

2020-2021



Rochester Childfirst Network

SERVING CHILDREN SINCE 1857

ANNUAL REPORT

RCN IS: INCLUSIVE - NURTURING - COMPASSIONATE - ACCOUNTABLE - PROFESSIONAL





Ann Marie Stephan, MS, EI
Executive Director



Dear friends of RCN,

Annual reports are snapshots of an organization's work during the year. This past year challenged RCN, our nation, and our world in ways unlike any other year in our lifetimes. You may be wondering, "How has RCN fared during COVID?" This Annual Report holds the answer.

In March 2020, RCN made the difficult decision to shut our doors as the COVID pandemic hit. The impact on children, families, staff, and community partners was immense. Within eight weeks we had re-opened with changes to our policies, procedures, routines, and facilities. The simplest things, like walking children to their classrooms, became incredibly complex. Every week there were new regulations, improved best practices, reports from the Health Department, changing rules for when/when not to quarantine.

RCN's teachers, staff and therapists adapted in ways that, to this day, still leave me in awe. However, perhaps the most amazing people at RCN were our children! Who would have believed that toddlers would master the basics of handwashing, or that three- and four-year olds would wear masks all day, every day? Who could have known that therapists could deliver speech and OT lessons remotely, and that the children could master new skills via teletherapy?

RCN has survived and is going strong. Because more than ever, children need the inclusive, nurturing, compassionate care that we offer. Because RCN is uniquely positioned to meet their needs. Because we've helped children and families for 165 years, and we're not going to stop now!

I thank you for your continued support of and belief in RCN. Be proud of RCN's remarkable legacy in which we all are playing our part.

Ann Marie Stephan

RCN Brand Platform

BRAND ESSENCE - RCN's Heart and Soul

Joyful learning and growth for all!

BRAND PERSONALITY - Our Five Key Traits

Inclusive Nurturing Professional Compassionate Accountable

BRAND PROMISE

Only RCN is relentless in its pursuit of educational and social-emotional growth for every child. We put children and families first, offering comprehensive in-house resources and support. Our children thrive in an inclusive, fun-loving and curiosity-inspiring environment, centered around intentionally designed indoor and outdoor spaces.



OUR NETWORK OF PROGRAMS

RCN touches the lives of more than 2,000 children in the Rochester area. RCN provides comprehensive, whole-child, early childhood education services to children through Universal Pre-Kindergarten, private pay and subsidized child care, special education, wraparound care, and in-home childcare business support and monitoring.

68%

of RCN families are eligible for free or reduced lunch.

30%

of RCN children have special needs and are served in classrooms with typically developing peers with full access to physical, occupational, and speech therapies.

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

49% BLACK

27% WHITE

17% HISPANIC

7% MULTIRACIAL/OTHER



Children grow by as much as **two developmental levels** in one year at RCN

“I gave him a voice!”

By Brittany Richardson, M.S., CCC-SLP



Brittany Richardson
M.S., CCC-SLP

I've always wanted to make a difference for others. I fell in love with speech therapy at college, and earned licensure to work with children and adults. My placement at Quest Elementary School (Hilton) had to be delivered online, due to COVID. That's when I first did Speech Teletherapy.

When delivering Teletherapy, it's challenging to get children to focus for an entire session. It's hard for children to interpret visual clues, and it isn't easy for them (or me!) to hear the sounds being made.

Teletherapy had advantages as well. Not wearing a mask online worked better than in-person masked services. Parents participated with their child, learning the same skills. We brainstormed strategies to keep children engaged--music, movement breaks, and dancing!

One of my best memories was working with Elijah*. We employed a total communications approach—signage, cue cards, digital activities, and occupational & physical therapies. I even convinced his insurance carrier to pay for needed technology for Elijah (which wasn't normally covered!) His parents told me “You gave Elijah a voice!” In that moment, I knew that my time and efforts had been worthwhile!

