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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **GREATER CENTRAL NEW YORK CHAPTER JOINS HEALTH UNDERWRITERS**

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09.22.05 // CONTACT: ROSS KRAFT, PRESIDENT, The MERIDIAN GROUP of NEW YORK, Inc. // (315) 368-0404

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(Syracuse, New York) – The National Association of Health Underwriters (NAHU) is thrilled to welcome a new chapter in New York State. The Greater Central New York Chapter of Association of Health Underwriters (GCNYAHU) was recently established to assist the region's health insurance agents and brokers as they guide employers and consumers through the complexities of the health care system.

Ross W. Kraft of Meridian Group of New York, Inc. was installed as president. Ross currently sits on the New York State Board of the Association of Health Underwriters and serves on several other not-for-profit boards.

Ross W. Kraft- incoming Greater Central New York Association of Health Underwriters President remarks,

“ *It's a very important time in the history of the American Health Care System, and as professionals we take our responsibility to health care consumers very seriously. At a time when the New York State working uninsured need more affordable health care solutions we need to become more engaged in the system at all levels (local, state and federal) and help create the atmosphere for positive change for all health care consumers. With the advent of consumer directed health care plans, taxed advantaged programs (HSA's/HRA's/FSA's), Medicare Part D prescription drug benefits for Medicare eligible individuals and recent mandate light legislation in many states, a lot has been accomplished thus far, in a very short period, however, we have a long way to go before affordable health care solutions are available to all Americans. What we do simply can't be done by a website, a distant bureaucrat or government manual. Our focus over the next year will be not only to demonstrate our value further, but to enhance it.* ”

Ross also added that they will push for the passage of sensible health care reforms such as refundable tax credits which will help insure more Americans, they will help improve and spread the word about important coverage such as long-term care insurance, and they will fight mandates and other onerous legislation that make health insurance more expensive for everyone.



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The new officers are as follows:

- President, Ross W. Kraft, Utica, New York, President, Meridian Group of New York, Inc.
- Vice-President/President Elect, Andrew F. Biernat, Utica, New York, Vice President, Meridian Group of New York, Inc.
- Secretary, Renee Guariglia, Syracuse, New York, Executive Vice President, Falcone Associates
- Treasurer, Jack Rockwell, Utica, New York, Director of Worksite Programs, Meridian Group of New York
- Membership-Retention, Robert Lucisano, Syracuse, New York, Benefits Consulting Group
- Membership-Retention, Mark Griffith, Utica, New York, Employee Benefits Specialist, Meridian Group of New York
- Membership-Growth, Rock Schneider, Syracuse, New York, Small Group Sales Rep., United Healthcare
- Membership-Growth, Michele Luke, Ilion, New York, Account Executive, CDPHP
- Education- Michael Grinnell, Syracuse, New York, Sales Representative, United Healthcare
- Legislation- Chad Bommer, Utica, New York, Sales Manager, Excellus Utica Region
- Programs- Bill Gall, Clayville, New York, Account Representative, Northwestern Mutual Financial Network
- Awards- Linda Schlafer, Syracuse, New York, VP Employee Benefits, HSBC Insurance Agency



*\*This image is available in digital format if requested.*