



**SENIOR MAJOR GIFT OFFICER, SCHOOL OF SCIENCE**  
**RENSSELAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE**  
**TROY, NEW YORK**



**Rensselaer**

Aspen Leadership Group is proud to partner with Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in the search for a Senior Major Gift Officer, School of Science.

The Senior Major Gift Officer will serve as the Director of Development for the School of Science and as the lead Advancement Officer in the school, responsible for designing and implementing a comprehensive advancement program to secure philanthropic resources for the top priority projects of the Institute and the school. The Senior Major Gift Officer will work cooperatively and collegially with members of the Institute's Central Advancement Office to effectively build successful fundraising programs for the school. The Senior Major Gift Officer will lead on behalf of and support the Dean of the school on matters pertaining to school project fundraising. The Senior Major Gift Officer will carry a portfolio of approximately 125 major gift prospects who have the capacity to make gifts in the range of \$100,000 to \$2.49 million.

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) is the nation's first and one of the world's most renowned technological research universities where students, faculty, and alumni have been defining scientific and technological advances for nearly 200 years. RPI boasts a legacy of changemakers confronting the most pressing problems facing humanity and the planet. Established in 1824 by Stephen Van Rensselaer and Amos Eaton, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute is a private research university located in Troy, New York. Built on a hillside, RPI's 276-acre campus overlooks the city of Troy, the Hudson River, and the Capital Region. Students at RPI can choose from more than 145 undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral programs across five schools as well as programs and certificates for working professionals. Beyond the classroom, Rensselaer develops technological leaders who are global citizens prepared to change the world with more than 200 student-led clubs, 50+ club sports, NCAA athletic teams including Division I men's and women's hockey and 21 teams that compete in Division III. With more than 110,000 living alumni, some of RPI's most notable alumni were behind innovations that have improved everyday lives—from the Transcontinental Railroad and the Brooklyn Bridge to baking powder and the digital camera.

Rensselaer educates the leaders of tomorrow for technologically based careers. It celebrates discovery and the responsible application of technology to create knowledge and global prosperity. With an emphasis on science and technology, RPI is classified among R1 Research Institutions and boasts faculty and alumni in the National Inventors Hall of Fame, as well as National Medal of Technology recipients, National Medal of Science winners, Fulbright Scholarship recipients, and a Nobel recipient. Researchers at Rensselaer transcend disciplines and work together to address a range of global challenges, focusing on five key areas of research: Biotechnology and the Life Sciences; Computational Science and Engineering; Energy, Environment, and Smart Systems; Media, Arts, Science, and Technology; and Nanotechnology and Advanced Materials. Collaborating with external sponsors and partners in the federal government, state government, foundations, and industry, RPI is solving the most pressing issues of our time.

With nine Institute-wide research centers, six Institute-wide research platforms, and \$122 million in research expenditures, RPI's nearly 700 Ph.D. students are well-placed to make an impact on the world. The Institute's Office of Research drives and supports the Research Enterprise, increases Rensselaer impact and visibility, and communicates to the national and international community that Rensselaer researchers are defining the frontiers of discovery and innovation.

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute has been named 51<sup>st</sup> university in the nation and 46<sup>th</sup> most innovative school, as ranked by *U.S. News & World Report*. The Institute is also ranked seventh among New York State colleges with the highest ROI by *Payscale*. Individual programs within the five schools also receive national recognition. The undergraduate game design program is ranked ninth by *U.S. News & World Report* and seventh by *GameDesigning.org*. The Lally School of Management at Rensselaer has been recognized among the “Best Business Schools” by *The Princeton Review* and boasts the #2 M.S. in Business Analytics program in the U.S. according to *TFE Times*. *College Factual* recognized RPI as the top computer engineering technology school and second among “Best General Visual & Performing Arts Schools,” “Best Engineering Technologies Schools,” and “Best Engineering Technologies Bachelor’s Degree Schools.”

### REPORTING RELATIONSHIPS

The Senior Major Gift Officer, School of Science will report to the Associate Vice President, Advancement & Constituent Development, John Prizner, with a dotted line relationship to the Dean, School of Science, Dr. Curt Breneman.

### FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

*Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute is a very special place. Having recently arrived at RPI initially last year as a consultant, I was immediately impressed with the professionalism and dedication of the staff, and the vision, skill, friendliness, and transparency of the Institute President, Dr. Marty Schmidt '81. Marty (as he prefers to be called) took the role of President of his alma mater in July of 2022, and since then has made significant connections—and had a significant impact—upon members of the alumni, student, parent, faculty, and staff communities.*

*I soon decided that RPI was the place for me. I’m thrilled to have the opportunity to work alongside the team, as I strive to embody leadership values which speak to kindness, creativity, authenticity, empathy, and inclusion, while we build a best-in-class advancement program. We are fortunate to have the board’s support as they have invested in our team to grow and restore our team as we double in size. This role will join the diverse team of seasoned, mid-level, and new professionals with a common goal and vision—to connect, engage, and inform the more than 110,000 members of the RPI global alumni community.*