*Not his actual name



COVID-19 Brings Out the Generosity of Donors

2020-21 could have been one of the most challenging years in RCN's history. We made it through thanks in part to the generous support of the Rochester community.

With the assistance of our banking partners at ESL Federal Credit Union, RCN's applied to the Paycheck Protection Plan within a day of its being announced. (This loan was later forgiven because RCN kept its people employed during the pandemic) We also received many "in-kind donations": PPE from the Department of Social Services and the United Way/RACF; 100 reusable bags for Wegmans for our families; 30 certificates for full Thanksgiving dinners from Christ Church of Pittsford; clothes and books from SUNY-Empire State College; and numerous gifts from individuals.

RCN's longtime donors rallied behind the 14th Annual Mad Hatter's Tea Party and Fashion Show, making it our most profitable ever despite being held online!



"RCN has benefited immensely from the historic generosity of the Rochester Community during the ongoing COVID crisis," said RCN's CEO Ann Marie Stephan.

"Our funders helped keep RCN's doors open, and our children and staff safe. Thanks to all of the gifts, RCN continues to give children a strong, safe start in life, where every child can thrive regardless of the barriers they face."



Caught in the Act!

During the 2020-21 school year, RCN initiated "Caught in the Act!" This gives employees the opportunity to recognize their fellow teachers and staff who go above and beyond their regular duties. Each month, different employees are thanked after being "caught in the act" of helping our children, families, and team members in special ways. Here's a sample "Caught in the Act!" story:

AMichelle Cohen-Johnson, Childcare/UPK

Since joining RCN in September 2020, AMichelle's commitment is consistently demonstrated while in the classroom with children, in the lobby with parents, in the staff lounge with teachers, and in the front office with staff. AMichelle helps staff through direct classroom support, providing bathroom breaks, assisting with a challenging child, working extra shifts, and encouraging everyone with positivity and optimism. During a snowstorm in February, AMichelle was "caught in the act" one weekend when she came in to unpack pallets of bookcases, ensuring the hallways were clear for children on Monday morning.

Children recognize AMichelle's nurturing and compassionate demeanor and stop by to "get some love" before going to their own classrooms. New employees regularly mention AMichelle as a welcoming presence at RCN who is always ready with a "hello," smile, and encouragement when things might seem overwhelming.

Submitted by Meredith Moore, Director of Children's Programs





Orlando Reyes

“RCN is Home”

By Orlando Reyes

Note: Orlando Reyes is one of RCN’s greeters. Over the years every child and parent has come to know “Mr. Orlando” and appreciate his gentleness with children, his bilingual abilities (English/Spanish), and his dedication to RCN. Here in his own words is his story.

I started working at RCN on September 29th, 2004. The first day I was kind of nervous and scared because I thought I wasn’t gonna do a good job, but I wanted to know how it felt like working with small children. The second day I was trained and it was great. I played with the children. I was thrilled and I know this is what I wanted to do!

RCN has been my home for 18 years, and I want to be here for another 18 years ‘til the day I retire. I started working at RCN when I was 23. I can’t believe I’ve been at RCN for 18 years.

I enjoy being around children. It makes me happy. I love it! I would not even think about leaving RCN.

A Calling to Childcare

Cassandra Manley has provided quality, in-home childcare for more than half of her life. While caring for children can be both a vocation and a business, for some it is truly a true calling. Cassandra is one of those people.

“My first child passed away after three months of her beautiful life due,” explained Cassandra. “I made the choice to stay home with Kristina, my second child, as a way of not missing a single day of her precious life. I chose childcare...or maybe it chose me...and I have never looked back.” Kristina is now 27 years old.

“Nutrition has always been an important part of our work,” she continued. “The CACFP and Foodlink programs have been priceless.” Before COVID hit, Cassandra’s in-home childcare was open seven days a week, with seven employees. “We’ve adapted with the help of our PPP forgivable loan and the CARES III grant. Thanks to the Family Child Care Satellites of Greater Rochester (FCC-SGR), we were able to complete our training for our midpoint license renewal, and didn’t close our doors at all during the pandemic.”





