

VOLUME 35 ♦ ISSUE 1

CONVENTION 2025

BANKING TRADITIONS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ALABAMA BANKERS ASSOCIATION





THE BAKER GROUP'S Baker Bond School

Education is the foundation of performance for investment portfolio managers. This is the reason The Baker Group has presented hundreds of seminars and conferences across the country over the last forty-five years. We continue to bring that history of educational experience to a bond school designed specifically for new portfolio managers and those who need to learn the fundamentals of fixed income investing. The Baker Bond School will give attendees the knowledge to better understand the various types of securities available, how to analyze them effectively, and how to use that knowledge to build and manage a high-performance investment portfolio within the framework of the entire balance sheet.

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- Fundamentals of bonds, bond types, and the role of the investment portfolio
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- Characteristics of high-performing portfolios
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 - Municipal Bonds
 - Mortgage-Backed Securities and Collateralized Mortgage Obligations
 - Commercial Mortgage-Backed Securities
 - Small Business Administration Securities
- Mortgage prepayment analysis
- Regulatory expectations for the investment portfolio
- Portfolio cash flow strategies
- How to develop a written investment strategy
- How to analyze bond offerings

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

This school is designed for CEOs, CFOs, and those new to their roles in managing or working with the investment portfolio. Directors and new members of the investment and asset/liability management committees will also benefit from the Baker Bond School.



September 18-19, 2025



SCHOOL LOCATION

Lively Hotel on Oak
Oklahoma City, OK
Cost: \$595



BOND SCHOOL SCHEDULE

Thursday, September 18, 2025

Breakfast, Program, Lunch, Program, Adjourn, Dinner

Friday, September 19, 2025

Breakfast, Program, Concludes at Noon

ACCOMMODATIONS

A block of rooms is available at the Lively Hotel on Oak. Identify yourself as a Baker Bond School attendee when calling 405.849.4777 to make online hotel reservations. The special room rate will be available until the room block is sold out. Hotel price: \$179 + tax.

For your convenience, register for the school online at GoBaker.com/bond-school/. Call Skoshi Heron at 888.990.0010 or scan QR code for more information.



11 hours of CPE credits will be earned for your attendance.



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Alabama Banking: Strength, Stability and the Power of Your Voice

Alabama's banking industry exemplifies strength, resilience, commitment, and talent. Consequently, it significantly contributes to communities across the state and positively impacts the financial success stories occurring every day.

As of Dec. 31, 2024, 135 banks operate in 1,371 offices across Alabama, with 95 being Alabama-chartered banks. Of these, 89 are state-chartered and six are federally chartered, collectively employing 27,922 full-time equivalent workers across 1,910 locations. With \$224.3 billion in assets, \$188.3 billion in deposits, and \$22.5 billion in equity capital, these institutions form the backbone of Alabama's economy, financing homes, businesses, and dreams statewide. In 2025, as economic and regulatory winds shift, the strength of our banks — and the voices of our bankers — will shape the future.

As safe and sound institutions, our banks are steeped in skilled management, upheld by robust capital reserves, and woven into Alabama's fabric. Yet, as a highly regulated industry, we face constant scrutiny, primarily through increased regulation and red tape. Interest rates, stabilizing after recent volatility, are easing pressure on lending margins, but challenges like rising consumer debt and commercial real estate risks persist. Our banks have proven adaptable, balancing innovation with stability. This resilience positions Alabama's financial institutions to thrive, even as national GDP growth forecasts hover between 1% and 1.9% for the year ahead.

What makes Alabama banks special? It's you — the bankers. You know your customers and communities well, and that matters, especially when speaking with the people who make our laws, whether in Montgomery or Washington, D.C. Regarding the United States Congress, your voice and input on all things banking are important to Senators Katie Britt and Tommy Tuberville, as well as to the seven members of the House of Representatives from across Alabama. Including the Alabama Legislature's 105 House members and 35 Senators, we have 149 elected officials who need to know your name and understand the issues that are meaningful to you and our industry. They make decisions that impact your bank, your customers, and your shareholders.

That's why speaking up is so important. Advocacy is not optional — it's essential. Engaging with ABA keeps you informed on legislative issues, empowering you to push back against unwanted regulations while championing those that benefit our industry, its customers, and shareholders. Many of these legislators are your customers or neighbors. You might see them at a branch or a community event. These personal connections allow you to communicate trustworthy realities about banking's role in Alabama — realities that data alone cannot convey. If you're not already in contact with your elected officials, now is the time to change that.

Consider the stakes: unfavorable legislation could tighten existing stringent rules, while supportive legislation might ease compliance burdens or enhance community lending. Your local relationships amplify our collective influence, ensuring that lawmakers recognize the safe, sound foundation provided by our banks. The association acts as your partner in this effort, offering resources, updates, and a unified platform for effective advocacy.

Looking ahead, Alabama banks will continue to thrive and lead the financial services industry by using new tools to make banking easier for customers. Someone might deposit a check on their phone, but they will still love that you remember their name.

In 2025, Alabama's banking industry stands strong, backed by \$24.1 billion in equity capital and a workforce dedicated to being the best. However, our success depends on more than balance sheets—it hinges on your engagement. Leverage your community ties, connect with your legislators, and collaborate through our association to shape a future where banking remains a cornerstone of Alabama's prosperity. Together, we'll ensure our industry not only endures but excels, serving our state with unwavering strength and purpose.



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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.

Let us be that local collaborative partner to help make Alabama stronger through working together. Call us today to get started!

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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 130 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 is a key component. A few years ago we incorporated a new opportunity into our convention to give vendors who chose to participate an the chance 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. 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 will feature an event called Mad Minutes where associate members who chose to participate will host a table and attending bankers travel amongst the tables. Like Rapid Fire, each associate member will give a 3-4 minute presentation about their company.

