

Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council
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R.I. PUBLIC EXPENDITURE COUNCIL HOSTS 78TH ANNUAL MEETING, HONORS STATE AND LOCAL UNSUNG HEROES

*Political Analyst Mara Liasson delivers keynote;
Government leaders address members*

PROVIDENCE, RI – The Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council (RIPEC) held its 78th Annual Meeting virtually on Monday, November 1st, they announced today. Approximately 200 virtual guests heard remarks from Governor Daniel J. McKee, Senate President Dominick J. Ruggerio, and Speaker of the House Joseph Shekarchi. Mara Liasson, Political Analyst for FOX News and National Political Correspondent for NPR, delivered the keynote address, and participated in a question and answer session moderated by Ian Donnis of The Public's Radio.

“Since becoming chair of RIPEC in 2018, I have witnessed firsthand how committed our community leaders are to improve and enhance Rhode Island's business climate,” **said Mim Runey, LP.D., chancellor at Johnson & Wales University and chair of the RIPEC Board of Directors.** “With Rhode Island's economy still recovering from the pandemic, there is perhaps no more important time for RIPEC's work towards improving public finance and economic opportunity in our state.”

RIPEC recognized unsung heroes who have made outstanding contributions to public service. **Frank J. Karpinski**, Executive Director of the Employees' Retirement System of Rhode Island, was presented with the Gary S. Sasse Distinguished Service Award for outstanding contributions to state government. **William Fazioli**, Director of Planning and Economic Development for the City of East Providence, was presented with the Robert M. Goodrich Distinguished Public Service Award for outstanding contributions to local government.

“Frank Karpinski is a true public servant in the very best sense,” **said General Treasurer Seth Magaziner**. “Under his stewardship, the Employees' Retirement System has made significant upgrades to customer service, won national awards for financial reporting, made numerous upgrades to technology and cybersecurity, and strengthened the retirement security of tens of thousands of public servants and their families. I am proud to call Frank a colleague, partner and friend.”

Bill Fazioli's background in economic development and finance has been invaluable to East Providence,” **said East Providence Mayor Roberto L. DaSilva**. “Bill has helped us turn a once blighted oil refinery into a vibrant new community that has expanded access to the waterfront and bike paths, and created a new tax base. We are proud and honored that he is part of our team, and being honored with this public service award.”

RIPEC President and CEO Michael DiBiase reported on the organization's work to make state and municipal governments more efficient and effective, protect taxpayers, and improve K-12 education through objective research and analysis. DiBiase also extended his thanks to Johnson & Wales University for hosting the on-site portion of the Annual Meeting for awardees and speakers, and to the meeting sponsors for supporting the event.

“It has been a privilege to lead the Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council and build on the organization's strong foundation of respected public policy research and analysis,” **said RIPEC President and CEO Michael DiBiase**. “We are in the midst of uncertain economic times, with a local economy that has not yet recovered from the pandemic and an abundance of one-time federal money. With its primary focus on financial responsibility, RIPEC is a unique and critical voice as Rhode Island faces these important challenges and opportunities.”

Amica Mutual Insurance Company was the Presenting Sponsor of the 78th Annual Meeting and Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island, Citizens Bank Rhode Island, and FM Global were Lead Sponsors.

[The Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council](#) is a nonpartisan and nonprofit public policy research organization dedicated to providing objective research and analysis that addresses the critical challenges surrounding public finance and economic opportunity in Rhode Island.

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