RCN Goes to Albany!



RCN's success has been measured by researchers, evaluators and accrediting agencies. The success of RCN "alumni" also demonstrates the value we've added to their lives. Two RCN success stories are NY Senators Samra Brouk (D-55) and Jeremy Cooney (D-56).

"Senators Brouk and Cooney visited RCN for a news conference in 2021," said CEO Ann Marie Stephan, "and both proudly mentioned they had attended RCN as children!"

"One thing hasn't changed since I walked these hallways" said Sen. Cooney, "and that's RCN's commitment to providing the best care and education possible to Rochester's children." Sen. Brouk noted, "It was such a pleasure to see RCN again that I returned a few months later. As I walked in the door I was greeted by a 'Welcome Back!' banner made by RCN's school-agers!" Senator Brouk gave those children a lesson on the role of a New York State Senator.



"A good education is the surest path to a secure future for our children," Sen. Brouk continued. "We need to give them the resources they need to thrive." Sen. Cooney noted, "One in two children in Rochester live below the federal poverty line. Helping children like those served by RCN is absolutely essential."

"It was truly a pleasure to welcome Senators Cooney and Brouk home," said Ms. Stephan. "At RCN, we believe our youngest citizens should have the opportunity to succeed as adults. Senators Brouk and Cooney have demonstrated what's possible when you get a good start at RCN!"

In-Kind Donations

2019-21



Individuals

Darlene S. Abel
Noreen Buchanan
Nancy Consol
Timothy Cosgriff
Marsha Dumka
Melissa Grove
Jeffrey Hoffman
Jara Johnson
Angie Jones
MaryAnne Jones
Edith Krause
Mary K Marrocco
Marcia Nabut
Catherine Pollicove
Karl Schuler
Elizabeth Steinberg
Kim Weick
Brandy Wiedrich

Businesses

A Different Point of View
Bill Gray's Regional Iceplex
Char Steak and Lounge
Christ Church Pittsford
Claudia O'Hara Wedding & Events Florist
Community Crisis Fund of United Way/RACF
Delta Sigma Pi
Diane Prince Country Furniture & Gifts
Esther Brill Partner Dance
Genesee Country Village & Museum
Geva Theatre
IDEX Health and Science
Kids Out And About
MacKenzie-Childs
Monroe County Dept. of Social Services
Mood Maker Books
Rochester Area Community Foundation
Rochester Broadway Theatre League
Seneca Park Zoo Society
Stokoe Farms
SUNY-Empire State College
Tops Markets
Wegmans East Avenue
Windsor Cottage

Tribute Listing

In Honor Of Betsy Garrett

Carol S. & Thomas J. Mullin Family Fund

In Honor Of Larry & Norene Green

Mr. and Mrs. Alice Smith

In Honor Of Justin Kieber King

Sarah Jerla

In Honor Of Sam & Max Spence

Eileen Spence

In Honor Of Ann Marie Stephan

Dana Babbin

In Honor Of Kim Frame Weick

Doris Frame Braine

In Honor Of David & Stephanie Whitaker

Judith H. Whitaker

In Honor Of Jean Williams

Lauren D. Frank
Geoffrey Lawrence

In Memory Of Eleanor Eilenberg

Barbara Reifler

In Memory Of Luke Fetterly

Erica Fetterly
Nikolas Obecanov

In Memory Of Daniel Goodwin

Canandaigua National Trust of Florida
Ron Carovano
Dan & Maggie Lort
Veniskey-Prince Family Fund