In addition to our convention trade show, we will also host a trade show in conjunction with our IGNITE Experience. The IGNITE Experience set for Sept. 16-17 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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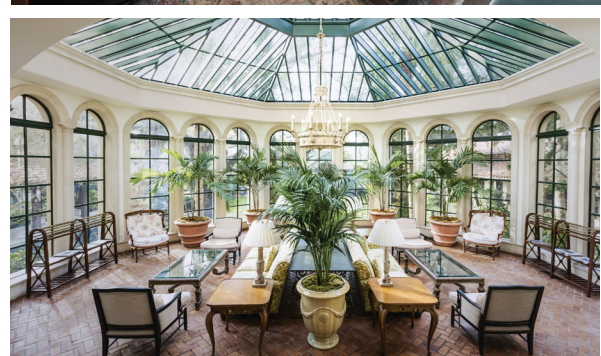
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ALABAMA BANKERS ASSOCIATION
132nd Annual Convention & Marketplace
June 8-11, 2025 • The Cloister • Sea Island, Georgia



Agenda (All times listed are Eastern Time)

SUNDAY, JUNE 8

6 - 7:30 p.m. Registration & Welcome
Reception in the Trade Show Area

MONDAY, JUNE 9

7:30 - 8:30 a.m. Breakfast in the Trade Show Area
8:30 - 9:20 a.m. General Session
9:30 - 11:30 a.m. Breakout Sessions
& Marketplace Day
5:30 - 7 p.m. Cocktail Connection
& Silent Auction

TUESDAY, JUNE 10

7:30 - 8:30 a.m. Breakfast in the Trade Show Area
8:30 - 11:30 a.m. General Session
6:30 - 9:30 p.m. Soul of Spain Grand Finale

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11

7:30 - 8:30 a.m. Breakfast
8:30 - 11 a.m. General Session
11 a.m. Convention Concludes
(Hotel check out is at noon)

Convention Events

Registration & Welcome Reception (Sunday)

Reconnect with old friends and enjoy cocktails during our Sunday evening event. Our marketplace will be set up with our vendors ready to interact with convention attendees.

Silent Auction & Cocktail Connection (Monday)

Join us for our annual Silent Auction in the trade show area hosted by our Bankers 2 Leaders division! Join us in and around the trade show area for heavy hors d'oeuvres, cocktails and desserts during our wildly popular silent auction!

Soul of Spain Grand Finale (Tuesday)

Join us for an evening to celebrate the fiery spirit of Spain during the twilight hours! Guests will enjoy a lavish feast while being entertained by a flamenco band and dancer.

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Dr. Morris Pickens will delve into the profound impact that our self-talk and inner dialogue have on the direction of our lives.



Often overlooked, the voice in our heads plays a crucial role in shaping our actions, thoughts, and overall mindset. It's like having an ever-present companion, influencing every decision we make—whether we realize it or not. Throughout the session, you'll hear compelling real-life examples from the medical field that illustrate just how extraordinary and powerful the mind truly is. Dr. Pickens will also offer practical strategies on how to foster a more positive, productive relationship with your own inner voice. This enlightening discussion will leave you with a deeper understanding of how to harness the power of your mind to transform your life for the better. Dr. Mo, a sports psychologist and performance enhancement specialist, has been a part of the team at the Sea Island Golf Performance Center since 2005. Listed by Golf Digest in 2012 as #4 in the Top 10 Golf Psychologists, his PGA client list is headed by Zach Johnson, winner of the 2007 Masters and 2015 British Open and Keegan Bradley, the 2025 Ryder Cup Captain. He has helped players

win 4 major championships, 33 PGA Tour events, and two NCAA championships. In addition to golf, Dr. Mo has helped professional athletes in NASCAR, the NFL, and Major League Baseball and college athletes in almost every sport. Dr. Mo has published three books on the psychology of golf including his latest book, *The Winning Way in Golf and Life*.

AI: The Morning Buzz(word)

featuring Emily Leithauser Hart

Copilot, ChatGPT, Claude, LLMs, NLP, neural networks, machine learning... what's the difference between all of the artificial intelligence buzzwords? And more importantly, what do financial leaders actually need to know about AI? In an overwhelming marketplace of AI offerings, this opening session will cut through the hype to provide a clear-eyed look at AI's role in banking. We'll explore how the current AI landscape came to be, key trends shaping the future, and how to critically evaluate AI's potential, risks, and biases. From efficiency gains to creative applications, this discussion will set the stage for a day of thought-provoking insights. Grab a cup of coffee and join us as we kick off the conversation on AI's real impact in financial services. Emily Leithauser Hart is co-founder and COO of fintech startup Occupi, which enables property managers to expand payment



options for renters in affordable and workforce housing. Emily started in communications in 2007 in non-profit and moved to the technology sector in 2010. Her four years with Apple included public speaking, event planning, technical instruction and troubleshooting, and global retail marketing strategy at the company's corporate headquarters in Cupertino, Calif. At development agency and technical advisory firm MotionMobs, Emily led product development upon creating the company's consulting division in 2015, overseeing the development strategy and release of more than 50 projects during her tenure. Fueled by her experience across consumer technology and software strategy, Emily co-founded Occupi in 2023 and now leads company operations and product development.

The Economic, Political & Business Climate

featuring Roger Tutterow

Join Dr. Tutterow for an engaging economic overview of the current national and regional financial environment. The economic outlook is somewhat mixed, with a blend of challenges and opportunities. Dr. Tutterow will discuss recent challenges to the economy, consumer price inflation, government activity and strategies and the outlook on monetary and fiscal policy.



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Alabama Banking School Celebrates 49 Years of Bankers Teaching Bankers

Congratulations to the 52 students who graduated from the Alabama Banking School in October. ABA welcomed Trustmark Regional President Linwood McClain who served as the commencement speaker at the graduation ceremony.

A total of 155 students traveled to Montgomery in late October to participate in the 2024 session of the Alabama Banking School. The three classes – pink dots (freshmen), green dots (juniors), and blue dots (seniors) – delved into the comprehensive, challenging curriculum with the goal of learning to become even more prepared, efficient, and knowledgeable bankers.

Held at the Renaissance Montgomery Hotel, our program has helped bankers from all areas of the industry attain new skills and hone existing ones. Graduates of the school oftentimes remain involved by serving as class directors or instructors. Some have been a part of the school for 25 years or more.

While most of the time was spent hard at work, there were opportunities for a few fun networking events. A few years

ago, the school started hosting a competition-based event on Monday evening with the hopes of encouraging class bonding. Over the years, the competition has evolved into a cornhole tournament held in the exhibit area of the hotel. This year, the seniors ended their banking school career with a perfect run at cornhole by winning the tournament again for a three-peat!

Another tradition held each session are the class dinners held on Wednesday evening. Freshmen enjoyed time in the Station Room at Dreamland. The juniors dined at Central Restaurant, and the seniors enjoyed dinner at the Ravello Ristorante.

One of the highlights of the final year of banking school is participation in the BankExec program. This is a computer-based bank balance sheet and income statement program that allows students to run a simulated bank. The teams were split between two communities to compete for best performance. Teams were judged by a “board of directors” consisting of bankers from across the state that volunteered to serve as judges.



