

Celebration of Two University Stalwarts

By Joel Seligman

I want to salute two extraordinary members of my senior leadership team who will retire in the next academic year. Bill Murphy is completing nine great years as vice president for Communications in July. Ron Paprocki, our senior vice president for Administration and Finance and chief financial officer extraordinaire, will retire in January 2016 after 45 years at the University. Both Bill and Ron have been stalwarts of our University, whose service has palpably strengthened our University.

Bill Murphy is widely considered to be the dean of university communications. After performing significant roles in the public affairs and communications programs at the University of Chicago, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and Ohio State University, Bill came to Rochester in 2006.

Bill has creatively and effectively implemented new ways to reach the public in a digitally transformed world—through photography, video, social media, and the web. With colleagues at Duke and Stanford, Bill led the creation of Futurity.org, a pathbreaking online collaboration featuring research news from the top universities in the United States, Canada, Great Britain, Europe, Asia, and Australia. Bill notably also spearheaded the creation of a suite of University-wide electronic newsletters for faculty, staff, students, parents, and alumni, and strengthened *Rochester Review* to reach more alumni more often, at lower cost, and with a more compelling presence.

Rocky, our now ubiquitous insect mascot, was brought to us by Bill and his team as part of a comprehensive campaign to strengthen our graphic identity and fortify our sense of One University. The result has been more attractive and cohesive publications, online resources, stationery, and representations of the University.

Bill's sophisticated appreciation for the University's missions in teaching, research, clinical care, and service, plus an historian's sense of perspective and rich appreciation of data are assets that I will truly miss.

Bill has been particularly effective in working with the many different schools and divisions of the University as part of a communications team. Bill is a consensus builder, who justifiably should feel pride



TEAM LEADERS: Vice President for Communications Bill Murphy (left) and Chief Financial Officer Ron Paprocki leave “a great legacy at this University.”

that he is leaving communications—and an outstanding team—far stronger than when he arrived.

For the past 15 years, Ron Paprocki, as senior vice president for Administration and Finance and chief financial officer has been indispensable to my predecessor, Tom Jackson, and me for his skill administering a broad portfolio of financial and administrative responsibilities, involving ultimate supervision of 1,800 employees. There is a great advantage in having one individual responsible for both finance and administration in achieving a friction-free and well-informed administration. But this can only effectively occur if the person in place has the talent and breadth to effectively administer this range of assignments. In Ron, we have been so fortunate to have had an administrator with the skill and determination to do so.

Ron's career at the University has spanned five Rochester presidents. He earned his bachelor's degree with high distinction from this University and earned his MBA from the Simon School.

As chief financial officer during one of the nation's biggest downturns in 2008–09, Ron helped navigate the University through that challenging financial crisis while helping achieve our overarching objective to protect our core. Thanks in part to Ron's decisive leadership, the University avoided the disruption and significant

layoffs seen at some peer institutions. In 2008, the *Rochester Business Journal* named Ron the Financial Executive of the Year for large nonprofit organizations in the Rochester area.

In 2008, Ron presented and the Board of Trustees approved the Campus Master Plan to provide a 20-year framework for the development of the University's lands and facilities, with a focus on increased classroom, meeting, office, research, residential, and clinical spaces. The plan has served us remarkably well since then.

Ron deserves particular credit for his leadership in the development of College Town, whose plaza is now dedicated to him. Ron and his team negotiated key aspects of the development agreement and ground lease, providing oversight to financing, legal requirements, design plan, construction details, and environmental issues. His leadership was critical to establishing multiple key partnerships at the city, state, and federal level to advance the project.

Ron was also instrumental in the development of Brooks Crossing and significant changes to Interstate 390.

He deserves especial kudos for the quality of his leadership team.

Bill and Ron have been colleagues of the highest integrity, intelligence, congeniality, and dedication. Each leaves a great legacy at this University. I wish them both the happiest possible retirement. 🍷