In Memory Of Bill Grant

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Mr. and Mrs. Susan Murphy

In Memory Of Ted Howk

Jane Moore
Barbara Reifler
Jean M. Williams

In Memory Of Jane L. Hultberg

Jane W Hultberg

In Memory Of Robert Johnson

Barbara Reifler

In Memory Of Rob Knapp

Heather St. Croix

In Memory Of Rob Knapp & Gretchen Stephan

Diane Harris

In Memory Of Cricket Luellen

Barbara Reifler

In Memory Of Kamala Madhu

Barbara Reifler

In Memory Of Ann McNabb

Anne Bauer
Linda Bennett
Monika Katzel
Kathryn Macwhinney
Marie Whitbeck

In Memory Of Pauline & Paul Moore

Mrs. Jacquelyn Hopkins



In Memory Of Clifford B Reifler MD

Dr. William Valenti

In Memory Of Carol Schlank

Nancy Carlisle
Catherin Feinen
Ann Kanthor
Francine Kent
Joan Mitchell
Gloria Pleger
Barbara Reifler
Marge Swartz
Diana & Philip Weintraub
Karen Wieder
Jean M. Williams

In Memory Of Gretchen Stephan

Barbara Stephan

In Memory Of Emilio Stramaglia

Sara Stramaglia

Tribute Listing

In Memory Of Muriel D. Steinberg

Calli Barry
Lita Boudakian
Esther Brill
Martha Browne
Margery G Burstein
Ann Chazan
Dr. and Mrs. J. Richard Ciccone
Lorraine Clements
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Croog
Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Dumka
Lori Friedman
Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Goldstein
Mrs. Victoria Goldstein
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Norene & Laurence Green
Thomas W Hackett Living Trust
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Patricia Karn
Monika Katzel
Patricia Kerper
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Mr. and Mrs. Susan Murphy
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Arlene Stolnitz
Amy Tackaberry
Wells Landing Community
Jean M. Williams
Windsor Cottage
Michael & Carol Yunker
Anita and Stephen Yusem

In Memory Of Robert Van Niel

Linda Baroody
Mr. and Mrs. John Buttrill
Elizabeth Cayer
Kate Flynn
Barbara E. Greenstein
Mr. and Mrs. David & Linda Marsh
Mr. and Mrs. Lou Martino
Mary Anne Palermo
Mr. and Mrs. Alice Smith
Elizabeth A. Steinberg
Judith Taylor
Marie J Vasile
Jane Wade
Jean M. Williams



Foundations and Donor Advised Funds

Amy Jenkins Cutler Fund
Annette Miller & Lauren Frank Charitable Checking Account
Benevity Fund
Brighter Days Foundation
Burton S & Charles J August Family Foundation
Carol S. & Thomas J. Mullin Family Fund
Cobblestone Capital Donor Advised Fund
Daisy Marquis Jones Foundation
Davenport-Hatch Foundation
ESL Charitable Foundation
Estate of Muriel D. Steinberg
Glover Crask Charitable Trust
Greater Rochester Summer Learning Association
Greenfield Fund
IDEX Foundation
Ivy Madison Charitable Gift Fund
J. M. McDonald Foundation
Joel & Ann Shamaskin Charitable Fund
Joyce C. Crofton Charitable Gift Fund
Junior League Garden Club
Kickball League of Rochester
Konar Foundation
Marcia Nabut Charitable Checking Account
Massie Family Fund
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph C. Briggs Charitable Checking Account
Nessler Trust c/o Brighton Securities
Network for Good
NoVo Foundation
NYS Employees Federated Appeal
OCFS-CARES Act
Peggy Wier Charitable Unitrust

RACF Early Childhood Education Fund
RACF Hursh Quality Matters
RACF Ralph Wilson Fund
Ransford Family Charities Char Checking
Rite Aid Foundation
Robert W. and Elizabeth S. Van Neil Charitable Checking Account

Rochester Area Community Foundation
Rochester Female Charitable Society
Rochester Press-Radio Club
Rochester's Child
RSM US Foundation
Ruth I. Morton Fund
Skalny Charitable Trust
Third Haven Fund
Thomas W Hackett Living Trust
Tradition Capital Bank
United Way/RACF Community Crisis Fund
Veniskey-Prince Family Fund Account
Wells Landing Community
Willmott Foundation
Wise Family Advised Fund
Zucaro Family Charitable Account