Seniors experienced Montgomery's new Whitewater Park on Thursday evening. Everyone enjoyed dinner and some brave souls participated in rafting!



A surprise guest — U.S. Senator Katie Britt — dropped by and spent the afternoon at the Alabama Banking School.



*Congratulations to this year's valedictorian, **Kimm Sanford** with **First Community Bank of Central Alabama**, and the salutatorian, **Michelle Wetzel** with **United Bank**. Shown in the photo to the left, from left are: Senior Class Director **Tara Hickey**, **Wetzel**, **Sanford**, and Senior Class Director **Chris Smith**.*



Above from left are: ABA President and CEO **Scott Latham**; Senior Class President **Roland Adams**, First Southern Bank; and **Trustmark Regional President Linwood McClain**.



Congratulations to BankExec winners from Community B (Capital Rock Bank)! In the photo above, from left are: Assistant School Director **Will Finney**; **John Michael Stephens**, Troy Bank & Trust; **Dickson Thames**, First Horizon Bank; **Noelle Geeslin**, Oakworth Capital Bank; **Lauren Hood**, Central State Bank; **David Kindred**, Bryant Bank; and School Director **Sherry Coker**.

Congratulations to BankExec winners from Community A (RiverviewOne Bank)! In the photo below, from left are: Assistant School Director **Will Finney**; **Allen Burgess**, CCB Community Bank; **Mike Ori**, Community Bank; **Rogerneiqua Hails**, Alabama State Banking Department; **Kristie Silva**, Brantley Bank; **Chad Woodail**, River Bank & Trust; **Michelle Wetzels**, United Bank; and School Director **Sherry Coker**.



CLASS OF 2024

- **Roland Adams**, First Southern Bank
- **Whitney Alexander**, Pinnacle Bank
- **Matthew Anderson**, Warren Averett
- **Karen Andrews**, River Bank & Trust
- **Melissa Brooks**, United Bank
- **Allen Burgess**, CCB Community Bank
- **Miranda Butler**, Citizens Bank of Winfield
- **Kenneth Chambers**, Cullman Savings Bank
- **Carolyn Crawford**, Friend Bank
- **Michael Cummings**, First Metro Bank
- **Chris Fuller**, Investar Bank
- **Noelle Geeslin**, Oakworth Capital Bank
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- **Hillary Hermeling**, Brantley Bank & Trust
- **Amanda Hicks**, Bank Independent
- **Lauren Hood**, Central State Bank
- **Angela Inman**, State Bank & Trust
- **David Kindred**, Bryant Bank
- **Daniel Lawler**, ServisFirst Bank
- **Harrison Martin**, Exchange Bank of Alabama
- **Charlesne McCurdy**, Bryant Bank
- **Scott McDonald**, Peoples Bank of Alabama
- **Steven Morelock**, Troy Bank & Trust
- **Greg Morgan**, First Bank of Alabama
- **Tara Nava**, First Metro Bank
- **Andrew Odom**, Bryant Bank
- **Michael Ori**, Community Bank of Mississippi
- **Justin Petrusson**, SouthPoint Bank
- **Zach Powell**, Bryant Bank
- **Amanda Redman**, Alabama Multifamily Loan Consortium
- **Chasity Robertson**, Merchants Bank of Alabama
- **Taylor Robertson**, First Southern Bank
- **Morgan Rushing**, West Alabama Bank
- **Kimm Sanford**, First Community Bank of Central Alabama
- **Meghan Savage**, Merchants & Marine Bank
- **Amy Scogin**, Citizens Bank of Winfield
- **Jeremy Scott**, CB&S Bank
- **Jonathan Sherrill**, CB&S Bank
- **Kristie Silva**, Brantley Bank & Trust
- **Rebekah Singleton**, First Bank of Alabama
- **John Michael Stephens**, Troy Bank & Trust
- **Dickson Thames**, First Horizon Bank
- **Ryan Till**, Alabama State Banking Department
- **Jennifer Treece**, Auburn Bank
- **Donna Tucker**, Citizens Bank of Winfield
- **Mike Tyson**, NobleBank & Trust
- **Chloe Watkins**, SouthPoint Bank
- **Michelle Wetzels**, United Bank
- **Louis Willie, IV**, Alamerica Bank
- **Chad Woddail**, River Bank & Trust



The Importance of Maintaining a Bond Portfolio in a Community Bank Balance Sheet

by John Bloss

Managing a community bank's balance sheet is like taking care of a home: it requires ongoing maintenance, thoughtful planning, and proactive decisions to preserve its value and ensure long term sustainability. Just as a well-maintained house stands strong through storms and shifting seasons, a carefully tended bond portfolio anchors a community bank's balance sheet against economic turbulence.

For community banks, certain bonds are more than just a safe haven; they're a critical tool for stabilizing income, managing risk, and preserving margins. Today, with the 5-year Treasury yield hovering at its highest average level in seventeen years, banks have a unique opportunity to "renovate" their portfolios, ensuring resilience for years to come.

Think of a bond portfolio as the foundation of a house. Neglect it, and cracks appear—margins erode, and vulnerabilities emerge. Maintain it, and it provides steady support. Right now, the 5-year Treasury yield offers a golden window for reinforcement. This part of the yield curve is often viewed as a good proxy for bank portfolios, considering their average lives tend to be around five years. As of February 24, 2025, this yield has averaged around 4.20% over the past year, a peak not seen consistently since 2007. Historical data over the last twenty years reveals this moment's rarity. From 2005 to 2007, yields fluctuated between 4% and 5%, but the post-financial crisis era slashed them to historic lows, averaging below 2% from 2011 to 2021. This is not suggesting yields are going to drop in similar dramatic fashion. However, as risk managers, we must anticipate such an occurrence. Today's rates signal a return to robust performance—a chance to remodel the portfolio before rates potentially decline again.

Am I suggesting we prioritize bonds over loans? Certainly not! At community banks, loans will be and should be the primary vehicles used to serve the local economy, businesses, and households. However, when loan demand is strong there is a tendency to ignore the bond portfolio. During these times, loans can be like the exciting new addition to your house—lucrative when times are good, but prone to leaks (refinancing or defaults) when rates drop or the economy falters. In low-rate environments, borrowers refinance at lower costs, shrinking bank margins, or worse, default during downturns, leaving banks exposed. Bonds, especially those with predictable cash flows and structure, offer a stable yield vehicle to complement the loan portfolio. Selective bonds with specified collateral tend to not refinance unpredictably or default; they pay reliably,

providing a buffer against loan volatility. This stability is a lifeline for community banks aiming to protect their net interest margins.

