Transition* - Alexis Cronk & Heather Ranson
- *Alignment Healthcare’s Founding and Growth Decisions* - Mengying He, Mahshid Jessri, & Andre Avramchuk
- *Imagining the Future when Life is Hard Enough* - Teresa Martinelli

# ABOUT THE WESTERN CASEWRITERS ASSOCIATION

The Western Casewriters Association (WCA) Conference is held yearly in conjunction with the Western Academy of Management (WAM). Participants can attend both conferences. The WCA Conference is a unique opportunity to engage with other case writers in a small group format to exchange feedback and polish a case, learn about using cases in the classroom, get a peer-reviewed conference and proceedings on a vita, and enjoy presentations from leading case researchers and case educators.

The WCA Conference is an excellent professional opportunity because it is a "developmental" meeting designed to provide feedback from experienced case researchers. Submissions are double-blind peer reviewed. Participants at the conference will have their cases reviewed by other authors. The objective is to help participants move their cases towards journal publication.

## HISTORY

The Western Casewriters Association was started by Dick Eisenbeis in 1989 at the Western Academy of Management. It has convened an annual case writing conference in the roundtable format since then to help train, develop, and support case researchers.

Past presidents of the organization include:

Sally Baack  
Jyoti Bachani  
Issam Ghazzawi  
Leslie Goldgehn  
Duane Helleloid  
Anne Lawrence  
Teresa Martinelli  
Steve McGuire  
Joshua Mindel  
Bruce Robertson  
Keith Sakuda  
V. Seshan  
Jeff Shay  
James Spee  
Teri Tompkins  
Michael Valdez  
George Whaley  
Joan Winn  
Andrew Fergus  
Deborah Walker  
Nina O'Brien  
Melanie Reed

## 2023 – 2024 WCA OFFICERS

President: **Andre Avramchuk**, Cal State, Los Angeles

President Elect & Program Chair 2023: **Kathryn Aten**, Naval Postgraduate School

Treasurer: **Teresa Martinelli**, University of La Verne

Webmaster: Arun Aryal, California State University Los Angeles

Program Chair Elect: Julian Vogel, San Jose State University

Past President: Melanie Reed, Thompson Rivers University

## 2023 WCA REVIEWERS

This conference would not be possible without the dedication contribution of our many reviewers who provide thoughtful, thorough, constructive and timely feedback on cases. **Thank you so very much for your valuable service to WCA!**

Andre Avramchuk

Andrew Fergus

Brent Opall

Danielle Duffhues

Duane Helleloid

Edan Epstein

Elham Malik

Issam Ghazzawi

Julian Vogel

Karen Gallagher

Lorraine Taylor

Mahshid Jessri

Mengying He

Prescott Ensign

Shakeel Sadiq Jajja

Varshini Gnanavasagan

Yang Zhang

Yvette Bendeck

# WCA AWARDS PROCESS

Two awards will be given at the WCA Conference this year. Reviewers' highest ranked cases were considered for an award. The Program Chair reread the highly ranked cases to determine the winners in consultation with reviewers.

The first award presented at the Conference will be the "Best Case Award," for which all submissions are considered. The second award presented at the Conference will be the "Best Mentored Case", which recognizes the best case written by a student author(s) with the guidance of a faculty mentor.

Award winners will be recognized at the close of the Conference.

## 2022 Award Winners

### **Best Case Award**

Pack Health's strategic crossroads: A big crisis-imposed dilemma for a small enterprise  
Mengying He, Mahshid Jessri, and Andre Avramchuk

### **Best Mentored Case Awards**

Reformulation of Aire Fresco's business strategy: Evaluating B2C vs. B2B  
Alix Crichton and Julia Ivy

ASK Wellness Society: Could unionization be a competitive advantage?  
Melanie Reed, Kyle Senft, Ankita Sherkhane, and Swati Sinha

## HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF THE CASE DISCUSSION SESSIONS

The Western Case Writers Conference (WCA) is a developmental workshop. Each person contributes to each case discussion and in turn receives feedback from each other person at their roundtable. Participants' preparation prior to the WCA and active participation at the WCA are crucial to the usefulness of the roundtable discussions and the value added that the Conference can deliver. Conference participants typically report that they were delighted with the helpful, constructive feedback they received.

