

insight

WELCOME TO A NEW YEAR

Message from the 2016 Board Chair



Michael DiAcetis
2016 Board Chair

This is an exciting time to take the position of board chair and I am grateful for the opportunity to serve. You could say it's the beginning of a new era and a new year, as we welcome Michael F. O'Sullivan as our Chamber president, effective January 4. Former publisher of *The Record* and *The Saratogian*, Mike is an accomplished executive with extensive experience leading organizations in sales, marketing, strategic planning, finance and budgeting, human resources and general operations. We were fortunate to attract several strong candidates for the position, a tribute to the outstanding organization that Linda Hillman built during her 15-year tenure. Mike is the right leader to take the Chamber to the next level as we move forward with continued success.

As Mike takes the helm of our growing organization, one of his first tasks will be finalizing the Chamber's new strategic plan, a three-year roadmap of priorities. Quality strategic plans have been crucial to the Chamber's past successes, such as the award-winning Leadership Institute, our interactive website that now attracts more than 18,000 visits per month and desirable programs including ongoing CEO Roundtables and the Tech Valley Empowerment Series. In fact, strategic plans paved

the way for two Chamber moves in recent years, first to River Street in Troy and, in 2014, to our present location in the historic Proctor's Theater on Fourth Street. Both moves highlighted the Chamber's role as a leader in fostering economic development in Rensselaer County.

The new strategic plan will include a redesigned website to drive even more business and exposure to our members with enhanced user-friendliness, online advertising, job postings and members news. Above all, the plan reinforces what our members have told us they want: cost-effective training for you and your staff by recognized experts (see "How to Wow!" on page four), HR solutions, business and education partnering and even more high-impact networking. We'll continue to add money-saving member benefits such as Save Local Now, which helps businesses with digital marketing, social publishing and web page optimization.

The Chamber is in a strong position to advocate for the business community locally and in the halls of state government. The Capital Region recently won \$98.1 million in state funds through the Regional Economic Development Council program. This is certainly a positive investment and provides the opportunity to fund priority projects that will transform our region.

As we begin 2016, please remember this is YOUR Chamber. The more you get involved, the more you will have opportunities to succeed. It is our privilege to help you reach your goals; let us know what you need. Best wishes in the New Year.

ASK THE EXPERT : Paperless Business Environments

Howard Gross is founder, president and CEO of *eBizDocs*, an award-winning electronic document management service provider. The firm assists businesses, organizations and government entities with electronic record management solutions. He has been recognized for his commitment to nonprofit organizations, particularly those empowering individuals with disabilities to find gainful employment in the business community.



Q: Why are businesses turning paperless?

A: There are many good reasons. Paper is physical, it multiplies and has a way of turning office space into storage space. Then you've got the problems of retrieval time, refile, misfiles and lost files. All of this affects productivity. In addition, there is a growing awareness of waste paper and sensitivity to the environment that has led many people to seek a better option.

Q: What are the advantages of electronic document management?

A: Digital documents reside on a server, taking up far less physical space, and cloud-based solutions have no physical demands at all. There is no need to leave your desk for retrieval and the danger of lost files is essentially eliminated. Documents can be instantly accessed, edited and even shared from any location using any web-based device with no special applications. Document management systems include workflow components that free up employees to be more efficient. This all adds up to more productivity, which saves money.

Q: How about security concerns?

A: Security is heightened. Detailed security rights ensure complete control over who can access any file. Built-in audit tracking will record who has accessed or modified any file in your system. Cloud server transmissions are secured and backups are managed seamlessly in the background. The server is always available to give access to critical documents, even if your physical location is not accessible.

"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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JOIN US FOR A FAREWELL CELEBRATION HONORING

Linda Hillman

Thursday, January 21 | 5 to 7:30 p.m. with brief remarks at 6 p.m.
Franklin Plaza Ballroom, 4 Fourth Street, Troy
Hearty Hors d'Oeuvres & Cash Bar
\$50 per person with proceeds benefitting a new scholarship for The Leadership Institute in Linda's name.
Register at renscochamber.com/events by Jan. 20



UPCOMING EVENTS

2016 County Executive's Breakfast January 12



Reserve your seat at the annual **County Executive's Breakfast** with Rensselaer County Executive Kathleen Jimino. She will report to us on the status of local economic development initiatives and what the future holds for the region. Reserve your seat now; this popular event sells out each year. Sponsored by the Rensselaer County IDA.

County Executive's Breakfast is on Tuesday, January 12 at the *Comfort Inn & Suites*, 99 Miller Road in Schodack. Sign up online at renscochamber.com/events. Registration and breakfast at 7:30 a.m.; program 8-9 a.m. \$35 for members; \$50 for walk-in members; \$70 for future members.

RENSSELAER
COUNTY

life looks good from here™

Chamber's Meet the Legislators on February 11

State representatives will present an informative panel discussion at the Chamber's upcoming **Meet the Legislators**. Our guests are (at right, l-r) New York State Senators Neil D. Breslin and Kathleen A. Marchione and New York State Assemblymen John T. McDonald III and Steven McLaughlin.



Meet the Legislators is on Thursday, February 11 at the *Hilton Garden Inn*, 235 Hoosick Street in Troy. Sign up online at renscochamber.com/events. Registration and lunch at 11:30 a.m.; program 12-1 p.m. \$35 for members; \$50 for walk-in members; \$70 for future members. Sponsored by National Grid.

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