Financials

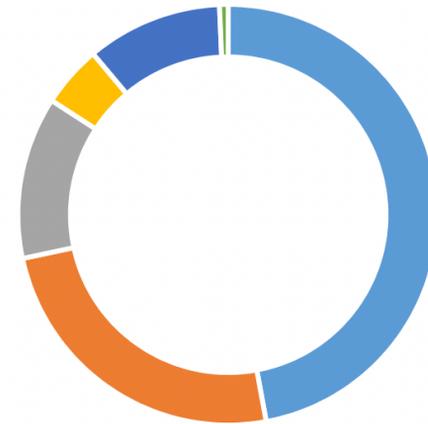
Program Service Income - \$2,281,318
Grants - \$1,189,102
Contributions - \$604,356
Foundation Support - \$229,744
PPP Loan Forgiveness - \$506,200
Other
 \$32,065
 \$4,842,785

Program Services - \$3,710,635
Management and General - \$397,877
Fundraising - \$216,237

 \$4,324,749

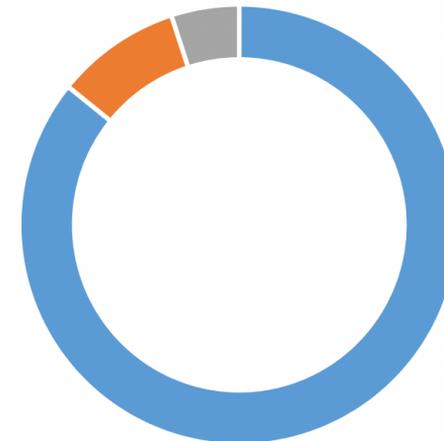
Surplus/Deficit
 \$518,036

Revenue



- Program Service Income ■ Grants ■ Contributions
- Foundation Support ■ PPP Loan Forgiveness ■ Other

Expenses



- Program Services ■ Management and General ■ Fundraising

RCN Honor Roll of Donors

Individuals

Gifts received July 1 2019 to June 30, 2021

Gay and Sandy Abbey	Anne Bosco	Nancy and Sam Consol	Ms. Flynn
Darlene Abel	Lita Boudakian	Ms. Corbett	Mary Anne Fox
Andrea J Adams	John Bourda	David and Connie Craig	Doris Frame Braine
Ralph Ades	Anne Brayer	Ellen and Robert Croog	Barbara Frank
Emily Alberts	Donna Breen	Janice Currie	Lauren and Annette Frank
Brigid Allinger	James Brennan	Vincenza Cusumano-Droel	Elaine Fredericks
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Wayne and Barb Andrews	Esther Brill	Jo Dargie	Daphne Futerman
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RCN Honor Roll of Donors

Individuals

Gifts received July 1 2019 to June 30, 2021

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Reneta McCarthy
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Rachael McGrath
Abby McHugh-Grifa
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Amy Michatek
Igor Milosevic
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Joan Mitchell
Kathanne Mitchell
Karen Montaglione
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Margie O'Neill
Mari and Brian O'Sullivan
Dustin Pahman
Mary Anne Palermo
Linda Pasto
Carol Personte
Patty Perticone
Wendy Peters
Gail Petri
Erin Petrone
Kitty Picardo
Deborah Pichette
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Bruni Postler
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Eloise Puls
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Janet Reed
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Barbara Reifler
Susan Reindel
Nancy Reitkopp