### **PURPOSE OF WCA CASE ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS**

The purpose of the WCA is to assist all case researchers to improve their cases for use in classes, for adoption by others, and for publication. Rarely is a case presented that is ready for journal publishing; yet even such a case can be improved. Case authors



may feel overwhelmed by all the suggestions. The process is not negative; rather, we work with you for improvement, just as we expect that you will help others to improve their cases. Therefore, all participants must thoroughly prepare all cases and instructor's manuals (IMs) (aka TN teaching notes). The discussion process is rigorous yet done in a supportive manner. You should expect that the first case discussed, long or short, would take more time than those that follow. Some issues will occur in several cases; discussion need not be repeated in detail after the first time the issues arise.

### PREPARING FOR CASE ANALYSES & FEEDBACK

The focus should be on major, as well as subtle ways, to improve cases; not on proofreading details of grammar, spelling, etc. To give helpful feedback, you may (1) mark up the cases and instructor's manual and give them to the author after discussion; or (2) prepare a summary of your comments and helpful suggestions prior to the Conference, and hand your written comments to the author. Important questions include:

- ✓ Is the case interesting? To students? To faculty? To potential journals?
- ✓ Does it address an important issue in the specified course(s)?
- ✓ Can teaching objectives be achieved with the case? Does the IM address these?
- ✓ Can the IM analysis be derived from the case (and other course material)?
- ✓ Are there enough data? Should more be added? Should some be deleted?
- ✓ Is the analysis tied to theory?
- ✓ Is the case presentation unbiased or is the author's opinion evident?

### DUTIES OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE CASE ROUNDTABLES

**Table Leaders:** Brief the participants about what will happen. Determine the case sequence (typically the sequence that is on the Table Assignments document is followed). Be sure there is a recorder for each case. Guide the discussion. Keep the focus on important issues, not on proofreading. Discourage repetitious comments. Be sure to be a timekeeper or assign one.

**Recorder:** Document the substance of comments. A copy of each case and IM will be emailed to each table participant. Provide your notes to the case author(s).

**Case Author(s):** Prepare some opening remarks that explain why you wrote the case, how you have used it in class (if you have), and any issues you are having with the case. Listen to the comments and ask questions.

**Discussants and Participants:** Review cases thoroughly, provide feedback, and participate actively. There may be participants in your session who are not presenting a case. They are there to observe, to learn, and to participate. Welcome them. Most participants find that these sessions are more enjoyable and collegial than any other type of academic conference they attend. We hope that you will agree. We have planned the WCA Conference to provide interesting, enjoyable, and instructive activities.

### AFTER THE CONFERENCE

Revise your case and IM to develop and improve as needed. Carefully consider all session comments; some changes may not be appropriate or feasible; you must decide

what to change and not to change. Some suggested data might not be available. However, you are likely to see the more cogent changes you do not make in reviews of your case when you submit it to a journal. Can you defend your choices when you respond to a reviewer? Test-teach the revised case and update your IM based on that teaching experience. Ask a colleague to observe your teaching or to teach the case, if possible; he or she will find things you missed or that you know but did not include. (The author always knows details not included in the case.)

Submit your revised Case and IM to the *Journal of Case Research and Inquiry* (JCRI), the *Case Research Journal* (CRJ), or to another scholarly journal. Most journal submissions will require at least one revision before acceptance. Failure to revise and resubmit represents the largest reason that submissions to the *Case Research Journal* are not published. If one journal rejects your case, do not be vexed, as it may be an appropriate fit with *another* journal.

WCA members may have suggestions about which journal would be a good outlet for your case. Once your case is accepted by a journal, or finally rejected, it is then appropriate to submit it to book authors for adoption. Note however, that any earlier acceptance by book authors disqualifies your case for most journals. Book acceptances often carry merit, depending on your university, but rarely have as much academic credit as acceptance by a peer-reviewed journal.

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"How to Get the Most out of the Case Discussion Sessions" was prepared by NACRA authors Timothy W. Edlund and Linda E. Swayne and adapted by Jeff Shay, Stephen McGuire, Duane Helleloid, and Leslie Goldgehn for WCA's purposes. Some edits were made by Deborah Walker in 2018. WCA thanks NACRA for use of the document.

