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Oregon Financial Services Group creates women's advisory board

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Oregon Financial Services Group, an agency of Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Co., has created the Women's Advisory Board of Portland with the aim of maximizing MassMutual's philanthropic initiatives for women.

Joanne Van Ness Menashe, director of individual development for the Oregon Symphony, has been named chairwoman.

The formation of the board began earlier this year when Craig Chambers, general agent for Oregon Financial Services Group, recruited a national advisory firm to select Menashe as a representative of the Portland metropolitan region.

Women are increasingly becoming key financial decision makers in businesses and households, said Chambers. Eighty percent of all family financial decisions are made by women today. Over the next five years, nearly 40 percent of the next generation of family- owned businesses will be headed by a woman. The board will help shape projects that reflect the needs in our community and help our firm learn how best to serve women.

MassMutual's goal is to become the company of choice for women seeking advice for the products and services that will meet their economic needs, said Susan Sweetser of MassMutual's Woman's Markets Initiative. The local board will be a sounding board for new initiatives and complement the company's sponsorship of other programs like the Executive Woman's Golf Association and Women in Financial Services.

The board includes more than 20 Portland-area individuals from corporations, nonprofits and academia.

Oregon Financial Services Group was established in 1889. The company works with business owners to develop strategic planning goals.

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