

BANKING TRADITIONS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ALABAMA BANKERS ASSOCIATION





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The Baker Group was founded by a community banker in 1979 with the express purpose of serving and supporting community banks nationwide. Over the last forty-five years, our commitment to that mission has not wavered. We now help more than one-thousand community banks across the country manage their balance sheets, interest rate risk, and investment portfolios.

Some in our industry openly advocate for fewer community banks in the U.S., going so far as to say we should have just a few dozen mega banks. *We cannot disagree more strongly!*

Community banks are the lifeblood of America and the communities they serve. Show us a thriving city or town anywhere and we promise there will be a strong community bank at the heart of that town, lending to small businesses, helping farmers, donating to charities, and supporting the community in countless ways. Without community banks, America as we know it would look much different, and not in a good way.

Community banks reflect the communities they serve—whether suburban, rural, interurban, agricultural, resort, military, or any other demographic. They are the backbone of these distinct micro-economies that abound throughout this great country. As long as these diverse communities exist, the need will remain for local institutions that understand the nuances of each specific community, from deposit products, to lending programs, to cash management. Without community banks, many customers would be left with an inefficient cookie-cutter banking system not structured to meet the unique needs of the communities they are supposed to serve.

The Baker Group remains committed to supporting community banks, the banking associations that advocate for them, and our shared mission of strengthening local communities across America. We are customer focused and industry responsive, providing honest and insightful guidance through strategic balance sheet and investment solutions.

Join us at our *45th Anniversary Interest Rate Risk and Investment Strategies Seminar* in Scottsdale, AZ, November 7-8, 2024.

Visit www.GoBaker.com or call Dale Sheller at 844.213.0486 to find out how The Baker Group can assist your community bank in defining and meeting your unique financial objectives.



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Nurturing Executive Leadership: The Key to Success

In the ever-changing landscape of the banking industry, the role of executive leaders has become increasingly crucial. Alabama's banks, like many others across the country, face unique challenges and opportunities that require capable and visionary leaders to navigate successfully.

Developing executive leaders within our banks is not only essential for each institution but also for the overall growth and stability of Alabama's economy.

ABA's Bank Executive Leadership Certification Program may very well fit the bill for what aspiring leaders in your bank actually need. The importance of fostering executive leadership talent is seen in the upward trajectory of the bankers who've completed this program.

So why enroll?

1. Driving Innovation and Adaptability: Executive leaders play a pivotal role in driving innovation and fostering adaptability within our banks. As technology continues to disrupt traditional banking practices, leaders must possess a forward-thinking mindset to identify new opportunities and implement innovative solutions. By developing executive leaders who embrace change and encourage a culture of innovation, Alabama's banks can stay ahead of the curve and maintain a competitive edge in the market.

2. Enhancing Risk Management: Effective risk management is vital for the long-term success and stability of any bank. Executive leaders, with their strategic vision and experience, are responsible for setting risk management frameworks and ensuring compliance with regulatory standards. By investing in the development of executive leaders, Alabama banks can strengthen risk management practices, minimize potential threats, and safeguard the interests of customers and stakeholders.

3. Cultivating Strong Corporate Governance: A strong corporate governance framework is essential for maintaining transparency, accountability, and ethical practices within banks. Executive leaders are at the forefront of establishing and

upholding these principles. By nurturing executive leadership talent, Alabama banks ensure that the highest standards of corporate governance are upheld, fostering trust among customers, investors, and the broader community.

4. Driving Employee Engagement and Development: Developing executive leaders goes beyond benefiting the banks themselves; it also has a positive impact on the workforce. Engaged and motivated employees are more likely to deliver exceptional service and contribute to the overall success of the organization. Executive leaders who prioritize employee development and provide opportunities for growth create a culture of learning and advancement. This not only attracts top talent but also retains and nurtures existing employees, driving productivity and fostering a positive work environment.

5. Strengthening Community Relationships: Alabama banks have deep roots within local communities. Executive leaders who understand the unique needs and challenges of the community can bridge the gap between the bank and its customers. By developing leaders with strong community engagement skills, Alabama banks can build lasting relationships, support local initiatives, and contribute to the economic growth and prosperity of the communities they serve.

The importance of developing executive leaders cannot be overstated. Look no further than the members of our current BELC program. Representing banks all across Alabama, these individuals are leading and will continue to lead in exceptional ways as part of the next generation of bank CEOs and executive officers. By investing in their leadership development, their banks have further prepared talented individuals to navigate the ever-changing banking landscape, to drive innovation, enhance risk management, strengthen corporate governance and build community relationships.



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Bryant Bank's Correspondent Services and Capital Markets team cares because Alabama is our home, too. Our vision is to see every Alabamian experience a financially stable future and live in a thriving community. To do this, we put care into action with Alabama's community banks to help foster economic growth and empower potential.

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Connecting Members with Resources to Enhance Profitability and Efficiency

One of our goals at ABA is to help match our bank members with the vendors needed to grow and thrive. And while we have a robust core of endorsed partners, we want to support all of our associate members who work alongside us in serving Alabama banks. We currently have 134 active associate members who offer a wide range of products and services. You can find a full list on our web site at www.alabama.bank and in our annual financial directory that was published in January.

For associate members wanting to connect with Alabama bankers, involvement in our trade shows and added exposure events are a key component. A couple of years ago we incorporated a new opportunity into our convention to give vendors who chose to participate an opportunity to speak to our attendees. Called Rapid Fire Learning Labs, this event allows our bankers and directors in attendance to learn more about our vendors and be rewarded for their participation with a gift. This year's gift was a pair of OluKai footwear. Over the years our bankers have shared that this has become a valuable way to find resources for their banks.

Our Bankers 2 Leaders Summer Leadership Conference featured an event called Mad

Minutes where associate members who chose to participate hosted a table and attending bankers travel amongst the tables. Like Rapid Fire, each associate member gave a 3-4 minute presentation about their company.

We still have two more trade show opportunities available this year! At our Credit Conference scheduled for Aug. 27-28 in Birmingham, we will host a "vendor experience." Only eight vendor opportunities are available for this event! Each vendor will be allowed to speak to the group to introduce themselves and their company. The last trade show of the year will be held in conjunction with The IGNITE Experience set for Sept. 18-19 in Huntsville. Much like the Rapid Fire sessions at convention, we offer Rocket Rounds at IGNITE. Our IGNITE event is designed for the bank's IT, human resources, public relations/marketing, and branch management personnel.

So whether you are a banker or an associate member, we hope that by hosting events to allow our members to connect will only improve business for both parties. Our goal as an association is to create opportunities to come together with the hope of continuing to help our state's banking industry thrive!



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131st Annual Convention & Marketplace

More than 400 people representing 45 banks attended ABA's Annual Convention and Marketplace held June 12-15 at the Four Seasons Hotel in Nashville, Tenn.

