



## 2017 RJC BOARD ELECTIONS

### NOMINEE BIOGRAPHIES – JEWELLERY MANUFACTURER OR WHOLESALER FORUM

#### **John Orrico**

**Frederick Goldman, Inc.**

John is currently serving as COO for Frederick Goldman, Inc.. FGI is a multinational manufacturer and wholesaler of wedding rings, Bridal and fashion jewelry. In this role, John is responsible for all Product Development, Manufacturing, Diamond Procurement, Inventory management, Engineering, Sales Operations, B2B and IT functions. Prior to Goldman, John served as Chief Supply Chain Officer for Birks and Mayors, a publicly traded luxury retailer based in Montreal and Tamarac, Florida. John was responsible for Strategic Diamond Sourcing, Product Development, Product Sourcing, Manufacturing, Wholesale, Recognition Sales and Quality Assurance. Prior to Birks, John was a Group Vice President of Merchandising, Supply Chain Operations at Tiffany & Co. He was the architect of Tiffany's vertical integration strategy building resources in NYC, Pelham, NY, Cumberland and Cranston, Rhode Island, Swiss Watch Factory and Judel Glassworks. John spent 13+ years at Tiffany, serving as a corporate Officer for 8 years. John has served on boards of the Canadian Jewelers Association and CIBJO.

#### **Mark Hanna**

**Richline Group, Inc.**

Mr. Hanna is Chief Marketing Officer of Richline Group, Inc., a Berkshire Hathaway Company. Mark graduated from NYU Stern with an MBA in Marketing and began his 45 years in the jewelry industry. He has had experience in all facets of management, manufacturing, marketing, sales and compliance. Prior to this position, he served (1996 – 2007) as EVP Sales and Marketing for both Bel-Oro International and Michael Anthony Jewelers. From 1990-1995, Mark was President of Leach & Garner International. In 2012, he was honored as one of US's top 200 CMOs and again in 2015 as CMO of Year, Corporate Social Responsibility, by the CMO Club. Mark is an active speaker and advocate on responsible issues including UL Responsible summit, MJSA Responsible panels, JIS Team leader, FJATA advisory, USWTA advisory, Ethical Metalsmiths, Pure Earth and Fairmined Gold. He has, additionally served as a board member of Special Olympics and the Responsible Jewellery Council (till 2016) plus an active member and contributor to Manufacturing Jewelers Association and the CMO Club.



## **Ara Guzelian**

**Charm America**

Starting from a young age, I was exposed to jewelry manufacturing. We had several people in our extended family that were jewelers or owned a jewelry manufacturing. It wasn't until 20 years ago when I landed a job with OroAmerica as an assistant buyer that I began my direct relationship with jewelry, primarily gold. I would go on to learn a lot of aspects, as well as the people behind the jewelry. In a large part, it was nice to see how close knit our community is. From there, I went on to manage a small manufacturing in Los Angeles that is one of the primary sources of gold charms in the industry. In this role, I was able to learn manufacturing details, as well as directly deal with customers in the wholesale and retail industries. Being once a buyer, it led to many advantages of inspiring and working with other buyers. As an RJC certified member, it would be an honour to serve as a board member to represent the manufacturers.

## **MANUJ GOYAL**

**Pinkcity Jewelhouse Private Limited**

Manuj Goyal is graduate Gemologist from GIA Santa Monica, USA. He has vast experience in the field of Gem & Jewellery of more than 20 years. Under his dynamic leadership, Pinkcity Jewelhouse Pvt. Ltd. is already having two factories for Gemstone cutting and Jewellery Manufacturing and the third factory is near to completion. It is because of his vision that Pinkcity Jewelhouse Pvt. Ltd. is one of the best factory in Jaipur as far as use of technology in the production process is concerned. Driven by the vision of Mr. Manuj Goyal, Pinkcity Jewelhouse Private Limited has created new benchmarks in gemstones cutting and gemstones studded silver & gold jewellery that reflects excellence in design and artistry. Mr. Manuj Goyal has not restricted himself to production only. Because of his marketing skills and extensive world wide travelling, Pinkcity Jewelhouse Pvt. Ltd has got buyers of jewellery from all over the world. Also, Mr. Manuj Goyal has ventured into retail in India market through Gemporia, India's first Live Jewellery Shopping TV channel which is a joint venture with Gems TV (Gemporia) -UK.