# PUBLISHING YOUR CASE

Publishing your case in a peer reviewed journal not only meets the standard of quality expected of all research, but also allows your work to be used by others. That is what you want and that is what WCA wants for you.

For a list of publication opportunities, visit “Case Publishing Outlets” through the link on our website, [www.westerncasewriters.org](http://www.westerncasewriters.org).



## CALL FOR CASES, NOTES, AND ARTICLES: JCRI

The *Journal of Case Research and Inquiry* (JCRI) is the peer reviewed online publication of the Western Casewriters Association (WCA) and is listed in *Cabell's Directory of Publishing Opportunities*. The JCRI publishes (1) TEACHING CASE STUDIES in business and public administration, nonprofit management, social entrepreneurship and economic policy; (2) NOTES - industry or theoretical analyses to accompany cases; and (3) ARTICLES on case research and teaching with cases.

JCRI publishes cases, notes, and articles online. That way they are available full-text and free of charge to educators and students. Educators are encouraged to place in their syllabi links to JCRI cases, notes, and articles.

Authors should review the JCRI submission guidelines by visiting JCRI's web page <http://www.jcri.org/>. Authors may contact the editor, Steve McGuire or associate editor, Deborah Walker, at [editor@jcri.org](mailto:editor@jcri.org).



# NACRA

NORTH AMERICAN CASE  
RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

## CALL FOR CASES: CRJ

The *Case Research Journal* (CRJ) is published by the North American Case Research Association (NACRA). The CRJ is the leading academic journal for cases in business and related disciplines in North America. The Case Research Journal publishes outstanding field-research-based, decision focused teaching cases drawn from research in real organizations, dealing with issues in all administration-related disciplines. Occasionally, the Journal publishes papers concerning case research, case writing or case teaching. All manuscripts are double-blind refereed by Editorial Board members and ad hoc reviewers.

The journal publishes four issues a year and has an acceptance rate of approximately 20 percent. Cases published in the CRJ are distributed directly to libraries and subscribers and online through NACRA's publishing partners, including, Harvard, Ivey, The Case Centre, McGraw-Hill Create, Pearson Collections, and Study.net. Authors should review the CRJ submission guidelines by visiting NACRA's web page <https://www.nacra.net/case-research-journal/>.

Authors may contact the editor, Gina Grandy at [crj.editor@uregina.ca](mailto:crj.editor@uregina.ca) if they have questions.

# WCA 2023 ACCEPTED CASE SYNOPSES

Case synopses have been edited for length and format. WCA authors retain all rights to their intellectual work product; please contact the author(s) for permission to reproduce or use a case.

WCA 2023 ACCEPTED CASE SYNOPSES

## **African Penguins in a Maui Resort: The Fate of an Endangered Bird Danielle Duffhues & Prescott C. Ensign**

This case focuses on the African Black Footed Penguins housed in the lobby of the Hyatt Regency Maui Resort and Spa. The six penguin's futures were under question due to an inconclusive vote by the State of Hawaii Department of Agriculture on whether to allow the importation of four more penguins into Maui to add to the Hyatt's existing colony. The request came from wildlife supervisor Povi Carisa-Abney in the hopes of broadening the genetic pool of the colony to allow the penguin breeding program to continue. The increased number of African Black Footed Penguins would also support the social needs of the species. This case asks students to analyze the support and the backlash over this request, and the various influences within Hawaii that impact the future of the African Black Footed Penguins in Maui such as cultural, tourism, and ethical concerns.

## **Air Product Sales: Adapting to Disruption in an Historically Stable Industry Edan Epstein**

Air Product Sales was a manufacturer's rep based in Montebello, California, competing in the HVAC accessory support segment. Manufacturer's reps played an important role in streamlining procurement in large scale projects. Originating as the internal sales division of Pottorff, a manufacturer of HVAC accessories, APS had operated independently since 2017, representing Pottorff, and also a variety of other firms that did not directly compete with their former parent company. Since becoming a separate entity, APS had more than doubled their revenue, with Pottorff still comprising about 50% of their sales. Their direct customers were mechanical contractors installing HVAC systems as part of larger construction projects. While APS was still growing at approximately 10% YOY, they faced potentially on-going supply chain delays and cost increases which they could not always pass on to their customers. Changes in air distribution technology posed potentially disruptive challenges both for APS and their manufacturing partners. At the same time, digital technology had also enabled APS to expand its bidding capabilities while reducing high rates of employee turnover. While APS had done well, there was significant competition. Accessory parts were similar, so competitors were challenged with how to differentiate themselves. Air Product Sales survived the pandemic but faced significant headwinds, even in an expanding market.