Convention kicked off on Sunday evening with registration and a cocktail party sponsored by **The Baker Group** in the trade show area and entertainment sponsored by **STS Group**. On Monday, after the breakfast sponsored by **ServisFirst Bank**, attendees participated in breakout sessions led by four of our endorsed partners including **The Baker Group**, **AgoraEversole**, **STS Group** and **EBS**. After the breakouts, our bankers participated in our Rapid Fire Learning Labs. This popular event allowed each participating vendor to make a brief presentation to every banker in attendance. Our morning break was sponsored by **United Bankers' Bank**. As a thank you for attending the learning labs, bankers selected a complimentary pair of OluKai footwear thanks to **SHAZAM**. Monday evening during our annual Bankers 2 Leaders Silent Auction, guests enjoyed cocktails sponsored by **Mauldin & Jenkins** and an acoustic guitarist sponsored by **PNC Capital Markets**. Guests enjoyed networking time in the trade show area during the event.

Tuesday morning's breakfast sponsored by **Bradley** law firm preceded our first general business session. We began the day with an incredible performance by Neva and Chelsea Petrey and Samantha Bagwell. The ladies sang "The Star-Spangled Banner" as well as their rendition of Lee Greenwood's "God Bless the USA." Retired Lt. Col. Scott Mann was our first speaker and shared an incredible story about the courage of at-risk Afghans risking everything for freedom and the volunteer efforts of veterans and other volunteers who supported them during the evacuation out of Afghanistan. Other speakers included Josh Blades who gave an update on Alabama Legislative affairs and Brian Jackson who discussed the ongoing issues related to cybersecurity amongst financial institutions. Tuesday's break was sponsored by **Wipfli**.

To switch things up a bit this year we flipped the schedule and held our "grand finale" event on Tuesday evening. We kicked off our "Country Music through the Decades" evening with a cocktail party sponsored by **Banc Card**. Guests enjoyed having souvenir photos taken courtesy of **Jones Walker** as well as the caricature artist sponsored by **EBS**. Dinner was a lavish buffet sponsored by **FHLBank of Atlanta** and **First National Bankers Bank**. After dinner, country music artists Danny Wells, Richie McDonald and Chase McGill took the stage to perform hits as they were originally written and tell the stories behind them.

Wednesday's breakfast was sponsored by **Bryant Bank Correspondent Division**, and the break was sponsored by **Maynard Nexsen**. During the

business session Jack Vonder Heide discussed artificial intelligence, and Gene Marks talked about political happenings and how to deal with issues in the workplace. ABA President and CEO Scott Latham moderated a panel discussion with Kenneth Kelly who serves as vice chairman of the American Bankers Association, and Jack Hopkins who is the chairman-elect of the Independent Community Bankers of America.

Mark your calendar for next year's convention which will be held June 8-11, 2025 at The Cloister on Sea Island in Georgia!





Interest Rate Risk in 2024

Model Assumptions in a Falling Rate Environment

by Luke Mikles

After a little more than two years and 525bp worth of rate hikes, the Federal Reserve has started to signal that rate cuts are on the horizon. During that period of rapid rate hikes we saw an increased focus on asset liability management (ALM)/interest rate risk (IRR) model assumption review and documentation. Along with rising rates, we also saw an increasingly competitive environment for deposits, which drove cost of funds up much faster than assumed across the board. So how does this impact institutions from an ALM and IRR standpoint? Specifically, how do model assumptions impact earnings at risk and capital at risk as rates fall?

First let's talk about loan constant prepayment rates (CPRs), a method of measuring prepayments that assumes a constant portion of the outstanding loan principal will prepay. For example, a 15% CPR assumes 15% of the outstanding principal balance will prepay in one year. Historically as rates start to fall, we see CPRs rise as people are now able to refinance their loans down to lower rates. Given the rapid rise in rates from the Fed, this may not be the case this time. According to the St. Louis Fed, the average 30-year fixed rate mortgage in July of 2021 was 2.87% compared to March of 2024 at 6.87%. That means if you locked in your mortgage in July 2021, it would take 400bps worth of cuts before you would start thinking about refinancing. Existing home sales are at all-time lows as people feel "locked in" to their current homes and low interest rates. It may take a significant cut from the Fed before we see an increase in prepayment activity on our loan portfolios. Due to this possibility, it is a great time to review current CPR assumptions and understand how they can impact earnings at risk. Overstating prepayment activity can lead to a misleading figure in change-in-interest income and provide an inaccurate projection in a falling rate scenario.

On the other side of the balance sheet, we have deposits. The competition for deposits has been evident as we have seen cost of funds steadily rise for the last two years. The big question is, as rates start to fall will we be able to cut those deposit rates as fast as we originally had to raise them? The assumption in play here is going to be the deposit beta, or shift sensitivity. This is the metric that shows us how much deposit rates change in line with a move from the Fed. A beta of 35% would show a 35bp move for every 100bp move from the Fed. The impact of an overly optimistic, or higher, beta in a falling rate environment could provide a misleading model output on changes to interest expense. Because depositors are now aware of the possible earnings and rates they can receive on their money, the fight for deposits remains high. The "sleepy depositor" for the most part has awoken. If this

trend continues, institutions may not be able to drop their deposit rates as quickly as in past falling rate cycles. This will directly affect how interest expense fluctuates as rates fall; therefore, institutions should review and discuss this probability and the impact on the bottom line.

As rates started to rise, the resurgence of the CD came right along with it. The composition of the balance sheet is another aspect of interest rate risk that changes along with the movement in rates. CD specials are a prime example due to the increased rates offered. As these products start to reach maturity, the institution should discuss the likelihood of whether those maturing dollars will continue into a similar product or possibly flow out into something else. For example, we have seen a migration of non-maturing deposits into CDs over the last two years. Will this trend start to reverse as rates fall?

The review of model assumptions is by far one of the most important pieces of the ALM process. While it may not have seemed important in the past to discuss falling rate assumptions, considering rates were near zero for so long, it is at the forefront of the interest rate risk world now. Understanding how institutions will operate as rates fall will have a direct impact on modeling, and thus a direct impact on model outputs. The more accurate the assumption, the more useful the model when it comes to making informed decisions for institutions. In this current environment, this discussion around assumptions can help put an institution on the best path forward.

Luke Mikles is vice president in the Financial Strategies Group at The Baker Group. He joined the firm in 2019, serving in the Interest Rate Risk Department. In 2023, Luke moved to the Financial Strategies Group, where he assists institutions with the risk management process and speaks at Baker's educational seminars across the country.



