

# Simeon Banister

Simeon Banister, a Rochester native, began his tenure as president and CEO of Rochester Area Community Foundation on Oct. 1, 2022.

Banister's career before the Foundation spanned public and private sectors and included the New York State Senate, state Department of Taxation and Finance, the State University of New York, and several private commercial real estate firms.

He joined the Community Foundation in 2017 as a program officer for equity and later vice president of the Community Programs department, which oversees grantmaking and community leadership. In October 2021, Banister was named executive vice president.

Banister played a key role when the Foundation and United Way of Greater Rochester and the Finger Lakes launched the Community Crisis Fund in March 2020 at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic hit. He co-led the committee that met every day for several months to review and approve grant requests. Nearly \$7 million was distributed by that committee during the first year of the pandemic. Banister took the lead in establishing the North Star Coalition, which is aligned with Urban Institute to help ensure that post-pandemic recovery dollars are used to create opportunities that will benefit historically excluded residents.

Banister has been recognized for his contributions. *Rochester Business Journal* named him to the 2019 Forty Under 40 class, and in 2021 was named to *City & State New York's* first-ever Western New York Power 100 list.

A graduate of North Carolina Central University and the Princeton Theological Seminary, Banister is a sought-after speaker, most recently on Rochester's history of redlining and racial inequities. For several years, he was president of the

Greater Rochester Martin Luther King Jr. Commission (through 2022) and currently serves on boards of the University of Rochester Medical Center and the Congressional Award Foundation's Advisory Board. Banister and his family live in Rochester.