## **Alignment Healthcare's Founding and Growth Decisions** **Mengying He, Mahshid Jessri, & Andre Avramchuk**

On March 21, 2021, Alignment Healthcare decided to start its initial public offering (IPO) through NASDAQ at an initial price of \$18 per share. Around the same period, the Federal Reserve announced that it would keep its benchmark interest rate near zero to continue supporting the economic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. Alignment Healthcare, a tech-enabled Medicare Advantage company, must decide its target growth rate after the IPO. As a privately held insurance company founded in 2013, Alignment Healthcare "has experienced an average 39% year-over-year growth rate annually since inception". It is easy for Alignment Healthcare to set an annual growth rate of around 30 to 40 percent. In addition, the market for Medicare Advantage Plans continued to grow. However, John Kao, the CEO of Alignment Healthcare, still had some concerns about the targets they wanted to hit with their growth rate. Should Alignment Healthcare stay with its 30 percent growth rate or adjust its growth rate to lower expectations? This case suits undergraduate and graduate students in healthcare management and entrepreneurship studies. The case applies to Healthcare Management, Entrepreneurship, and Business Strategy courses. It helps illustrate the entrepreneurial path from starting the business to developing the firm's growth strategy.

## **At the Helm of Twitter: The Leadership Style of Elon Musk** **Issam A. Ghazzawi**

At one time or another, Elon Musk had been called a bad boss, unsympathetic, someone who fired people who disagreed with him, brilliant, creative, demanding, domineering, or savvy among other titles. After his \$44 billion Twitter takeover, Elon Musk introduced severe cost-cutting measures into his new company that included his laying off about half of Twitter's staff, resulting in unprecedented lawsuits from former employees who alleged that said mass layoffs violated their labor rights. Those who remained had agreed to extremely hardcore work that resulted in some ending up sleeping at Twitter's headquarters to meet deadlines imposed by their new boss. The City of San Francisco officials investigated reports that Musk converted several areas of the office building into makeshift bedrooms. Despite his success, Mr. Musk's history of erratic behavior, incendiary remarks, and his style of management impaired his decision-making in instances. He acted as a brash and demanding leader. With the night falling in late December 2022, Elon sat down to reflect on what he has done and whether could he do more to create stability in his company. Musk firmly believed that to move forward and build a breakthrough Twitter 2.0 and succeed in an increasingly competitive world, he needed to change the working environment and instill an "extremely hardcore" culture. However, he could do much to restore employees, investors, and consumers' confidence.

## **Dollar Pricing, Offshore Markets, EV Charging: Reon® Energy at the Crossroads in Volatility**

**Muhammad Shakeel Sadiq Jajja & Ahmad Ammar**

Reon® energy, coming from a large conglomerate lineage (Dawood Hercules® Corporation), was one of the leading companies in Pakistan's renewable energy sector. The company started its journey with offering small to medium size run-of-the-mill solar solutions to customers primarily motivated to pursue CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) agenda. However, after a strategic paradigm shift in 2016, Reon® went exclusively after blue chip companies for large scale projects. In this process, the company learnt that the business had more to offer beyond asset sale and installation. The appetite to understand customer requirements and then to innovate by leveraging the cutting edge of the technology led to triggering a transformation from 'Goods-Dominant-Logic (GDL)' to a 'Service-Dominant-Logic (SDL)' contingent upon development and acquisition of distinctive resources and competencies. In the meantime, business environment factors took a downturn to diminish economic rents in the industry, forcing several players to take the exit route. A major blow in early 2022, came in the form of Pakistani Rupee's devaluation against US Dollar and some regulatory measures that made imports of equipment extremely difficult. However, the evolved repository of resources and capabilities not only enabled Reon® to stay afloat, but also ushered in a set of possibilities to negotiate with the exogenous crisis in future – some of these possibilities were tantalizingly paradoxical. The company found itself at a crossroads of strategic decisions for the way forward.