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CLASS OF 2024



***Congratulations to the members of the fourth class of the
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This group graduated from the program on July 10 at an event held in conjunction with our annual B2L Summer Leadership Conference. Nearly 150 bankers have participated in the Bankers 2 Leaders' Bank Executive Leadership Certification Program since its inception in 2016. This 18-month program is designed to equip highly motivated mid-to senior-level banking professionals with the ability to handle the challenges associated with moving into new and more complex leadership roles. The nationally known faculty includes authors, researchers and consultants!

Participation requires a competitive application and admissions process, and the deadline to apply is Aug. 14. The next opportunity to apply will not come around until summer of 2026 - so if you are interested, we encourage you to apply! Visit bit.ly/4eVZ8ao to apply online. Only 42 applicants will be accepted.

QUESTIONS? Email Ashley Thomas at athomas@alabama.bank.



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Scott works hand-in-hand with community banks in the Southeast to find ICBA member benefits that help them achieve their bank's goals.

When he's not exploring new ways to connect with bankers, he's spending time in the great outdoors, hiking, camping, and adventuring.

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EDUCATION SPOTLIGHT

ADVANCED BSA ACADEMY

A total of **60 people** representing **30 banks** traveled to the coast to participate in our Advanced BSA Academy. This week-long event was led by faculty members **Brian Crow, Dawn Kincaid, Julia A. Gutierrez** and **Elizabeth K. Madlem**. In addition to the faculty, attendees also heard from a regulatory panel featuring: **Steven Holloway**, FDIC; **Danile Haggerty**, Federal Reserve; **Becky Green** and **Jason Andres**, Alabama State Banking Department; **Dulce Jerez**, OCC; and **Kristen Yukness** and **Louis Norvell**, IRS.



THE LENDING INSTITUTE

David Kemp and **Mike Allen** led The Lending Institute event in May at The Valley Hotel in Birmingham. Participants enjoyed getting outside of the classroom to go to a working construction site as a field trip!





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Opportunities

WEBINARS

REGISTER TODAY! For more information or to register visit www.alabama.bank/edu. ABA's webinar provider is OnCourse Learning.

JULY

- 18 Internal Controls over Financial Reporting - 2 Part Series
- 18 Processing Garnishments on Accounts Containing Federal Benefit Payments
- 19 Preventing and Responding to Robbery
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- 5 Vendor Management Program: How Model Risk Fits In
- 6 Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) Deep Dive - All Day Streaming

- 6 BSA: Money Laundering in Residential Real Estate and Mortgage Loan Fraud
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QUESTIONS? Contact **Elizabeth Bailey**, vice president of professional development, by email at ebailey@alabama.bank or by calling (251) 510-3593.

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NOVEMBER

- 13 **Navigating Flood Risk Management and Fair Lending Principles**
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OCTOBER 2

CEO Forum

Vestavia Country Club
Birmingham

OCTOBER 20-25

Alabama Banking School

Renaissance Hotel
Montgomery

OCTOBER 30

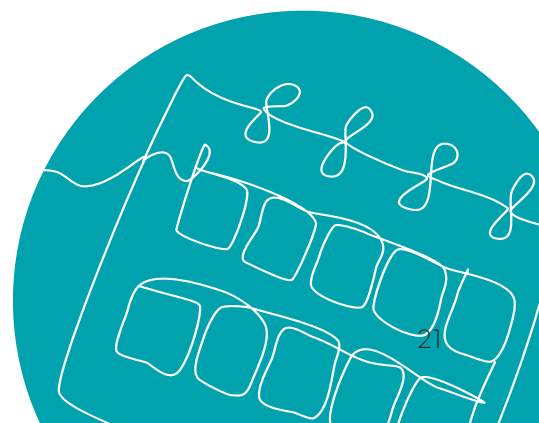
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Vestavia Country Club
Birmingham

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Valley Hotel
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Death, Taxes, and Financial Privacy?

By Carol Ann Warren

As the saying goes, there are two things for certain in life, “death and taxes.” When customers pass away, the bank has many issues to deal with related to the death of an accountholder, such as probate, payable on death accounts, family members, etc. One of the main questions related to death is what information the bank can divulge without violating the Right to Financial Privacy Act (RFPA) and the Gramm Leach Bliley Act (GLBA).

RFPA was enacted in 1978. The goal of RFPA is to limit the circumstances in which a government entity can access financial information. Ultimately, the government can only access financial information in response to specific authorization by the consumer, subpoena, warrant, or a formal written request from a government entity.

The RFPA does not extend past the death of the customer. While not explicitly stated in the regulation itself, there have been many court cases and opinions that solidify this point. The bank must protect this information prior to death, but it is not bound by the confines of RFPA after death.

While that may be true, this likely does not give the bank the opportunity to freely release personally identifiable information to the general public or the government. The bank will ultimately need policies and procedures in place to protect the financial information of the deceased to protect the bank, the individual’s estate, and the bank’s goodwill.

GLBA was enacted in 1999 and is facilitated through Regulation P. This law took RFPA a step further. Regulation P provides protections specifically for consumers who obtain financial products from financial institutions. This regulation requires banks to send certain disclosures related to privacy, information sharing, and information disclosure.

Under GLBA and Regulation P, the law and regulation are silent as to the death of an individual and whether the requirements still apply. Furthermore, this has not been

litigated, so there is not a case law precedent, like there is with RFPA. Fortunately, the regulation gives some insight into this issue.

A customer under Regulation P is referred to as a “Consumer”, which is defined as “(1) Consumer means an individual who obtains or has obtained a financial product or service from you that is to be used primarily for personal, family, or household purposes, or that individual’s legal representative.” 12 CFR § 1016.3(e)(1). Therefore, there is an argument that the Regulation may extend past death the death of a consumer due to the inclusion of the “legal representative” text.

As most bankers know, this is not the “end” of the customer relationship. There are many considerations and responsibilities for the bank. The bank must pay payable-on-death (P.O.D) accounts to the intended beneficiaries, facilitate estate accounts, communicate with executors, and comply with applicable court orders. Ultimately, this leads to the question of what information the bank may divulge and to whom may the bank divulge that information.

Under RFPA, the bank will generally be allowed to communicate with Federal government entities. For example, if the individual is receiving VA benefits, the bank has a responsibility to return those benefits after the bank receives notice of the death of the account holder. The bank would be allowed to divulge that the recipient has passed and that the funds are to be returned.

