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Retail Merchants Honors George Koch with Distinguished Service Award; Mahaney Becomes Vice Chairman, Gordon Gough to President and CEO

(Columbus, November 12, 2013) The Ohio Council of Retail Merchants today honored national retail leader and Council alumnus George Koch with their 19th Distinguished Service Award. Koch served the Merchants as Associate Director and later served as President of the Grocery Manufacturers of America, leading the development of the Uniform Product Code system and other innovations.

The Council also announced that John C. Mahaney, Jr. became Vice Chairman, leaving the President/CEO role to Gordon Gough, who currently serves the Council as Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer. Mahaney, now 81, joined the Council in 1958 as an associate director and moved up the ranks to become their leader and President / CEO twelve years later.

John Matesich, III, the Merchants' Board Chairman, noted, "In Mahaney and Koch, we have two giants of retailing with us today. Both are native Ohioans who served their communities and constituencies well.

"George's leadership transformed the way Americans bought and sold their daily groceries.

"John's irrepressible Irish gift of gab and his bulldog-like tenacity have been a constant presence at the Statehouse, helping Governors and legislators see the value of the Merchants to Ohio's economy and communities for decades.

"The Council's Board believes Gordon shows every evidence of becoming a third giant helping Ohio retailers. The Board appreciates the leadership John has provided for 43 years but is looking forward to Gordon's own brand of leadership, which we have relied upon as Gordon's responsibilities have grown," Matesich concluded.

Mahaney is giving the reins to the younger Gough quite willingly. "Gordon already has the skills, abilities and experience needed to succeed, many more than I had when I started," said Mahaney.

"The Chief has been a great leader and a great teacher," Gough added. "I look forward to applying the lessons I've learned from him on behalf of our members."

Gough concluded, "Retailers face challenges every day and I'm fully prepared to work with every retailer as their advocate at the Statehouse and in their communities."

The Merchants, Ohio's largest and oldest advocate for Ohio retailers, approved the change at the organization's Annual Board Meeting today in Columbus.

Gough, a 36 year old native of Kettering, is a graduate of The Ohio State University, and holds a MBA from the Dauch College of Business and Economics from Ashland University. Gough resides in Dublin with his wife and three children. Prior to joining the Council in 2003, Gough served as a Legislative Liaison with the Ohio Department of Commerce.

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PREVIOUS WINNERS OF THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Awarded for meritorious service and unparalleled contributions to association management.

1961	Fred Lazarus, Jr., Cincinnati
1965	Herman Freedlander, Wooster
	John W. Rudin, Mount Vernon
1970	Robert Lazarus, Sr., Columbus
	Robert Levy, Sr., Columbus
1973	Jacob E. Davis, Cincinnati
	David L. Rike, Dayton
1974	Wayne E. Brown, Columbus
1975	Francis A. Coy, Cleveland
	John L. Feudner, Akron
	Lincoln H. Gries, Akron
1981	Charles Y. Lazarus, Columbus
1984	Harold Freedlander, Wooster
1996	Herbert E. Strawbridge, Cleveland
1997	Herbert H. Schiff, Columbus
1998	Max Gutmann, Dayton
1999	R. David Thomas, Columbus
2002	Richard Bogomolny, Cleveland

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