## **Fyre Fest – An Influencer Marketing Failure Varshini Gnanavasagan & Prescott C. Ensign**

In 2017, a fraudulent luxury musical festival was put together by entrepreneurial hustler, Billy McFarland, along with celebrity ambassador Ja Rule. With the help of prominent individuals and social media influencers, the music festival was promoted as an exclusive event. Ticket holders found out upon arrival they had been fully deceived by those who had hyped the wonders of the event. This mini-case discusses how Fyre Media promised to put on a luxury music festival to ticket buyers, with the help of hundreds of social media influencers who were paid to promote the festival. The case focuses on the ethics behind influencer marketing, a growing industry which utilizes people with large social media followings to promote products and services, in exchange for financial compensation or to receive free products and services from the promoting brand. The case allows students to discuss the ethical issues of influencer marketing, as well as analyze the impact of this type of marketing on consumers.

## **Global Animal Partnership: Does Anyone Care about the Chickens? Yang Zhang and Steve McGuire**

Anne Malleau, the Executive Director of Global Animal Partnership (G.A.P.), had been working for years to get GAP up and running. For sure, G.A.P. had been wildly successful in some regards, but lacking in others. By 2022, G.A.P. had certified more than 400 million animals, most of them chickens, since it started the 'Better Chicken Project' in 2014. Yet it seemed increasingly difficult to get organizations to commit to the project. Consumers, on the other hand, were more and more concerned about healthy food and the humane treatment of animals, but were confused by the myriad of statements, slogans, and labels on the food products that they purchased (Watsky, 2022). Consumers cared – but did not know how to express this care in their purchasing behavior, mostly because of confusing information and competing claims. The case describes Global Animal Partnership's (G.A.P.) attempt to get companies (farmers, producers, retailers) and consumers to recognize – and value – the humane treatment of chickens and the healthy practices of farmers, butchers, and retailers that provide safe and healthy food. Anne Malleau, the Executive Director of Global Animal Partners, faced two challenges: How to get chicken organizations (farmers, butchers, retailers) to agree to GAP standards and seek certification by G.A.P., and , How to get consumers to recognize and value the GAP brand and label.

## **H&M's Conscious Choice Inconsistent Efforts Towards Sustainability in an Unsustainable Industry Rahma Soliman & Prescott C. Ensign**

H&M removed its environmental scorecard data from websites after a *Quartz* independent investigation, published June 28<sup>th</sup> 2022, revealed that sustainability claims on products from its *Conscious Choice* line to be false and misleading. Following the release of the independent investigation, Chelsea Commodore, a marketing student at SUNY New Paltz University, filed a class action lawsuit against H&M for misleading marketing activities. The case provides students with the opportunity to follow actions taken against the SAC's Higg Index, analyze the allegations of the class action lawsuit, and discuss potential steps that can be made by H&M to resolve the conflict. This case explores H&M's attempts at advertising and communications its sustainability initiatives to the public, while discussing the backlash received from using an arguably inaccurate index, the Higg Index, to rate the eco-friendliness of its products. The Higg Index, created by the Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC), has been questioned by many entities and banned by the Norwegian Consumer Authority (NCA) for inaccurate findings on the extent in which garments are "sustainable".



## **Imagining the Future when Life is Hard Enough** **Teresa Martinelli**

Large-scale homeless encampments have become the norm in every major city in the United States. Such conditions have been shaped by and serve a growing population of homeless. Varied and even contradictory roles in different localities have forced the need for quick urban policies and municipal regulations as societies scream at their representatives – do something! This management and public administration case is intended for class study, whereby the application of concepts can provide learning to complement knowledge and give an example of how public and community problems can be encountered and actions taken. This case is designed to help improve the readers' own experience in which likely homelessness is increasing among their communities or perhaps those cities they visit in other locations. This case allows students to experience in-depth analysis and discussion of current and glaring real world problems and strive to find applicable solutions if not globally, yet at least locally.