## **Kimberly Rainone**

**Temple St Clair**

Ms. Rainone is a strategic product development and merchandising executive with exceptionally diverse experience across retail, wholesale, luxury and mass channels for premier brands and organizations including Target, Ralph Lauren and QVC. She is a handbag, footwear and jewelry expert with comprehensive understanding of product life cycles, from concept to global sourcing and production, for branded, licensed and private label products. She has a strong ability to assemble, train and lead large, multidisciplinary teams, foster vendor/partner relationships, and turn around underperforming businesses with significantly enhanced processes and targeted product offerings. Ms. Rainone is comfortable collaborating with both highly creative designers as well as analytical,



commercially driven merchants. Specialties: Branding, Product Development, Luxury, Mass Market, Sourcing, Handbags, Accessories, Shoes, Jewelry, and Merchandising for Women's, Children's, Men's.

## **Linus Cortez III**

**Stuller, Inc.**

Linus J Cortez III, CPA Executive Vice President – Chief Financial Officer Stuller, Inc. Linus is employed with Stuller, Inc since 1996, where he serves as Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer and Compliance Officer. At Stuller, Linus supervises and oversees all Finance and Administration and certain Supply Chain disciplines, including financial reporting, accounting operations, debt facilities, treasury, corporate insurance, legal, security and loss prevention, supply chain procurement and inventory management, customer credit policies and operations, and products and services pricing operations. Prior to joining Stuller, Linus was a Senior Audit Manager with KPMG Peat Marwick for 10 years where he provided various audit and financial services for entities in the energy and manufacturing industries. Linus graduated from Louisiana State University in 1983 with a B.S. in Accounting and obtained his Certified Public Accountant license in 1985. Linus is a member of the Louisiana Society of CPAs, the Board of Trustees of the Schools of the Sacred Heart of Grand Coteau, the finance committee of St Peter's Roman Catholic Church, and serves on the steering committee of the Acadiana CFO Roundtable. Linus is a past member of the Board of Directors of American Gem Society Laboratories, Board of Directors of the Lourdes Foundation and the school boards of Carencro Catholic School and Teurlings Catholic High School.

## **Victor Chan**

**Continental Jewellery (Mfg) Ltd**

Mr. Victor CHAN is the Chairman of the Continental Holdings Limited and Continental Jewellery (Mfg) Limited in Hong Kong. He manages the daily operations of the Group, including sales and marketing, product development and innovation, investment activities, finance, as well as corporate and business development, etc. Mr. Chan holds a number of public and honorary positions, including the President of the Entrepreneurs' Organization (Hong Kong and China South Chapters); Vice Chairman of the Hong Kong Jewellery & Jade Manufacturers Association; Founding Chairman of the Youth Chapter of the Hong Kong Young Industrialists Council; Member of the Jewellery Advisory Committee of the Hong Kong Trade Development Council; and Executive Committee Member of the Federation of Hong Kong Industries. He was appointed as a committee member of the City of Jiangmen Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference since 2013. He is also one of the Directors of the Hong Kong United Youth Association. Prior to joining the Group, Mr. Chan had worked in both banking and manufacturing industry for several years. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree with double majors in Entrepreneurial Studies and Finance from Babson College in Boston, Massachusetts.