*In my opinion, there is no better time to join the RPI team. As the nation’s first technological research university, we will be celebrating the bicentennial milestone in 2024. There are so many opportunities to make your mark while making a difference for our growing team as we look to commemorate the Institute’s 200<sup>th</sup> year of leadership, innovation, and research next year.*

*We challenge our students to think, “why not change the world?” I feel most fortunate to be leading a team that has the same opportunity—to change our students’ lives—through our efforts in advancement and engagement. Join us as we build the very best team, and work together to change the world for our faculty, staff, alumni, donors, parents, and, most importantly, our students.*

*I hope you consider the role further and look forward to future conversation.*

—Matthew J. Ter Molen, Vice President, Institute Advancement

## **RENSELAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE'S COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION**

Diversity is a core value at Rensselaer. The Institute is comprised of a diverse community with respect to ethnicity, race, culture, religion, national and geographic origin, gender, and gender identity. Its focus is on intellectual excellence and agility, multicultural sophistication, and a global view. That means that it is, and must always strive to be, a campus open to the full range of ideas and perspectives.

At Rensselaer, all members of the community are challenged to ask, *why not change the world?* To accomplish this, it seeks to engender intellectual agility, multicultural sophistication, and a global view in its students. This requires contributions from a rich diversity of persons, groups, and viewpoints. Fostering and nurturing this diversity, and the inclusive and collaborative environment required for it to reach its fullest potential, must be, and is, at the very core of Rensselaer's mission and values as the nation's first technological university.

Rensselaer strives to develop aspirational goals, strategies, actions, and initiatives which nurture and sustain a diverse and inclusive living, learning, and working environment that will ultimately help it make real progress in strengthening its efforts to become the most accessible, warm, welcoming, supportive, and inclusive community that it can be.

### **PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Senior Major Gift Officer, School of Science will

- raise new commitments from prospects capable of gifts of \$100,000 to \$2.49 million;
- prepare and submit proposals and conduct pre-planned face-to-face prospecting and cultivation visits;
- create compelling cases for support;
- coordinate and collaborate with the Dean in the cultivation, solicitation and stewardship of top prospects for philanthropic support while planning, directing, and implementing activities required to secure the School of Science's fundraising goal;
- engage and partner with members of the School of Science's faculty and Leadership Council in fundraising activities for the school;
- identify additional potential donors for the school and coordinate their cultivation and solicitation through the Central Advancement Office, working cooperatively with members of the Institute's Central Advancement staff in developing a comprehensive operational plan in the areas of annual giving, corporate and foundation philanthropy, planned giving, and alumni engagement;
- actively participate and present in prospect strategy sessions; and
- be responsible for annual goals in line with those of a Senior Major Gift Officer.

### **LEADERSHIP**

**Matthew J. Ter Molen**

**Vice President, Institute Advancement**

Matthew J. Ter Molen was appointed Vice President for Institute Advancement, effective January 1, 2023.

Ter Molen joins the Rensselaer community from Syracuse University, where he held the position of Chief Advancement Officer and Senior Vice President since being appointed in December 2014. In this role, he oversaw all advancement operations at Syracuse University, including the planning, launch, and execution of the \$1.5 billion University-wide campaign *Forever Orange*. The *Forever Orange* campaign raised more

in private philanthropy than at any other time in Syracuse University history, more than \$1.2 billion raised to date.

Before joining Syracuse University, Ter Molen held the position of Associate Vice President for Development and Campaign Manager at Northwestern University. In this capacity, he directed, planned, and launched the University's \$6 billion comprehensive campaign, *We Will. The Campaign for Northwestern*. Before serving as the Associate Vice President, Ter Molen served as the Assistant Dean for Advancement for the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences at Northwestern University. Ter Molen served for two years in the Peace Corps in Honduras before starting his first fundraising position at the University of Chicago, where he began as an Assistant Director in Annual Giving. From 1990 to 1998, he held successive positions at the University of Chicago, including Regional Major Gifts Officer and Director for Annual Giving.

Ter Molen holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio.

### **John Prizner**

#### **Associate Vice President, Advancement & Constituent Development**

John Prizner is a performance-driven and collaborative development professional with more than 20 years of experience in complex higher education environments, nonprofit management, and business development. Prizner spent more than eight years at Syracuse University, where he worked as the Assistant Dean for Development in the Whitman School of Management and most recently as Senior Principal Gifts Officer. Prizner has also held several leadership positions in higher education major and principal gifts fundraising and engagement, including Assistant Dean and Director of Development, Senior Director of Development, and Director of Development at the University at Buffalo School of Management and Canisius University.

Prizner earned a Master of Science in public relations from Syracuse University, S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications, and a Bachelor of Arts in communication studies and sociology from Canisius University.

