

Kenneth Olson of POKO Partners elected to board of Norwalk Symphony Orchestra

The Norwalk Symphony Society, the governing body of the Norwalk Symphony Orchestra, has announced the election of Kenneth Olson of POKO Partners, LLC, to the Symphony's board of governors. Mr. Olson's position on the board is effective immediately and will run through the 2009-2010 season.

"Kenneth has already shown tremendous support for the Norwalk Symphony Orchestra not only through his generous financial contributions, but through his leadership in structuring the Wall Street Place/POKO Public Performance Series," said Stephen Nevas, immediate past president of the NSO.



Kenneth Olson

The public performance series will be undertaken during the 2008-2009 school year and will provide a special sequence of over a dozen public-school related performances that will augment the Symphony's regular schedule.

As President and CEO of POKO Partners, LLC, Mr. Olson leads a socially responsible private real estate company whose core beliefs embrace the development of quality, affordable and mixed income housing. Since founding POKO Partners in 1995, Ken's main responsibility is redefining traditional opinions of affordable housing by creating attractive, diverse mixed income developments which set the standard for community growth by increasing foot traffic, encouraging organic and service oriented commerce and preserving the environment.

"I'm excited to join this prestigious group of individuals responsible for the continued success of such a historical institution within Norwalk," said Mr. Olson. "The arts are an integral part of a community and therefore important to the revitalization of Wall Street."

POKO's latest development, Wall Street Place, will lead Norwalk's economic revitalization by creating a pedestrian friendly hub filled with mixed-income housing, shops, restaurants and cultural activities. Located on a 6.3-acre site extending from Wall and Isaacs Streets to West Avenue, Wall Street Place will be a sustainable, mixed-use community with approximately 390 residences and 60,000 sq. ft. of retail.

Prior to founding POKO Partners, Mr. Olson was the Senior Vice President of GTE Realty Company, a firm developed from a resulting debt restructure he led as Director of Finance for the Markham Company, where he redeveloped all of the company's real estate inclusive of the project planning, construction, management and leasing. Olson began his career in 1981 with Bank Leumi in Commercial Construction Lending.

He assisted with the creation of the Connecticut Historic Tax Credit legislation that was passed in 2006, sits on the Governors Advisory Panel on Affordable Housing in Connecticut and is a Board Member of the Connecticut Real Estate Finance Association as well as the Executive Committee of the New York State Association for Affordable Housing.

He resides in Westport, Connecticut with his wife and children.

About POKO Partners, LLC

POKO Partners LLC is a socially responsible private real estate company founded in 1993 by Kenneth Olson with offices in Port Chester, New York and Norwalk, Connecticut. POKO Partners' core philosophy embraces the development of quality, mixed-income and affordable housing to positively impact undervalued neighborhoods throughout New York City and Connecticut. POKO Partners strives to spur economic and community revitalization by creating neighborhoods, not just buildings. Other current POKO projects include Delany Lofts, Harlem; 1655 Madison Avenue, Harlem; 160-08 Jamaica Avenue, Queens, NY; Pitkin Ave, Brooklyn, NY; Bronx Condos, Bronx, NY; Threadmill, Stonington CT and Capehart, Norwich, CT.

About The Norwalk Symphony Orchestra

From its beginnings in 1939, when a group of local musicians gathered to play for their friends and neighbors, the Norwalk Symphony Orchestra has grown into a fully professional orchestra, currently under the leadership of the acclaimed Conductor, Diane Wittry. Many of the world's greatest musicians, as their careers began to blossom, have performed with the Orchestra, including Van Cliburn, Yo-Yo Ma, Itzhak Perlman, Isaac Stern, Emanuel Ax, Dave Brubeck and his son Chris. Today, the NSO continues its mission of hosting talented young musicians as they spring onto the national stage, allowing local audiences to witness the energy and admire the skills that will make these young musicians famous. Over the years, the Orchestra's conductors have included Pulitzer Prize winner Quinto Maganini, Dennis Russell Davies, James Conlon and Gilbert and Jesse Levine. The NSO performs in the airy and acoustically renowned Norwalk Concert Hall. Information about the Orchestra's 2008-2009 season may be found at www.norwalksymphony.org.