## **LOUIS EBRANI**

### **LOUIS CREATIONS INC**

Louis Ebrani was born on January 25, 1955 in Tehran, Iran. From the day he was born, he served as leader in many different ways. He attended Ettefagh Elementary and High School in Tehran. Ettefagh was a prestigious school and only the very top students were admitted and attended this school. The students of this school had a vigorous, challenging and accelerated curriculum in multiple languages. When Louis was in middle of high school, one of his math teachers told his class to put a line across their papers and informed them that they were done, they have learned everything there is to know about Trigonomics. When his journey at Ettefagh came to an end, Louis went on to study at Technion Institute of Technology in Haifa, Israel. Technion is another institution where only the very top students are admitted. Louis studied Civil Engineering in Technion and maintained his status of being a top students while he was studying in the competitive university. He used this time in Israel to get to know the land of Israel as well in addition to studying. He volunteered in different places during his college career and began to see the beauty of the land, as well as the first sparks of Israel's technological growth of where they stand today. Technion continues to stand as one of the top institutions in the world in many fields of study; it is especially one of the top amongst the institutions of technology and Louis is proud to be a graduate from such an institution. Louis has a passion for learning and expanding one's knowledge. Graduating from Technion was not enough for him and he still excelled in his academic career. Louis then travelled to New York and immediately enrolled in Polytechnic University in Brooklyn, New York. He continued his studies in Civil Engineering with a focus on design of special and major constructions. The roots of Louis Creations begin here. Louis decided to take his engineering skills, which focuses on many small details to make a larger image to jewelry. He started with as larger company to gain some experience in this field and being the quick learner and adapter that he is, Louis quickly picked up many skills and opened up his own company. Louis Creations is a very unique company, located in New York City. While it is a small and humble company it is very powerful. Everyone is always greeted with a smile and utmost respect in the office, whether it be the employees, customers, or someone who just pops in to say hello. Louis always puts his customers first by providing them the best, fastest and most pleasant experience. While most companies manufacture overseas, Louis Creations commits to manufacturing locally so that they can develop a relationship with the factories and to oversee what is going without the need of travel, but most importantly, to ensure quality service and the fastest possible service to his customers. Louis has setup the company so that not only the customer is always happy, but so are the employees. Because the jewelry is manufactured in the US there is very little need for travel and the employees of Louis Creations do not have to choose between work and family, they can have both without compromise. This has played a huge role in Mr. Ebrani's life. He always works hard to support his family, he is also always there for his family and his community. Louis does not "live to work" rather, he "works to live." There is so much more to Louis outside of his company. Let's start with his family. Louis devotes his life to his wife, kids and now thank God, grandchildren as well. He treats every member of the family with tremendous love and respect. Every member of the family has the same respect back for Louis. Not one person has left the family and every member of the family always has the family in mind with every decision they make. There has been a level of trust instilled in the family and every child and grandchild of Louis knows that they can always trust him with anything and go to him when they need advice or guidance. Louis has a strong connection with everyone in his family. Louis also became a