Under GLBA, while the conservative argument is to keep those Regulation P protections in place, certain exceptions apply to divulging information to interested parties.

a) Exceptions to opt out requirements. The requirements for initial notice in § 1016.4(a)(2), for the opt out in §§ 1016.7 and 1016.10, and for service providers and joint marketing

in § 1016.13 do not apply when you disclose nonpublic personal information:

(1) With the consent or at the direction of the consumer, provided that the consumer has not revoked the consent or direction;

(iv) To persons holding a legal or beneficial interest relating to the consumer; or

(v) To persons acting in a fiduciary or representative capacity on behalf of the consumer;" 12 CFR 1016.15(a)(2)

Based on the above, the bank would be able to divulge information if the bank has prior consent from the consumer, if there is a beneficiary or related interest to that individual, or to a fiduciary or representative, which would include executors. The bank will likely need to verify the identity of these individuals and have appropriate due diligence procedures in place prior to revealing private banking information. This may include court orders identifying the executor or driver's licenses for P.O.D.

beneficiaries. There is not a lot of regulatory guidance on what is required. Therefore, this will be more of a matter of internal policy.

As the saying goes, taxes and death are inevitable, but hopefully, the bank will be prepared to handle the death of an account holder. The bank will want to have policies and procedures in place when the bank receives notice of a deceased customer, but the bank has options to divulge information to those with interests in the applicable accounts. The bank will want to weigh those policies and procedures with safety and soundness considerations. When death inevitably arises in the banking world, the bank does have options.

Carol Ann Warren serves as associate general counsel for Compliance Alliance. Carol Ann is a licensed attorney in Mississippi, Tennessee, and Texas.



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BOARD BRIEFS

Financial Institutions Should Evaluate DEI Programs Following Recent U.S. Supreme Court Decisions

by Rebecca Sha and Michael E. Turner, Phelps Dunbar

Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) programs and statements are increasingly coming under criticism and scrutiny. And recent decisions from the U.S. Supreme Court have increased the legal risk to businesses with DEI programs. While still ensuring they comply with federally mandated affirmative action requirements, financial institutions should carefully evaluate their DEI programs to limit risk including of shareholder derivative suits and discrimination lawsuits.

The June 29, 2023 decision, *Students for Fair Admissions v. The University of North Carolina and Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard University* (collectively, “*SFFA*”) has had a profound impact on DEI programs and challenges. In *SFFA*, the Court overturned decades of prior precedent and held that college admissions systems that considered race among other factors were unconstitutional under the Equal Protection Clause and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (the “Act”), which prohibits discrimination in programs or activities receiving financial assistance.

More recently, on April 17, in *Muldrow v. City of St. Louis*, the Court expanded the scope of actionable employment discrimination claims under Title VII of the Act. That case involved a transfer of the plaintiff police officer from one department to another, but she was not terminated or demoted and did not suffer any loss in pay as a result. Prior to *Muldrow*, only “adverse employment decisions” that resulted in a significant change to the employee’s working conditions, often demonstrated through a loss of pay or other compensation, were actionable. A unanimous Court rejected the previous standard and held that an employee need only demonstrate some “disadvantageous” change to an employment term or condition to be able to bring an actionable claim. *Muldrow* is likely to result in an increase in the filing of discrimination claims with little to no economic damage.

While it has long been the law that an employer is

prohibited from making employment decisions based on a Title-VII protected class (such as race and sex), financial institutions are unique from many other employers because they must balance that law with the federal requirement to comply with certain affirmative action programs. Institutions covered by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) or National Credit Union Association (NCUA) with at least 50 employees are covered by the following laws that mandate affirmative action:

- Executive Order 11246, which governs women and minorities;
- Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act, which governs individuals with disabilities; and
- The Vietnam Era Veterans’ Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974 (VEVRAA), which governs certain veterans.

The Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP), a federal agency within the U.S. Department of Labor, monitors and enforces compliance with federal anti-discrimination law by “federal contractors.” Among other things, the OFCCP oversees affirmative action requirements, with which certain financial institutions are required to comply. According to the OFCCP’s Jurisdiction Frequently Asked Questions, financial institutions covered by the FDIC or NCUA are considered federal contractors under the applicable rules.

Neither the *SFFA* or *Muldrow* decisions specifically addressed these federal affirmative action programs or voluntary DEI programs. But the legal reasoning that prevailed in those cases is likely to be cited by plaintiffs in future cases attacking these laws and programs or seeking to hold an employer liable for an employment decision taken in the context of DEI programs or goals. For example, male or non-minority employees who are excluded from a bank’s closed affinity group or professional development

program may rely on *Muldrow* for a Title VII claim over that exclusion. DEI-type statements also could present a risk of claims from employees who believe the bank did not follow through with the stated goal or commitment. Already, there are published reports of large employers, including financial institutions, who are conducting major overhauls to their DEI programs due to criticism of the programs and fear of reverse discrimination lawsuits.

Financial institutions should take the following steps to mitigate legal risk from DEI programs or DEI-type statements in the wake of *SFFA* and *Muldrow*:

- Promote diversity, equity, and inclusiveness as company values but avoid references or commitments to specific steps or actions (unless required by an applicable federal affirmative action law).
- Open diversity programs and benefits, including affinity groups, to all employees.
- Promote diversity in candidates but avoid specific numerical hiring or department/job quotas, which are illegal per se.
- Do not associate compensation or employee evaluations in connection with diversity metrics.
- Conduct attorney-privileged assessment of DEI

programs.

- Review all DEI programs and statements, including employee handbooks and training, to ensure they are legally compliant and do not include DEI statements that may be discriminatory.
- Implement legal supervision and control/approval over all DEI communications and disclosures (both internal and public).
- Avoid employment decisions based on subjective factors that could be misinterpreted as discriminatory.
- Reinforce that employment decisions will be non-discriminatory and that the best qualified applicant or candidate for the job will be selected, regardless of race, sex, or other protected characteristics.

Rebecca Sha and Michael E. Turner are partners at Phelps Dunbar LLP and practice in the firm's Labor and Employment Group. Rebecca works in the firm's New Orleans office.

Michael works in the firm's Birmingham office.



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PERSONNEL

Community Bank's Coast Region congratulates **Chase Noel** on his promotion to loan officer. A native of Mobile, Noel recently served as credit analyst and has been in the banking industry for three years. In his new role, Noel will continue to manage and develop his loan and deposit portfolio within the Mobile County market. The bank also welcomed **Jacob Brock** to its staff as a loan officer. A native of Fairhope, Brock has four years of banking experience. In his new role, Brock will manage and develop his loan and deposit portfolio within the Baldwin County market. Brock is a veteran, who served as a combat engineer for the Alabama National Guard and went on tour in Afghanistan in 2015 and Guantanamo Bay in 2016.



Chase Noel



Jacob Brock

CB&S Bank announced the promotion of **Taron Thorpe** to chief analytics officer. Prior to this new role, Thorpe served as regional market president for CB&S Bank. As a specialist in financial goal achievement with over 25 years of business experience, Thorpe has been an integral part of the region's growth.