To seize this opportunity, banks should adopt or simply maintain a dollar-cost averaging strategy—steadily investing in these elevated yields over time. Just as you wouldn't renovate your entire house in one frantic weekend, don't chase the market in a single leap. By spreading purchases across months, banks lock in today's high yields, building a portfolio that thrives even if rates fall. Make no mistake, market yield volatility is a daily reality we're currently experiencing with political climate changes and global economic uncertainty. So, during this time, remember that remodeling is messy from day to day and stay focused on the long-term benefits. Consider this: a 4.50% yield today could be the cushion our margins need if future yield environments are significantly lower, as they have been in past cycles.

CALL TO ACTION: FIND WAYS TO PARTICIPATE AND DON'T MISS THIS MARKET OPPORTUNITY

The graph above underscores the urgency—yields haven't been this high since before the Great Recession. Missing this market is like letting your house decay until the roof caves in. Community banks must act now, reinforcing their bond portfolios to weather future storms. With market yields at almost two decades high on average, this isn't just maintenance—it's a strategic upgrade. Don't wait for the next downturn to regret a crumbling foundation. Invest now, dollar by dollar, and build a balance sheet that stands firm.

John D. Bloss is a managing partner and serves on the board of directors for The Baker Group. He works with community financial institutions in the areas of investments and asset/liability management, education, portfolio management evaluation, interest rate risk, strategic planning, and regulatory issues.



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EDUCATION SPOTLIGHT

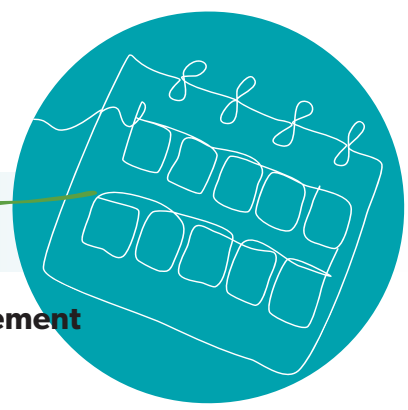
LENDING INSTITUTE

David Kemp and **Mike Allen** led The Lending Institute event in March at The Henderson Beach Resort in Destin, Fla. Participants enjoyed getting outside of the classroom to go to a working construction site as a field trip!



EDUCATIONAL

Opportunities



LIVE
SEMINARS

MAY

13 **Navigating the Mortgage Journey from Start to Finish**
Prattville

JUNE

12 **Banker Responsibility under the FCRA & FACT Act**
Live event via Zoom

12 **Compliance Management Essentials (CMS)**
Live event via Zoom

AUGUST

12 **BSA Essentials**
Birmingham

13 **Elevate Your Expertise on All Things TRID**
Birmingham

20 **Internal Audit Workshop Essentials**
Birmingham

SEPTEMBER

10 **Title Insurance 201**
Prattville

QUESTIONS? Contact **Elizabeth Bailey**, vice president of professional development, by email at ebailey@alabama.bank or by calling (251) 510-3593.

2025 EVENT CALENDAR

JUNE 8-11

132nd Annual Convention & Marketplace

*The Cloister
Sea Island, Ga.*

JULY 10-12

B2L Summer Leadership Conference

*The Lodge at Gulf Shores
Gulf Shores*

JULY 31 - AUG. 2

CEO, Bank Exec & Directors Conference

*The Grand Hotel
Point Clear*

SEPTEMBER 7-10

DC Fly In

*Willard Intercontinental Hotel
Washington, D.C.*

SEPTEMBER 16-17

IGNITE Experience

*The Westin
Huntsville*

OCTOBER 12-17

Alabama Banking School

*Renaissance Hotel
Montgomery*

October 22

Trust Conference

*Vestavia Country Club
Birmingham*

November 12-13

Women in Leadership Conference

*The Valley Hotel
Homewood*

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b2L Summer Leadership Conference

JULY 10-12, 2025

The Lodge at the Gulf State Park • Gulf Shores



The Onus of 'On Us' Checks

by Theodore Kelly

An “on-us” check is one that is drawn on an account held at the same bank at which it is presented. That is, the bank is both the depository bank and the payor bank. In simple terms, the opposite of an on-us check is a transit check. A transit check is presented at another financial institution and subsequently sent to the payor bank through a clearing process for settlement. On-us checks carry different risks than transit checks, creating distinct responsibilities, particularly regarding wrongful dishonor and funds availability.

No federal requirement obliges banks to pay on-us checks ‘over the counter’. If a non-customer physically presents an on-us check to “Bank of Snow,” there is no explicit requirement for the bank to pay that item (at least from a federal standpoint). Of course, most banks contractually agree to pay duly presented and properly payable items, so refusing an on-us check may incur legal risk from the drawer. That’s not to say the bank is prohibited from dishonoring this type of check for a valid reason, such as insufficient funds in the drawer’s account or failure of the payee to provide reasonable identification; but wrongful dishonor may occur in the absence of a valid reason. See UCC 3-501, 3-502, and UCC 4-402.

Wrongful dishonor occurs when a bank lacks a valid reason for refusing its obligation to pay an item according to its terms. And a bank may be held liable for damages proximately caused by its refusal. See UCC 4-402. Further,

some states require banks to pay ‘on us’ checks without regard to whether the payee is a customer (provided the check is properly payable and the payee provides reasonable identification). That is, if the bank would otherwise cash an on-us check for a customer, some states require banks to do the same for non-customers. Further, a bank’s agreement with its customer may not disclaim responsibility for lack of good faith or to limit potential damages. Improper intervention between a customer’s promised payment to another party may evidence a lack of good faith, or worse, increased liability for proximate damages if bad faith can be proved. See UCC 4-103.

If the above isn’t enough to initiate a conversation with bank counsel, my compliance colleagues may want to consider the UDAAP ramifications associated with disparate treatment. Let’s say your bank has a policy of cashing an on-us check for non-customers for \$5. Simultaneously, the bank requires customers to deposit on-us checks and will only make those funds available according to its Funds Availability Policy. Refusing to pay an on-us check to a customer according to the same terms as a non-customer would likely incur UDAAP risks. For instance, if a customer’s account is overdrawn, but they merely want to cash the on-us check to prevent an offset of those funds, is it “fair” to not provide the same service to customers as the bank does to non-customers? Probably not. A customer could easily endorse the check to a third-party non-customer or deposit it at another financial institution to avoid the bank’s offset of funds. I certainly don’t want to be the person trying to explain the “countervailing benefits to consumers or competition” that somehow outweigh the injurious effects of this type of policy.

