



**PANEL No. 2: PUBLIC FINANCES IN RHODE ISLAND**

**SPEAKER BIOS**

*(In order of appearance)*



**RONALD K. MACHTLEY, Host**  
**President, Bryant University**

Bryant’s president since 1996, the Honorable Ronald K. Machtley has led Bryant to achieve unprecedented growth and transformation. Machtley’s pivotal contributions in areas including academic excellence, enrollment, campus expansion, and technology have established an exceptional foundation for continued success. A practicing attorney, Machtley previously served as a three-term United States Congressman representing Rhode Island. A graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, Machtley earned a Juris Doctorate from Suffolk University Law School. He served on active duty in the U.S. Navy and retired as a captain from the U.S. Naval Reserves after 25 years of service. His civic engagement has included serving on the boards The Rhode Island Foundation and as the President of the Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council.



**Margie O’Brien Reed, Moderator**  
**Director, Capitol TV**

Some may recognize our Moderator, Margie O’Brien, from Governor Gina Raimondo’s daily press briefings where she assisted in getting the latest information on the COVID Crisis out to Rhode Islanders. Others know her as a journalist. O’Brien has been telling stories for over 25 years as an award-winning news reporter and anchor in the Providence and Boston news markets. Her “beat” changed in 2015, when she began covering the Rhode Island Legislature and political news as Host of RI Capitol TV. O’Brien is also the founder of IMAGE, a communications consulting company. She earned her Bachelor’s degree in Political Science from St. Anselm College and her Master’s degree in Communications and Broadcast Journalism from Emerson College. She is a graduate of Leadership Rhode Island (LRI) and proudly sits on the board of the LRI Women’s Network.



**Jeffrey Thompson**

**Economist and Vice President, Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, New England Public Policy Center**

Jeffrey P. Thompson is a vice president and economist in the Research Department of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston. He previously served as Principal Economist at the Federal Reserve Board and as a professor at the University of Massachusetts Amherst's Political Economy Research Institute. He specializes in public and labor economics, household finance, applied microeconomics, income, wealth and consumption inequality, state and local taxes, and regional economics. Thompson earned a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science at Lewis and Clark College, and holds a PhD in economics from Syracuse University. He joined the Boston Fed in 2018.



**Paul L. Dion**

**Chief of the Office of Revenue Analysis, RI Department of Revenue**

As Chief of the Office of Revenue Analysis since 2008, Paul L. Dion leads a staff of five economists responsible for the analysis, evaluation, and appraisal of the state's tax system. Dion is a member of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston–New England Public Policy Center's Advisory Board, the state's Council of Economic Advisors, and is an elected member of the Board of the Employees Retirement System of Rhode Island. He holds a Bachelor's degree from the University of Rhode Island, a Ph.D. in Economics from Washington State University, and a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study in Finance from Bryant University.



**Michael DiBiase**

**President and CEO, Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council**

Michael DiBiase began serving as President & CEO of the Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council in January of 2020. Prior to his appointment as President & CEO, Michael served for five years as Director of Administration for the State of Rhode Island. His prior experience includes senior positions in government relations for Fidelity Investments, as well as serving as Chief of Staff for Rhode Island Governor Lincoln Almond. Before joining the Almond Administration, DiBiase was a practicing attorney in Providence. He is graduate of Boston College and University of Pennsylvania Law School.



**Gary Sasse**

**Founding Director, Hassenfeld Institute for Public Leadership, Bryant University**

Gary Sasse's background encompasses a variety of roles as a leader, advisor, and consultant with broad experience at the most senior levels of both public and private sectors. Sasse was appointed by former Governor Donald Carcieri to serve as Director of both the Department of Administration and Department of Revenue, and he previously served as Executive Director for the Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council (RIPEC). He holds a Bachelor of Arts in political science from Florida State University and a Master of Science in Public Administration from the University of Missouri.