First Bank of Alabama in Talladega announced promotions of several staff members. **Greg Lee** plans to retire effective Dec. 31 and will transition from the chief credit officer role and serve as senior vice president, senior credit manager. In this role, Lee is responsible for the commercial relationship managers and their effectiveness and growth within the bank. Lee has been a part of the bank since 2013 and ascended into the role of chief credit officer in 2016. **Susan Bowerman**, senior compliance officer, was promoted to senior vice president. She has been instrumental since 2013 in positioning the bank for the growth through the



Greg Lee

strengthening of policies and procedures. **Frankie Ferguson**, corporate relations officer and executive board secretary, was promoted to vice president. According to the bank, as the keeper of all knowledge and information for the bank, she has held multiple positions and has never been afraid to say, "How can I help?" **Brandon Freeman** was appointed by the board of directors to chief credit officer.

According to the bank, his background in lending and his relationship both inside and outside of the bank have prepared him well for the position. Freeman, who joined the bank in 2018, will focus on the credit

department, credit administration, loan policy management, and overall credit management for the bank. **Anna Adair**, accounting specialist, was promoted to assistant vice president. Adair has been with the bank since 2008 and held many positions within the organization. According to the bank, her attention to detail has helped the accounting group grow and prosper. **Jamie Cash**, controller, was promoted to vice president. Cash was hired initially as the internal auditor in 2019. Cash continues to promote the bank within the community as a United Way Board member and serves on the leadership team within Alabama Banking School. According to the bank, she is committed to improving the bank with streamlining the balance sheet and income statement. **Kristen Ford**, retail operations officer, was promoted to vice president. Ford is a product of the acquisition of **Bank of Wedowee**. Hired in late 2015, she was recognized quickly within her first year and a half of being with the bank that she would be



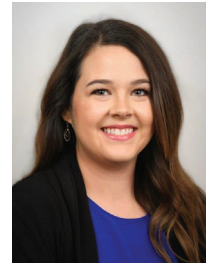
Susan Bowerman



Frankie Ferguson



Brandon Freeman



Anna Adair



Jamie Cash



Kristen Ford

STATEWIDE ROUND UP

newsline



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a great self-starter and had the ability to assist with future bank and branch purchases through her operational skills. She continues to find ways for making the bank more efficient through various operational processes.

Brooke Bayliss, marketing officer, was promoted to vice president and also treasury management officer. Bayliss is responsible for all of the bank's digital, print and social media marketing efforts. According to the bank, she has helped grow the bank from three branches to 14, and increase in assets to more than \$1 billion. Thanks to her efforts, the bank is branded across East Central Alabama. With her latest promotion to treasury management officer, she will maintain some of her current marketing role, while adding treasury management duties involving maintaining and developing relationships with the bank's commercial customers. **Dana Travis**, training and development officer, was promoted to vice president. Travis joined the bank as the Ashland Branch Manager. When the bank decided to launch its in-house training program, Travis was chosen to lead the division thanks to her previous bank experience. According to the bank, Travis continues to take on responsibilities as the bank's growth in new markets emerge. **Rob Skelton**, retail branch administration officer, was promoted to vice president. Skelton joined the bank as branch manager and has excelled in leading the branch's growth and development. **Delane Sledge** was promoted to the position of marketing specialist. She will transition to her new role as staffing allows. **Alyson Thompson**, digital and data strategy officer, was promoted to vice president. She joined the bank as a financial specialist and within nine months was named



Brooke Bayliss



Dana Travis



Rob Skelton

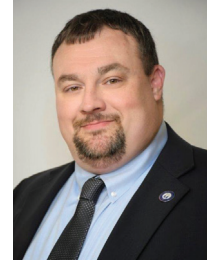


Delane Sledge



Alyson Thompson

the Clanton branch manager following the bank's acquisition of SouthFirst. She is also responsible for developing the bank's successful call center staff. **Sam Whorton**, commercial loan officer, was promoted to vice president. A veteran Alabama banker, Whorton joined the bank in 2016 as a loan officer and later was named as the Munford branch manager. According to the bank, his growth is driving his ability to build a stronger relationship within the commercial lending area.



Sam Whorton

First Community Bank of Central Alabama

congratulates seven employees on their recent promotions. **Tanya Tyrone** has been promoted to chief operations officer. Tyrone is a member of the bank's founding team and brings 31 years of banking expertise to FCBCA.

Ryan Skipper has been promoted to chief lending officer. Skipper joined the FCBCA lending team in 2021 as the bank's senior lender and brings 19 years

of banking and financial industry experience to the team. **Kimm Sanford** has been promoted to chief financial officer. With over a decade of experience with the FCBCA team, her career path has included the roles of branch operations officer, branch manager, and controller. **Daniel Ingram** began his career with FCBCA in 2013 as part of the bank's customer service team.

Daniel has been promoted to vice president and currently serves as the bank's computer operations officer. **Wendy Troglen** has been part of the FCBCA team since 2007. She has been promoted



Tanya Tyrone



Ryan Skipper



Kimm Sanford



Daniel Ingram



Wendy Troglen



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to vice president and serves as part of the bank's loan operations team. **William Carter** has been promoted to assistant vice president and is a loan officer in the Wetumpka market.



William Carter



Adrienne Kidd

Adrienne Kidd has been promoted to loan officer and serves in the Tallassee market.

First Metro Bank in Florence congratulates two employees on their promotions. **Laura Hardy** was promoted to executive vice president and chief financial officer. Hardy joined the bank in 2008 as a part-time teller.



Laura Hardy



Dana Smith

She later became head teller and served in a variety of roles including customer service representative, lending assistant, and assistant branch manager at the bank's office in downtown Florence. In 2016 she was promoted to accountant I and then in May 2021 she was promoted to comptroller. **Dana Smith** was promoted to officer status as assistant cashier. A bank employee since 2017, Smith was named branch manager of First Metro's Greenhill office last fall. She has served in other positions including customer service representative and lending assistant at the bank's Greenhill office. Having lived in Greenhill for most of her life, Smith has enjoyed serving her hometown customers.

First National Bankers Bank announced the following promotions. **Chad Davis**, information technology, was promoted to senior vice president and IT support manager. **Hank Marks**, investment sales, was promoted to senior vice president. **Jessica Johnson**, payment operations, was promoted to vice president. **Kerri Rachal**, bank



Hank Marks

operations, was promoted to vice president.

Kayla Harvey, finance division, was promoted to assistant vice president.



Jessica Johnson



Kerri Rachal



Kayla Harvey

Justin Hartnagel, IT audit services, was promoted to assistant vice president.



Justin Hartnagel



Stephanie Davis



Hannah Honore'

Stephanie Davis, client services, was promoted to officer. **Hannah Honore'**, ALM Division, was promoted to officer and ALM analyst I. **Ross Michel**, ALM Division, was promoted to officer. **Hester Sofranko**, FNBB Services Corp., was promoted to officer. **Lorie Evans**, administration, was promoted to administrative support specialist II. **Holly Livingston**, ALM Division, was promoted to ALM specialist I. **Rebecca Poore**, administration, was promoted to administrative support specialist II. **Brooklyn White**, payment operations, was promoted to payment operations specialist II.