## **Ionomr Innovations: Leading Canada's Renewable Energy Transition** **Alexis Cronk & Heather Ranson**

Ben Britton founded Ionomr with the purpose of contributing to a solution to alarming reports regarding the current state of Earth's climate under anthropogenic pollution. Ionomr was a polymer manufacturing company that produces the device needed to enable hydrogen electrolysis in hydrogen fuel cells to convert hydrogen atoms into usable energy. These systems were necessary if the Canadian economy was to fulfill its commitments to net zero emissions by 2050. It was apparent that to uphold Canada's net zero commitment the market for hydrogen energy had to be extensive, however, with lack of progress in critical infrastructure to support hydrogen energy, it was unclear if the market would grow to its fullest potential or be successful in the near term. Ben was faced with the decision of where to position his innovative technology to ensure the longevity of his business while preserving the quality of his invention. This case explores three potential strategies Ben could follow; license Ionomr's innovative polymer technology, develop in-house manufacturing of fuel cell systems, or specialize in polymer production and operate early in the value chain.

## **Motivo Engineering: Staying Hungry and Independent** **Edan Epstein**

Motivo Engineering was a privately held company based in Gardena, California, with revenues of over \$20 million a year and growing. They contracted with clients to rapidly develop viable prototypes of new industrial products, especially autonomous vehicles. Their stated purpose was to "accelerate product development for audacious visionaries", essentially serving as the R&D partner for product developers who in turn mass reproduce the product for commercial clients, such as hospitals, agricultural concerns, aircraft makers, and many others. Founded in 2010 by Praveen Penmetsa, Motivo was private and has never sought outside investment. Their core competency was their ability to rapidly develop a variety of complex prototypes, enabling their clients to secure funding or win a manufacturing contract. Unlike many other product engineering firms, Motivo didn't specialize, apart from their interest in mobile machines. A key to their success was their ability to deploy teams of engineers with agile generalist skills who work exceptionally well together. A major challenge, however, for the firm had been the retention of their best talent in the face of poaching efforts from firms with deeper pockets. While the future looked optimistic, leadership wrestled with the quality problem of how much and how fast they wanted to grow. Originally, they envisioned limiting their growth to only 49 people; any bigger, and they believed they risked losing their informal culture of innovation and

teamwork. But success had increased their ambition. As of November 2022, Motivo employed over 100 on staff, and were projected to double their revenue within five years. The leadership team, led by CEO, Alan Goad, met monthly to consider what direction to take and how they might grow their organization without losing the agility that had helped them to succeed.

**This Land is Your Land, This Land Is My Land? Real Estate and Reparation  
Consideration of Indigenous Land  
Franziska M. Renz and Julian U. N. Vogel**

European and European-influenced cultures often think of the period from the 14th century to the 16th century as marked by exploration, discovery, and expansion. This heroic founding of new settlements to procure more sophisticated goods and increase the standard of living of the upper class in Europe also describes the deception, slaughter, and stealing from many different Indigenous cultures by the colonialists, as the “newly discovered” places had often already been inhabited for thousands of years (e.g., Native Land Digital, 2022). Even though these injustices were committed hundreds of years ago, they still have consequences to this day. This case provides an example of the struggles Indigenous communities face when ensuring that their rights are met within the institutions of a system that was established by colonialists. The case is appropriate for undergraduate and graduate courses in all areas at universities that are located on land that previously belonged to Indigenous groups. In particular, the case is well-suited for undergraduate and graduate courses in Ethnic Studies, Indigenous Studies, Chicano/Latinx studies, General Finance, and Real Estate. The case allows students to analyze the micro level of the relationship between institutions established by colonialists and the Indigenous communities.

**Understaffing Issues at Jeffersonville Animal Shelter: How to Manage in Addition to  
Love  
Yang Zhang and James Cooper**

Jeffersonville Animal Shelter was a public animal shelter in Southern Indiana. It received more than 3,000 animals annually and only had 13 employees. Sarah Green was the shelter director. Unlike the director of a private shelter, Ms. Green could not simply hire more employees to solve the understaffing issues. After \$1.3 million renovations, the shelter was not very likely to receive more funding from the city. In addition, compared to other public safety issues, animal control and wellbeing had a lower priority. Despite several active and engaged volunteers, Jeffersonville Animal Shelter had plenty unfulfilled needs, such as kennel cleaning and dog walking especially on weekdays. Ms. Green wondered whether having more volunteers would relieve the shelter’s understaffing problems. If so, who were potential volunteers? How could Jeffersonville Animal Shelter compete against other nearby animal shelters for more volunteers?

# NOTES