Of course, these analyses are dependent on your bank’s specific policies, agreements, and the relevant federal and

state authorities – it's uncertain whether the practices described above will result in administrative or civil liability. Determination of whether a violation even exists is left to the factfinder (i.e., auditor/examiner or judge/jury). That said, banks should consider implementing policy changes and other controls to bring any identified risks within the limits of their risk appetite (along with safety & soundness considerations). We always recommend consulting with bank counsel for guidance relating to legal risks.

So, we've discussed cashing on-us checks. Well, what if a customer deposits an on-us check? There is a question of the appropriate 'funds availability' timeline for a deposit versus cashing an on-us check. Regulation CC generally requires a bank to make funds available to their customers as soon as the material risks associated with the type and amount of the check subside. The timelines act as a balance of safety & soundness and consumer protection risks. When a customer deposits an on-us check, the risk is relatively low because the bank can almost immediately determine that the check is authentic and that funds are available in the drawer's account. When a customer deposits a transit check, the risk is much greater because the check could be altered, fraudulent, stolen, there may be insufficient funds, the

clearinghouse or payor bank may have a system issue that delays settlement, etc. Because the risk is much lower, funds from on-us checks must generally be made available no later than the next business day following the banking day of deposit. A final word on funds availability – remember that banks are not permitted to invoke the 'holds on other funds' rule when cashing on-us checks for customers.

The handling of on-us checks presents unique challenges for banks, particularly regarding wrongful dishonor and funds availability. While federal regulations may not explicitly mandate the payment of on-us checks to non-customers, banks often have contractual obligations to do so. Additionally, state laws and UDAAP considerations may necessitate equitable treatment of customers and non-customers in on-us check cashing policies. Banks should carefully navigate these complexities by establishing clear procedures for on-us check handling and consulting bank counsel and your friendly neighborhood compliance advisors for guidance.

Theodore "Theo" Kelly is associate general counsel for Compliance Alliance.



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BOARD BRIEFS

Recent FinCEN and FINRA Reports Highlight Emerging AML and Fraud Risks Posed by Generative AI

by Chris Couch and Andrew Meaders

Many banks have embraced the potentially transformative applications of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI). These range from modernizing legacy systems and streamlining compliance assessments to personalizing customer experiences. An SAS report from October found that 60% of banking respondents use GenAI and another 38% intend to use it in the next two years. Ninety percent reported they have a dedicated GenAI budget for 2025.

Not surprisingly, however, the opportunities created by GenAI come with new challenges. Malign actors and criminal enterprises employ the same powerful tools. A study released this month by the American Banker found that banks made enhanced security and fraud mitigation their top spending priorities in 2025 in response to rising fraud incidents. Recent reports from the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) and the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) highlighted the emerging fraud and money laundering risks facilitated by GenAI and outlined steps financial institutions can take to mitigate these risks.

GenAI's Capabilities

GenAI has significantly reduced the resources and sophistication required to produce high quality fake, or "synthetic," content across a range of media. Synthetic content refers to media created through digital or artificial means or otherwise manipulated with technology. FINRA's 2025 Annual Regulatory Oversight Report highlights the ability of threat actors to leverage GenAI to create imposter websites, domains and social media profiles to impersonate financial firms and registered representatives.

In December 2024, for example, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) charged three defendants with impersonating legitimate securities brokers and investment advisors in an online scheme that stole more than \$2.9 million from 28 investors. According to the SEC, the defendants created websites impersonating nearly two dozen actual

securities brokers. They directed investors to fake online platforms created to make the investors think their portfolios were increasing in value. They even purchased voice-changing software to mimic the female investment advisors they were impersonating.

The scheme's complexity reflects GenAI's capacity to generate realistic content, or "deepfakes." Deepfakes manufacture what appear to be real events, such as a person doing or saying something they did not actually do or say. The expansive (and unnerving) threats associated with deepfakes have surfaced across several facets of society. They create particular risks for financial institutions.

In May 2024, fraudsters tricked an employee at a multinational firm into paying out \$25 million. They set up a video call with what appeared to be the firm's CFO and several staff members the employee recognized, but that were actually deepfakes. GenAI-rendered deepfakes also allow criminals to avoid identity verification and due diligence controls in less sensational ways. According to FinCEN's November 2024 report, criminals use GenAI to create falsified documents, including government-issued driver's licenses and passports, either by editing an authentic source image or creating a synthetic image. Criminals also create synthetic identities by combining GenAI images with stolen personally identifiable information (PII) or entirely fake PII. Once accounts are opened using fraudulent identities, criminals use them to receive and launder the proceeds of related fraud schemes or funnel accounts.

Mitigating the Fraud and AML Risks Created by GenAI
The advances in GenAI present new challenges for banks implementing policies and procedures for Customer Identification Programs (CIP) and Customer Due Diligence (CDD), which must be reasonably designed to achieve compliance with regulations implemented under the Bank Secrecy Act. These challenges are especially acute for

institutions that allow customers to open accounts entirely online. In response, FinCEN and FINRA outlined best practices to manage the risks of GenAI-enabled fraud, both during validation of a customer's identity (i.e., confirming the identity exists and is unique and that the presented identification documents are authentic) and verification of the identity (i.e., confirming that the validated identity belongs to the customer).

To validate a customer's identity, best practices include:

1. Requiring both documentary (e.g., government-issued IDs) and non-documentary identifying information, or multiple forms of documentary information, and flagging inconsistencies among identity documents or between an identity document and other aspects of the customer's profile.
2. Contracting third-party vendors to verify the legitimacy of suspicious information or images, including by examining an image's metadata or using software to detect deepfakes or specific manipulations.
3. Reviewing account applications for common identifiers (e.g., email addresses and phone numbers) present in other applications or existing accounts, especially if the accounts otherwise appear unrelated.
4. Reviewing account applications for use of temporary or fictitious email addresses.