In his role, Prizner oversees the development of a dedicated constituent development program for the schools and units and is responsible for hiring and leading the constituent officers to achieve annual cash and overall commitment goals. Working in collaboration with Vice Presidents, Deans, Directors, and other unit leaders, Prizner plans and implements program strategic relationships with individuals, corporations, private foundations, and international advancement programs that provide annual revenue and campaign commitments to the Institute from gifts, research contracts, and tuition income.

### **Dr. Curt Breneman**

#### **Dean, [School of Science](#)**

Dr. Curt Breneman, a tenured full professor in the School of Science, joined Rensselaer in 1989 and served as Acting Head of the Department of Chemistry & Chemical Biology Department from 2010-2012, and then Head of the Department of Chemistry & Chemical Biology from 2012 until June 2014. Dr. Breneman's research is in the field computational chemistry and predictive cheminformatics, with emphasis on both computational drug discovery methodology and materials informatics methods. His materials informatics work led to his being an advisor to the White House OSTP/NIST Materials Genome Initiative (MGI) program. Dr. Breneman is founder and Director (2005 - present) of the interdisciplinary School of Science-based Rensselaer Exploratory Center for Cheminformatics Research (RECCR).

Dr. Breneman has published more than 100 journal articles, 16 book chapters, numerous refereed conference proceedings, and holds a patent on his molecular property descriptor technology ("PEST") which has been licensed by several major pharmaceutical companies. His "RS-Predictor" drug metabolism method is currently in use across the drug discovery industry, and his "YAMS" materials informatics software has been supported by the ONR and licensed by a major aerospace company.

Dr. Breneman's "CHELPG" atomic charge algorithm was used to parameterize several major molecular force-fields is an integral part of the Gaussian series of quantum mechanical software which is used by thousands of universities and companies worldwide. His 1990 CHELPG paper has been cited more than 5,000 times. Dr. Breneman has advised multiple postdocs and graduated 24 Ph.D students during his academic career at Rensselaer.

Dr. Breneman is a Fellow of the American Chemical Society and served the ACS Division of Computers in Chemistry as both Treasurer/Fundraiser for ten years, and then as Chair of the Division in 2010.

Dr. Breneman received his B.S. in Chemistry from UCLA and his Ph.D. from the University of California at Santa Barbara for his work in Physical Organic Chemistry. Immediately prior to joining Rensselaer, Dr. Breneman performed postdoctoral research at Yale University in the field of theoretical and computational chemistry.

### **PREFERRED COMPETENCIES AND QUALIFICATIONS**

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute seeks a Senior Major Gift Officer, School of Science with

- a commitment to the mission of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute—to educate the leaders of tomorrow for technologically based careers, celebrating discovery and the responsible application of technology to create knowledge and global prosperity;
- experience in higher education and history of cultivating and closing major gifts;
- an ability to establish and maintain relationships with major gift prospects and to close gifts;
- an ability to set priorities while also contributing to a team effort in Institute Advancement;
- excellent oral and written communication skills;
- strong organizational skills;
- an ability to deal with technical information and to translate this information into a product salable to non-technical internal and external constituencies;
- flexibility in dealing with a wide variety of people;
- an ability to process information quickly and accurately;
- an ability to work effectively under pressure and meet established goals and objectives;
- an ability to demonstrate an understanding of Rensselaer and its major initiatives;
- an ability to multi-task, handle multiple projects and deadlines; and
- an ability to thrive in a team environment.

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute will consider candidates with a broad range of backgrounds. A bachelor's degree or an equivalent combination of education and experience and at least seven years of progressively responsible fundraising experience is preferred.

### **SALARY AND BENEFITS**

The hiring range for this position is \$120,000 to \$150,000 annually. Rensselaer provides this hiring range as a good faith estimate of what the starting pay will be offered to the successful candidate. Rensselaer's Total Compensation Program is designed to provide stable pay growth, a comprehensive and affordable benefits package, and a comprehensive and affordable retiree medical and prescription plan. Rensselaer is recognized locally and nationally for the depth and breadth of its compensation and benefits program. Its goal is to provide you and your family with a comprehensive health and welfare program as an umbrella of financial security and protection during your employment. Learn more [here](#).

## LOCATION

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute is in Troy, New York. The position may have the opportunity for a hybrid working arrangement (a combination of on- and off-site).

## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applications must be accompanied by a cover letter and résumé. ***Cover letters should be responsive to the mission of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute as well as the responsibilities and qualifications stated in the prospectus.*** Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the successful candidate has been selected.

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute welcome candidates who will bring diverse cultural, ethnic, national, and international perspectives to Rensselaer's work and campus communities. Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity, Race/Gender/Veterans/Disability Employer.

To apply for this position, visit: [Senior Major Gift Officer, School of Science, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.](#)

To nominate a candidate, please contact Eric Rosaria, [ericrosario@aspenleadershipgroup.com](mailto:ericrosario@aspenleadershipgroup.com).

*All inquiries will be held in confidence.*