

insight

A NEW ERA BEGINS

Message from the Chamber President

It's an honor and a privilege to be your new Chamber president. It's an exciting time to step into a new opportunity and that's how I feel about taking the helm of the Rensselaer County Regional Chamber of Commerce, following Linda Hillman's successful 15-year career. The transition, which Linda and I started in November, has gone very well. As many people have told me, I have

very big shoes to fill. Fortunately Linda is leaving the Chamber



"Let's take the Chamber to the next level — together."

Mike O'Sullivan
Chamber President

in a great position financially, where membership is strong and events are growing. Our staff members are a terrific group of professionals who love what they do and our board of directors has dedicated their time and talents to the Chamber's mission and the community. Then there are our members. After only a few weeks, I've been impressed with how you've made me feel welcome, whether it's dropping by the office, introducing yourself at a Chamber event, calling or sending a message via email. As we move forward, it's exactly the model of participation and engagement I want to

encourage, as everything we do here at the Chamber is for you. Meet us, greet us, call us and email us, but whatever you do, TALK to us about your ideas, the help you need and what will assist you to achieve your goals. Together, we can turn your everyday challenges into opportunities.

As a former publisher of *The Record* and *The Saratogian*, I'm a local guy with extensive experience leading organizations in sales, marketing, strategic planning, finance and budgeting, human resources and general operations. During my career in the media, I was always drawn to that part of my job where I was engaged with the community. I enjoy helping businesses grow. Now, I'm getting to do it full time, with an organization known for its resources and advocacy in the community, in ways that truly make an impact.

Some of the items on our agenda include finalization of the Chamber's new strategic plan, a three-year roadmap of priorities. We'll be redesigning the Chamber's website, launching The Leadership Institute's Class of 2017 and hosting our popular CEO Roundtables and Empowerment Series. We'll also present new professional development programs and, of course, more opportunities to network.

Now is the time to get involved in your Chamber and make your opinions known. I look forward to meeting more of you as we take the Chamber to the next level — together.

ASK THE EXPERT: The Importance of Print

Denise Padula is president and owner of *The Alchar Printing Group*, one of the area's top 10 commercial printers and a certified NYS Woman-Owned Business. She has been with *Alchar* for more than 30 years and directs all aspects of her company's operations. She has received awards from her industry, the business community and in recognition of her community service. Denise serves on the NYS Printing Industries Alliance Board.



Q: Is print losing its audience?

A: The U.S. has the largest number of print media outlets in the world and the highest circulation of print media. So printing is still a dominant channel of communication. Online content (blogging, social media, web advertising) is here to stay but commercial printing continues to play an important role in the communication mix. Traditional print is more effective at driving business at a local level, carries more clout and has longer staying power.

Q: What about digital?

A: Digital options cast a wide demographic and up to half of what is sent out is deleted on receipt. Companies, including tech savvy entrepreneurs and small businesses, can better target and position their message through print media, zeroing in on relevant audiences through niche publications. What we've learned is that digital used as a support to print gets the best results.

Q: Why does print have staying power?

A: Print has a clear, competitive edge for businesses. Studies show people pay more attention to print mail; they keep it, they pass it on to others and they remember it. Printed materials, whether it's an ad, marketing piece or article, are perceived by readers as more highly credible than online versions. People also have an affinity for newspapers and magazines, which they save and read at their leisure. Most people sit in front of computers all day, bombarded with digital communication. Print lets people unplug; they can lean back versus leaning forward.

"Ask the Expert" is a monthly Q&A featuring a member of the Chamber's Board of Directors.



The Rensselaer County Regional Chamber of Commerce is a business, civic and economic development alliance that strives to enhance the economic vitality of Rensselaer County and the neighboring Gateway communities of Cohoes, Green Island, Waterford and Watervliet. The Chamber seeks to improve the quality of life within the community for both residents and businesses.

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Mike O'Sullivan, President
90 Fourth Street, Suite 200, Troy, NY 12180
Telephone: 518.274.7020
renscchamber.com

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EMPOWERMENT SERIES

Discover Your "Wonder Woman" on February 4

Learn how to harness the power within, build your professional and personal networks and find inspiring mentors at the Chamber's upcoming **Wonder Women**



Mentoring Breakfast, the latest in our popular Tech Valley Series for Empowerment. We're gathering top women professionals to share their experiences by hosting a series of three 20-minute sessions for attendees, sparking lively and candid conversations about career challenges and solutions. Table hop as you meet with mentors and discover new strategies for success.

Topics include moving your career to the next level, taking risks, having difficult conversations, lessons learned and balancing multiple roles in life. Sign up now for an event that will give you "a-ha!" moments, new connections and take-away solutions. Bring your superhero cape and discover the wonder woman in you! *Due to popular demand, the Chamber will offer this event twice in 2016, with the next program in August.*

OUR PRESENTERS

Katie Abrahamson-Henderson

Head Women's Basketball Coach, University at Albany

Kelli Arnold, Sr. VP/Director Government Banking & Eastern New York Market Executive, First Niagara Bank

Jan Cory, President, Silhouette International

Miriam Dushane, Managing Director, Linium Recruiting

Dr. Ann Errichetti, CEO, St. Peter's Hospital/Albany Memorial Hospital & VP, Albany Acute Care, SPHP

Alisa Henderson, President, Duncan & Cahill

The Hon. Kathleen Jimino, Rensselaer County Executive

Denise Padula, President, The Alchar Printing Group

Mel Quinlan, Vice President, Oberlander Group

Paula Stopera, President & CEO, CAP COM FCU

Register now for **Wonder Women Mentoring Breakfast** on Thursday, February 4 at The Century House, Route 9 in Latham. Sign up online at renscchamber.com/events. Registration and breakfast at 7:30 a.m.; program 8-9:30 a.m. \$35 members; \$50 member walk-ins; \$70 future members. Sponsorship opportunities are available. Contact Kate Ollier at kollier@renscchamber.com or 518.274.7020, ext. 23 or 518.687.1249 to learn more.



Major underwriters for the Tech Valley Empowerment Series are CAP COM FCU, Linium Recruiting and Turner Construction Company.