Once a bank validates the customer's identity, best practices to verify that the identity belongs to the customer opening the account include:

1. Asking follow-up questions or requesting additional documents based on information from credit bureaus, credit reporting agencies or digital identity intelligence.
2. Reviewing IP addresses or other available geolocation data associated with new online account applications for consistency with the customer's home address.
3. Limiting automated approval of multiple accounts for a single customer.
4. Using multifactor authentication (MFA), including phishing-resistant MFA.
5. Requiring live verification checks that prompt a customer to confirm their identity through audio or video.

These strategies are not foolproof. FinCEN notes that illicit actors may be able to respond to live verification prompts or access tools that create synthetic audio and video responses on their behalf (see the SEC action described above). However, FinCEN points out that because these responses can reveal inconsistencies in a deepfake identity, criminals often avoid or try to bypass them by claiming to be experiencing technical glitches or requesting to change communication methods.

Once the account has been opened, banks may be able to detect deepfake identity documents by triggering additional customer due diligence when accounts include some or all of the following signs of suspicious activity:

1. Access to an account from an IP address that is inconsistent with the customer's profile.
2. Patterns of apparent coordinated activity among multiple similar accounts.
3. High payment volumes to potentially higher-risk payees, such as gambling websites or digital asset exchanges.
4. High volumes of chargebacks or rejected payments.
5. Patterns of rapid transactions by a newly opened account or an account with little prior transaction history.
6. Patterns of withdrawing funds immediately after deposit and in manners that make payments difficult to reverse in cases of suspected fraud, such as through international bank transfers or payments to offshore digital asset exchanges and gambling sites.

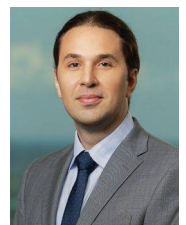
Takeaways for Banks

GenAI presents promising opportunities for innovation. But it also poses significant challenges for banks trying to counter increasingly sophisticated fraud and money laundering threats. Recent publications from FinCEN and FINRA highlight these threats, unpacking how illicit actors create synthetic content and deepfakes that can bypass traditional identity verification processes. While brazen fraud and money laundering schemes will continue to print sensational headlines, banks must prioritize the unglamorous legwork necessary to design identity verification processes and customer due diligence to counter the rapidly evolving threats posed by GenAI.

Chris Couch is a partner at Phelps Dunbar. He works with banks and privately held companies' executives on strategic business decisions, helping them think through how pulling one lever affects the operation of the whole machine. His experience working in the banking industry and ability to think in multiple directions allows him to minimize risk and align clients' operations with their goals.



Andrew Meaders is a member of Phelps' Business practice group. He is a Certified Anti-Money Laundering Specialist (CAMS) and works with community banks and other financial services clients in several areas, including corporate governance and securities, asset and bank sales and commercial lending facilities.





PERSONNEL

Bank Independent headquartered in Sheffield is pleased to announce the promotion of **Tiffany Dostica** to sales specialist. Dostica will serve consumer customers with their non-real estate loan needs in her new role while assisting with new deposit accounts. She will be based in the Russellville Village Square Sales Office, where she will serve all of Franklin County. Dostica joined the bank as a part-time teller in 2012 and has since progressed through a variety of other roles including head teller and sales manager roles.



Tiffany Dostica

CB&S Bank headquartered in Russellville welcomes **Tiffany Cox** as central Alabama retail manager/Auburn branch manager – first vice president. She brings 15 years of banking experience with her as she guides clients through their financial journey no matter their current stage of life.



Tiffany Cox

Community Bank headquartered in Flowood, Miss. welcomes **David F. Maron** as its senior vice president, general counsel. A seasoned attorney with nearly three decades of legal experience, Maron will oversee the company's legal and government affairs departments. And as a member of the executive leadership team, he will provide legal counsel to the board, executive leadership, and senior management. Maron joins the bank after serving as chief legal counsel and deputy chief of staff to Mississippi Gov. Tate Reeves. Prior to public service, Maron was a shareholder at an AmLaw 200 firm where he provided legal counsel to corporate clients with an emphasis in defending business and commercial litigation across multiple jurisdictions. The bank also congratulates **Jack Burrell Jr.** who was named loan officer. A native of Fairhope, Burrell previously served as a management trainee and has been in the banking industry for one year. In his new role, Burrell will



David F. Maron



Jack Burrell Jr.

continue to manage and develop his loan and deposit portfolio within the Baldwin County market.

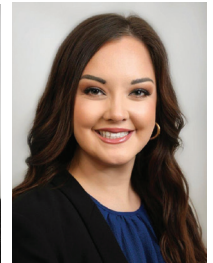
The **Exchange Bank of Alabama** in Gadsden announced **Catherine Ray Martin** as its new president and chief retail officer. Martin is a fourth-generation banker with more and 30 years of experience. She previously served as senior vice president of marketing and retail. The bank announced other promotions including: **Christopher Ray** to senior vice president and chief financial officer, **Kevin Phillips** to senior vice president and chief lending officer, **Andrea Howard Roberg** to vice president of retail banking, **Susan Bailey** to vice president and senior lending officer, **Shane Rudd** to vice president of credit services, **Kim Long** and **Jennifer Wallace** were both named vice president, and **Harrison Martin** to loan officer. **Ricky Ray** will continue to lead Exchange Bank as chairman of the board and CEO.

First Bank of Alabama in Talladega announced that **Pam Stephens** would succeed **Sharon McVay** who retired in December as compliance officer. Stephens has worked for the bank for 39 years in various capacities most recently as consumer loan operations officer. The bank also announced several other staffing changes. **Alyson Thompson**, digital and data strategy officer, will take on an expanded role in the marketing department.

She will continue to work with the digital customer service team and lead an expansion of the bank's data strategy efforts. **Tori Harry**, digital customer service specialist, has been promoted to digital customer service supervisor. **Meagan Manley** has been promoted from digital customer service specialist to marketing specialist. Teller **Kaitlyn**



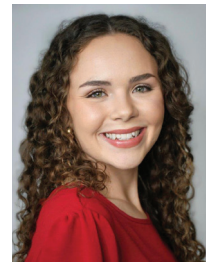
Pam Stephens



Alyson Thompson



Tori Harry



Meagan Manley



Kaitlyn Williams

STATEWIDE ROUND UP

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PERSONNEL • DIRECTORS • RETIREMENTS • OBITUARIES



Williams has transferred to the bank's Oxford branch.

