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ABC RI chapter elects new board members and officers for 2015

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The Rhode Island chapter of Associated Builders and Contractors has named its new slate of officers and board members for 2015. Next year's chair of the board will be Lynn Kent, CPA of Robert F. Audet, Inc., a long-time electrical contractor member of ABC. Kent was instrumental in establishing the RI Construction Training Academy, ABC/RI's Apprenticeship School, in the early 1990s. For many years, she served as the chapter's treasurer before taking some time away from the board in the early 2000s. In 2013, Kent accepted the nomination of vice chair of the board. She was chair-elect in 2014, and will assume the leadership position of the chapter board on January 1. Following Kent through the chairs and assuming the role of chairman-elect is John Cardosi, Jr., president of J.J. Cardosi, Inc., a general contractor located in East Providence. Cardosi will assume the position of chairman of the board in 2016, and it will be his second term as chairman. He also served in that role in 2011. The vice chairman, slated to be chairman in 2017 is Philip Freshman, owner of Alpha Electrical Contractors, Inc., of Riverside, RI. Freshman has been on the ABC Board for three years, and is a past chairman of the RI Construction Training Academy board of directors. Continuing as treasurer, for his fifth consecutive term, is Michael Orabona, CPA. Orabona is a partner in the firm of Sinel, Wilfand & Vinci, CPAs, located in Cranston.

The immediate past chairman will be 2014 chairman of the board, Steven Benfeito, owner of New England Drywall Co., Inc. of East Providence. Under Benfeito's leadership, the Rhode Island Chapter of ABC has shown membership growth (for the fifth year in a row). Benfeito led the chapter into affiliations with other business organizations such as the Rhode Island Small Business Coalition and the RI Construction Coalition, which commissioned a study by Bryant University that demonstrated the great importance of the construction industry to the economic growth of the state. Benfeito was the 2013 recipient of the chapter's first Chairman's Award. He sits on the ABC national board of directors, and has been a guest speaker at national conferences.

Members of the board of directors, recently elected, include Joseph Reale, Jr., Esq., a Providence attorney specializing in construction and contract law, Judith Ventura Enright, CPA with LGC+D, LLP, George Grayson of TradeSource, Inc., who was the ABC board chairman in 2013, and Tony Raposo of William Anthony Excavating, Inc..

Continuing on the board are members Angelo Balassone of Joseph Tavone Painting Co., Inc., Charlie Byrne of Byrne Bonding - A Division of Starkweather & Shepley Brokerage, Inc., Stanford E. Cameron, the Executive Director of the Center to Advance Minority Participation in Construction; Brian Renaud of The Contractors Plan Powered by the Fringe Benefit Group; and Christopher Whitney, Esq. of Pierce Atwood, LLP.

Stepping off the board of directors, having completed their terms, are John Brooks, president of

Advanced Building Concepts and Anne Powers, president of American Tele-Connect Service, Inc. Powers was chair of the ABC Board in 2010.

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