RCN Honor Roll of Donors

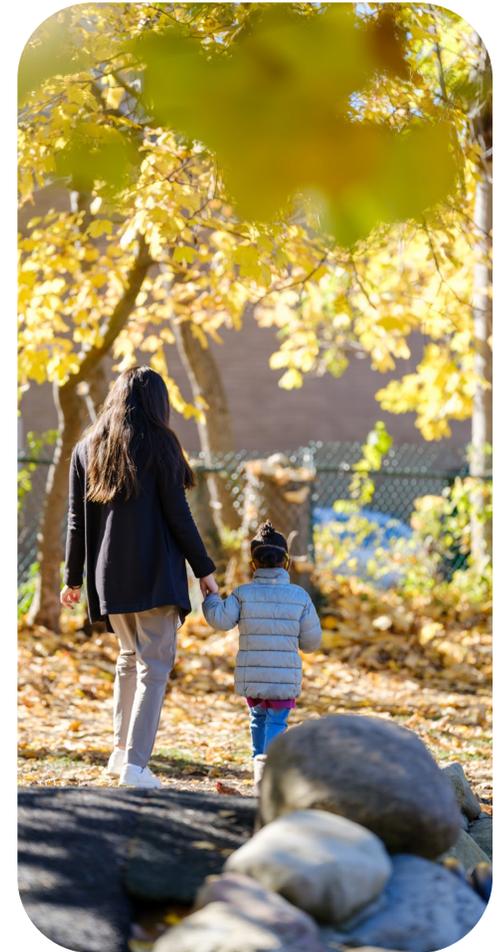
Individuals

Gifts received July 1 2019 to June 30, 2021

Rev. James Renfrew
Marie Restaino
Alan Reynard
Tom Richards
Angela Robillard
Donald and Jeri Rombaut
Valerie Rozak-Brunson
P A Rubinstein
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Kathye Simon
Jennifer Simson
Renu and R.P. Singh
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Alice and Michael Smith
Neil Smith
Robert Smith
Stephanie Snow

Wanda Snow
Hannah Solky
John and Monica Sozio
Suzanne and Ted Spall
Karen Spawton
Eileen Spence
Margie Spence
Suzy Spencer
Lynn Spiotti
Heather St. Croix
Ronnie and Latanya Stamps
Harry & Beatrice Standhart
Liz Steinberg
Muriel Steinberg
Lindsay Steinberg McGrail
Carol Steinberg-Gould
Georgine Stenger
Ann Marie Stephan
Barbara Stephan
Renee Stephan
William and Joanne Stephan
Sally Stetson
Christena Stevens
Arlene Stolnitz
Sara Stramaglia
Johanna Stump-Siembor
Linda Sullivan
Marybeth Sullivan
Marge Swartz
Rose and Frank Swiskey
Celia Szczepura
Amy Tackaberry
Jennifer Takatch
Judith Taylor
Kathryn Thomas
Debbie Tschiderer
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Ann Van Bork
Robert Van Hise

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Nessa Vanhorn
Marie Vasile
Wagner Vecchiato
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Joanne Vergona
Garry and Debbie Vernon
Judy von Bucher
Gretchen Voss
Jane Wade
Lisa Waldman
Li Juan Wang
Sandra Weber
Bruce and Kim Weick
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Diana & Philip Weintraub
Kathy Whelehan
David and Stephanie Whitaker
Judith Whitaker
Marie Whitbeck
Judy White
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Cheryl Wilkinson
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Andrea and Jonathan Zuegel



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URMC-Highland Hospital

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Davina McLean-Randall, Ed.S.
Greece Central School District

Amy Michatek, CPA
Wilmore Marketing Group

Peter Nabozny
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Urban League (Retired)

Karl Schuler
Taylor, the Builders

Stephanie Snow
IDEX Corporation

Elizabeth Steinberg
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Muriel Steinberg*
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***Deceased**



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Christian Gehlen
Norene Green
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Barry Wisset, Esq.

RCN Foundation Board 2020-21

David Veniskey, CPA, President
Jeri Rombaut, CPA
Christian Gehlen
Norene Green
Peter Schermerhorn
David Whitaker
Barry Wisset, Esq.



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