Greg Lee has transitioned into the role of facilities specialist. In this capacity, Lee will visit the bank's branches to address and resolve any facility-related issues. A bank employee since 2013, Lee has 46 years of banking experience and has served in a variety of roles throughout the years including as chief credit officer. **Ashley Brown** who currently serves as BSA, AML, and OFAC officer has been promoted to vice president. Brown joined the bank in 2003. **Rachel Rampy**, commercial loan officer, was promoted to vice president. **Tiffany Scarbary** was promoted to branch manager of the Roanoke Branch. Scarbary joined the bank last year as a loan processor.



Greg Lee



Ashley Brown



Rachel Rampy



Tiffany Scarbary

First Metro Bank welcomes **Angela Ford** to its team in Athens as assistant vice president and branch operations manager. Ford's banking background is in sales and management, which will be carried into her new role, but she will also be responsible for the oversight of branch operations at both of the bank's offices in Athens in addition to being a lending officer.



Angela Ford

Regions Bank announced that **Chase Simpson** will serve as vice president and relationship manager in the Regions Affordable Housing division. In this role, Simpson will manage, source, and lead origination efforts for affordable housing opportunities across several states, including cities in Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and West Virginia. Through low-income housing tax credits (LIHTCs), comprehensive financial solutions, and a holistic suite of additional banking options,



Chase Simpson

Simpson and colleagues will meet the financial needs of affordable housing developers planning to bring new or renovated properties to the market.

River Bank & Trust based in Prattville welcomes **Sarah Kathryn Haller** as senior vice president and relationship manager at the Gadsden office. With over 16 years of banking experience, Haller will help neighbors and businesses achieve their financial goals. The bank also announced the addition of **Rebecca Spear** who joined the bank as vice president and office manager of its Wetumpka location.



Sarah Kathryn Haller



Rebecca Spear

ServisFirst Bank in Birmingham welcomes **David Sparacio** as its chief financial officer. A seasoned financial executive with over three decades of experience in banking and financial management, Sparacio will oversee the bank's financial strategy, regulatory reporting, and accounting operations. Another new hire to the ServisFirst team is **Linda Presley** who joined the Huntsville team as an assistant vice president, branch manager. Presley also has more than three decades of banking experience. Throughout her career, Presley has excelled in leadership, sales, and customer service, with a strong focus on client relationships and building high-performing teams. Her experience spans areas such as branch management, sales coaching, operational excellence, and loan services. Congratulations to **Lisa Bryan** on her promotion to the private banking manager in Huntsville. In her new role, Bryan will lead the Private Banking team, overseeing client relationships and managing a talented team to deliver personalized financial solutions. With more than three decades of experience and a proven track record in managing teams and



David Sparacio



Linda Presley



Lisa Bryan



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STATEWIDE ROUND UP

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PERSONNEL • RETIREMENTS • DIRECTOR NEWS



branch operations, Bryan is known for her commitment to exceptional client service.

SmartBank headquartered in Pigeon Forge, Tenn. announced the addition of several new staff members.

Casey Greb has joined its retail leadership team as vice president, regional retail manager. Working primarily out of the bank's new Birmingham branch, Greb will oversee retail banking operations for SmartBank's Middle and Northern Alabama markets. The bank also announced the addition of 22-year banking veteran **Jonathan Smith** to its team as a mortgage loan officer. In Birmingham, the bank added **Todd Shafer** as senior vice president, private banker. With over two decades of experience, including 17 years in private banking,

Shafer brings extensive expertise in lending, deposit strategies, treasury management, wealth management and mortgage solutions. In addition to new staff members, the bank also congratulated employees on recent promotions. **Allyson Sanders** was promoted to vice president, private banker, serving the Huntsville market. Sanders will continue to work closely with the bank's team of seasoned professionals to deliver customized banking solutions tailored to meet the unique needs of our private banking clients. **Sheena Marler** was promoted to regional retail manager. In her new role, Marler will oversee branch operations across the southwest Alabama and coastal markets, leading efforts to strengthen client and community relationships while ensuring operational excellence. Marler served as the Mobile Branch Manager for the past three years, where she played a key role in opening the branch. **Jeff Williams** was

promoted to division president. In this new role, Williams will oversee operations across multiple markets with assets totaling \$1 billion, including Auburn, Dothan, Fairhope, Mobile, and Montgomery, Alabama, as well as Destin, Panama City, Pensacola, and Tallahassee, Florida. Williams has over 30 years of banking experience and a proven history of excellence in executive management and leadership roles, consistently delivering exceptional results. The bank appointed **Brian Groeschell** as central division president. In this role, Groeschell will oversee the bank's operations across key Alabama markets, spanning from Huntsville and North Alabama through Central Alabama, encompassing Birmingham and Tuscaloosa, and extending to southwest Alabama in Clarke and Washington Counties. Groeschell brings a wealth of experience to this pivotal role, having previously served as Alabama Regional President. He joined SmartBank in 2014 as Tuscaloosa market executive, demonstrating a consistent track record of success in guiding sales processes, building high-performing teams, and fostering strong community and client relationships.



Casey Greb



Jonathan Smith



Todd Shafer



Allyson Sanders



Sheena Marler



Jeff Williams



Brian Groeschell

RETIREMENTS

Sharon McVay retired from **First Bank of Alabama** on Dec. 31 after a 36-year career in banking. McVay first came to the bank in 2017, opening the Ashland location as branch manager and introducing the bank to the Clay County communities. She then moved into her current position in compliance. According to the bank, she has been a loyal and trusted member of the First Bank of Alabama family, and they will miss her presence.



Sharon McVay

DIRECTOR NEWS

First US Bank welcomed **Staci M. Pierce, J. D. and Tracy E. Thompson** to its board of directors. Pierce currently is the CEO of Action Enterprise Holdings, LLC, a transportation and environmental services company headquartered in Birmingham. She has over eight years of



Staci M. Pierce



newsline

STATEWIDE ROUND UP

DIRECTOR NEWS • EMPLOYEE NEWS OF INTEREST

experience in executive and leadership roles in the transportation and environmental services industries and, prior to that, practiced law for five years. Thompson is the CEO and co-founder of Focus Health Group, which was founded in 2002 and is based in Knoxville, Tenn. Focus Health Group is a health services company that provides low-cost generic pharmaceutical products.

Thompson served as chairman of the board and CEO of The Peoples Bank, which was organized in 1920 and acquired by First US Bank in 2018.



Tracy E. Thompson

NobleBank & Trust in Anniston welcomes **Linda Jenkins** to its board of directors. Jenkins retired from Regions Bank as a market executive after 46 years of service. During her career in the banking industry, she held several distinct positions cultivating a comprehensive expertise in bank operations and leadership. According to the bank, she has selflessly mentored and trained so many successful bankers in the Calhoun County market area.



