



THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Founding Member of Rochester Accounting Firm to Chair Community Foundation Board; Four New Members Named

Rochester, NY — Richard J. Mengel, a founding partner of the Rochester accounting firm of Mengel Metzger Barr & Co., LLP, has become chair of the board of directors for Rochester Area Community Foundation.

“Over the past five years, the Community Foundation has truly been a catalyst for community change and we will continue working to make a difference every day,” says Mengel, who has been on the board for eight years. “At the same time, our board is embarking on a new strategic planning process to ensure we meet both our donors’ expectations and the needs of the community.”

As board chair, he succeeds immediate past chair Jill M. Cicero, Esq.

Joining the board during Mengel’s inaugural year are: **Jeremy A. Cooney**, an attorney and leader of the young professional movement in Rochester and New York state; **Jeremy Haefner**, provost and senior vice president for academic affairs at Rochester Institute of Technology; **Elizabeth A. Thorley**, financial advisor and an owner of Crossbridge Financial Group LLC; and **Jeffrey M. Wexler**, CPA, partner at Davie Kaplan, CPA, P.C.

Dick Mengel, a graduate of the University of Rochester’s Simon School, has a strong history of serving the greater Rochester community. He has held leadership roles on the boards of the Salvation Army, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society Upstate New York Chapter and the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. He has served on the Estate Planning Council of Rochester’s board and on advisory groups for Quad A for Kids and UR’s Planned Giving Advisory Committee. During his tenure with the Community Foundation, Mengel has chaired the Audit Committee and the Marketing/Communications Committee and was a member of the Finance Committee. In his practice, Mengel focuses on accounting for family estate planning, business succession planning, mergers and acquisitions, and family limited partnerships. In 2009 he was inducted into the New York State Society of CPA’s Hall of Fame. He and his wife, Theresa, live in Pittsford.

Attorney **Jeremy A. Cooney** worked with PAETEC CEO Arunas Chesonis in 2004 to create the ROC City Coalition, which grew from four to 12 young professionals organizations during his tenure as the group’s chair in 2006. He is now chair of “We Live New York,” a statewide effort to attract and retain

young professionals. A Rochester native, he graduated from Hobart and William Smith Colleges with a bachelor's degree in public policy studies. A graduate of Albany Law School, Cooney was class president for three years and was executive editor of the school's law review. He served on the economic development transition team for then-incoming Rochester Mayor Bob Duffy. He is a board member for Episcopal SeniorLife Communities and Hochstein School of Music & Dance and serves on the membership development committee of the Genesee Valley Club. Cooney lives in Rochester.

As provost and senior vice president for academic affairs at RIT, **Jeremy Haefner** oversees nine colleges, two institutes, three global campuses and a number of university-level programs. He is active in faculty recruitment and development and led a strategic initiative to balance teaching workloads with research expectations. Before joining RIT in 2008, this mathematician spent 18 years at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs in a variety of leadership roles. A graduate of the University of Iowa, where he majored in math, Haefner went on to get his master's and doctoral degrees in mathematics from the University of Wisconsin. He lives in Brighton.

Elizabeth A. Thorley, a founder and owner of the independent Crossbridge Financial Group, has been involved with the Community Foundation as a member of the Finance and Professional Advisor Liaison committees. She is Women's Golf Chair and a Finance Committee member at Locust Hill Country Club and she serves on the Southeast YMCA's advisory board and the Caring Ministries Adult Care Facility board for Fairport Baptist Homes. Thorley received her bachelor's degree in economics and public affairs from the University of Denver and a master's in personal financial planning from the College for Financial Planning in Colorado. Before Crossbridge, she worked for American Express Financial Advisors and the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System. She lives in Perinton.

Jeffrey M. Wexler, a partner with Davie Kaplan, CPA, has developed an expertise in identifying international tax-planning strategies and works with closely-held and family-owned businesses. A graduate of Ithaca College, he began his career in public accounting in 1992. In addition to memberships in accounting-related organizations, he is on the board of governors for Irondequoit Country Club and on the Jewish Community Federation's Professional Advisory Committee. As a member of the Frank Commisso Scholarship Committee, Wexler has been involved in selecting recipients of two named scholarships at the Community Foundation. He lives in Pittsford.

As one of greater Rochester's largest grantmaking foundation, the Community Foundation engages passionate philanthropists in improving our community through grants and initiatives that address aging, arts and culture, civic engagement, early childhood development, education, environment and animal welfare, health and nutrition, historical education and preservation, the needs of women and girls, youth and families, and more. Since 1972, the Community Foundation has awarded more than \$277 million in grants and scholarships to improve our region. For additional information, visit www.racf.org.

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