Ross Michel



Hester Sofranko



Lorie Evans



Holly Livingston



Rebecca Poore



Brooklyn White

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STATEWIDE ROUND UP

newsline



PERSONNEL • EMPLOYEE NEWS OF INTEREST

Regions Bank announced **Katie Such** has been elevated to serve as head of Regions Affordable Housing. Such joined Regions Affordable Housing in 2016 as head of distribution and investor services. In that role, she led sales and distribution of funds for clients and connected developers and investor clients for key transactions. In 2019, Such was promoted to operations manager, where she oversaw underwriting, investment, legal and asset-management functions for the group. Prior to joining Regions, Such held affordable housing leadership positions at PNC Bank and directed underwriting, asset management and investor relations service teams. She also served as the deputy executive director for the Housing Authority of Portland, now known as Home Forward.



Katie Such

Regions Financial Corp. announced **John Jordan** has joined its Consumer Banking Group as head of Retail. He will lead an organization of more than 7,500 Regions Bank associates, including frontline branch teams, regional branch-banking leaders and support functions. Jordan joins Regions from Bank of America, where he spent more than 20 years in retail banking and wealth management as well as client experience, strategy, national sales and service operations, products, programs, and analytics. Highlights of his tenure include the launch of the Bank of America Preferred Rewards® program, the largest relationship rewards program in the financial services industry. In his most recent position, Jordan led The Academy – a team of coaches and learning professionals providing onboarding and education to more than 150,000 Bank of America employees each year.



John Jordan

Tammy McCurry joins **ServisFirst Bank** Huntsville as first vice president, mortgage production manager. Bringing over three decades of expertise in banking and mortgage lending, McCurry is dedicated to using her extensive knowledge to guide homeowners on their journey. Her background spans across



Tammy McCurry

various facets of residential lending, from mortgage origination to secondary operations, underwriting, closing, and construction lending. The bank also congratulates **Stuart Whitaker** on his promotion to first vice president, commercial banking officer. With over a decade of banking and finance experience, Whitaker moves into this elevated role where he will maintain his commitment to serving a wide variety of industries and business types in the Southeast. In this new role, he is responsible for bringing in new relationships to the bank, growing existing ones, and addressing the needs of commercial and industrial clients, along with managing commercial real estate needs for clients.



Stuart Whitaker

Congratulations to **John Whittenburg** with **SmartBank** in Auburn on his promotion to regional commercial real estate specialist. Whittenburg joined SmartBank in 2021 and has 26-years of commercial banking experience, most recently serving as corporate relationship manager for the Auburn market, working with many of the bank's largest clients and developing key relationships with commercial real estate and affordable housing developers, becoming a trusted advisor and partner for their projects.

EMPLOYEE NEWS OF INTEREST

Independent Banker magazine, the award-winning monthly publication of the Independent Community Bankers of America (ICBA), unveiled its sixth annual 40 Under 40: Community Bank Leaders list. The award recognizes community bank innovators, collaborators, educators, strategists, advisors, and civic servants. **Christy Wilson**, assistant vice president and compliance officer at **Troy Bank & Trust**, was named to this year's list. During her 15 years in banking, which began at **First National Bank of Brundidge**, she has served in a variety of different roles including customer service, marketing, loan review, BSA, and consumer compliance. In addition, she created the bank's Money Matter\$ program. This



Christy Wilson



newsline

STATEWIDE ROUND UP

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is a financial scholars program aimed at helping improve financial literacy in the community by educating students and adults about money management. Christy also plays a vital role in coordinating the bank's annual Banking on a Cure blood drive, which helps bring awareness and funding to childhood cancer.

DIRECTOR NEWS

Citizens Bank & Trust in Guntersville is pleased to announce the addition of **Taylor Bentley Conner** to its board of directors. As general manager of Howard Bentley Buick GMC in Albertville, Conner brings a wealth of automotive industry experience to the bank's board. A third-generation family businesswoman, she is an innovative automotive executive with proven success in leading dealership operations, management and marketing with a lifetime of firsthand experience. Under Conner's leadership Howard Bentley Buick GMC has received numerous recognitions. That includes continuing an impressive streak of being named a General Motors Dealer of the Year nine years in row since 2015.



Taylor Bentley Conner

First National Bankers Bankshares, Inc. recently elected four new members to the board of directors for FNBB, Inc. and its banking subsidiary, First National Bankers Bank. The terms for **Lucie Beeley**, CEO of **Georgia Community Bank** in Dawson, Ga.; **David**

Dotherow, president and CEO of **Winter Park National Bank** in Winter Park, Fla.; **Pieter van Vuuren**, president and CEO of **First National Bank of Middle Tennessee** in McMinnville, Tenn.; and **Mark Wilson**, president and COO of **First Arkansas Bank and Trust** in Jacksonville, Ark. began on May 1.

"We owe a great deal of gratitude to **Skipper Goodwin**, **Bill Smith**, and **Bill Wright** for their dedication and loyal support of FNBB, Inc. and its subsidiaries during their recent tenure as board members. They have served this organization in an extremely professional manner throughout their terms." said **Joseph F. Quinlan Jr.**, FNBB Chairman.

SouthPoint Bank is pleased to announce that **David Moss Jr.** has joined its board of directors. Moss is the regional vice president of sales of the Southern Region for Oriental Weavers. Moss, a native of Cullman, has served on the Cullman City Council since 2019. He was previously with Shaw Industries as a sales manager for 20 years before joining Oriental Weavers, where he has been the past 15 years. Moss earned a Bachelors of Science in Business Administration degree from Auburn University. He is married to Mary Leah (Ballew) Moss of Cullman and has three children and one grandchild. His father, **David Moss Sr.** served on the former **Merchants Bank of Alabama** Board of Directors for over 25 years.



David Moss Jr.



First Community Bank of Central Alabama congratulates Senior Vice President **LaMarlowe Weldon** on 60 years of service to the banking industry! Weldon began her career in banking at the age of 17 in the customer service department with **First National Bank of Wetumpka**. She was part of the original team that founded FCBCA in August of 2001. "The bank congratulates Weldon on this incredible milestone and recognizes her for the important role she continues to play at the bank," **Rana Futral**, president & CEO, said.



RETIREMENTS

Richard Knight, executive vice president at **Metro Bank** in Pell City, will retire in July. Knight’s financial career began in 1979 when he served as branch manager of three finance companies. In the late 80s he served as vice president of both Anniston Federal Savings and Loan and St. Clair Federal Savings and Loan. In August of 1997, Knight joined Metro Bank as a vice president/loan officer. In 2005, he was promoted to his current role as senior lender/executive vice president. After he retires, Knight plans to play golf, finish a house on the water, and spend time with his family. He will continue to serve on Metro Bank’s board of directors of which he has been a part since Aug. 1, 2019. Upon his retirement he will have worked at Metro Bank for 27 years. The bank says he will be greatly missed and knows this is just the beginning of his next chapter.