Linda Jenkins

Regions announced **Roger W. Jenkins**, director and CEO of Murphy Oil Corporation, has been appointed to serve on the boards of Regions Financial Corp. and its subsidiary, Regions Bank. Jenkins' term on the Regions boards began Jan. 1. An experienced corporate executive, Jenkins has been with Murphy Oil since 2001. In 2013, he was elevated to serve as director, president and CEO



Roger W. Jenkins

of the organization. Murphy Oil recently announced Jenkins will retire from Murphy's board on Dec. 31, 2024, and will remain in an advisory role until his full retirement from Murphy on Dec. 31, 2025. Prior to serving Murphy Oil, Jenkins had a 17-year career with Texaco.

EMPLOYEE NEWS OF INTEREST

The **Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta** announces the appointment of **Michael D. Ross** by the Atlanta Board of Directors to the Birmingham Branch Board of Directors. Mike will serve a three-year term ending Dec. 31, 2027. Ross is president and CEO of CB&S Bank in Russellville.



Michael D. Ross

Momentum Leaders is proud to announce the inaugural Upward class for North Alabama. Among the participants is **Amanda Hicks**, **Bank Independent** Vice President Sales Officer for Madison County, who joins the group of trailblazing professionals committed to empowering women leaders across Alabama and beyond. The Upward program is designed specifically for emerging women leaders, equipping them with the skills, tools, and network necessary to excel in their careers and communities. Over the next nine months, the participants will engage in a comprehensive curriculum that includes leadership training, mentorship opportunities, and networking events. The program cultivates confidence, fosters collaboration, and drives positive change within their workplaces and communities.



Amanda Hicks

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.



Bank Independent Honors Recipients of Mauldin Scholarship

Bank Independent recognized two students from Athens State University and six from the University of North Alabama as recipients of the 2024 Edward Fennel Mauldin Endowed Scholarship. The scholarship, designed for first-generation college attendees, is named in honor of the late Bank Independent President, **Edward Fennel Mauldin**.

Students from Athens State receiving the scholarship included: **John Jones**, a junior majoring in management, and **Mallie Dover**, a senior majoring in early childhood education. Both students are both first-time recipients of the scholarship.

Undergraduate students from the University of North Alabama receiving scholarships were **Henry Ajualip Huaracas**, a freshman majoring in computer science; **Ashton D. Bright**, a sophomore majoring in criminal justice; **Kadi A. Norato**, a junior majoring in nursing; and **Devin Wesley Riggs**, a senior majoring in psychology. Graduate recipients included **Colton C. Marquart**, MBA, and **Anyia A. Smith**, elementary education.

Bank Independent President **Macke Mauldin** congratulated the students on their achievements, sharing how his father, the late Edward Fennel Mauldin, never graduated from college, yet led a successful life and career. Mauldin emphasized that his father's belief in the transformative power

of education remains a guiding principle for the bank's support of first-generation college students.

"You have the support of the entire Bank Independent team," Mauldin said. "This scholarship carries a responsibility. Many people have helped you get to where you are today, and I encourage you to embrace that responsibility by paying it forward when you see someone in need."

The First Bank's Heritage Community Foundation Awards more than \$250,000 in Grants to Nonprofit Organizations

The Heritage Community Foundation, operated by **The First Bank**, recently awarded more than \$250,000 in grants to nonprofit organizations throughout the bank's operating footprint. Founded in 2014 by Heritage Bank prior to the bank being acquired by The First, the Heritage Community Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization that supports local nonprofit groups by making a difference in the lives of people within its communities. In 2023, Heritage Bank was acquired by The First, providing the opportunity for the foundation to extend its service area into other areas of Georgia and Florida, as well as into the states of Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana.

"As a result of our bank's growth in

recent years, we are thrilled to have the opportunity to expand the footprint of our Heritage Community Foundation and the resulting impact on local communities," said **Hoppy Cole**, chief executive officer and president of The First. "Giving back to our communities and supporting local economies is integral to our mission as a bank, and our foundation is a pivotal part of how we support and execute that strategy."

Today, the foundation is primarily funded by employees of The First with all operating costs funded by the foundation. To date, the foundation has awarded over \$1,174,000 in grant awards to more than 150 nonprofit groups, donated more than \$22,000 to disaster and emergency relief, as well as provided over \$23,000 in support to The First employees experiencing hardships due to natural disasters or other unforeseen circumstances.

"Now celebrating 10 years of making an impact in our communities, the Heritage Community Foundation's recent efforts this year to support hundreds of nonprofit organizations with over \$250,000 in grant awards speaks volumes to the generosity of our bank and our employees who donate their time and resources to ensure the foundation's success," said **Jerome Brown**, president of the Heritage Community Foundation and executive vice president and chief community officer at The First. "I am grateful for the bank's support of the foundation and the continued impact the foundation has made on local communities surrounding our bank operations."



Peoples Bank of Alabama Opens Pelham Office

Peoples Bank of Alabama opened its new location at 2267 Pelham Parkway in November. The ribbon cutting event included local officials, key business leaders, and members of the bank's board of directors and executive management team. "We are thrilled to officially open our doors in Pelham," said **Brian Bertella**, regional market president. "We are very excited about being a part of this vibrant community. This expansion allows us to add a convenient location for our customers and participate in a community where so many of our customers and teammates live."

SmartBank Opens Montgomery Office

SmartBank announced the opening of a new location at 207 Montgomery Street in the historic Bell Building. The Montgomery team is led Market President **Donna Cooper** alongside a group of experienced banking professionals. **Jay Baker**, corporate relationship manager, and **Libby Taunton**, private banker, provide tailored financial solutions to individuals and businesses, while **Devon Averett**, financial center manager, and **Ruby LaFlore**, assistant financial center manager, ensure seamless day-to-day operations. Supporting private and commercial banking needs are **Teresa Green**, private banking assistant, **Cindy Mattingley**, commercial assistant, and **Kaylan Wright**, financial services representative.



ABA HALF CENTURY CLUB



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

Congratulations to **Marion Community Bank Dallas County Regional President Wayne Middlebrooks** who celebrated 50 years of service to the banking industry. Shown in the photo are, from left, **Marion Community Bank President and CEO Guy Davis**, Middlebrooks and **ABA President and CEO Scott Latham**.

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