very active member in his community due to all the services he assists with. He belongs to the Persian Mashadi Jewish community in Great Neck, New York. It is a close knit community with over 6,000 members strongly believing in its traditions, yet, the community members have adapted to the American culture since moving to the United States and contribute to society. There is a board called the Central Board, which is the board that oversees the big community decisions. Louis, one of the founders of this board, has served as a part of the central board many times and was even re-elected several times. Louis has been serving as an active member and head and continues to serve as an active member on the Religious Council Committee. This committee deals with the different religious leaders and programs of the community, including dealing with holiday programming and religious private schools. Here in New York, Jewish Day schools are private and very expensive. However, it is very important to observant Jews and this community to learn about our values and traditions. Unfortunately, due to the skyrocketing tuition prices and this tight economy, it is often unaffordable for families with multiple kids to send their kids to these schools. A Jewish day school is called a Yeshiva, and today Louis runs a very important operation called the Yeshiva Scholarship Program. Louis makes it his responsibility to make sure that every family in the community that wants to send their kids to a Jewish day school but cannot afford it will be helped out. He assists in running fundraisers to raise money for this cause and he has developed relationships with principals and heads of schools across New York to work out financial aid packages for students in the community. When the month of September approaches, Louis' mailbox is always overflowing with Yeshiva Scholarship applications. He spends hours and hours on this project to figure out how much financial aid each family should get. All information is kept confidential of course. If there is not enough aid from the community awarded to a family, he then calls up or meets with the principal of the school the family would like to send their child to in order to advocate to the family, hoping that the school will help out as well. Louis received an award and plaque at the Yeshiva of Central Queens annual dinner in 2010 for this tremendous act of kindness and role he took upon himself. This is the elementary school Louis has sent all four of his kids to and this award was their token of appreciation for all that he does to help out the Mashadi kids. Louis also assisted in the formation of Angel Fund. Angel Fund was a committee established in the community to assist needy families. They raise money in order to provide these families a monthly allowance for their basic food necessities. In addition they assist in helping these people find jobs. The list can go on with all the Louis is involved with. But one last committee to talk about that Louis is involved with is the burial and cemetery committee. When a member of the community passes away, a family member immediately contacts Louis so that he can make all the necessary arrangements. He fills out forms and contacts a burial organization to dismiss the one who passed away from the hospital, or wherever he passed away. There is a cemetery plot for the community and Louis has a map of the cemetery and he carries it with him everywhere he goes, so that in the event that someone does pass away he can make arrangements right away. Louis not only takes care of the funeral but also shows emotional support to these families. He goes out of his way to often visit these families and inform them of anything that has to happen to make this process as smooth as possible. Mr. Ebrani is a superb, one of a kind man. His heart is filled with warmth and he is true giver. He is always looking to make the world a better place. Louis is a trustworthy man and everyone knows that they can turn to him for advice or guidance and they know that whatever they are sharing with him will be kept confidential. Louis does not pick and choose lifestyles, he takes what he finds value in and applies it to his life. He runs a successful company. He plays a huge role in the community and he has raised an impeccable family. He has done these three things without any



compromise on any of them. He somehow, is there, 24/7 for his company, his community and of course, his family. When Louis finds an opening, he goes for it and puts in everything to ensure a successful turnout.

## **Domenica Piantedosi**

**Felicia (Thailand) Ltd**

Domenica has extensive experience in both the financial and the jewelry industries. She is General Manager of Felicia (Thailand) Ltd., and Board Member and Treasurer of The Foreign Correspondents Club of Thailand. She began her career with Continental Bank in Chicago and Milan, covering corporate banking. In Milan, she joined Standard Chartered Bank as Head of Risk Management, then moved to London for a special assignment with the Chairman/CEO of SCB, before moving to Bangkok, as Deputy Country Manager. After 14 years in banking she established Compass International, an international advisory firm, working in several Asian countries and in New York for more than 12 years. During this time she began providing strategic, management and financial advice to jewelry companies in Thailand and she studied at GIA, becoming a Graduate Gemologist. In 2010, Domenica moved to Singapore as Director of Finance at the LKY School (National University of Singapore). Subsequently she was VP Strategy for Wellfirst (US-based corporation). Domenica has served on boards of private companies and of non-profit organizations in Italy, Singapore and Thailand. She provides high quality advice, guidance and oversight that is independent, objective and relevant. Domenica has a BA cum Laude from the University of Connecticut and a Masters with Distinction from Johns Hopkins University (SAIS).

## **ANTOINE MALO**

**MALO CREATIONS INC.**

Tony Malo was blessed to be born into a family of talented jewelers. His father started his business in Montreal after emigrating from Turkey with the knowledge he had acquired as a youngster from his own father. In the same manner, Tony was exposed to the craft at a very early age. He often spent his days off from school at the workshop satisfying his ongoing curiosity. Tony loved to accompany his father at tradeshow, standing proudly next to him, absorbing Mr. Habib Malo's business ethics. As he completed his studies, Tony knew the direction he would take in life and following his passion, he implemented himself in the family business and today, he proudly has taken the torch as a third generation Malo jeweler. Tony's primary focus has been manufacturing from the onset. He focused on improving the manufacturing process by seeking knowledge and new machinery technologies for his factory from all corners of the world. Tony quickly became the driving force behind Malo's vision and innovation. Through a youthful outlook on his craft, Tony has been able to stay true to ancient traditions while incorporating state of the art technologies to create new-age masterpieces. His strive is clearly demonstrated in the outcome of the fruits of his labor as he was recently rewarded with his carbon-fiber & gold line, "NOIR", which won back to back awards at the prestigious JCK Jewelers Choice Awards in 2016 and 2017. Through his unwavering commitment to the craft at such a young age, Tony continues to innovate and bring new masterpieces to the jewelry industry, which is a promise he intends to keep for the future.



