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**For Immediate Release:**

**MENTOR Rhode Island Welcomes Jana Planka**

**as New Chief Operating Officer**

(**Warwick, RI**) MENTOR Rhode Island is pleased and excited to welcome Jana Planka as its new Chief Operating Officer. Jana retired from a 40-year career as a manager in the banking sector including several years as an Executive Vice President at Coastway Community Bank (now HarborOne). Jana has also been passionately involved in mentoring through MENTOR Rhode Island for nearly 30 years.

“Jana’s management experience, business acumen, and belief in youth mentoring will be key components in the long-term success of our organization. In alignment with our strategic priorities, the staff restructuring MENTOR Rhode Island has completed will position our team to be as efficient as possible,” said MENTOR Rhode Island President & CEO Jo-Ann Schofield. “As a small non-profit we continue to do more with less and Jana’s addition allows us to streamline staff functions and responsibilities. We will be more nimble, opportunistic, and forward thinking as an organization as we continue our mission to provide youth access to mentors.”

After an onboarding period, Planka will focus on day-to-day office operations, staff management, and MENTOR Rhode Island’s newest efforts to engage the corporate community through various efforts including fee-for-service trainings to help companies with employee retention by creating a mentoring culture or a formal mentoring program for their employees.

“I’m excited for the opportunity to use the skills I’ve gained over the past 40 years to support a cause I care very deeply for,” said Planka. “I was very fortunate to have grown up with lots of guidance and support from those around me,” she said. “And now, I believe the best way to acknowledge the gifts I have been given is to take this position with MENTOR Rhode Island and help provide more access to the gifts of mentoring for our youth.”

To learn more about the role mentoring plays in our community and to find volunteer opportunities visit [www.MentorRI.org](http://www.MentorRI.org)

***About MENTOR Rhode Island: The RI Mentoring Partnership, Inc.***

Our mission is to ensure youth have access to the motivational and supportive relationships they need to grow into confident, successful adults. We envision a Rhode Island where all youth are connected to relationships with adults who inspire and support them. All youth will have role models who provide a road map for lifelong success and achievement. We serve as an umbrella organization for dozens of mentoring programs around Rhode Island offering help with recruitment, training, and technical assistance. We are also directly responsible for the coordination of the school-based mentoring programs in Warwick, Woonsocket, Newport, Middletown, Pawtucket, Providence, Warren, & Cranston.

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