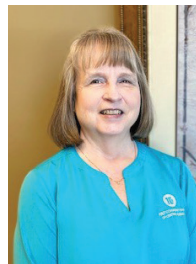


Richard Knight

First Community Bank of Central Alabama congratulates two employees on their retirements. **Michael R. Morgan** retired as chief executive officer. Morgan began his banking career at First National Bank in January of 1989 as the night computer operator. He was part of the original team from FNB that founded First Community Bank in 2001. He will continue to serve on the bank’s board of directors and in the local communities. He also serves as chairman of the Elmore County Board of Education. According to the bank, Morgan has been a valuable member of the FCB team since the bank’s inception, and his 23 years of dedicated service is worthy of admiration. **Teresa Lanier** retired as loan operations officer. She has served as part of the FCB team for 17 years, and she will continue to assist the loan operations team in a supportive role. The bank thanks her for her many years of devoted service.



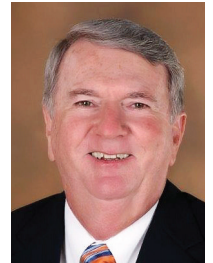
Michael Morgan



Teresa Lanier

OBITUARIES

Mike Ellenburg, former chairman, president and CEO of **First Southern State Bank**, passed away on June 2. Ellenburg’s banking career spanned nearly 50 years. He joined the bank in 1987 as executive vice president. At the time, the bank had two locations, 50 employees, and total assets of \$46 million. He became president in 1996 and led the expansion of the bank’s footprint, championed digital transformations, enhanced services, and encouraged growth. Today, the bank manages in excess of \$802 million, with 130 employees working across 11 offices in four counties of Northeast Alabama. Ellenburg retired as president and CEO of the bank in 2017, but remained as vice chairman of the board of directors. He was named chairman of the board in January of 2024. Ellenburg served as chairman of the legacy Community Bankers Association of Alabama and served on numerous committees of the Independent Community Bankers of America including the Federal Delegate Board. Ellenburg’s service was not limited to banking. He invested in his community by working on several committees and at First United Methodist Church of Scottsboro and was also an active member of the Scottsboro Rotary Club.



Mike Ellenburg



Bank Independent Opens Two New Offices

Bank Independent headquartered in Sheffield celebrated the ribbon cutting of two new sales offices. One office opened in Madison in early April, and the other office opened in south Huntsville in mid-June. The events which included an open house were attended by Bank Independent executives, team members, and leaders from Madison City and Madison County.

“We are thrilled to celebrate the grand opening of our new West Madison office,” said **Rick Wardlaw**, CEO of Bank Independent. “This expansion marks a significant milestone in our journey to better serve the Madison County community. As we commemorate our 10th anniversary in the county, we remain committed to providing exceptional financial services and building lasting relationships with our customers. The opening of this office, along with our recent growth in Huntsville, demonstrates our dedication to being built to serve, not to sell.”

Expansion in Madison County includes the five-story office building at 225 Holmes Ave in early 2023, the Hampton Cove office in the summer of 2023, and the recent opening of the West Madison office in 2024. These developments underscore Bank Independent’s unwavering commitment to serving the community and providing



exceptional financial services to its customers.

“We initially came into Madison County with the goal of proving that we could be a community-oriented, service-oriented bank,” Huntsville City President, **DeMarco McClain** said. “I’m proud to say that ten years later, we’re celebrating a decade of success. We now have six locations in Madison County and 60 employees. We look forward to being an integral part of the South Huntsville community and to many more years of prosperity.”



SouthPoint Announces Homewood Branch

SouthPoint Bank is pleased to announce the opening of a new branch in Homewood located at 1720 28th Avenue South. This expansion reflects SouthPoint Bank’s commitment to providing accessible, high-quality banking services to the Homewood community. The new Homewood branch will offer a full range of banking services, including personal and business accounts, loans, ATM services and drive thru.

Wilson Holifield, COO and executive vice president, will manage the team of bankers who are ready to serve the Homewood community. “We are looking forward to meeting the banking needs of the Homewood community and surrounding communities. We offer exceptional customer service coupled with forward thinking products and services,” said Holifield.





Regions Bank Announces Madison Branch

Regions Bank announced its latest investment in the metro Huntsville market – the new Town Madison branch along Martin Road Southwest.

The branch, currently under construction near Redstone Arsenal Gate 7, will become one of the most modern Regions facilities not only in the Tennessee Valley, but also throughout Regions’ entire footprint. It is projected to open in the third quarter of the year.

The branch will be notable not only for what it has – such as innovative technology and a modern design – but also for what it

doesn’t have. There will be no waiting in a traditional teller line. In fact, there will be no teller line at all.

Instead, when customers walk into the new Town Madison branch, they will be greeted personally by a Regions banker who is ready to deliver a full range of services. Rather than customers needing to be referred from one banker to another for more in-depth needs, every banker at Town Madison will be ready to provide a wide array of services from account setup to helping people create customized roadmaps toward reaching their own, unique financial goals.

ASSOCIATE MEMBER NEWS

Mauldin & Jenkins welcomes **Tim Messman**, CPA, as a partner within the firm’s Financial Institutions practice. Messman is an esteemed expert specializing in accounting, auditing and SEC services for financial institutions. With over 25 years of experience assisting organizations in meeting their accounting and financial reporting requirements, Messman adds a wealth of knowledge, skills, and experience to the firm’s Financial Institutions practice.

Two Associate Member CPA Firms Recognized by Accounting Today

Accounting Today recognized **Mauldin & Jenkins** as one of its Top 100 Firms, Regional Leaders, and Fastest Growing Firms in the U.S. for 2024. The latest accolades represent Mauldin & Jenkins’ 30th consecutive appearance on *Accounting Today’s* annual list of the Top 100 Firms. Climbing five spots from last year’s number, the firm ranked number 68 on this year’s list. The annual

rankings are a longstanding and well-respected tradition to compare growth, performance, and revenue among the most successful firms.

Saltmarsh, Cleaveland & Gund, recent recipient of *ClearlyRated’s* Best of Accounting® Award for providing superior service to clients, has been included in *Accounting Today’s* list of Regional Leaders. This is the eighth year the firm has been recognized as a Regional Leader in the Gulf Coast for achieving growth over the past year.

SEND US YOUR NEWS!

Do you have information for Banking Traditions magazine?