## **Kai-Friedrich Binder**

**Friedrich Binder GmbH & Co. KG**

Education: - Diploma in Economics from Mannheim, Germany, 1984 - MBA from McGill University, Montreal, Canada, 1988 Business experience: - Consultant at Bain & Company, Munich & Paris (1988-91) - self-employed since 1991 - MD+owner: egf - eduard g. fidel GmbH, Germany since 1996 (member of RJC) - MD+owner of Friedrich Binder GmbH & Co. KG, Germany since 2012 (member of RJC) Personal info: - born 1961 - married, 3 children - Hobbies: skiing, golf.

## **Dr Brian Berenblut**

**BJB Lts**

Brian is a physicist who has retained his interest in applied science whilst operating within the jewellery industry.

## **Rihen Mehta**

**7Cs Group**

'90% in the mind and 10% in the body'. This has been Riheh Mehta's motto for life and what drove him to conquer the English Channel in 11:33 hours, at the age of 12. This philosophy has also guided him in shaping my professional career. He learnt the art of diamond cutting, assortment and jewellery manufacturing and grew to become the director of the Middle East operations of one of the world's foremost diamantaires, RosyBlue. The desire to constantly innovate and create a platform of 'growth for all' prompted him to join his father's newly-founded group and then spearhead the successful diversifications from a purely diamond and jewellery-trading business. Today, the 7Cs Group has a strong presence in the field of wholesale and retail jewellery, sustainable construction, real estate investment, hospitality and advertising. The fast-paced growth is the testament to the hard work, gumption and forward-looking attitude of group's 1,900 hand-picked professionals.



## **Nirav Mehta**

Treliss Worldwide Inc

Mr. Nirav Mehta brings a diverse background into the diamond and jewelry industry. He has worked in investment banking and the pharmaceutical industries in the areas of finance, strategy, business development and marketing/branding prior to joining the family business. Over the past 12 years, he has been instrumental in building strategic partnerships with brands and retailers globally on behalf of Treliss. He is also a champion of social responsibility through his commitment of being an active member of the World Diamond Council as well as leading the process for RJC accreditation for Treliss. Mr. Mehta also currently serves on the board of Plukka, a Hong Kong based online retailer and the Indian Diamond Colorstone Association (IDCA). He will be a great asset to the RJC board and will continue to be a strong advocate for best practices in the diamond and jewelry industry.

## **Philippe Neu**

Rolot & Lemasson/ Charles Perroud

35 years experience. Since 9 years, manager of Rolot & Lemasson, the french chain manufacturer. Also industrial director of Charles PERROUD (France), subcontractor manufacturing 18K gold jewellery for different brand names. Fomer other experiences in the high quality standards. During 5 years, Director of fashion jewellery manufacturer in Germany using for raw materials brass, silver, and zamack. Worked before for 7 years as a technical director in France in the lapidary industry; cutting and polishing sapphire watch glasses and synthetic stones.

## **Thomas Puzone**

Vacheron Constantin

Thomas was born in Italy October 7th 1964. Married with 3 children he studied in Geneva/Switzerland and started a first job at UBS in 1980. After 10 years in banking he decided to take a new challenge as founder of a company active in watch and jewellery design. The main customers were house names and established luxury brands At Vacheron Constantin since 1998, Thomas has been in charge of sourcing, managing the purchasing department. The purchasing scope includes production components and raw materials (precious metal and diamonds). The supplier panel is composed of manufacturers of watch-case, dials, hands, bracelets, buckles, movements and packaging. Most of them are RJC certified.