If so, send it to **Shelley Hildebrand** by emailing her at shildebrand@alabama.bank. We want to hear about what is going on in your bank, and how your bank is impacting the community! Other items to share include personnel changes, director changes, retirements, and obituaries. Feel free to send high resolution photos with your news items! Information is accepted all year long. **Questions?** Email Shelley at shildebrand@alabama.bank.



The First Bank Donates \$1 Million to Historically Black Colleges and Universities

The First Bank headquartered in Hattiesburg, Miss. recently donated \$1 million to 12 historically Black Colleges and Universities across Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, Georgia and Florida. Recipients in each state include Jackson State University, Tougaloo College, Southern University and A&M College, Southern University at New Orleans, Dillard University, Xavier University of Louisiana, Bishop State Community College, Albany State University, Savannah State University, Clayton State University, Florida A&M University and Edward Waters University.

“Historically Black Colleges and Universities date back to the late 1800s and were created to provide Black students an opportunity for higher education,” said **Jerome Brown**, chief community officer for The First Bank. “Today, they continue to serve higher education

and a broad range of economic and community development purposes. The First Bank has many HBCUs in its footprint of operation and understands the role we play to help the schools’ efforts for educational achievement.”

As one of the largest certified Community Development Financial Institutions in the nation, The First Bank has awarded over \$70 million in community investments to support economic growth and job creation since 2010. In the last year alone, the bank has donated over \$1.6 million to deserving charities including schools, children’s homes, food banks, hospitals and local housing initiatives.

“Our bank believes in supporting its markets by investing in communities, providing financial education and generating access to credit,” said **Hoppy Cole**, president and chief executive officer of The First Bank. “Education is key to forming these three fundamental building blocks, which is why we believe so strongly in the mission of these universities and want to support the great work they are doing in their colleges of business and small business development centers to educate our future business leaders.”

Food Share Drive Raises Over \$7,000 and 300+ Donations

Bank Independent and the Helping Hands Foundation headquartered in Sheffield are proud to announce the successful completion of the 10th Annual Food Share Drive. Thanks to the generosity and support of our community, \$1,000 was raised for each partner organization, and more than 300 items were shipped directly to them.

“We are very proud of the success of the 10th Annual Food Share Drive and are deeply grateful for the support of our communities,” said **Macke Mauldin**, president and CEO of Banclndependent. “This drive demonstrates the power of community coming together to support those in need. We extend our thanks to each person who contributed. Your generosity has made a positive difference in the lives of many families.”

Running from April 29 to May 17, the drive aimed to combat food insecurity and support local organizations across the seven counties served by Bank Independent. Community members contributed both

monetary donations and items from Amazon Wishlists specifically curated for each partner. These contributions have stayed within the local communities, directly benefiting families in need.

“We are thrilled with the success of this year’s Food Share Drive and the positive impact it has had on our community,” said **Hallie Mauldin**, community engagement leader at Bank Independent. “This year, we made several changes to the process to make it more convenient for people to give, including setting up Amazon Wishlists for each partner organization, allowing items to be shipped directly to them. We learned a lot from these changes and overall, we are incredibly proud of the results.

The partner organizations that received the donations include: Help Center of Florence, Franklin County DHR, The Meal Barrel Project, Limestone County DHR, Neighborhood Christian Center, Manna House in Huntsville, and Downtown Rescue Mission.



Regions Bank Receives 2024 Presidential Award for Excellence in Supporting Exports



Regions Bank announced it received the 2024 President’s “E” Award for Export Service in recognition of the bank’s work to provide financing solutions for corporate banking clients that collectively increase the nation’s exports. Regions received the award at a ceremony in mid-May at the U.S. Department of Commerce in Washington, D.C.

“Our focus at Regions Bank is helping business clients maximize opportunities for growth, and our work with exporters helps American businesses expand their global reach while building on their success,” said **Ronnie Smith**, head of Corporate Banking for Regions. “Exports strengthen our local economies, create jobs and keep our communities moving forward. Regions’ Global Trade Finance team is an important resource for clients to expand their market reach. The President’s ‘E’ Award is a testament to our relationship-based approach toward delivering customized insights from specialized bankers who are committed to client success.” The “E” Award was created in 1961 by Executive Order and serves as the highest recognition a person or U.S. entity can receive for making a significant contribution to the expansion of American exports. This year, Regions is one of only 10 entities receiving the “E” Award for Export Service; the “Service” category honors organizations like Regions who support exporters as they distribute their products or services to the global marketplace. Also at this week’s ceremony were 30 individual exporters who were recognized for their success in global trade.

Alabama Bankers Attend Graduate School of Banking at Louisiana State University



On May 31, 152 bankers received diplomas from the Graduate School of Banking at Louisiana State University. Shown above is the full group of Alabama bankers represented across all three classes. This three-year program provides courses covering all aspects of banking, economics and related subjects. Students traveled from 18 states and Mexico to participate in this session. Congratulations to the following 13 bankers from Alabama who graduated from the program.

- **Holt Barnett, FirstSouthern Bank**, Florence
- **William Edward Brocato, United Community Bank**, Decatur
- **Kasey C. Culbert, Citizens Bank & Trust**, Guntersville
- **Jason A. Eppenger, Alamerica Bank**, Birmingham
- **Jennifer Brockway McKay, CB&S Bank**, Huntsville
- **Anne Mauldin Osborne, Bank Independent**, Leighton
- **Jimmy Wayne Page, The Citizens Bank**, Winfield
- **Custis Coleman Proctor, Synovus Bank**, Birmingham
- **Cade B. Smith, Solutions Plus Bank**, Albertville
- **Joseph M. Southers, First Metro Bank**, Athens
- **Loyd Daily Thomas Jr., First South Farm Credit**, Albertville
- **Ross L. West, SouthPoint Bank**, Cullman
- **William A. Whigham, River Bank & Trust**, Montgomery

ABA *HALF CENTURY CLUB*

Celebrating those who have been in the banking industry for 50 years or more!



Congratulations to **Carlton DeVaughn** on celebrating 50 years of service to the banking industry. DeVaughn is an executive vice president and senior chief financial officer at First State Bank in Lineville. He joined the bank in 1974. Shown in the photo from the left are ABA President and CEO **Scott Latham**, FirstState Bank President and CEO **Steve Foster**, DeVaughn, and FirstState Bank Board Chairman **Don Hogan**.



Congratulations to **Kathy Blue** with **AmeriFirst Bank** on celebrating 50 years of service to the banking industry! Blue works in the operations department and has over 50 years of experience helping the customers and community in Union Springs and all other locations of the bank. She has worked in various positions throughout her career. Shown in the photo from left are ABA President and CEO **Scott Latham**, AmeriFirst Bank EVP and CFO **Marsha Moffett**, Blue, and AmeriFirst Bank President and CEO **Bob Ramsay**.

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